"GOD" AND NONSENSE

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The following intellectual exercise has
as its purpose an evaluation of Antony Flew's neo-positivist
falsifiability challenge to the meaningfulness of religious
language and Ian Ramsey's attempt to meet that challenge via
the use of models and qualifiers. The work of other
philosophers such as Frederick Ferré, William Austin, John
Hick and Ronald Hepburn is also related to the points dis-
cussed by Flew and Ramsey

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The meaningfulness of religious language is a relatively
recent focus of concern in philosophy of religion. Until the
twentieth century the debate between theist and non-theist
(whether atheist, agnostic or skeptic) seemed to be a meaning-
ful issue. All sides of the dispute seemed to be agreed about
the meaningfulness of the issues debated and attacks on
Christianity and related theistic faiths generally argued
either (1) the basic dogmas of religion were either false or
(2) unknown to be true. Claim (1) was usually supported on
empirical grounds, that is, science or common sense or biblical
criticism showed that such presumably key doctrines of the
Christian religion as creation, original sin, eternal punish-
ment and divine revelation were untenable because of the
findings of geology, biology, linguistics and ancient history.
In addition philosophers such as Hume and Mill attacked theism
on both empirical and logical grounds particularly stressing
the problem of evil. It was held by many others that certain
key dogmas of religion contradicted each other so that it
seemed that on grounds of logic and/or experience theism was
in difficulty.

But theism stubbornly refused to be falsified so easily
so that with the advent of the positivist movement in the
twentieth century non-theists influenced by logical posi-

tivism switched their attack from the level of the <u>truth</u> of religious language to its <u>meaningfulness</u>. Many began to suspect that <u>nothing</u> could falsify theism since more sophisticated theists seemed unmoved by the powerful attacks on theism from empirical quarters.

In the 1940s John Wisdom was able to argue that the issue between theist and non-theist was not an empirical issue after all. He likened it to two travellers who came across an apparently deserted garden and engaged in a heated debate on whether or not there was a gardener responsible for the origin and upkeep of the garden. They were unable to detect the putative gardener by empirical means and the believer (in the gardener) kept modifying his thesis so that the gardener became an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener and consequently undetectable by empirical methods. The evidence concerning the condition of the garden was quite ambiguous, sometimes indicating care (by the putative gardener) sometimes indicating unconcern.

Antony Flew took this parable and used it to point to the meaninglessness of religious utterances. But Flew's attack on theism(which is the starting point of the thesis)is much more subtle than the simple neo-positivism outlined above might indicate. We shall explore the multi-faceted nature of his (and R. Hepburn's) attack which in many ways revives many of the old logical considerations of Mill, Hume <u>et. al.</u> In addition we shall consider one prominent means of meeting the challenge of Flew: the method of model-construction.

The major figure to be considered here is Ian Ramsey whose Whidden lectures of 1963 will be analyzed and compared with his other several short monographs on religious language. The two major concepts of religious doctrines to be considered are 'God' and 'immortality', the two most difficult but two most interesting problems in religious language.

Chapter one will explore Ramsey's first lecture, a comparison of theological and scientific models. In this lecture Ramsey introduces the concept of 'empirical fit', his substitute for the positivist principle of 'empirical verification/falsification.

Chapter two will examine Ramsey's concept of the role of models in Psychology and the social sciences in which he elaborates the concept of 'personal model' a model he applies especially to the word 'I' and also to the terms 'freedom' and 'duty' both of which he relates to 'I'. 'I' for Ramsey is a paradigm for all metaphysics and a key, the best logical key, to the understanding of 'God'. The basic point Ramsey tries to show is that all these words 'I', 'God' etc. involve more than observables. This attempt to <u>transcend</u> the observable and yet maintain an <u>empirical</u> basis for his claims is one of Ramsey's key aims.

In chapter three we examine lecture three on models and qualifiers and explore Ramsey's application of these to the concept of 'God'. Here we examine in great detail his discussion of the characterizations of God in chapter two of <u>Religious Language</u>, the most important section in all of

Ramsey's works since it is here that he attempts to cash in his God-models as empirical currency.

In chapter four we turn to two other philosophers of religion who have discussed the role of models in elucidating religious language: Frederick Ferré, and William Austin. Ferré discusses models under the categories of type, scope and status and we shall see that his concept of model contrasts strikingly with that of Ramsey and is much closer to the philosophers of science than Ramsey's concept is.

Austin's major idea is 'complementarity' by which he parallels the scientific use of the 'complementary' models of wave and particle to explain optical phenomena with the theologian's use of complementary models to explain religious phenomena.

In chapter five we attempt an overall assessment of model-construction in religious language considering critiques from diverse sources ranging from non-theists like R. Hurlburtt and A. Flew to sympathetic critics like H. D. Lewis and Austin himself, who has very interesting critiques of Ramsey.

The discussion is considerably broadened in chapter five to include a consideration of John Hick's 'eschatological verification', an attempt to link God-talk with discourse about immortality. At this point the problem of disembodied consciousness, raised in chapter one, is examined in some detail and applied to both of the above but especially to God-talk.

The issue of falsifiability is disposed of cursorily and it is argued that the theist has problems but (a) not in connection with _meaning_ but with _truth_ and (b) not with _falsification_ but with _verification_ since it is easier to stipulate what would count against theism than it is to show what would verify it. It is also suggested that on two other counts at least the theist has difficulties with religious language: one on the basis of coherence and the other on the basis of his (the theist's) abuse of ordinary language. But these are not explored in any great detail since the major issue in this thesis is Flew's neo-positivist falsification challenge and Ramsey's attempt to meet it.

In connection with this later point it is concluded that Ramsey (as well as Ferré and Austin) have left too many logical and epistemic gaps in their reasoning to allow us to conclude that they have answered the problem raised in (a) above. Thus the verdict on Ramsey's case for Christianity, so far, must be 'Not proven'.

CHAPTER I

Since the appearance of the Flew-Wisdom[1] parable of the
gardener the problem of the meaningfulness of religious language
has tended to focus on the issue of empirical falsifiability.
This parable introduced a new stage in the discussion of the
status of religious language. Whereas the positivist had tended
to dismiss it (along with pronouncements of metaphysics and
ethics) as cognitively insignificant because of its alleged
unverifiability, Antony Flew's attack is much more subtle.
Rather than dogmatically ruling religious utterances out a priori
he issues a simple challenge. He notes that such putative
assertions as "God loves us" are qualified and modified until
they seem to die the death by a thousand qualifications.[2]
Faced with this situation Flew simply asks "Just what would
have to happen to entitle us to say 'God does not love us' or
even 'God does not exist? I therefore put ... the simple
central question, 'What would have to occur or to have occured
to constitute for you a disproof of the love of, or of the
existence of, God?"[3]

As can be seen, Flew has replaced the traditional
positivist criterion of meaning with something more like
Karl Popper's criterion of falsifiability. He does not ask
"What empirical observations would tend to verify or lend
support to theological assertions?" but rather, "What empirical
evidence would falsify or constitute evidence against

theological assertions?"

It might be more accurate to say that the theologian (and philosopher of religion) rather than having an old problem replaced by a new one is now in fact confronted by two problems instead of just one. Or one might merely say that what we have are really opposite sides of the same coin. Falsifiability and verifiability are obviously closely related and the theologian has a difficulty no matter what side of the coin he opts for. Of course he can reject the problem altogether and deny that the categories of empirical verification/falsification are relevant to religious discourse. But this attitude is somewhat irrational. The burden of proof, it seems, is on the theologian on at least two counts.

(a) Despite the numerous qualifications that have been and may have to be made for the original positivist criterion (eg. dispositional terms, unobserved entities, fiction, conditionals, and first principles that are not analytic nor empirical-axioms, postulates, etc.) it certainly would be strange for a person to put forward a theory in a respectable academic discipline (except mathematic and logic of course) such as chemistry, psychology, history, economics, etc., while refusing to allow evidence to count against it or without putting forward evidence in its favour. None of the writers on religious language I have consulted have denied the utility of the falsifiability/verifiability criteria (if suitably qualified) for the natural and social sciences. It would then seem to be incumbent on the theologian to demon-

strate that religious language ought to be an exception to the
rule.

(b) If the theologian is unable and unwilling to allow
anything to count against his assertion the same is not true
of the unbeliever. Hume, J.S. Mill, Flew and many others are
ready to confront the theist with the problem of evil. It is
no coincidence that Flew uses as an example of unfalsifiable
theological utterances "God loves us as a father loves his
children".[4] For the existence of human pain and suffering is
relevant to this assertion and seems to count against it.
Further the distribution of pain and evil (the suffering of the
innocent, the prosperity of tyrants and criminals) seems to
count against God's justice if the term "justice" is used in
its ordinary sense.

Confronted with the problem the theist must either re-
treat to obscurantism or present a cogent explanation of evil
and evidence for the propostition "God loves us". For if we
have a proposition p and there is evidence against it but no
evidence for it then it is plainly irrational to believe p.
And this is exactly the situation that seems to pertain to
the assertion "God loves us".

At this point the theist can make a number of moves
(apart from obscurantism which is philosophically uninteresting):

1. The theist could deny that religious utterances are
assertions despite their formal similarity to ordinary asser-
tions. This would give us a non-cognitive account of religious
language in terms of emotive, conative and/or prescriptive

discourse.

2. He could maintain that there is evidence for the proposition "God exists" in the theistic proofs. In fact this would invalidate Flew's whole approach, since, as stated, it is clearly incomplete. For (a) if the ontological argument is valid the proposition "God exists" is analytic and consequently empirical evidence becomes irrelevant. And (b) if the other proofs (especially the cosmological and teleological) are cogent then there is an empirical base for religious language that has to be dealt with by Flew and one would be entitled to ask what would falsify his position.

3. One could try to explicate religious language by the use of analogy, metaphor, and models, the validity of which is measured by a different standard than that of the falsification/verification principle, but which nonetheless maintains an empirical basis or anchorage. It is this sort of move that people like Ian Ramsey and Fredrick Ferré make in order to preserve the intelligibility of religious discourse.

They face in this endeavour a number of problems: (I) They must show that the criteria they wish to substitute for the verification/falsification principle are tenable substitutes. (II) They need, it seems, not only general theological models and a particualr theistic model but above all a theodicial[5] model to incorporate the problems Flew, Hume, J.L. Mackie and H.J. McCloskey[6] would raise concerning the existence and distribution of evil in the cosmos. (III) They must clarify the relation their models bear to

"reality", i.e. what sort of ontological status the models
have, what type of ontological commitment they entail. In
addition they ought to be able to indicate that there are good
reasons for opting for their models rather than, say, a
naturalistic model of the universe.

In this thesis I intend to compare and contrast the
approaches of Ferré and Ramsey to the problems of religious
language, their explications of the function, role, and status
of theological models indicating the strengths and weaknesses
of their respective approaches. In so doing, I will attempt
to answer two basic questions already hinted at:

A. What ontological commitment or reference do these
models entail?

B. Do they solve or at least help to solve the problem
of the meaningfulness of religious language vis-
a-vis the verification/falsification principle?

The former raises the problem of reference, the meta-
physical (or ontological) issue, whereas the latter raises
the problem of sense, the epistemic (or methodological)
issue.

Ian Ramsey has probably done more in the field of explica-
ting the models of theology than anyone else. Most of his
books are attempts to apply the methodology of model con-
struction to various areas of Christian doctrine. The two
works of his that will be the major focus of attention will be
his Religious Language and Models and Mystery, a work based
on the 1963 Whidden lectures. I will start by considering the
latter since in it he sums up the methodology which he employs

in his other works and presents and elaborates his concept
of models, stressing the similarities and differences between
those of theology and the natural and social sciences. In
addition he attempts to clarify the relation of models to
both qualifiers and mystery, and the affinities they have with
metaphor and analogy. We shall then explore how he applies
this general methodology to particular religious dogmas
especially concentrating on Religious Language since it is in
this work that he articulates the concept of God by use of
models and qualifiers. While not ignoring other areas of
religious language I wish to concentrate on the key concept
of God.

This can be justified by pointing out that the meaning of
many religious utterances is dependent upon the meaning of
the word "God". For example, the expressions "Christ is the
Son of God", "the grace of God", "the law of God", "the Church
of God", "man is the image of God", "the Bible (Koran, etc.)
is the word of God" all employ terms that are meaningful per
seé, that is, in the context of ordinary language and in
which it would be possible to substitute a proper name while
retaining a meaningful expression.

But if the word "God" is itself nonsensical then the
expressions above are also. These expressions have meaning
if and only if "God" is meaningful.

So far it may seem that the theist has merely one problem

when it comes to religious language, namely the neo-positivist challenge of Flew. But in fact there is at least one other standpoint from which the theist can be attacked: that of ordinary language. This also, like the neo-positivism of Flew, is an outgrowth of the logical positivism of the inter-war years.

Flew himself uses this technique especially in chapter two of God and Philosophy but it is also exemplified in Ronald Hepburn's Christianity and Paradox. (Both Flew and Hepburn acknowledge their indebtedness to each other.) This attack, while it makes use of the modified positivist criterion of meaning, puts more emphasis on the paradoxical (if not contradictory) language of theism and its use (or abuse) of terminology from ordinary language. To take an example, Christian theists (following the Bible) speak of God seeing, hearing, willing, acting in the world and speaking to man. The Bible also speaks of God's eyes, hands, ears, etc., that is, the organs with which we associate sensations, volitions, thoughts et al. in ourselves and other people. But the creeds of the church assure us that God is "without body, parts, or passions."

Now to avoid the charge of contradiction (and of anthropomorphism) the sophisticated theologian will reply that talk of God's eyes, heart, mind (although this last may be an exception) is not to be taken literally. Yet God thinks, wills and in some sense sees (is conscious of) what goes on in our world.

This challenge of the linguistic philosopher raises problems for the theist in at least two different areas. For

the above example, while it may seem to raise only the problem of disembodied consciousness, has ramifications not only for God-talk but also for discourse regarding immortality.

The latter problem is an interesting one in that it is both independent of and closely related to the problem of "God". To demonstrate this note that while I pointed out above that expressions like "son of God" and "law of God" depend for their sense on the meaning of "God" (assuming it proper to speak of proper names as meaningful; but is "God" a proper name anyway?) this is not true of expressions concerning immortality. The assertion "Socrates is immortal" is meaningful whether or not "God" is. In this way belief in immortality is logically distinct from religious language and not necessarily a religious belief at all. (Plato's belief in immortality doesn't seem to be religious but philosophical). While we have a tendency to think of belief in God and belief in immortality as related (and as a matter fact they often are) there seems to be no conceptual necessity linking the two. One can believe in God but not in immortality and vice versa.

However, it would not be difficult to connect the two conceptually and to raise a dilemma for the theist. There seem to be only two ways in which to maintain the intelligibility of immortality-language: 1. one could defend a Platonic-Cartesian dualist view of man as two distinct but mysteriously related entities; a material body on the one hand and an incorporeal mind-soul on the other. This means that the latter can exist independently of the former and it makes sense to

speak of disembodied consciousness hence immortality is perfectly plausible. This seems to be the position of traditional theism as represented by Augustine, Aquinas and St. Paul.[7]

2. The second line of defence would be to adopt an Aristotelian-Strawsonian position on man and regard him as a unity, not a duality, of body and mind with the latter being not a substance but capacities, dispositions, etc. In this case man could not survive death since the mind is inextricably connected to (but not identical with) the body. In this case immortality could be maintained but only on the ground that the _whole_ person, body and mind (consciousness) will be reconstituted (presumably by God) at some point after death. This is the position adopted by John Hick in his defense of resurrection and eschatological verification.[8]

Neither alternative is particularly appealing to the philosophical theist. If he opts for the former he has all the difficulties associated with Platonic-Cartesian dualism, difficulties that it would be superfluous to raise here (Ryle's _The Concept of Mind_ does this sufficiently well). If he opts for the latter he has all sorts of problems with personal identity.

Suppose he does opt for the latter and relies on the concept of God's omnipotence and omniscience to stifle objections that (a) these putatively resurrected persons could not _be_ the same persons who died at such-and-such a time and place and (b) they could not be _known_ to be the same even if _per impossible_ they were. The theist at this point still does

not have disembodied consciousness for <u>men</u> but he still needs

it for <u>God</u>. He must therefore maintain that it is merely

a contingent empirical fact that man is not a combination of

body and mind. "Disembodied consciousness" would still be

meaningful (it has to be for "God" to make sense): it is

merely the case that God's consciousness is disembodied while

man's is not.

So while the theist can appeal to resurrection to make

immortality intelligible in the face of his rejection of

disembodied consciousness (for man) he still needs the concept

for God and there are formidable difficulties here. Is it

intelligible to attribute to God predicates of consciousness

(particularly sensations) while denying Him sense organs?

("without <u>body</u>, <u>parts</u> or passions"). Does it make sense to

speak of God thinking without a brain?

These are difficult questions for the theist, questions

that strike me as being much more formidable that the neo-

positivist falsification criterion. In fact I shall argue

(A) that falsification is a relatively trivial problem that

can be disposed of much more easily that many theists (and non-

theists) seem to feel, (B) that, in fact, the old-style

<u>verification</u> criterion is a stiffer test for the theist than

falsification since it is much easier to stipulate what would

<u>falsify</u> theism than it is to stipulate what would <u>verify</u> it.

I shall also argue (C) that more difficult than either of the

above is the problem of "ordinary language" especially when

predicates that derive their meaning from everyday human

events and actions are applied to the "transcendental" realm.
Complicating this is the problem of the internal consistency
of theistic discourse; (D) that Ramsey and Ferré have interes-
ting but ultimately unsatisfactory solutions to these problems
with their concepts of models and have not yet met the Flew-
Hepburn challenge; (E) that despite the formidable difficulties
concerning meaning (cited in (C) above) the real problem of
religious language, the ultimate difficulty for the theist is
not _sense_ but _reference_.

Now Ramsey is not unaware of these various difficulties,
particularly the ones regarding the extent to which ordinary
language is either stretched by theistic language to the
breaking point (or leads to incoherence). In fact, Ramsey
argues that religious language must be logically odd and queer
from the standpoint of ordinary language. How then does he
propose to deal with these formidable problems?

The first two lectures in _Models and Mystery_ deal with the
role of models in particular academic disciplines, the first
involving a comparison of scientific and theological models.
The second is a cursory examination of models in the "human"
sciences, psychology and social science. The third lecture
is most general of all, relating models and qualifiers in
various disciplines.

In chapter one, Ramsey outlines three uses of models and
draws three parallels for theological models. He further
stipulates two conditions for scientific models to meet.
Theological models are required to meet the first but not the

second (which is, roughly, the verification principle). But
Ramsey offers an alternative to experimental verification in
his concept of "empirical fit" which he elucidates partly in
chapter two with reference to psychology, a field in which he
claims that "personal" models are needed which are of the
"empirical fit" type.[9] In chapter three he stresses both the
relation of models and metaphors and that of models and quali-
fiers. The former (models and metaphors) are supposed to be
the "basic currency" for mystery.[10] Qualifiers are held to be
the "route from model to mystery".[11]

Ramsey begins chapter one by pointing out what he regards
as an often overlooked and misunderstood common feature of
disparate academic disciplines: "the use they make of models".[12]
He immediately connects this with the second key concept men-
tioned in the title: mystery. "It is by use of models that
each discipline provides its understanding of a mystery which
confronts them all."[13] Thus, we see at the outset not only
that models provide "scientific and theological understanding"[14]
but that they also point to mystery. In a sense they both
reveal (or disclose) and conceal.

Ramsey then raises the Platonic type question: "What is a
model?"[15] and gives a Wittgensteinian answer, calling upon the
history of science to see how the term "model" has been used.
He begins with Lord Kelvin's well-known reference to mechanical
models, which is an example, he says, of a "scale model" or a
"picturing model".[16] Other examples of such models include
Bohr's model of the atom and Rutherford's solar system

model.[17]

While acknowledging that scale models are still useful in understanding various phenomena his whole argument "presupposes a new era in science, a new way of theorizing in terms of models."[18] This has important lessons for theology because "the result is to make science not a picture language about the universe but a collection of distinctive, reliable and easily specifiable techniques for talking about a universe which is ultimately mysterious".[19]

Ramsey agrees that while there has been no explicit scale model era in theology "much theological discourse has been construed as if it incorporated scale models, picturing models, less or more complex".[20] Examples of this are alleged to be the picturing of God as judge, king, father and shepherd. He concedes that there are "enormous advantages" to this viewpoint, two of which he regards as especially relevant to his purpose:

> First, it [picture models] enabled the scientist and theologian .... to be articulate about electrical phenomena, atomic structure .... about God ..... the significance of Jesus ... rather than take refuge in holy silence.

> Second, picturing models being replicas, they reproduced identically important and relevant properties which also belonged to the object modelled. To this extent the models provided the scientist and the theologian ..... with reliable genuine descriptions.[21]

As we shall see Ramsey hopes to retain these two advantages of the picturing model while avoiding the crudities, absurdities and pseudo-problems that too straight-forward an interpretation would entail. This, it would seem, commits him

to demonstrate at least three points in connection with (theological) models: (1) They must enable him to be articulate about religious phenomena while preserving mystery. (2) They must reproduce important and relevant properties belonging to the object modelled. To the extent that Ramsey is able to do this he will clarify the answer to the first of the key questions I raised at the outside, ie. the issue of "ontic reference". (3) He should show that his models do avoid the logical difficulties that the simplistic "picture" account runs into. If he could accomplish this he would have a tenable case for his models.

Two problems arise in connection with the simple scale model view. One is the question of compatibility. This is a problem for both theological and scientific models. In the latter we have the familiar waveparticle theories of light or the dicotomy of the common sense and electron tables. In the former we have the incompatibility of king, father, etc. with houses of defence and strong towers.[22] Secondly, picture models drain mystery out of religious language.[23]

Now a problem arises here for Ramsey, of which he takes cognizance, viz. What is the alternative? We seem to have two choices - to "take refuge in the inexpressible, or sponsor a scholastic doctrine of analogy".[24] Ramsey suggests a tertium quid or what is in reality a combination of the above two. For he attempts to preserve the mysterious (the inexpressible) in religion while making use of analogy via the concept of "analogue models".

The last term is borrowed from Max Black who in turn
borrowed the concept (but not the term) from James Clerk
Maxwell. The latter was attempting to deal with the problem
of action at a distance involved in Faraday's concept of
lines of force. Maxwell wanted to mediate between the view
that they were "mere mathematical abstractions" and the view
that they were picture models,[25] that is, he tried to explicate
a "model which stands somewhere between a picture and a mathe-
matical formula"[26] an "analogue model"[27] a term, as noted,
borrowed from Max Black, although Ramsey prefers the term
"disclosure model".

He gives reasons for this preference but first let us
look at a passage from Black cited by Ramsey:

> An analogue object is some material object, a system,
> or process designed to reproduce as faithfully as
> possible in some new medium the <u>structure</u> or web
> of relationship in an original .... the crucial
> difference between the two types of models is in
> the corresponding methods of interpretation. Scale
> models .... rely markedly upon identity: their
> aim is to imitate the original ... On the other
> hand, the making of analogue models is guided by
> the more abstract aim of reproducing the <u>structure</u>
> of the original.[28]

Why does Ramsey prefer "disclosure" to "analogue" in des-
cribing the model? He agrees with Black that there must be
"structural similarity" without "sheer reproduction, replica
picturing".[29] This is equivalent to "similarity-with-a
difference" and it is this that "generates insight, that leads
to disclosures when ... 'the light dawns'".[30] It boils down
to a difference of concern. Ramsey is concerned with the
"context of discovery" - the origin of the model in dis-

closure or insight whereas Black is concerned with its logical
structure - "the context of justification" although Ramsey
would maintain that, in this case anyway, the former is rele-
vant to the latter.

Now he argues that it is with this type of model that
"contemporary science is most concerned"[31] and cites as
evidence three uses of models enumerated by Dr. Leo Apostel:

(i) "First it is characteristic of scientific models that
they enable a theory, a deductive system, and in particular
mathematical treatment to be given in respect of phenomena
which are at present uninterpreted and lack a scientific
mapping."[32] As examples Ramsey cites the case of   light
being treated in terms of linear propagation and then being
developed to cover reflection and refraction, and the use of
a computer to model the nervous system. In each of these cases
"there are some features of the phenomena ... which with some
features of the model generate a disclosure".[33]

(ii) "A model may simplify the phenomena and the treat-
ment by singling out fundamental notions which again it
echoes in the disclosure which brings it to birth".[34] This
is especially necessary where the theory or mathematical treat-
ment is so complex that it bewilders and renders articulation
problematical. · This, it is clear, corresponds with the first
advantage of "scale models" ie. they enable us to be articulate
about the phenomena.

(iii) "Models also are profitably used in science when

they are in some way "representative of " or become proxy for, a topic which eludes our grasp or view, being somehow associated with that topic in a disclosure."[35] This is especially useful when the object studied is too big, too small, too dangerous or too far away to be observed and experimented with.

Ramsey points out the similarity regarding articulation with scale models. But it is similarity-with-a-difference! For now "articulation ... . is much more tentative than it was before".[36] Philosophers and scientists are much more cautious in dealing with it. Some philosophers of science subordinate the model to the mathematical and deductive theory with which it is associated. But this raises a key issue: "How can we be reliably articulate?"[37]

This in turn is not unconnected with one of our major issues, an issue Ramsey himself raises: "What is its [the model's] reference? What sort of ontological committment does it involve?"[38] He raises the issue here in connection with scientific rather than theological models. The latter issue is raised in Religious Language.[39]

Rather than answering the question he gives us two conditions which most hold if a disclosure model is to give us a reliable scientific understanding of the phenomena. But, before we look at these two conditions I prefer to note the three parallel functions of theological models. Then we can consider the two conditions which scientific models have to fulfill in connection with the two conditions he stipulates for theological models for at this point the parallel breaks down.

In theology:

"(1) Models can be seen as builders of discourse, as giving rise to large-scale interpretations of phenomena that so far lack a theological mapping."[40] This can be both compared and contrasted with the parallel use of scientific models. In both cases we are attempting to map uninterpreted phenomena of religion. Examples of such models are those of Messiah and Logos which were used "to make possible the emergence of some reliable and consistent large-scale doctrinal discourse."[41] It is the explication of this type of model that is the theme of Ramsey's Christian Discourse and Religious Language.

"(2) In a second group come models which enable us to make sense of discourse whose logical structure is so perplexing as to inhibit literacy."[42] Its purpose is to "simplify complex discourse ... by singling out one or other of the fundamental notions it contains".[43] This can be seen as even more straightforwardly parallel to the second function of scientific models.

"(3) In a third group come those models which enable us to talk of what eludes us."[44] Here again there is similarity-with-a-difference vis-a-vis the scientific model. They too enable us to grasp what eludes us but scientific objects do not elude our grasp in precisely the same way that a theological object does. Examples of such models are those that speak of God as "King, judge and father."[45] It is especially appropriate that Ramsey uses the concept of God as his example

here, for this concept as elaborated in <u>Religious Language</u> is
very elusive as we shall see.

What then of the two conditions that must hold? For
scientific models they are:

> (a) "structurally the model must somehow or other
> chime in with and echo the phenomena .... The model
> arises in a moment of insight when the universe dis-
> closes itself in the points where the phenomena and
> the model meet .... Such a disclosure arises around
> and embraces both the phenomena and their associa-
> ted model.

> (b) In any scientific understanding a model is the
> better the more prolific it is in generating de-
> ductions which are then open to experimental veri-
> fication and falsification."[46]

What about theological models? Do the same two con-
ditions hold? Ramsey answers the first affirmatively and the
second negatively.

"In all cases the models must chime in with the pheno-
mena; they must arise in a moment of insight or disclosure".[47]
But, "(b) It is, however, the second condition which most
sharply distinguishes the theological model from the
scientific model".[48]

Since condition (b) is virtually equivalent to the no-
torious verification principle it is quite relevant to our
second major question. Ramsey is quite explicit in rejecting
its applicability to religious discourse. "A model in theology
does not stand or fall with, a theological model is not judged
for its success or failure by reference to, the possibility
of verifiable deductions."[49]

Is it a legitimate move? Is Ramsey's position intel-

ligible? Since, rather than excluding the verification fal-
sification principle from science he explicitly commends it,
it is incumbent upon him to explain why the principle should
not apply to religious discourse. If it doesn't then is such
language _cognitively_ meaningful? Ramsey suggest different
criteria for judging the adequacy of theological models,
which he sets forth not only in this section but also under his
discussion of condition 1. Are they adequate criteria? Can
they give the empirical anchorage to religious language
that would be supplied by the verification/falsification prin-
ciple if it were not ruled out _a priori_?

What are these criteria then by which the adequacy of
theological models are to be judged?

> It is rather judged by its stability over the widest
> possible range of phenomena, by its ability to
> incorporate the most diverse phenomena not incon-
> sistently. A particular model in theology .... is
> not now used to generate deductions which may or may
> not be experimentally verified .... it rather stands
> or falls according to its success ... in harmonizing
> whatever events are to hand.[50]

The three major criteria for Ramsey then seem to be
scope, consistency and harmony. It is what he calls the "method
of empirical fit",[51] a concept he elaborates and illustrates
in chapter two. While different from the verification prin-
ciple it functions as a putative replacement. It is designed
for the same purpose: "It is ... important to see where
they resemble each other and ... to see where they face the
same problem and may each embrace the same solution."[52] But
before unpacking this concept we should perhaps look more

closely at condition one as it relates to theological models.

It seems clear that it also bears some relation to "empirical fit" and is therefore relevant to the issue of whether or not Ramsey has an acceptable substitute for the verification/falsification principle:

> There must be something about the universe and man's experience in it which, for example, matches the behavior of a loving father .... there must be something about certain cosmic situations which matches those situations in which men find them- selves in the presence of a judge or a king.[53]

As examples Ramsey cites insights which originate par- ticular models such as personal affection or slave release in relation to the phenomena of Christian life. These in turn lead to a better understanding of Grace and Atonement. The same is true, he says, of Logos and Messiah and the concept of revelation although he does not unpack such ideas in this context.

On general grounds there seem to be no objections to this method, although the application by Ramsey to particular examples does generate problems. But as an answer to Flew's question with which we began it may be quite feasible. For implicit in the above question is a criterion which would specify what counts against the Christian claim. If there were nothing in the universe or cosmic situation which did not resemble the behaviour of a loving father or a judge these claims would be falsified.

There is also the related problem, pointed out by Hume, Flew, et al. that in fact many "cosmic situations" point to

the opposite conclusion about a loving father. But I will postpone discussion of this problem until we consider Ramsey's somewhat sketchy theodicy in <u>Religious Language</u>.

Let us first finish our analysis of chapter one of <u>Models and Mystery</u>. Ramsey connects in the last part of this chapter, condition one and the problem of ontological committment. Having discarded the old "picture model" view we must ask "What on this view are models about?"[54]

The answer is complicated and is composed of two parts - "they are in one sense about, they <u>refer</u> to, the observable events in which they are either verified or find their fit".[55] So in some way and in some sense they "correspond with reality". But even more important for Ramsey "They each arise out of, and in this way become currency for, a universe that discloses itself to us in a moment of insight."[56] This helps to solve, according to Ramsey, the problem of "ontic reference" - "The ontological committment arises in a disclosure, and the model, whether in science or theology provides us with its own understanding of ... what the discolsure discloses."[57]

Now it might seem that Ramsey has confused the contexts of discovery and justification. But he would undoubtedly reply that the insight or disclosure - the discovery-- is quite relevant to the justification of the use of theological models. In fact, the two questions raised at the beginning - the issue of ontic reference and empirical fit - are inseparable for

Ramsey. Whether or not he can maintain this position will be one of the major foci of the rest of the thesis.

CHAPTER II

In Ramsey's first lecture we saw that he left us with a number of problems, especially those of ontic reference and empirical fit. He was primarily concerned with comparing and contrasting theological and scientific models, stressing that in neither case should the models be regarded as pictures but rather as disclosure models. In his second lecture he attempts to apply similar considerations to the models of psychology and social science.

There are two basic concepts that we shall focus our attention on in this chapter: That of personal model and that of empirical fit. I hope, for the sake of clarity, to keep the two distinct but since they are somewhat entangled in Ramsey's exposition this will not always be possible. For instance he gives as an example of a personal model '_a_ loves _b_' and asserts that this is the type of model which has to be judged on the basis of 'empirical fit'.[1] I plan to depart more from the schema of chapter one. My intention is to be more than expository by (a) adding a few critical comments and (b) referring to other works of Ramsey in order to elucidate futher these two major concepts.

For Ramsey there are three paradigms of disclosure models which are particularly useful and instructive if we wish to map the logical geography of the term "God". By exploring

these in some detail we will be in a better position to examine this key term ("God") in chapter three. These three basic paradigms are "I", "freedom" and "duty". Of these the first is most basic (to the understanding of "God") partly because it is basic to the understanding of "duty" and "freedom".

In another context, for example, he tells us that "in this word 'I' we have a paradigm for all metaphysical integrators".[2] One such metaphysical integrator is "God" and if asked how do we talk of this integrator word "our first move towards an answer must be - model 'God' on 'I'".[3] In Religious Language he also stresses the 'close logical kinship between "God" and "I"'.[4] In Religion and Science he unpacks more clearly in what ways the 'logical behaviour of the word "God" resembles that of "I"'.[5] We shall be looking more closely at this later but right now it ought to be pointed out that Ramsey's theology is going to be tied closely to his theory of personal identity or the self and that his theory is quite incompatible with a behaviourist, mechanistic or deterministic account of human behaviour.

It is important to point out however that Ramsey's view of the self is a necessary but not sufficient condition for justifying God-talk. That is, he must make good his claim that in the appropriate disclosure situations we are aware of 'more than observables' if these are to be paradigm cases for discourse about God. But even if he established this it by no means entails automatically that he has justified theistic language. What I propose to do in this chapter then is to

examine (A) Ramsey's concept of personal models with special attention to the paradigms "I" and "freedom", (B) his concept of empirical fit and (C) the putative link between the "duty" and "I" paradigms on the one hand and the "God" paradigm on the other.

(A) Personal models

At the outset of the second Whidden lecture Ramsey, as usual, is attempting to avoid a Scylla-Charybdis situation. He wants to allow the behavourist and others with a propensity to scientific rigour to use mathematical models and scientific method in their study of man, while preserving the uniqueness and irreducibility of human persons and acts to mechanistic or organic principles. He begins by citing a psychologist with behavouristic sympathies, R.C. Atkinson, who models psychology on mathematical physics and explains human learning on the basis of stimulus, response and reinforcement all of which are to be measured with mathematical precision.

Ramsey finds a couple of basic difficulties in Atkinson's account. He feels that he overlooks the participant-observer[7] distinction by equating "act" and "movement"[8] and he reduces persons to organisms. But Ramsey is far from rejecting Atkinson's models in toto. They are useful "as far as they go".[9] But they do not, they cannot (logically)go all the way. For we are talking not merely about objects but about a subject (which cannot be reduced to an object) and in fact the concept "object"is logically incomplete without the concept "subject".[10] We have an insight into ourselves which

is the basis of the psychological models and it is this in-
sight (in part) which leads many to claim that "the data of
psychology are somehow 'basically different from those of
the natural sciences'".[11]

So far Ramsey's point is just as germane to the <u>natural</u>
as to the <u>social</u> sciences. Even a claim such as "the nearest
star is 4.3 light years away" (a presumably objective claim)
entails a <u>subject</u> making the claim so that even here one can-
not eliminate the subjective reference.

But an additional factor complicates the picture in the
social sciences. Unlike physics or chemistry the subject-
matter of psychology includes not just objects but <u>ourselves</u>.
In studying learning, for example, we are studying an activity
<u>in which we participate</u> unlike studying say the course of the
starry skies above, geological strata or inorganic chemistry.
(But what about <u>organic</u> chemistry?) Now in talking of human
behaviour in terms of models we must bear this in mind. In
discussing learning we are discussing an action in which we
ourselves have participated and it is this 'occasion of par-
ticipation' that gives rise to the model in a 'moment of
insight'.[12]

This insight gives rise to Ramsey's personal models. He
does not use the term here but he does speak of "this <u>personal</u>
corrective"[13] (my emphasis) to Atkinson's talk of humans as
organisms. That we are organisms Ramsey does not deny. "But
are we more?"[14] At this point he cites Peter Winch's argument

that the account of human love (in <u>Romeo and Juliet</u>) is unintelligently described by using the same categories as those applied to a sexually excited rat. Shakespeare does a much better job at this point.[15]

The mistake of the behavourist is the same as the mistake of Kelvin. He takes his models to be picture models. There is less excuse for this blunder than there was for that of Kelvin:

> in the case of psychology, there ought to be an
> absolute safeguard against these blunders. For
> in the case of psychology all of us know at
> once what the model is about. It is about
> persons like ourselves.[16]

Now there are a couple of problems we might raise here: first, how well do we know ourselves? Richard Taylor points out that "our knowledge of man, of human history, of cultures remote in time and distance, fills volumes, and yet each of us is bewildered by that one being that is closest to him, namely, himself ... it seems that the simplest question one can ask about himself - the question ... What am I? - is the very hardest to answer".[17] But perhaps Ramsey would agree with this since he is as anxious as Taylor is to stress the mysterious character of man.

But second, how do we know that other persons are like ourselves? One need not sponsor so absurd a theory as solipsism to see that Ramsey has a problem here. He may have insight into his own self but does he have the same type of access to other persons? But let us lay aside these problems

for now and push on.

Elsewhere Ramsey asks "Can human behaviour in principle and on all occasions be adequately and satisfactorily treated in terms of observables: in terms of what can be perceptually verified?"[18] That it can in part Ramsey is quite willing to concede. In Religious Language he says 'Plainly "I" is in part tractable in observational language.'[19] It is not something "entirely independent of our public behaviour".[20]

In connection with cybernetics Ramsey again concedes that the behaviourist is right as far as he goes. The study of the brain has been greatly advanced by this method but human behaviour cannot be exhaustively described by these techniques.[21] There are at least two undesirable consequences that follow from the behaviourist viewpoint: (i) There is no room left for the concept of responsibility which further entails a "serious tension between the two foundations of modern society, law and science"[22] and (ii) eccentricity and individuality would be ruled out especially in education.[23] But Ramsey fails to establish that undesirability of consequences is a sufficient reason for disbelieving a theory. I find predictions of gloom regarding man's fate undesirable (for example the theory that mankind is doomed to extinction because of nuclear war, famine, pollution etc.) but the undesirability of these happenings is no argument against belief in their occurence.

Closely allied to the "I" paradigm are the concepts of "freedom" and "immortality" and "duty". The first two of these are the theme of Ramsey's Freedom and Immortality, which

elucidates in more detail what is entailed in his concept of personal models. His concern here is to justify discourse about these two specific concepts mentioned in the title, although Ramsey's account of immortality is much less clear and less interesting than that of John Hick, (whose discussion of immortality will be considered in chapter 5). But how does Ramsey justify discourse about freedom and immortality?

"Each appeals to a similar kind of situation, a situation not restricted to the 'observables' of sense-experience".[24] Again we see the same theme as previously: human behaviour cannot be exhaustively described in terms of observable behaviour. This is followed by the claim that similar considerations justify metaphysical and theological discourse:

> the kind of situation which justifies belief
> in freedom and immortality, is the kind of
> situation to which we must appeal if we
> seek an empirical justification for the
> language of metaphysics and philosophical
> theology in general.[25]

Ramsey then is committed to a defence of free will. This concept is justified by appealing to the decision-situation: "the claim of free will is the claim that at a moment of free decision there occurs a situation not restricted to the spatio-temporal events it contains".[26] This is connected with our being ourselves, being "I". At the moment of decision the word "I" covers more than the object-language of science can talk about. The situation discloses the "'transcendent' character of a man's personality".[27]

We can make all the concessions we want to the bio-

chemist - we are organisms (as admitted also in Models and Mystery). We can admit to economic conditioning, and allow various instincts, inhibitions, emotions. complexes and the unconscious if necessary to enter as explanandum of human behaviour:

> But all that granted the believer in free will
> holds that in a certain kind of decisive action
> a man realises himself as something more than
> language or all of these stories - be they of
> biochemistry, economics, psychology; and so
> on - talk about.[28]

Ramsey is quite confident that his concept of the self cannot be endangered by such explanations because the models of the social sciences like those of the natural sciences are not picture models. The necessary corrective to this error of Kelvinist social scientists is to stress the social, human "character of our existence and behaviour."[29] Voting, for example, is more than marking an X on a ballot. It involves participation in the political life of the country.

Ramsey again praises Winch this time for his critique of Durkheim's attempt to explain social life not by reference to the participants but by "more profound causes unperceived by consciousness".[30] He further agrees with Winch that: (a) models are as legitimate for the sociologist as for the psychologist, (b) the concept of a "sociological law"[31] can be useful and even (c) "single-factor" or "key-cause" theories which cite only one variable (geography, economics, religion) in terms of which the institutions and development of a society are explained is a valid method.[32] But in all cases

we must recognize that we have not told the whole story.

Ramsey however wants to go beyond Winch. For not only will the topic of psychological and sociological models be "elusive to scientific language which works in terms of observable predictions" (the kind sponsored by Weber, Pareto, Durkheim, Atkinson and the behaviourists) but "it is elusive to the social language whose logical significance and distinctiveness Winch rightly emphasizes".[33]

He attempts to illustrate this by reference to a disagreement between Winch and Karl Popper. The latter argued that social institutions are just explanatory models introduced by the social scientist for his own purposes. But this (according to Winch) is palpably untrue. The idea of war was not invented by people explaining what happens in armed conflict, it belongs essentially to the behaviour of the people at war. But the concept of gravity does not belong to the behaviour of the falling apple but rather to the physicists' explanation of the apple's behaviour.[34]

This means that in social studies we need not only models with a scientific status but also "distinctively personal models - models of persons in relation".[35] These latter models will be unlike the former in that their "links with observable facts are not predictive"[36] (my emphasis). Instead "these models will work in terms of ... empirical fit. For it is empirical fit rather than deductive verifications, which characterizes models which are distinctively personal."[37]

The illustration Ramsey chooses is particularly appro-

priate for our problem. It is "a loves b". The interesting
point about this is that we can substitute for 'a' and 'b'
not only 'Tom' and 'Mary' but 'God' and 'man' (or 'his children',
'the church' etc.)

(B) Empirical Fit

What then is Ramsey's concept of empirical fit? Using
the "a loves b" model he points out that we may stipulate
verifiable or falsifiable consequences. For the former we
might assert that "a loves b" entails that a will plan for
b's happiness, for the latter that a will not be found causing
b's unhappiness.[38] But both are defective for (i) a may be
planning b's happiness for quite unworthy motives not for
love and (ii) love can be 'deepened' "through tensions lived
through and redeemed",[39] so that a, though he loves b, may
cause b temporary unhappiness.

How then do we test the assertion "a loves b"? The test
"will be how stable the assertion is as an overall characteri-
zation of a complex multivaried pattern of behaviour which
it is impossible in a particular case to specify deductively
beforehand."[40]

This test applies also in psychology when it becomes
"more explicitly personal".[41] He uses the example of a
psychiatrist who diagnoses his patient as a "mild depressive".[42]
This could be merely a model with a biochemical context calling
for a drug prescription. In this case psychiatry would
work "like an ordinary science".[43]

But it could also be a personal model, that is

> one to be further tested and tried out in
> relation to the patient's whole life. The
> psychiatrist will now test how adequate the
> model is in providing an illumination of the
> patient's total behaviour, by seeing how far
> it fits what the patient says as he now
> continues to speak further about himself.[44]

The alleged advantage of this is that it preserves the virtues of the verification/falsification principle, that is, the link with empirical evidence while avoiding conclusive falsification: "the concept 'mild depressive' when used personally has empirical relevance but it is never absolutely falsified or completely verified".[45]

At this point one might well raise the important question - is the difference between the concept of experimental verification/falsification and Ramsey's empirical fit as great as Ramsey seems to imagine?[46] Is it the case for example that any scientific theory is ever completely verified? One of the stock objections to the original positivist criterion was that it rendered scientific laws meaningless because they are never completely verified.

In addition Ramsey seems to have a rather simplistic account of falsification as well. Perhaps some scientific theories are "absolutely falsified"[47] even if none are "completely verified". But the procedure is not nearly as straightforward as Ramsey (and Flew) seem to imagine. It is germane to raise Flew's name here even if Ramsey doesn't since it is apparent that Ramsey has Flew's parable in mind. It seems more than coincidence that Ramsey's form "a

loves <u>b</u>" can be given Flew's content - "God loves us"[48] Both
Flew and Ramsey seem to assume that falsification is a rela-
tively straightforward affair that can be easily modelled
on <u>modus tollens</u>: $p \supset q, \sim q \quad \therefore \sim p$.

But can Flew (or Ramsey) point to a case in the history
of science where a scientist put forward a theory, performed
an experiment that tended to disconfirm the theory and admitted
'Alas my beautiful theory has been conclusively falsified.'?
If Kuhn[49], Feyerabend, Lakatos[50], <u>et. al.</u> are correct the
process of falsification is much more complicated than this.
It is much more likely that the scientist will do one of the
following: (a) feel there is something wrong in the <u>experiment</u>
not the theory (b) incorporate the recalcitrant data into his
theory by showing how, despite appearances, the theory is still
tenable (c) alter or modify his theory slightly to incorporate
the data without abandoning the theory's most salient features.

This is roughly analogous to what the theist does.
Faced with the phenomena[51] of evil he can allow that it counts
against his assertions but not decisively. Basil Mitchell
comments that there is something odd about Flew's conduct
of the theologian's case and it seems he is right (even if we
don't accept his, Mitchell's, solution of the problem of evil):

> The theologian surely would not deny that the
> fact of pain counts against the assertion that
> God loves men[52]....the theologian <u>does</u> recog-
> nize the fact of pain as counting against
> Christian doctrine. But it is true that he
> will not allow it - or anything - to count
> decisively against it;[53]

I.M. Crombie also allows that evil counts against the

theistic conclusion and even goes beyond both Mitchell and Ramsey (who, would agree roughly with Mitchell's position) in allowing the possibility of something that counted <u>decisively</u> against the proposition 'God is merciful' - "suffering that was utterly, eternally and irredeemably pointless",[54] although he doubts that there is such suffering[55] or at least that we could establish conclusively that there was.

The approaches of Mitchell and Crombie it seems go at least part of the way to meeting Flew's challenge and since this approach is similar if not identical with Ramsey's concept of empirical fit then Ramsey also <u>partly</u> meets Flew's assault. I say 'partly' because it is important in this context to distinguish 'meaning' and 'truth'. The real problem in religious language from my perspective is not its meaningfulness but its truth, and this is especially true of "God loves man".

Even if this latter assertion is not as straightforward as "Tom loves Mary" it is an intelligible assertion. This is indicated even by Flew. The examples he uses (as well as those of Mitchell and Crombie) show this. It is quite significant that Flew uses the existence of evil as evidence against "God loves us" and not "The sky is blue", "jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system" or such irrelevant but popular arguments as Copernican astronomy or Darwinian evolution. But if we had no idea of what "God loves us" means then we could not know that the fact of evil is any more rele-

vant to its truth than the colour of the heavens.

Yet this concession to the theist is still only partial. One could agree that "God loves us" is meaningful in the same way as "Hitler loved the Jews" or that "The king of France is bald"[56] The presence of evil is a datum that Ramsey has to explain if his concept of empirical fit is to do the job. One can accept Ramsey's concept of empirical fit and still decide that Ramsey's models do not pass his own test!

I began this digression by noting that Ramsey makes too great a distinction between "verifiable deductions" and "empirical fit" especially in regard to their falsifiability. Nonetheless this does not make the distinction entirely bogus. For the basic point is that prediction is not part of empirical fit.

Ramsey uses two other examples of empirical fit and I will suggest a third. He takes the Oedipus model to be a personal one as is friendship. The former is an example of "models finding their fit in an ever-widening social and personal context, rather than in a scientific verification or falsification of deductions arising from them".[57] The latter "is a model which defies prediction and is of the empirical-fit type".[58] Note how Ramsey rules out prediction as a criterion of personal models.

The further candidate I would suggest to illustrate empirical fit would be literature.[59] How do we judge whether or not Antony loved Cleopatra,[60] for example? Surely not by prediction of consequences. It is rather by an overall

assessment of the literary evidence. Again if we want to answer the question "Who has a more adequate view of human nature - Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dickens. Tolstoy or Stevenson (in his Jekyll and Hyde model of man)?" empirical evidence is obviously relevant but not evidence of the predictive or 'verifiable deductions' type.

I mentioned earlier that Ramsey wanted to go beyond even Winch. It is not enough just to supplement scientific models with social, personal ones. We must realize that even when we use both we still do not grasp exhaustively "I". But before we look at this I would like to examine the concept of empirical fit as Ramsey expounds it in other contexts. Then we shall take a look at how Ramsey attempts to model "God" on "I".

In Christian Discourse Ramsey attempts to deal with the problem of criteria by which to evaluate models and what he offers there amounts to an elucidation of the concept of empirical fit. What happens for instance when we are confronted by several apparently conflicting models? "Have we any criteria of preference? Can we elucidate any dominant model? What will be the most reliable discourse in which to set the concept 'God'?"[61] We are given four basic criteria:

> The most reliable context for God will be
> that which, avoiding clashes with other well-
> established discourse about the universe,
> leads to articulations which are subsequently
> verified ...- and is thus a context which in
> its totality is offered as the simplest, most
> consistent, most comprehensive, and most co-
> herent map of the universe.[62]

We have then as criteria: (i) simplicity (ii) consistency (iii) comprehensiveness and (iv) coherence.

    (c) <u>Link with God-talk</u>

"Duty" is another important paradigm for Ramsey. It "may arise as a metaphysical category".[63] It arises in a situation where again there is involved more than observables. We are confronted with an "objective challenge which is talked of in terms of obligation and duty."[64] Note that what we have is not purely subjective even though it is also non-observable. The challenge is 'objective'.

But if it is not observable we might readily ask - how do we recognize it? Since it is not something observable we do not recognize it by any of our sense-organs. Rather we recognize it by a disclosure. Now this may seem somewhat mystical but this is not Ramsey's intention.

He tells us that "We recognize something as an obligation or duty, or more strictly as a <u>prima facie</u> obligation and duty, when ... it presents itself to us in a disclosure situation."[65] The disclosure has an objective referent but not one that is observable. The disclosure amounts to extra-sensory perception or intuition.

The latter term is one Ramsey generally avoids but does not explicitly object to.[66] In fact the term "<u>prima facie</u> duty" reminds us of the ethical intuitionist Ross to whom Ramsey refers in <u>Freedom and Immortality</u>[67] where he also speaks of <u>prima facie</u> duty and obligation and of duty as

objective challenges:

> 'Duty' or 'Absolute Value' is what challenges
> us 'objectively' when as a result of moral
> reflection there breaks in on us as some-
> thing going beyond the 'objects' that which
> demands a unique personal response showing
> itself in certain particular behaviour in
> a given circumstance.[68]

If we take the term 'intuition' to refer to that which
gives us immediate grasp of X without the mediation of either
the senses or logic (this does not entail mysticism - there
can be 'sensible intuitions' as in Kant and 'rational intu-
tions' as in Aristotle) then this concept is identical with
Ramsey's discernment, insight and disclosure.[69]

In Religious Language he suggests that words like "duty"
and "conscience" have to be 'given logical placings very
similar to that of "God"'.[70] Again these terms are in part
dependent on but not exhausted by spatio-temporal observables:
'no number of spatio-temporal events can ever exhaust what
we mean by "duty" but we must not suggest[71] ... that duty
is altogether independent of the spatio-temporal behaviour it
elicits".[72]

This disclosure or insight is tantamount to what Ramsey
terms 'discernment' which in turn entails a committment.[73]
This concept in a moral context bears striking parallels to
theological contexts. Conscience for Butler, Moral Law
for Kant, and Duty for Ross are all bases for discernments
which involve a commitment leading to "acting from a sense of
duty".[74] They are 'close logical kinsmen to the theologians's
"God".[75]

But precisely how do we jump from 'Duty' to 'God' or from 'I' to 'God'? Let us consider 'Duty' first. Ramsey asks 'if the moralists speak of a "sense" of "duty" why should not the religious person speak of a "sense" of the unseen?"[76]

This is somewhat ad hominem and clearly inadequate as a justification of such talk. But in the context Ramsey is attempting to justify the meaningfulness of the concept 'sense of the unseen' rather than its validity:

> in each of the phrases a word with a perfectly
> good meaning in perceptual language -"sense"-
> is given a qualification of such a kind that
> the ensuing phrase seems to be bogus, if
> not self-contradictory .... if apparent non-
> sense is repeated in places widely apart,
> we shall be hesitant before we say that such
> phrases are entirely devoid of meaning.[77]

In fact the case can be made even stronger since we do have perceptions that are not sense-perceptions such as depth-perception and time-consciousness. Neither time nor space are or can be objects perceived by our sense organs. But only a person embued with strong empiricist prejudices (and a very unempirical outlook- the two often go together) could deny the reality of space and time-conciousness.

In fact one could draw (and it is surprising that Ramsey does not) interesting parallels between the concepts of space and time and that of 'God'. Ramsey stresses frequently that "the logical status of 'God' is unique."[78] This is surely the case with space and time, both of which are sui generis thus necessitating metaphorical talk ('time flies' or 'time flows' 'objects are in space') and the various

paradoxes which arise in theology have interesting parallels
in Zeno's paradoxes[79], Kant's antinomies[80] and the wierd
conclusions of modern relativity theory.[81]

The obvious retort to this is that it does make sense
to speak of space-time awareness and even of a 'sense of
duty'. This makes it plausible to argue that the same _may_
be true of God-talk. But it does not show that there are as
good reasons for regarding it as so. After all it is not
possible to think of change, extension or motion without the
concepts of space and time and psychically our moral experience
necessitates some concept of duty. The same could be said of
Ramsey's concept of 'I'.

It is easy enough to agree with him when he says that we
must go beyond even Winch and Strawson. We not only need to
supplement scientific with social or personal models but we
need to recognize that even then we have not exhaustively
described a person:

> for each of us 'I' is a logical peculiar
> therefore social studies, by needing both
> sorts of models, point clearly and unmis-
> takeably to their topic as something elusive
> which has to be understood in terms of them
> both, but never adequately.[82]

This means there will always be a residuum of mystery
about man.[83] "_all_ the models used insocial studies may be
and must be fulfilled in insight which discloses the ultimately
mysterious character of man".[84] What is true of social
science must also be true of theology. The question "Does
theology reliably purvey mystery?"[85] is a basic issue for

the adequacy of religious language.

Since Ramsey promises to discuss this question in chapter three I shall postpone my discussion of the same. Meanwhile we do well to focus on the question I raised earlier. Just how do we link up the mysterious 'more than observables' character of 'duty' and 'I' with 'God'? Granting the logical affinities we can concede plausibility at best (or better possibility) to Ramsey's program but what justification on empirical grounds do his claims for 'God' have?

Part of the answer is found in Freedom and Immortality:

> The basic justification for the word 'God'...
> is that in talking about the universe, in
> reckoning with distinctive situations,
> we find that we need to talk of more than
> Duty and Absolute Value. 'God' thus takes
> its place with the various words and phrases
> which one by one specify what is distinc-
> tively objective about this or that dis-
> closure-situation.[86]

He anticipates an objection at this point. Why not several words in view of the diversity of situations? Here Ramsey argues that "God" serves a useful 'integrating' function. He cites (a) Occam's razor which exhorts us not to multiply entities beyond necessity (a principle often used against the idea of God) as justification for keeping ultimate concepts to a minimum and (b) he says it provides an answer to the quest for unity that would satisfy the metaphysically minded a single, ultimate and dominant category by which to interpret the universe.[87]

For those with anti-metaphysical prejudices he offers "God" as an integrating key for science. This is an advan-

tage, says Ramsey, because science is in need of such an in-
tegrator. For science presents us with "logical fragmen-
tation".[88]

Why is this? Because science uses incompatible models
and scientific theories which work at "logical cross-
purposes".[89] Ramsey uses the standard example of the wave-
particle duality in optics. Now this leaves the scientist in
a dilemma. Either he combines or mixes the models or he keeps
them separate. The former involves a 'type-trespass'[90] if
not a downright contradiction. The latter entails a logically
fragmented map of the cosmos.

At this point the theist claims to provide the solution.
Theology can now provide the unified cosmic map to a frag-
mented scientific understanding:

> logical diversity between the languages of
> religion and science, far from being a hindrance,
> is a positive merit indeed it is a logical
> necessity. For in the long run it enables
> theology to supply a fragmented science with
> that one cosmic map which remains the
> scientific ideal.[91]

The same function of 'God' as an integrator word is
present in Prospect for Metaphysics[92] In addition there are
two other features of the 'God' - 'I' parallel that ought to
be pointed out: (I) Ramsey notes that 'from such assertions
as 'I'm I", "I exist", "I am alive", ... we can make no pre-
cisely verifiable deductions".[93] Any fact about me, the colour
of my hair or of my suit, my pulsebeat, my inhibitions etc.
could have been otherwise. "No detailed assertion that can
be made about me can be deduced rigorously from the fact that

I exist."[94] Yet we are absolutely certain that these asser-

tions are true (that is, that I exist, et.al.)

But while this is the case 'all sorts of scientific

assertions entail "I exist"'.[95] The mathematician's des-

cription of my motion, the physiologist's description of my

blood count, the psychiatrist's diagnosis of my psychopathology,

the educationalist's description of my I.Q. all entail 'I exist'

while 'I exist' entails none of these. The same is true of

'God exists':

> For the world and all the diverse areas of
> scientific events, God's existence is en-
> tailed .... But nothing verifiable in detail,
> can be deduced from an assertion of God's
> existence any more than it can be deduced
> from an assertion about my existence.[96]

Thus we have the following shcemata (where $\longrightarrow$ indicates

entailment and $\sim$ negation):

'"I exist $\rightleftharpoons$ "He has a temperature of 97.9."'

and '"God exists $\rightleftharpoons$ "Such and such circumstances are the

case."'[97]

(II) As noted earlier Ramsey wants to go beyond the

Strawsonian view of persons as bearers of both corporeal

and conscious predicates (or in model language, a being about

whom discourse is built in terms of both scientific and per-

sonal models). As persons require non-personal models so does

God. Ramsey agrees with J. Robinson (the Bishop of Woolwich)

that we have to be careful in speaking of God as personal

(we need non-personal models in speaking of God) but we do

need personal models too. But both together are still not

enough: "<u>neither</u> a personal <u>nor</u> a non-personal model will ever with complete adequacy replace the word 'God' in a sentence. Both will be wanted."[98]

Ramsey realizes that this is not totally satisfactory: "the problem ... persists ... Can we in any way grade, or express preferences between the personal and non-personal models?"[99] He suggests three possibilities without really opting for any of them.[100]

At this point Ramsey raises another difficulty the solution of which, if one is possible, we can leave to chapter three. It bears an obvious affinity with the second of our major issues set at the outset but is also closely related to the first. "When we have to be articulate in terms of what are only models, and diverse models at that, how can we know what we are talking about?"[101]

CHAPTER III

In the first two chapters we have explored the first
two Whidden lectures of 1963, examining in chapter one,
Ramsey's comparison and contrast between theological and
scientific models. In that chapter we raised the two major
problems that are the focus of this thesis: ontic reference
and empirical fit. The latter concept was shown, in
chapter one, to constitute the major difference between the
two types of models mentioned above. Chapter two was devoted
to elucidating this idea and the closely related one of 'per-
sonal model'.

In this chapter we shall explore how Ramsey applies his
concept of models to the problem of God. His approach in
general is to treat the traditional characterizations of God
(immutability, impassibility, infinite goodness and love etc.)
and other characterizations of God such as first cause, as
qualified models. In his third Whidden lecture Ramsey ex-
pounds his concept of models and qualifiers. We shall
explore this concept and illustrate it by reference to
Religious Language concentrating on the concept of God.

Models and qualifiers, on Ramsey's view, do not involve
a straightforward description of God. The qualifiers are not
descriptive but prescriptive, telling us how to develop the
model in a certain direction until the 'light dawns' the

'penny drops' or the 'ice breaks'.[1] Since this is the case the question of 'ontic reference' is very difficult to answer. Nonetheless in this chapter I will try to approach an answer by (A) expanding more clearly Ramsey's concept of 'odd discernment' and 'total commitment' (B) examining the third Whidden lecture to see what his concept of models and qualifiers is and (C) exploring his illustrations of models and qualifiers as he applies this concept to key religious ideas in Religious Language.

(A) Discernment and Commitment

Chapter one of Religious Language is entitled "What Kind of Situations are Religious?" After tracing the course of twentieth century analytic philosophy through three stages,[2] he asks the key question- "To what kind of situation does religion appeal? What kind of empirical anchorage have theological words?"[3]

He begins by citing two points originally suggested by Bishop Butler: first, that it is '"contrary to experience" to suppose that "gross bodies" are ourselves'[4] and second "probability is the very guide of life".[5] The former illustrates odd discernment for it is equivalent to a '"self-awareness" that is more than "body awareness" and not exhausted by spatio-temporal "objects"'.[6] This is parallel to religious discernment:

> Such a discernment lies at the basis of religion, whose characteristic claim is that there are situations which are spatio-temporal and more. Without such "depth"; without this which is "unseen", no religion will be possible; (7)

The second point involves commitment although on the surface it hardly seems to. For the argument from probability might induce one to believe that God probably exists just as the Dalai Lama probably exists. But this type of belief is manifestly not religious but half-hearted and makes very little if any difference in our lives.[8] Much more is involved in religion and Ramsey uses a moral example to illustrate this.

According to Butler "in questions of difficulty" if there is a greater amount of presumption on one side than on the other no matter how slight this settles the question. But in matters of great consequence even where the probability is low a reasonable man will act on this slight probability. Suppose for example that a poor swimmer sees a drowning child. The probability of rescue is low but because this is an issue of 'great consequence' the man jumps in. "Here is a dominating loyalty linked with a world view, and in particular with a particular assessment of personality".[10] In risking his life for the child the man shows 'total commitment' a commitment based on 'discernment' " a commitment which sees in a situation all that the understanding can give and more".[11] (my emphasis)

Thus "Butler suggests that religion claims (a) a fuller discernment, which we respond with (b) a total commitment".[12] (b) without (a) is bigotry and idolatry, (a) without (b) is insincerity and hypocrisy.[13]

Ramsey attempts further to illuminate these concepts by reference to two groups of examples, the first of which are

taken from ordinary life situations: the stuffed-shirt judge
who recognized his long lost wife in the courtroom, a stiff
formal party where someone's dinner jacket splits or a chair
collapses underneath someone, the appeal to a fisherman's
prejudices to drive across a political point, the man beside
us in the train who introduces himself as Nigel Short.[14]
Ramsey anticipates a couple of objections: first, that the
situations to which he appeals could all be 'reduced to
"observables" of one kind or another'[15] and second, that these
situations could be treated in psychological terms.[16]

The first he meets by noting that it is merely asserted
and not established and that "any assertion claiming a uni-
versal reduction of all odd situations to psychological terms
will never be convincingly established."[17] The second chal-
lenge is more serious he feels because it meets him on common
ground since it would be based on a philosophical psychology
that goes beyond psychological data.[18]

Now this is an important point since it is preceded and
followed by Ramsey's attempt to refute the charge of 'sub-
jectivism' and this in turn bears an obvious relation to our
problem of ontic reference. 'I am not implying that religion
is "purely subjective" or a mere matter for psychology.'[19]
Here he appeals to what the phenomenologists call 'the inten-
tionality of consciousness'[3]. 'I do not know what a "purely
subjective" experience is - all experience is of something".[20]

He reemphasizes later "Let no one condemn the examples
I have given on the grounds that they assimilate religion to
psychology".[21] They do not reduce religion to subjective,

emotive experience. "All these characteristically different situations, when they occur, have an _objective_ reference and are, as all situations, _subject-object_ in structure".[22]

This at least clear up one matter. We know that Ramsey claims an objective referent for religious language. When situations 'come alive' and the 'ice breaks' 'there is an objective "depth" in these situations'.[23] The Whidden lectures make a similar claim as we shall see.

The first group of examples were intended to illustrate total commitment and are examples we are already familiar with, as they illustrate 'free will' and 'moral duty'. But commitment cannot be divorced from the discernment even if the two can be distinguished. Ramsey reminds us again of Butler's claim that we are more than 'gross bodies'. Ramsey, as in Freedom and Immortality, Religion and Science and Prospect for Metaphysics allows the legitimacy of scientific discourse in describing and explaining human behaviour but it cannot be exhausted by any of these categories - biochemistry, physiology, psychology, economics and the subconscious.[24]

But more is involved than just this 'discernment' that certain situations have a depth which cannot be unpacked completely in scientific jargon. "With this discernment there now goes a personal commitment".[25] Commitment, in this case, involves 'free will', _choosing_ to do X rather than being _told_ to do X, _deciding_ to do Y rather than being _ordered_ to do Y.[26]

The second example is that of duty: "The discernment and

total commitment which characterizes religion, can be illus-
trated by that pledging of ourselves which occurs when we
"act from a sense of duty"'.[27] The illustration from Butler
already cited,[28] is one example of moral discernment.
Another is Kant's moral law and Ross' _prima facie_ duties.[29]

Other examples of commitment include non-moral ones:
McTaggart's loyalty to his college, a captains's devotion to
his ship, a sport fan's devotion to cricket, a mathematician's
commitment to his axioms, and human affection (ἀγάπη).[30]

Mixed in with these examples are two kinds of discernment-
commitment: 'mathematical' (a "partial commitment extending
to the _whole_ universe")[31] and personal (or "quasi-personal").[32]
Religious commitment involves both:

> It combines the total commitment to a pastime,
> to a ship, to a person, with the breadth of
> mathematical commitment. It combines the
> "depth" of personal or quasi-personal loyalty-
> to a sport, a boat, a loved one with the
> range of mathematical and scientific devotion.
> It is a commitment suited to the whole job
> of living. (33)

But it resembles the second kind of commitment (personal)
rather more than it does the first.[34] This means that "we
see religious commitment as a _total_ commitment to the _whole_
universe."[35] At first blush this seems Spinozist but turns
out to be somewhat different. This commitment is connected
with the _peculiar status_ of religious language: "religious
commitment is something bound up with key words whose logic
no doubt resembles that of the words with which we charac-
terize personal loyalty as well as that of the axioms of

mathematics and somehow combines features of both,"[36] al-
though Ramsey doesn't specify exactly how it accomplishes
this.

This leads Ramsey to the second major theme of this
chapter[37] namely, the nature of religious language. Its
succinct character seems to be logical oddness and this is ex-
emplified in two ways: (I) Since it involves object language
and more, object language given very special qualifications,
it will exhibit "logical peculiarities, logical impropriety".[38]
(II) Religious language will contain significant tautologies.[39]

The former is illustrated by the parallel noted in chapter
two between 'I' and 'God'. The latter is exemplified by
explanations such as 'I'm I' 'Fishing is fishing' and 'Duty
for Duty's sake' in answer to questions such as 'Why did you
do X?' or 'Why do you want to go fishing' or 'Why should I do
my duty?'[40]

In order to understand religious language then 'we must
train ourselves to have a nose for odd language, for "logical
impropriety."'[41] Ramsey sees this as no problem since there
are extra-religious examples from quite widely differing
fields which offer parallels to this. One such obvious example
is poetry.[42] A second is found in some of the concepts of
scientific discourse: Newton's absolute space, Hoyle's
'continuous creation' and 'evolution' as used in an all-embracing
sense in the late nineteenth century.[43]

In chapter two of Religious Language he attempts to
illustrate the logical oddness of religious discourse by

reference to traditional characterizations of God, which he
elucidates by using the categories of model and qualifier.
But before we look at how Ramsey applies these concepts let
us look at his exposition of them in Models and Mystery.

(B) Models and Qualifiers.

Ramsey begins the lecture by drawing some parallels
between models and metaphors. One of the things he never
does however is clearly to distinguish the two. In fact he
often treats as models what are, more strictly speaking,
metaphors. For example he regards (as noted earlier)[44]
'strong towers' and 'houses of defence' as models whereas they
would be more accurately classified as metaphors. The same
is true of regarding God as a father.

The distinction I would make between such terms as
'metaphor', 'model' and 'analogy' is that the first is a
literary device whereas the other two are scientific and
philosophical devices. What the other two (models and analogy)
have in common is that they point to common characteristics,
either between analogates or between the model and the thing
modelled. But the latter (analogy) does not necessarily pre-
serve structural properties whereas the former does.

Ramsey, however uses the concept of model to include
what would usually be regarded as metaphors or analogies.
Ramsey sees two important parallels between metaphors and
models: first, they both yield possibilities of articulation[45]
and second, they both are "rooted in disclosures and born in
insight".[46]

As examples we can talk of old age as the autumn of life - it enables us to infer the purposeful character of existence;[47] while associated with decline and decay it is also the crown of the year with golden beauty etc. We also speak of a religious leader as a light. This too makes articulation possible - light leads and guides. It characterizes day, in contrast to night. Those who walk in the light do not sleep in daylight but are enlightened and they shine as lights.[48]

Metaphors are not mere ornaments of speech enabling us to exhibit the flower of rhetoric (with the purpose perhaps, of cloaking our ignorance) any more than models are crutches for mathematical deductions. Ramsey agrees with Black that metaphors are irreplaceable (hence irreducible to scientific and straightforward descriptive language). Their distinctiveness lies in their origin in disclosure and insight.

Ramsey attempts to schematize this by generalizing and formalizing metaphors:

> the metaphorical expression 'A is B' arises
> in a disclosure where languages A and B meet
> tangentially, touch at a point or rather at
> two coincident points. Hence, the 'is' of
> the metaphor has to be understood as a claim
> that (i) A and B in contact have generated a
> disclosure revealing some object and (ii) what
> it is that has been disclosed demands dis-
> course which infiltrates B into A. (49)

In examples such as 'electricity is flowing in the wire', 'Light is a wave motion' and 'Jesus is the Messiah' the copula 'is' "points to a disclosure whose object brings with it the possibility and need of endless novelty in metaphorical

talking".[50]   What Ramsey calls 'tangential meeting' other would
call eccentricity of language[51] but Ramsey as we noticed
earlier is not adverse to eccentric or odd language.   In
fact he welcomes it because of its 'enrichment' and because
it points the way to mystery.[52]

Models and metaphors not only enable us to be articulate
in "an unspecifiable number of ways"[53] they are also "the basic
currency for mystery."[54] But there is another important point
Ramsey wants to stress: "the ontological reference of model
and metaphor alike."[55]   In this area he attempts to go beyond
Black "in the cognitive significance which I give to insight
and imagination; it is in my emphasis on the objective reference
of all disclosures."[56]

Ramsey does not want to reduce religious experience,
merely to subjective, emotive experience.   There clearly is
for Ramsey an objective referent in these disclosures and we
talk about this objective referent in terms of models.   But
while other academic disciplines have neglected or misjudged
the place of models in their understanding theology has
done both.

The models of theology like those of natural and social
science are not picture models.   We must emphasize the logical
gap between the model and what the insight reveals.[57] He
illustrates this by reference to the model of God as a
loving father.

Theology requires a 'diversity of models'.   This means
as we saw earlier that 'eccentricity', logical impropriety'

is the life blood of theological models.[58] (which is really making a virtue out of necessity!) This logical diversity is provided in theology by 'built-in stimuli' that is qualifiers.[59]

Qualifiers serve two functions. First, they produce and provide for the endless contruction of metaphors, or endless series of variants and thus multiply models thereby creating models with 'family resemblances'.[60] Second, they point to mystery, that which eludes articulation and understanding;

> Qualifiers thus provide not only for the endless construction of metaphors; they are at the same time the words in theology that witness to its grounding in permanent mystery, they point to a cosmic disclosure as that alone which reveals the topic of any and every theological utterance. (61)

This quotation is interesting for at least two reasons. It indicates the very close identification of 'metaphors' and 'models' in Ramsey's viewpoint. He uses the former term where he could just as easily have used the latter. Second it shows that mystery is irreducible, it is 'permanent'. While other disciplines are judged by the quality of their articulation, theology is judged by its ability to point to mystery[62] "At every stage in theological reasoning the route from a model to a mystery must be indicated."[63]

Two points at least should emerge from this and be borne in mind when we look at Ramsey's concept of God. First we do not have death by a thousand qualifications (contra Flew) "Rather it is life by a thousand enrichments."[64] Second the objective reference is safeguarded, for the object declares

its objectivity by actively confronting us."[65] Whether or
not Ramsey can substantiate these claims is a point we can
postpone until the final chapter. Let us now look at how
he applies models and qualifiers to the understanding of 'God'.

(C) Characterizations of God

Chapter two of Religious Language is one of, if not the
most interesting sections in all of Ramsey's works. It is al-
so one of the best examples of metaphysical reasoning since
the beginnings of the positivist movement. The last two
chapters are not quite as interesting nor relevant (directly)
to the problem of God.

Ramsey begins chapter two by dividing the attributes
and characterizations of God into three categories: (I) the
attributes of negative theology - impassibility, and immuta-
bility, (II) the characterizations of God by 'Unity',
'Simplicity' and 'perfection', and (III) other attributes and
characterizations - first CAUSE, Infinitely WISE, Infinitely
GOOD, CREATOR ex nihilo, and eternal PURPOSE,[66] where the
underlined words are qualifiers and the capitalized words
are models.

He suggests in the case of (I) that we can understand
their logical behaviour correctly "if we see them as primarily
evocative of what we have called the odd discernment, ...
which, if evoked provokes a total commitment."[67] He reminds
us again that this occurs when we are aware of more than the
apatio-temporal observables of a situation; "when a particular
situation is perceptual and more."[68]

Ramsey then points out that two characteristic features
of perceptual situations are change and interaction.[69] But
the attributes of negative theology take this situation and
whisper in our ears a denial. Yes, there is change but there
is also that which is immutable. Not <u>everything</u> changes.
Nor is interaction the whole story.[70]

Two examples are put forward to illustrate this: a
train in which we travel as darkness falls. Change is
apparent everywhere. "But not everything changes[71]... Is
there not something which is unchanged? Do you not apprehend
something which remains invariable in the situation?"[72]

Perhaps the second example is better. It involves meeting
an old friend we have not seen in years. He has changed con-
siderably but 'Has not the "bond of freindship" remained firm,
invariable, fixed, despite the changes and chances and all
that has been transitory?'[73] In this discernment of this
"bond" we have another example of an "odd discernment"[74] as,
hopefully, would be the case with the train passenger.[75]

With respect to interaction we are told to 'fix...on
"passibility" and develop it in a story'.[76] In this case the
story can be Marxist and/or Freudian. We are products of our
economic environment, or a battleground of instincts and
psychic forces.[77] All of this suggests interaction. Indeed
'Interaction is "written over the universe"'.[78] But negative
theology exhorts us not to regard this as the whole story.
'"Impassible" invites us to treat all "passible" stories as
inadequate'[79] The invitation exhorts us to go further until

'the light dawns, the ice breaks, the penny falls, until an "odd discernment" is evoked.'[80]

It is interesting that Ramsey equated[81] his 'odd discernment' with Bradley's 'immediate experience'.[82] Since 'immediate experience' is virtually equivalent to what is meant by 'intuition' (that which is grasped apart for the mediation of the senses or logic) it seems to confirm the suggestion made earlier in chapter two that Ramsey's disclosure, insights and discernment are equivalent to 'intuition'. (but not mystical intuition - it is, rather, parallel to Kant's sensible intuition).[83]

Ramsey makes two more claims of great moment. First the characteristically different situation evoked by these stories "is the foundation in fact for assertions about God's immutability and impassibility".[84] This is a very strong epistemic claim clearly suggesting that the situation justifies not only the meaningfulness of such talk but its validity as well. It is a claim we shall scrutinize in the final chapter.

Second these two words 'claim for the word "God" a position outside all mutable and passible language'.[85] But that seems to be as far as they go. They are examples of a model and qualifier, the models being 'mutable' and 'passible' and the qualifier in both cases 'im'. But this logical operator (im) involves obliterating progressively features of perceptual situations and hence can tell us almost nothing about how to use the word 'God' significantly.[86]

(II) The second group should be treated cusorily since

Ramsey does not regard them as examples of models and qualifiers. Nonetheless they are relevant in any overall assessment of Ramsey's philosophy of religious language. He treats these words by what he calls "the method of contrasts".[87] As unpacked by Ramsey they are strikingly close to the first set, the major difference being that they don't have an 'im' in front of them. For just as he invited us to negate 'passible' and 'mutable' stories, so he invites us to consider diversity, complexity and imperfection and get rid of them. We get diversity by "relational addition from without".[88] We see the many objects, a table, a chair, a carpet, et. al. as part of one room, the many rooms as part of one house, the many houses as part of one city, the many cities as part of one country etc. The story continues until the penny drops etc. that is, until we have a characteristic disclosure and we have a situation in which the term 'unity' is to be commended.[89] Now this might seem to make God a synthetic unity but this interpretation is ruled out by Ramsey's placing of 'simplicity'. Again we think of its opposite, 'complexity' and we similarly dispose of it "not by addition from without, but by analysis from within".[90] We take for instance a car and break it up (conceptually of course) into pieces, relatively simple parts such as the carburetter. But it in turn can be broken down and we can move to the language of chemistry. But even here we can't stop "the important point is never to halt the story if we can still go further,"[91] that is, if the characteristic situation has not yet broken.

The term 'perfection' can be ommitted here since it bears a very close affinity with 'infinity', the term that qualifies both the 'wise' and 'good' models of God. In explicating both Ramsey uses similar examples (better man and infinite sum) in both cases. Let us then pass to these very important concepts the ones Ramsey himself feels are the "most useful phrases of all", [92] whose merit lies in the fact that they give us "the fullest insight as to how theology is built out of ordinary language."[93]

(III) To do this theology takes five terms which have a fairly straighforward usage in ordinary language (the models) and qualifies them in order to develop the model in a certain direction until the light dawns and all that.

In the case of 'First Cause' the term 'cause' is the model and 'first' is the qualifier.[94] Ramsey gives a very straight forward definition of model in this context: "It is a situation with which we are all familiar, and which can be used for reaching another situation with which we are not so familiar; and which, without the model, we should not recognize so easily".[95] The concept of model as enunciated here is slightly different than that presented in chapter one of Models and Mystery. It is in fact our old friend (or rather enemy) the picture model. For he says in regard to causal stories in a mundane context 'Here then we are given, by means of the word "cause" specific straight forward pictures"'.[96]

But it is at this point that the qualifier enters the

picture. (no pun intended) "It is a directive which pre-
scribes a special way of developing those "model" situations',[97]
and is a directive that advises us to push back and back and
back. The directive is "always able to be obeyed".[98] Now it
may seem that we are on the road to an infinite regress
rather than a first cause. But actually the story is pushed
back and back only until the light dawns etc. 'At that point
there is a "sense of the unseen"'.[99] In fact the model, has
fulfilled one of the major functions outlined in lecture
three;[100] it has pointed the route from model to mystery:
'Here is something "mysterious" which eludes the grasp of
causal language'.[101] It is important to note that the mys-
tery involved (a) cannot be eradicated by a continuation of
the story (b) is not synonymous with 'ignorance' (c) involves
"what's seen, what's talked about in causal language, and more."[102]

Now as Ramsey unpacks what is entailed in the qualifier
'first' what emerges is that it involves a logical rather
than temporal priority. It is closer to Richard Taylor's
first cause[103] than to that of Aquinas, although I find Taylor
much more lucid and cogent than Ramsey on this point. For
Taylor God is a first cause not temporally but logically.[104]
The universe depends on God for its existence.

Two considerations prompt me to compare Ramsey's concept
with Taylor's. First Ramsey illustrates first cause in a
theistic context by reference to a parallel in a personal
context. Suppose we ask why Jones dove into the swimming
pool. The answer 'Because I decided to' can elicit the fur-

ther question 'Why did you decide to?' which in turn can
elicit 'Because I wanted to'.[105] It should not be difficult
to see what the next question in this intellectual ping-pong
match will be and also how we have a potential infinite re-
gress. But this regress can be halted by a significant taut-
ology, one of the two features of the logical oddity of re-
ligious language. In this case the answer to "Why did you
want to dive" is the tautology 'I'm I'. It is a 'logical
stop-card'.[106] Similarly 'the word "God" "completes", and is
logically prior (my emphasis - note that he says logically
prior not temporally prior) to all causal stories...."God"
works something like the tautology "I'm I."'[107]

Secondly, Ramsey claims that it enables us to avoid need-
less puzzles. For example it could be alleged that the word
'cause' always implies a causal predecessor. If this is the
case then obviously 'first cause' is self-contradictory. But
Ramsey claims that the puzzle disappears for while 'first cause'
has the same grammatical structure as 'remote cause' and
'proximate cause' it has a different logical structure.[108]
Now it would seem that the puzzle can be resolved if and only
if Ramsey is not using 'first cause' in a temporal sense.
For if he is then he still has the problem of self-contra-
diction. 'First Cause' used temporally would still imply a
causal predecessor and hence be contradictory.

The second and third of Ramsey's examples can be con-
sidered together. For they both have the same qualifier
('infinitely') and are closely related anyway. Both are simi-

lar to 'first cause'. 'Wise' and 'good' according to Ramsey always
imply 'wiser' and 'better',[109] just as 'cause' implies causal
predecessor. It may seem then that 'infinitely wise' and 'in-
finitely good' would be self-contradictory. Thus we would have
the following parallel hierarchies:[110]

Third form boy---scarcely wise　　　Ferdinand Lopez---hardly good
Sixth form boy---rather wise　　　　Long John
Undergraduate----definitely wise　Silver------------fairly good
Lecturer---------very wise　　　　　Solomon----------just good
President of the　　　　　　　　　　David-----------very good
Royal Society or　　　　　　　　　　St. Barnabas------very good indeed
British Academy--even wiser　　　　St. Francis------intensely good

　　　　　　. . . .　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　. . . .

God---------------infinitelywise　　------------infinitely good

　　In this case (as usual with Ramsey) it is much easier to see
what he does not mean than to ascertain what he does mean. He
is always closer to the pit of agnosticism than to that of an-
thropomorphism. For instance we are told that the first logical
function of the word 'infinite' in both cases is to develop stories
of wise men and good lives in the right direction. "But in
tracing such a sequence there is no intention of arriving at "God"
as a last term".[111]

　　This he illustrates by reference to the concept of infinite
sum in mathematics. Consider the series 1, $1\ 1/2$, $1 + 1/2 + 1/2^2$,
$1 + 1/2 + 1/2^2 + 1/2^3$, ... $1 + 1/2 + 1/2^2...1/2^{n-1}$ In this case
'2' may be said to 'complete' all those sums and to preside over
the various imperfect sums which somehow or other it holds to-
gether."[112]

　　But '2' is obviously not a sum in this case as it is in
the case of $1 + 1$ where we have a finite number of terms. In

fact the concept 'sum' implies a finite number of terms so that the expression 'infinite sum' is even more obviously paradoxical than 'infinite goodness'.

In saying that 2 is the infinite sum:

> We can only mean that "2" is a number out-
> side the series and of a different logical
> status altogether from the terms of the
> series but a number which might be said to
> preside over and label the whole sequence (113)

In similar fashion the phrase 'infinite goodness' "points to something outside 'good' language altogether",[114] and it, like 'infinite wisdom', presides over the languages of wisdom and goodness as 2 presides over the infinite sum.

Another example of Ramsey's is a sucession of regular polygons.   What about a 'regular polygon with an "in-finite number" of sides?'[115] The word 'infinite' here as in the 'infinite sum' case directs us to continue the story on and on until the light dawns etc. At the moment of insight the light dawns and we get the outline of a circle (in this process it is necessary to keep the volume of the polygon constant) But 'circle' is logically odd from the standpoint of polygon language.

Now a couple of problems arise here: first, both 'circle' and 'two' are quite intelligible concepts apart from 'mathe-matical insight'. We can define circle without reference to polygon language at all, just as we can understand 'two' without using infinite sums. But the same doesn't seem to be true in the case of 'infinitely wise and good'.

Secondly, by placing "God" 'outside "good" language

altogether,' (my emphasis) we are in danger of making the
term completely unintelligible. For instance, is "God" out-
side of 'good' language as he is outside of 'passible' and
'mutable' language? In discussing the problem of evil
Ramsey says "Our troubles with God and evil often arise be-
cause we have spoken too easily and too casually of God as
"good"'.[116] Now this may well be true but it hardly solves
either (a) the problem of evil or (b) the problem of meaning.
But these are problems we can return to in the final chapter.
For now let us turn our attention to what other philosophers
have said about models in both the scientific and theo-
logical spheres.

CHAPTER IV

So far we have been examining Ramsey's concept of models. In this chapter I hope to broaden the scope of the discussion by examining the concept of models held by other philosophers and comparing them to Ramsey's. It is possible to examine models under two headings: (a) the role of models in philosophy of science and (b) the concept of models held by other philosophers of religion.

The major figures who have attempted to elucidate (a), include R.B. Braithewaite, Ernst Nagel and Abraham Kaplan. Their discussions have much in common. They all tend to stress the close connection of models with theories (Ramsey hardly ever refers to the latter). They are concerned much more with the structure and function of models in contrast with Ramsey's concern with its origin. To be fair to Ramsey he does try to explicate the function of models but has little to say about their structure.

All of these philosophers are also somewhat wary about the use of models and stress their shortcomings. Ramsey, of course, is aware of shortcomings in the indiscriminate use of models but seems to feel that all of these are due to the original sin of 'pictorial realism'.

(A) Models in Frederick Ferré

When we turn to Ferré's concept of models in religion we see that he is closer to A. Kaplan[1] and Ernst Nagel[2] than

Ramsey is.   In his article 'Mapping the Logic of Models in Theology' he cites both of these gentlemen.   But we shall see that many of his points are quite similar to those of Ramsey.

His account of models is developed in three of his major works, one of which is the journal article referred to above which is devoted to the problem of mapping theological models and in which he breaks the analysis of models down into three parts, type, scope and status.   The other two works are books in which the discussion of models is reserved to the end or near the end in each case.   In <u>Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion</u> he devotes the first two parts to an analytical and historical treatment of philosophy of religion setting the stage for part III in which he develops his concept of models.

Part I is devoted to defining both 'religion' and 'philosophy of religion', Part II to tracing the historical development of the latter starting with the classic theistic proofs working through the critiques of these by Hume and Kant and finishing with tracing the roots of existentialism, pragmatism and positivism.

Part III brings us to the contemporary scene.   Here he suggests that the alleged conflict of science with religion is a bogus problem.[3]   Evolutionary theory is not incompatible with the design argument, Freudian psychology does not upset the validity of religious belief nor does astronomical cosmology destroy the argument from contingency.   We have a 'scientific stalemate' - "despite the vast increases in knowledge provided by the sciences in the twentieth century,

fundamental issues of belief in God remain unsettled".[4] But

if science leaves us neutral on the validity of religious

belief is there any way to adjudicate the dispute between

theist and non-theist? According to Ferré there is: it is

found in linguistic philosophy.[5]

· He examines the issue of experimental falsification[6]

and alternatives to the cognitive meaningfulness of religious

language - emotive, conative and heuristic accounts.[7] He then

goes on to explore the 'Cognitive possibilities of Theistic

Language' in chapter 13 and here his models become important.

He begins by summarizing what he takes to be "the two primary

functions of theism's logically primary images": '(1) ex-

pressing and influencing basic life styles, and (2) reflecting

and shaping ultimate "ways of seeing"'.[8]

These correspond respectively to Ramsey's committment

and discernment. In discussing and evaluating the conative

theory of religious language earlier for example he agrees

that religion certainly involves 'commiting oneself to a way

of life',[9] but he points out that 'this kind of meaning (per-

formative) is wholly dependent on the provision of some kind

of descriptive content.'[10] For example the meaning of 'I

bid fifty dollars' while being performative not descriptive

is parasitic upon descriptive language ('bidding fifty dollars').

Similarly if theistic language can be used conatively

in order, say, to commit oneself to Christian agape rather

than Nazi hostility "there must be some distinguishable des-

criptive content that undergirds the possibility".[11] This

is a much stronger claim than Ramsey makes. He repudiates
descriptive language but attempts to maintain an objective
reference and what Ferré says is quite relevant to Ramsey's
enterprise.

Presumably the descriptive content is supplied for
Ferré by (2). The terms "ways of seeing" suggests 'perspective'
and more vaguely Ramsey's 'discernment'. The parallel with
the latter term arises because 'seeing' is not used here
in any straightforward literal sense. It is rather like
Ramsey's 'sense of the unseen'.

But the concept owes much·more to Dorothy Emmet than to
Ramsey. Ferré acknowledges his debt to the former in the
same footnote in which he refers to Ramsey's project. Miss
Emmet in fact has a very interesting diagram that is worth
reproducting since it helps us understand better what Ferre
is doing.[12]

Fig. 1.

F   metaphysical models F^1

E   Theoretical interpretation in Natural Science E^1

D   perceptual objects D^1

C   psychological sensations C^1

B   variations in the physiological world B^1

A   variation in the Physical World A^1
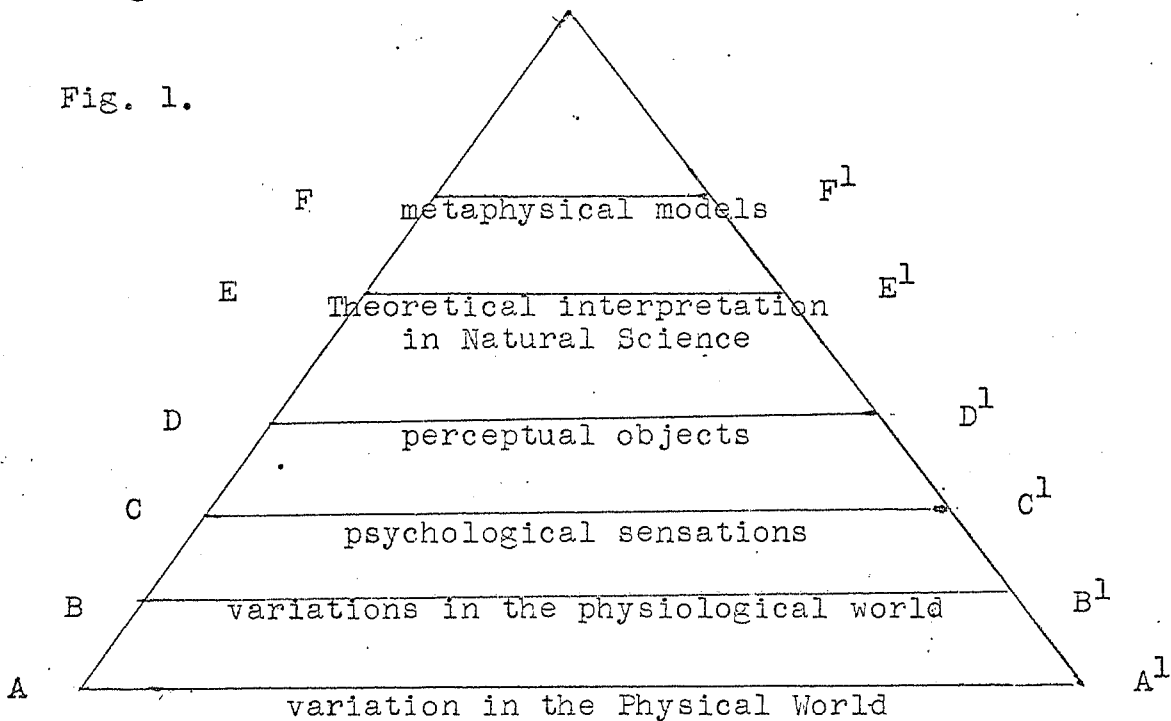
Now how do we evaluate what we have in FF[1], metaphysical
models? She suggests they are selected by our 'perspective'
which in turn is determined by what we regard as important,
that is it involves value judgements. Criteria such as co-
herence, comprehensiveness and self-evidence are relevant to
any overall assessment of the model.[13] These criteria are
quite similar to those of Ferré and Ramsey.

Miss Emmet brings together analogy and model:

> What the [metaphysician] does; therefore,
> is to construct a theoretical model drawn
> from analogy from some form of intellec-
> tual or spiritual relationship which he
> judges to be especially significant or
> important. (14)

Ferré notes that in constructing his model the theist
asks: "What is 'most important' in the ultimate scheme of
things? The theistic model points to vividness of conscious-
ness, to creative freedom, to moral excellence,"[15] although
precisely how this would differ from a humanistic value per-
spective is not easy to see. This quotation indicates not
only the affinities of Ferré's concept with Miss Emmet's but
also points to affinity with Ramsey's for the model referred
to here is clearly a personal one. Ferré emphasizes this in
the article (referred to earlier) when he points out that
'God' is integrated in terms of epistemically 'vivid personal
models'.[16] But despite this and other similarities what is
more striking is the difference between the two.

Ferré is much closer to the formalistic concept of
models as outlined by Kaplan and Nagel. He stresses the

close connection between model and theory[17] relying a great deal on Nagel's[18] discussion. In his last chapter he discusses the many current calls for reconsideration and restatement of Christian theism and discusses in order 'Reforming the model' and 'Rethinking the Theory'.[19] This close connection between models and theory is something Ramsey hardly, if ever, considers.

Ferré begins his discussion of models by distinguishing 'conceptual' models from scale or mechanical models. The latter can be built or even made to work whereas the latter can only be drawn, described or conceptualized.[20] The classification of models into scale, mechanical and conceptual is what was earlier referred to as 'type'.

Models differ also in 'scope'. Some of them stand for a single thing (such as the Queen Mary) others represent whole classes (e.g. the hydrogen atom) and sometimes they refer to vaster domains (such as the whole universe)[21] The difference of type and scope are due to differences of purpose. Models can play roles of interpretation, integration and heuristic stimulation.[22] Ferré's main concern is with the cognitive function of models.

He points out three benefits of models for theories. They can bring ideational definiteness to otherwise highly indeterminate theories.[23] Secondly, they can introduce conceptual unity to a subject matter either internally by suggesting additional ways in which the data fit together[24] (his example - the hydraulic model of an economic system is

borrowed from Kaplan) or <u>externally</u> by drawing together previously disparate fields as the molecule model integrated thermodynamics and statistical mechanics.

Thirdly a model may suggest fruitful lines of inquiry, as the 'Big Bang' hypothesis has helped suggest fascinating applications of radio telescopy to quasar research.[25]

Like Braithwaite, Nagel and Kaplan Ferré recognizes the need for caution in using models.[26] We must avoid literalism otherwise we get such 'paradoxes' as the wave-particle duality. 'The "paradox"...arises from attempts to take the models literally and to push them beyond their appropriate logical limits.'[27] This of course is the same warning as Ramsey's against 'picture models'.

What is the relation of models to theory?

> Conceptual models...give abstract theories
> concrete interpretation; theories in turn,
> attempt to articulate the formal structure
> of their subject matter thanks in part....
> to suggestions derived from the formal
> structure of their associated models. (28)

Theories, then, serve the purpose of mediating between 'reality' and models. Ramsey more or less dispenses with this middleman and has the models directly articulate the structure (but not the <u>formal</u> structure and not pictorially) of the subject-matter.

A model is accredited and therefore acceptable if it gives shape and support to theories that preform their conceptual role well. One important conceptual role of a model is its use in warranting empirical hypotheses and this "is

essentially linked to the task of helping us anticipate specific experiences"[29] This is the verification principle and as a <u>scientific</u> tool is quite acceptable. "But the sciences do not exhaust human thinking".[30] We must consider different conceptual roles, types of theories and associated conceptual models and "other standards of sucess."[31]

In this he is very close to Ramsey. For both accept the verification principle as applicable to scientific models but suggest other criteria for theological models. There are further similarities worth stressing. Ferré points out that:

> Well-chosen metaphysical models must lend
> themselves to articulation, of course, in
> metaphysical theories that are themselves
> capable of self-consistent elaboration,
> spelling out in depth and in detail the
> structures of reality as suggested and
> made concretely vivid by the model. (32)

The model however is ancillary to the theory and if that theory develops in a direction that requires the modification or abandonment of the model, it must be expendable.[33] But we must avoid any confusion of theistic imagery with either falsifiable empirical propositions or linguistic conventions.[34]

How then can we give rational justification for theistic belief? "It appears that it must be done...by displaying the success of the model in concretely interpreting some viable metaphysical theory (or theories).[35]

He suggests three criteria for this: appropriateness, adequacy and coherence.[36] The first involves a linkage with some viable metaphysical theory. Historical examples are

used by Ferré here. Christian doctrine has seized upon
several conceptual vehicles for its models: Plato's meta-
physical system, Aristotle's and more recently those of Hegel,
Heidegger, Whitehead and Wittgenstein.[37] The important
point here is that the 'fit' is not between model and 'reality'
or the phenomena but between model and theory.

But not only must there be the latter fit but also the
former. This is implied by the criteria of 'adequacy'. Here
the relation of the metaphysical scheme or theory itself to
reality is basic. This is somewhat similar to Ramsey's
'empirical fit'. Ferré does not use the term 'fit' in this
context (as he did in discussing coherence) but it bears a
strong family resemblance.

Since unlimited scope is the characteristic of meta-
physical models "only a fully comprehensive scheme will be
adequate to all the varieties of experience and knowledge
that must be integrated".[38] The last term, 'integrated' is
reminiscent of Ramsey who suggested that 'God' can be used
as a metaphysical integrator.

Adequacy requires that no important range of human
experience and interest be ignored, denied or distorted.[39]
There are problems here as Ferré recognizes. We can draw
no hard and fast a priori line between explaining and
explaining away. Ferré feels this is not a serious problem
since there is a similar problem in philosophy of science.[40]

Other problems are handled by similar appeals. For
example we seem to be at the mercy of intuitions.[41] Further

there is the problem of level of adequacy. But again perfect inclusiveness, an adequacy that explains all aspects of experience without distortion is probably an unattainable ideal.[42]

The third criterion stresses internal connection and integration rather than consistency. It is a criterion Ramsey advocates.[43] Again complete coherence is never attainable[44] nor can we define precisely the acceptable level of incoherence.[45]

Nonetheless discoverable disconnection is a defect:

> The more the various elements of a scheme
> can be shown to entail one another, the
> more nearly integral, and therefore the
> more successful, it may be counted as
> being. (46)

Again this criterion like the second is somewhat vague. It is impossible to define a priori the acceptable level of incoherence that can be tolerated, especially since the conceptual scheme involved attempts an explanation of the whole of things. But Ferré appeals again to science: it is not possible to stipulate how much complexity can be tolerated before the standard of simplicity is violated.[47]

At any rate the process of human inquiry is not a mechanical affair as is sometimes depicted in logic texts. But neither is it a matter of whim or arbitrary preference.[48] Ferré extends this point to include the criteria as a whole. He realizes the criteria are bound to seem imprecise, and too dependent on 'feeling' and 'intuition'. Further there is a built-in tension between the second and third criterion.

"Scope and system are polar notions."[49] The tighter the
system the more temptation there is to omit part of the data
and the more scope is defended the harder it becomes to
retain system.[50]

Ferré meets the problem by reemphasizing that there is
more to scientific method than usually realized. Feel,
hunch and intuition play very important roles.[51] But of
course the scientist can look to future experiences and new
data to turn up. The metaphysician cannot. So the disatis-
faction directed at metaphysics is not entirely due to a
"falsely idealized notion of inquiry in other domains."[52]
The understanding provided by metaphysical models and theories
is less compelling than other types.

But is there any understanding at all? The answer de-
pends on how many modes of understanding one is prepared to
allow.[53] Ferré cites five, the first three of which would
be acceptable to most (symbolic abstraction, empirical
hypotheses and limited theories)[54] while the last two are
moot-metaphysical theories and religious imagery.[55]

Even granting the fourth to be legitimate problems
remain. For all ontological schemes seem to end in arbitrary
explanations and this is a "powerful threat to the sense of
understanding".[56] The fifth mode is supposed to help over-
come this:

> The theistic model, as religious imagery,
> is a kind of symbolism which may function...
> to overcome the threat of the arbitrary on
> its valuational side as well as to meet the
> cognitive challenge of strangeness and dis-
> connection on its theoretical side. (57)

Ferré does not claim that the model succeds in doing this but does claim progress in clarifying what modes of understanding are and which are not appropriate in evaluating such claims.[58] As can be seen Ferré lays a great deal of stress on the role of value judgements in construction of the theistic model. Ramsey stresses this too but he is more inclined to find parallels between moral language and religious language. Ferré has a much more direct connection. Moral language plays a fundamental role in shaping religious language and theological models.

In suggesting how the theistic model ought to be reformed Ferré expecially stresses reforming its _moral_ aspect-rejection of certain Old Testament moral standards[59] as well as rejection of certain standards he alleges to find in the New Testament such as anti-semitism, anti-feminism, blood sacrifice, the doctrines of the fall and of hell.[60]

But if we are to _modify_ the model while _retaining_ the Christian view how do we do so? What principle of selection enables us to separate the wheat from the chaff? Ferré suggests that if a 'dominant motif' could be found selection could be made   in terms of its own normative character.[61] This is comparable to Ramsey's quest for a dominant model in Christian Discourse.[62] He suggests ultimately a personal model. Ferré stresses the agape model which would eliminate anti-semitism, anti-feminism, hell and rejection of the world,[63] while offering "a principle for radical social reform".[64]

Let us then sum up the diferences and similarities between Ferré and Ramsey. While Ramsey calls his models 'disclosure models' Ferré refers to his as 'conceptual'. The latter stresses the close connection between model and theory and is more value-oriented in constructing models. But both agree that personal models must be used, that the principle of falsification is inapplicable to these models that they must be judged rather in terms of coherence, fit, adequacy and on their ability to integrate all of experience.

(B) William Austin

When we turn to Austin we find two major themes on which he concentrates: (a) paradox and (b) complementarity. Two articles of his concern us here. In the first he outlines his theory by comparing paradox in science and theology and suggesting the use of complementary models to overcome the paradox. In the second he applies this 'complementarist' interpretation to Ramsey's models.

He begins both articles with a quote from A.N. Whitehead:

> The dogmas of religion are the attempts to
> formulate in precise terms the truths dis-
> closed in the religious experience of mankind.
> In exactly the same way the dogmas of physical
> science are the attempts to formulate in
> precise terms the truths disclosed in the sense-
> perception of mankind. (65)

Of the numerous objections to this type of approach Austin considers only the problem of paradox. Because religious discourse abounds in paradox, it has been suggested that it is closer to poetry than science. But Austin raises the question "is science free from paradox?"[66] He appeals to

the wave-particle duality pointing out that the rival accounts of the nature of light (the wave theory and the particle theory) "both must be pressed into service to account for the phenomena."[67]

He goes on to give us a definition of paradox, indicates briefly the grounds for speaking of the wave-particle duality and proposes an interpretation of Neils Bohr's 'principle of complementarity' and suggests that a complementary use of models lies behind at least some theological paradoxes. His definition of paradox is "a statement which appears to be either self-contradictory or incompatible with other statements taken to be true."[68]

Bohr's principle of complementarity which arose in the 1920s was "that any given application of classical concepts precludes the simultaneous use of other classical concepts which in a different connection are equally necessary for the elucidation of the phenomena."[69] In Physics the photoelectric and Compton effects required employment of particle models where only wave models had been used before. Both models must now be used in strange, perplexing combinations.[70]

On the basis of these considerations Austin defines 'complementarity' as a

> relation between two models used in the inves-
> tigation of a given domain- a relation in which
> the need to alternate, and combine features
> of, two models imposes restrictions on the free-
> dom and precision with which we can deploy
> each.   (71)

Austin considers possible objections, that Bohr meant

something different by 'complementarity' and that the present
wave-particle duality may be overcome, that Schrodinger and
others never gave up the idea of a unified wave or particle
theory and that others are working towards different, non-
complementary models.[72] But Austin argues that even if the
stage is merely transitional it does not materially affect
the position that an analysis of it will help us to understand
theological paradox.

One such paradox that he feels is capable of a com-
plementarest interpretation is the justice-mercy dicotomy.
Austin knows of no theologian who has self-consciously adopted
such a principle.[73] Theologians have balanced affirmations
against contrasting affirmations but have not paid attention
to the manner in which the use of one model limits the sense
in which its contrasting partner can be taken.[74] This is what
is lacking for example, in the justice-mercy paradox. The
attempt to combine both by picturing God as a 'generally fair
but kind lenient parent' is "too indefinite"[75]

Further as it stands now the justice-mercy paradox does
not reflect the use of complementary models because "it
lacks...any sort of specification of how the need to use both
models restricts the freedom and precision with which each
is employed".[76]

This is perhaps his most important point, that the need
to use complementary models imposes limits on the freedom
with which each can be elaborated. For Austin, as with
Ramsey and Ferré, what he propounds is more a program, hints

at a blueprint for theological progress rather than a completed
system.

In his second article Austin indicated more clearly what
a complementrist interpretation of the love-justice paradox
involves. There are three basic elements:

> (1) that behind the paradox lie   the
> models Merciful Father and Stern Judge,
> (2) that theologians need both models in
> their interpretation of experience, but
> (3) that the need to preserve both re-
> stricts the way that each can be de-
> veloped.   (77)

He then goes on to consider Ramsey's concept of models,
Ramsey on paradox and relations among models in which he
asserts that there are 'hints of complementarity' in Ramsey.[78]
His definition of model is quite similar to the formalistic
account of Black, Kaplan and Braithwaite:

> what is a model? It is an object or set of
> objects, whose properties and relations are
> well known, used in the investigation of a
> set of phenomena which is not so well under-
> stood. The well-understood object...becomes
> a model for the investigation of the ill-
> understood phenomena when someone sees a
> significant similarity between the structure
> or web of relations in the former and struc-
> ture or web of relations glimpsed in the
> latter.   (79)

For M to be a model of O there must be a relation of
isomorphism - identity of structure - between them.[80] Austin
feels that Ramsey's approach to paradox is incidental rather
than systematic[81] and is a 'paradox-minimizing approach'.[82]
Paradoxes are to be resolved by tracing them back to their
disclosure basis and refusing to think of them in 'picture'
language. Austin raises four points about Ramsey' treatment

of paradox that leaves him uneasy.[83] We can postpone most

of these until chapter five when we consider the various

criticisms made of Ramsey's models.

But one of these problems is germane to Austin's

thesis: that of the relation among qualified models.[84]

Austin gives three reasons for regarding this relation as

important. Again we can skip these reasons for now since

they include criticism of Ramsey's viewpoint and pass over

to the last part of Austin's essay where he endeavours to

show that Ramsey hints at complementarity.

He finds two passages in Ramsey's earlier work that

drops such hints - his discussion of the doctrine of reser-

rection and immortality and the discussion of atonement.

In Freedom and Immortality Ramsey says:

> The doctrine of the resurrection of the body
> and the immortality of the soul, if ... taken
> together to make complementary claims, might
> well be regarded as plotting from two opposite
> points of view what the phrase 'immortality
> of I' talks about.   (85)

Austin feels that this use of 'complementary' parallels

his because, despite differences "The main similarity is that

for Ramsey the need to recognize both doctines imposes limits

on the freedom with which each can be elaborated.[86]

In Christian Discourse Ramsey speaks of the Hebrew model

of '"vindication against an oppressor" as a "corrective" to

the model, "acquittal in a law court"'[87] Austin also says

that "In one isolated passage he seems to allow the importance

of looking for coherence among doctrines beyond what is pro-

vided by their common basis in disclosure"[88] (the passage is

in MM, p. 66)

But there seems to be at least two other passages overlooked by Austin in this connection. In Christian Discourse Ramsey points to the importance of coherence as one criteria of evaluating metaphysical models[89] and in Religious Language he raises "the problem of complementary languages and their unity"[90] in connection with the doctrine of the hypostatic union.

To sum up: we have seen how Ramsey's concept of models is quite different than that of Kaplan and Nagel and that Austin and Ferré are much closer to Kaplan etc., that Ferré is much more value-oriented than Ramsey and that Austin suggests the need to use complementary models.

CHAPTER V

In our final chapter we shall attempt an overall assessment of the cognitive significance of models in religious discourse. We shall start with a few comments on Flew's falsification criterion. Next we shall consider some of the criticisms made by various writers (such as Flew, H.D. Lewis, Richard Hurlburtt) of Ramsey's use of models. Then I shall attempt an overall assessment not only of Ramsey's models but of the project itself (including the attempts of Ferré, Austin and John Hick. (the last-named is considered not because of his model-construction but because of his theory of 'eschatological verification' and immortality).

(I) A sufficient number of difficulties for the positivist criterion of meaning (whether in terms of verification or falsification) have already been pointed out and acknowledged by empiricists themselves[1] even in the field of philosophy of science from whence the criterion was allegedly derived and in which it was supposed to be most applicable. The most recent and most cogent of such critiques comes from Imre Lakatos.[2] He points out that "We cannot prove theories and we cannot disprove them either".[3] Even more shockingly he argues "Exactly the most admired scientific theories simply fail to forbid any observable states of affairs".[4]

Popper himself admits "'No conclusive disproof of a theory can ever be produced'; those who wait for an infallible dis-

proof before eliminating a theory will have to wait forever and 'will never benefit from experience'"[5] In fact Popper rejects the idea of falsification <u>as a criterion of meaning</u>. He asserts instead "Falsifiability separates two kinds of perfectly meaningful statements: the falsifiable and the non-falsifiable. It draws a line inside meaningful language, not around it."[6]

But does this really help the theist? According to Popper "<u>It must be possible for an empirical scientific system to be refuted by experience</u>"[7] Of course if Lakatos is right then Popper is wrong. But even if Popper is right does this help Flew and if he is wrong does this help the theist?

At this point to avoid confusion it is necessary to keep several ideas separate. (1) In the first place I don't think there is a problem of <u>meaning</u> for the theist <u>on account of non-falsifiability</u>. Flew has either misunderstood Popper or simply appropriated him for his own purposes, that is he takes Popper's criterion of <u>demarcation</u> and turns it into a criterion of <u>meaning</u>. But will it serve as the latter? The answer is surely No.!

To start with Flew is not totally consistent in his treatment of theory of meaning. In another context he says "correct usage-... surely is and must be the standard of meaning"[8]

Now Flew might reply that the two criteria are not incompatible but is this the case? It is obvious that meaning is much wider than <u>cognitive</u> meaning (granting that the ex-

pression 'cognitive meaning' makes sense)[9] Conative, prescriptive, emotive and illocutionary sentences are all meaningful and obviously so without any reference whatever to verification since they cannot be categorized as true or false.[10] 'Shut the door' and 'Damn it' are both meaningful if and only if we can understand them. Why should there be a different criterion for cognitive sentences since they are composed of the same basic elements? 'Green wisdom flies vociferously' and 'Cat up door think our sweetness' are nonsense because of the way the basic elements are put together just as 'Jones shut the door' (cognitive) and 'Shut the door, Jones!' are meaningful because of the way the elements are put together. Since 'Jones shut the door' and 'Shut the door, Jones!' differ only because of the position of 'Jones' why should we use different criteria of meaning in the two cases?

(2) While falsification is a problem for the theist, verification is a tougher one. It is easier to stipulate what would count _against_ particular religious assertions than it is to stipulate what would _support_ them. Take for example the apostles' creed. Let us assume also for the sake of argument (as Quine, Lakatos _inter alia_ seem to believe) that it is scientific systems _as a whole_ not _individual statements_ that are verified or falsified, and let us apply this to theological systems. It seems easy to show what would count against the apostles' creed. (a particulary good example since (a) it is perhaps the only creed common to all branches of the Christian church and (b) it sets off Christianity

from other religions such as Judaism and Islam) Part of the
creed assets 'I believe....in Jesus Christ his [God's] only
Son our Lord Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of
the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
dead and burried...The third day he rose again from the
dead"

Now suppose that evidence was unearthed demonstrating
that Christ never lived. He obviously then could never have
been born of Mary (whether or not she was a virgin) could not
have suffered under Pontius Pilate, could not have been crucified,
(hence could not have died for our sins) dead and buried nor
could he have risen again from the dead. All this would
follow trivially from the fact that Christ never existed. Of
course this would not affect the radical theologian who wants
to demythologize and "existentialize" the New Testament nor
would it disprove Jewish or Islamic theism.

So consider then the Jewish belief "God gave Moses the
ten commandments" or the Islamic belief "Mohammed is the
prophet of Allah". Now suppose it could be shown that neither
Moses nor Mohammed ever existed? Then surely these claims
would be falsified. But how would they (Or 'Christ is the
son of God') be verified? This seems to be a much more
difficult problem.

Again of course it is not a problem for an existential
theologican (such as Tillich or Bultmann) but their accounts
of religious language are (or seem to be) non-cognitive and
hence immune from such problems anyway (but not others).

Similar considerations apply to discourse about miracles. Talk about the miracles of Moses, Christ or Mohammed is not meaningless any more than fairy tales, legends and classical and Nordic myths are. Our problems with witches, genies, dragons and fairies as with God, immortality and miracles are not with _sense_ but with _reference_, that is the _lack_ of evidence that we should lend credence to claims regarding the afore-mentioned entities and events. At this point we should note that we disbeleive in witches _et. al._ not because we have evidence that they do not exist but because we have no evidence that they do. Thus while universal statements are falsifiable but not verifiable, existential statements are verifiable but not falsifiable. (One more reason why Flew should be asking not "what would _falsify_ the statement 'God exists'" but 'what would _verify_ it.')

(3) The point regarding immortality and God requires elaboration. Assuming we have disposed of the problem of falsification have we merely left the theist with the problem of evidence (or reference) rather than sense? The answer at this stage is No!.

At first blush it seems easy to show that talk about immortality is meaningful. If the statement 'All men are mortal' is meaningful then surely 'All men are immortal' is also. How could 'My pen is blue' be meaningful if 'My pen is not blue' is non-sense? If 'Nothingness nothings' is non-sense how can 'Nothingness does not nothing' be intelligible?

Yet this is somewhat superficial. For as I indicated
in chapter one there are only two grounds upon which the
intelligibility of immortality could be maintained. The
former, Cartesian-Platonic dualism would be a great convenience
for the theist if he could defend this view of man. I doubt
if he can however so let us consider instead the intelligi-
bility of resurrection language.

John Hick has an interesting article[11] (much more
interesting than Ramsey's discussion in Freedom and Immortality)
on this possibility in which he argues that there is nothing
intrinsically unintelligible about the possibility of a person
being reconstituted as the same person after his death. He
first argues that if we has a case in which a person in North
America at a meeting of a learned society were to disappear
and at the same instant an exact replica of him were to re-
appear in Australia and the person in Australia had the same
physical and mental characteristics then we would be forced
to conclude that he was the same person as the one who
disappeared in North America. "There is continuity of
memory, complete similarity of bodily features....and also
of beliefs, habits and mental propensities."[12]

Hick postulates two other cases: the second in which a
man in America dies and a replica appears in Australia, the
third in which a man dies and a replica appears not in
Australia but in a "different world altogether, a resurrection
world inhabited by resurrected persons."[13]

In all these cases we would surely be entitled to infer

that the replica was in fact the same person as the original Mr. X. There are several advantages, Hick argues, in this theory that makes it attractive. "It is consonant with the conception of man as an indissoluble psycho-physical unity and yet it also offers the possibility of an empirical meaning for the idea of 'life after death'".[14] Thus it can be easily accomodated to a Strawsonian or Rylean concept of persons and minds and is not susceptible to the objections against Platonic-Cartesian dualism.

It also helps to answer Flew for it provides 'eschato-logical verification',[15] a concept for which Hick acknowledges Crombie's contribution in the New Essays in Philosophical Theology.[16] Yet Hick realizes that such occurences as he cites would not per se verify theism: "Survival, simply as such, would not serve to verify theism. It would not neces-sarily be a state of affairs which is manifestly incompatible with the non-existence of God."[17]

If fact there cannot be, for Hick, any encounter with, or direct experience of, God but only indirect, circumstantial evidence that "points unambiguously to the existence of a loving God."[18] The fact that the attributes of God such as omnipotence, omnipresence, perfect goodness, infinite love "cannot be given in human experience"[19] is countered by Hick with an appeal to the Incarnation. "Our beliefs regarding God's infinite being are not capable of observational verifi-cation...but they are susceptible of indirect verification by the removal of rational doubt concerning the authority of

Christ."[20]

Hick appears to rule out the possibility of intersubjectivity: "only the theistic believer can find the vindication of his belief."[21] Since Hick explicity asserts, however, that anyone can become a believer his theory can be reconciled with the demand of intersubjectivity.

There remains this problem however. What reasons are there for expecting eschatological verification? By similar moves one could establish the meaningfulness of alchemy, astrology, magic, witchcraft, miracles etc. but do we have any evidence that the stars influence our conduct, that witches exist etc? We don't experience people popping out of being and reappearing in Australia and don't seem to have any reliable evidence as yet that man is immortal although we also don't have any difficulty in understanding the meaning of resurrection-talk. We surely can envisage Ezkiel's valley of the dry bones and their reconstitution as persons (Ezek. 37) but what grounds do we have for believing in such occurences? This is the real problem not 'what do claims regarding putative resurrections mean?'

The same problem seems to apply to disembodied consciousness although the theist may have a genuine problem here with intelligibility. Now I indicated earlier that the theist would have a stronger although less convenient case for immortality by rejecting Cartesian dualism.

But even if the theist does reject Descartes' 'ghost in the machine' he still has a problem with disembodied con-

sciousness <u>with God himself</u>. Is it intelligible to talk
about a being who has sensations, volitions, thoughts,
intentions etc. but is "without body, parts or passions"?[22]
This is a difficult if not impossible question to answer but
is basic to our problem.

According to Jerome Shaffer (who raises the issue in
regard to an after life not in relation to God):

> a survival of consciousness after the death of
> the body certainly is imaginable, at least in
> one's own case....I seem to see the following:
> people bending over a body which appears to be
> mine, a doctor feeling for a pulse, an
> ambulance arriving...and my body taken away.
> I no longer see [my body]. I watch a funeral,
> hear people say kind things about me...All
> during this time I have thoughts, sense
> impressions, feelings. I continue to be con-
> scious, but no longer have a body. Surely this
> is intelligible. (23)

We are tempted to agree with Shaffer as we agreed with
the intelligibility of Ezekiel's vision. But is it this
simple? Note that Shaffer uses terms like 'see', 'look' and
'hear', terms that normally if not always presuppose bodily
organs. Peter Geach argues:

> As for disembodied sensations and feelings,...
> connexions are broken in this case; there is
> no handhold for applying "sensuous" concepts
> to disembodied existence at all- we just
> do not know what we are doing if we try. (24)

Yet Geach does not draw what seems to be the obvious
conclusion, that talk about disembodied <u>consciousness</u> is
meaningless: "Denying sense to the attempt to think of
feelings, sensations, emotions, etc., apart from a living
organism may seem to be practically the same as denying dis-
embodied mind altogether. Such a denial does not follow."[25]

Yet, citing St. Thomas, Geach says "Sensuous experiences
are possible only in connection with a living organism."26

Two questions can be raised here. First, is it any more
intelligible to speak of thinking without a brain then it is
to speak of seeing and hearing without eyes and ears? Wouldn't
we have the same problem _mutatis mutandi_ with thinking? Do
we have any more experience of thought without a brain than
we do of sight and sound without eyes and ears?

Now lest it be misunderstood it should be pointed out
that the above argument does not imply a mind-brain identity
thesis any more than the point regarding sight implies any
identity between seeing and light rays hitting the eye-ball.
It simply raises the point that we do not have experience of
thought without a brain and we do experience people with
brains thinking, that is, the brain seems to be a necessary
and perhaps sufficient condition for the possibility of
thought. Sensations may also be necessary for thought. What
would we think about if we had no sensations? A god without
sense-experience would be thought thinking itself!

If Aquinas did assert (as Geach says) that sensuousus
experiences are possible only in connexion with living organ-
isms then either (a) God has no knowledge of the universe
and of human history or (b) he knows it on the basis of pure
thought (that is, He is a pure rationalist) or (c) he pre-
destined it all and is unaware of what goes on (_perceptually_
unaware) but knows what _must_ be going on because he planned
it. None of these options is particularly appealing to the

theist.

The better position would be to reject Aquinas (and Geach) and claim that sensuous and intellectual experiences can occur (in God's case, at least) without the organs that (in man's case) always accompany such experiences. Here is the classic case of the theist avioding the Scylla of anthropomorphism and risking the Charydis of agnosticism. Do we know what the theist is talking about when he speaks of God in personal terms without ascribing material object predicates to God?

This is a very difficult question and it masterly exploited by Hepburn in Christianity and Paradox. As he points out "there are some tests for the existence, presence, and activities of persons,"but apparently not for God.[27] God is spoken of as a 'personal being' and also as being 'outside of space and time'.[28] Is it intelligible to speak of God as both personal and a being 'without body, parts or passions'?

It seems that the only plausible move for the theist (we shall soon explore Ramsey's) is to maintain that it is a contingent fact that we see with our eyes, hear with our ears, think with (or because of) our brain, that is, the brain is a necessary condition for our thought. This it true of man but not of God. In fact man could have seen with his ears, heard with his eyes, thought with his stomach or without these organs. Presumably then so can God.

Even if the theist is conceded this much there still

remains the problem of reference and it is clear by now that this is his major problem not that of sense. The problem with statements about witches, fairies, unicorns is not meaning but reference. Similarly with God except that with Him we have the added problem that whereas we can draw pictures of witches and fairies we can't picture God. (Zeus yes, but not God)

Is God (existentially) in the same category as witches, unicorns, and ghosts or in that of chairs, horses, stars and trees (even if he does have a different 'mode of being')? As pointed out earlier in this chapter (p. 90) we have sufficient grounds for rejecting existential claims if we have no grounds for accepting them. This is the fundamental problem that the philosophical theist faces. Now Ramsey's models claim to solve the problems of both sense and reference. To what extent do they accomplish this, particularly the latter?

(II) To help answer this question we shall consider some of the more important criticisms made of Ramsey's use of models. R. Hurlburtt refers to Ramsey and compares theological and scientific models:

> The models of scientific operation are expansible, coherent, indirectly verifiable and fruitful, subject to public criteria, and are usually given up when other models prove more advantageous. They tend to be quite dynamic. This is not true of theological and religious beliefs. (29)

Flew in a review of Ramsey's Christian Discourse raises the criticism that Ramsey fails to show how religious discourse gets started and he also reemphasizes the familiar

theme about falsifiability.[30]

H. D. Lewis offers a critique of Ramsey in <u>Philosophy</u> <u>of Religion</u>. In regard to Ramsey's 'lively and homely' examples of the man on the train and the stuffed-shirt judge[31] he comments "A difficulty which arises at once about these examples is that of deciding what the 'more than what's seen' involves."[32] Further it is "not enough to exhibit the peculiarity of religious utterances without saying more about the sort of meaning they do have and how they are validated".[32] He feels that Ramsey is wrong in claiming that we, by his method, bypass old controversies: In discussing freedom and immortality Ramsey claims that we have experiences that trascend the present. But "What...have we beyond certain sorts of human situation?"[34]

He feels in addition that Ramsey is too vague and im-precise, that he is in danger of making the idea of immortality empty of all precision and significance (Lewis is surely correct at this point) of taking out of religion any reference to reality other than peculiar situations in the present life:

> How far Professor Ramsey manages to escape
> these dangers and retain in the notion of
> disclosure situations, ...a reference to
> some genuine reality beyond what is 'observable'
> is a truly difficult question...Has he got us,
> in any substantial way, beyond the notion
> of a special way of viewing the course of
> merely human experience? (35)

One final point of Lewis' is worth citing, namely, what about conflicting claims?[36] Roman Catholics, Hindus and Moslems all use odd language. How are we to adjucate these

conflicting claims? In trying to avoid the pit of anthro-
pomorphism Ramsey comes dangerously close to that of
agnosticism.[37]

William Austin raises difficulties somewhat related to
those I have already noted. In regard to Ramsey's example of
Gestalt forms and infinite sum he asks if our grasp of what
goes on here is a disclosure of a mystery.[38] 'in our non-
theological example is the "something more" really mysterious?'[39]

In raising the problem of what does a 'cosmic disclosure'
disclose he feels Ramsey can be defended but fails to in-
dicate how.[40]

I mentioned in our exposition of Austin that he raised
four points about Ramsey that 'leave one uneasy'. They are:

> a) "First, it is not as clear as one might wish
> what constitutes properly tracing models...
> back to disclosures." (41)

He feels that Ramsey's treatment of models and qualifiers
is too schematic at this point.

> b) Second, given his heavy reliance on dis-
> closures as the basis for harmonization of
> models, one wonders how we know that all
> disclosures are disclosures of one mystery...
> c) Third, how does one tell a genuine dis-
> closure from a false one? (42)

As can be seen this third point is quite similar to Lewis.
If a Buddhist or a Muslim claims a disclosure of say, Nirvana
or Allah is this claim to be accepted or not? If not why
accept Ramsey's claims?

> d) Finally, granting that models are born in
> disclosures of a common mystery, one wonders
> why we cannot expect that the models and the

discourse developed from them should
interlock in one non-paradoxical set of
doctrines. (43)

Austin elaborates this final point suggesting three

reasons why the relation between theological models ought

to be taken seriously: 1) They should enable us to be articu-

late about mystery, 2) being articulate about mystery involves

using models to interpret experience and 3) it is reasonable

to expect the models used to interpret experience to be co-

herent with each other.[44] If the latter criterion is not met

we can still use models but their conflict will remain a

standing problem. This seems a sound point and one to which

Ramsey himself subscribes when he advances coherence as a

criterion by which to evaluate models.

Point two is important also. Austin gives two reasons for

regarding Ramsey's models as interpretations of experience.

First, they are to enable us to be articulate about mystery.

While theological models differ from scientific in being con-

cerned primarily with mystery whereas the latter are con-

cerned with articulation the difference is one of emphasis for

all disclosures (including theological ones) aim at both

understanding and mystery.[45]

Second, the non-theological examples of 'empirical fit'

models (mild depressive and 'a loves b') are clearly inter-

pretations of experience. At this point Austin suggests

falsification procedures are not nearly as simple as Ramsey

suggests and refers especially to the works of Hempel,

Quine and Kuhn.[46]

Ferré in summing up Ramsey's discussion of the characterizations of God as elaborated in chapter two of <u>Religious Language</u> quotes his defence against the charge of 'subjectivism' and comments "Although Ramsey has here suceeded in 'emphasizing' his view he has not advanced a step toward defending it. He fails to deal with illusions or the place of hallucination in experience."[47] He also feels Ramsey has confused experiencing-<u>as</u>-objective with having experience <u>of</u> the objective."[48] Experiencing a rope <u>as</u> a snake is not the same as having experience <u>of</u> a snake.

In addition a point made by Dorothy Emmet in her discussion of the role of analogy in theology is quite germane here. Her comment is especially appropriate since the example used is the analogy of God as a father which Ramsey treats as a model. She says that to speak in such a way is to speak neither anthropomorphically or merely symbollically:

> It is to illustrate the relation of dependence which obtains between creature and creator by means of the analogy of the relation of child to parent. But the appropriateness of the analogy depends on the reality of the relation which it exemplifies. The existence of the relation cannot be established by analogical argument. (49)

How then are we to assess the validity of these criticisms? We shall begin Hurlburtt's since they seem to be the weakest and shall conclude with my own.

Hurlburtt's complaint is almost but not quite totally unfounded. Theological models are susceptible to quite extensive changes as the history of Christian thought shows. The whole history of Protestantism (which was by no means

the first attempt to alter the Christian model and theory)
began in an effort to 'reform' the model and this model has
become progressively more radical since. Both Ramsey and
Ferré seem to realize this. Ferré wants to reform the model
and rethink the theory which is precisely what theologians
have been doing (although not in these terms nor probably
as self-consciously as Ferré advocated) and Ramsey is clearly
doing something like this and does not claim to have said the
final word.

This of course may seem to obscure a very sound point
that Hurlburtt has, that scientific models are verifiable and
fruitful in a way that theological ones are not. It is not
quite as obvious however that scientific models are as co-
herent as he thinks. The wave-particle duality is only one
example. Austin makes a good point here. It seems that both
theology and science need complementary models.

But Hurlburtt begs the question regarding the unveri-
fiable nature of theological models. He does not show that
the criteria of empirical fit is an unacceptable one nor that
Ramsey's attempt to find an empirical anchorage for religious
language is unsucessful. Further we could substitute 'natura-
listic' for 'theological and religious' and create similar
difficulties for him and Flew.[50]

What then about Flew's points? The spectre of unfalsi-
fiability raises itself here again of course. Ramsey does
attempt to show how the discourse gets off the ground. The
real question is whether or not he justifies it.

Now at this point the game of intellectual ping-pong really begins. When Flew (as does Hurlburtt) throws the un-falsifiability problem at the theist he could throw it back. What would falsify Flew's position? Would any amount of evidence of design convince Flew of the falsity of his position?

He would have an obvious counter-retort *viz.* if the universe contained much less or no suffering, especially of children and animals, or if it were the case that what suffering there was served some necessary and useful purpose and was distributed much more obviously according to merit, (the 'bad' guys always suffered and the 'good' guys always prospered etc.) then belief in God would be intelligible.

The theist would then reply, (roughly) that much evil is due to human free will, that certain evils make higher goods possible, that other evils are due to the uniformity of nature which is neccesary if we are to make reliable predictions and control nature and if moral responsibility is possible etc. Now much more could be said on the subject as indeed much has been, enough to warrant a separate thesis. My intention is not to solve this problem but that of the intelligibility of religious language and the adequacy of 'models' in elucidating this intelligioility.

The problem of evil then is not introduced here because I intend to solve it (or demonstrate its insolubility). I have two basic motives for interjecting it. First it is one indication (*contra* Flew) of the meaningfulness of religious discourse. Second it is the most difficult problem for

Ramsey and his handling of it is one of the weakest aspects
of his theology.

(III) We shall return to the second point later. For
now let us concentrate on the former. I earlier indicated
why I though Flew's example rather than showing the meaning-
lessness of religious language showed the opposite. At this
point it is appropriate to substitute my own theory of
cognitive meaning which is probably as inadequate as any other.
I indicated earlier in chapter one that, if suitably qualified,
the verification/falsification principle was a sound one for
all respectable academic disciplines (except formal ones of
course) and that there were no particularly good reasons for
excepting theology. Instead of stipulating the probably un-
attainable ideal of complete verification or falsification
however we should substitute 'confirmation' and give up the
idea of conclusive confirmation or disconfirmation.

Thus we know what the proposition p means if and only if
we know what would tend to confirm it and disconfirm it. We
know what would tend to confirm "All crows are black" (all
observed crows being black) and what would disconfirm it (a
white crow) It might seem that the latter would give us <u>con-
clusive</u> disconfirmation. But it is open to the universal
blackcrowist to maintain that this odd looking bird is merely
a funny type of sparrow.

The existence of evil then is disconfirming evidence of
God's existence (or goodness). The maldistribution of pain
and suffering is evidence either that God is unjust or does

not exist. A universe where only the 'guilty' suffered and
the innocent did not or where there was evidence of beneficent
design would be the opposite.

This criterion preserves to a degree the intelligibility
of 'immortality' language (using the term in a more traditional
manner than Ramsey) Survival of death or resuscitation of the
corpse would be confirmation of immortality but obviously
not conclusive evidence. There could be no such thing from
the logic of the situation. We could not know until the end
of eternity if we were immortal. On the opposite scale
there could be a quite plausible case for denying immortality.
The close connection, for example, of brain processes with
thought and consciousness constitutes evidence against the
concept of survival and the dissolution of the corpse into
its constituent chemical elements is confirmation of the
implausibility of resurrection. Again psychic research and
the moral argument may be regarded as confirmation of
immortality.

None of these arguments strikes me as conclusive but
this hardly makes them unintelligible. On the contrary the
fact that we can appeal to the above cited evidence indicates
the opposite. It is significant that the believer in
immortality, would, cite psychic research or the moral argument
and not such facts as 'Birds fly' or 'The Democrats won the
1960 election'. Nor does the denier of immortality point to
the elliptical orbits of the planets or the mating habits of
the Perian earthworm as the grounds for his skepticism. Yet

if these concepts of immortality were unintelligible it is
difficult to see how this would be possible.

Take as a contrast an obviously meaningless phrase such
as 'Green wisdom flies slowly' or 'Nothingness nothings'.
Would anything confirm or disconfirm either of these asser-
tions even partially? Further the moral argument regarding
immortality cuts both ways and this too is significant.
In Christian Discourse Ramsey mentions F.D. Maurice's re-
jection of the doctrine of hell. He notes that Maurice did
not reject it because of any 'humane revulsion against the
notion that the majority of mankind could be doomed to
eternal punishment.'[51] This revulsion seems to be at the
heart of Ramsey's and Ferré's (it obviously is in the latter's
case) rejection of this doctrine, and of its rejection by
countless others. But it is certainly not rejected because
of its meaninglessness. On the contrary it is precisely
because people understand what this doctrine means that they
do   reject it.

The rejection is not purely empirical nor for that matter
purely moral either. It is more logical than anything else.[52]
At least this seems to be the case with Ferré. The concept
of agape as Ferré sees it is not consistent with that of
Hell. Now at this point Ferré has a much clearer and stronger
case than Ramsey. On the former's premises he has very good
grounds for rejecting said dogma. But the unintelligibility
of Ramsey's concepts comes clearly to the fore here.

In Religious Language as we saw in dealing with the

problem of evil he said we use the word 'good' of God too
casually and that 'God' is outside of 'good' language al-
together. But if this is the case Ramsey would have no
grounds as Ferré does for rejecting hellfire. After all if
God is good in some quite different sense than the ordinary
then it is hard to see how God's 'goodness' (if we can still
use the term) is inconsistent with hellfire. In speaking of
God in terms of 'supreme redeeming love' Ramsey tells us "we
are not making an assertion in descriptive psychology- we are
not claiming to know something about the private life of
God."53

This is the first of the three major problems and diffi-
culties with Ramsey's thesis that I wish to stress. In
attempting to avoid the Scylla of anthropomorphism and the
Charybdis of agnosticism Ramsey certainly avoids the former
but what about the latter? The second major problem is that
of coherence. For now I shall dwell on the first since I have
in effect already raised it.

We can in this context consider Lewis' critique of
Ramsey that he makes the concept of immortality (among others)
vague and imprecise and is in danger of removing ontic
refenence. It seems to be a valid criticism.

Of course Ramsey does not want to remove ontic reference
but intent and result often differ and it is the latter we
want to deal with here. First it is not at all clear to
me that Ramsey's concept of 'First cause' 'infinitely wise
and good' and 'immortality' are more intelligible than the

ones they are apparently designed to replace. I say 'apparently' because it is not clear whether Ramsey is offering a new concept or merely elucidating what he feels was implicit in the older ones.

At any rate some of his arguments against 'traditional' interpretations of old concepts do not seem at all cogent. It is not self-evident that 'first cause', 'infinitely wise' etc. are self-contradictory. He says for example that 'wise' implies 'wiser' and 'good' implies 'better'. True, but he has apparently never absorbed the elementary school lesson regarding the grammar of superlatives. We have 'good' 'better' and 'best', and 'wise' 'wiser' and 'wisest'. It might be wrong but it hardly seems contradictory to call Solomon the wisest person who ever lives. That 'wise' implies 'wiser' does not mean anyone was wiser than Solomom. Similary if God is infinitely wise (or better prefectly wise) not only is no one wiser than he but it would not be possible for any one to be wiser.

To say that 'God is infinitely wise' in this latter sense may be false or at least impossible to verify (presumably the design argument is supposed to offer confirming but not conclusive evidence for this claim) but it is at least intelligible and does not seem contradictory. Ramsey's concept however is very difficult to define since he won't let it be descriptive. Even the analogical use of 'wise' is more intelligible since there is at least some connection between 'wisdom' as used of God and as used of Man, (as is the case

with 'good') but Ramsey seems to destroy even this minimum

of intelligibility by putting 'God' <u>outside</u> good and wise language

<u>altogether</u>.

Nor is the concept 'first cause' obviously self-con-

tradictory. Perhaps it is but the way Ramsey argues it seems

to be a <u>petitio principii</u> against the cosmological argument.

There can be no first cause because 'cause' implies a prede-

cessor. But this is anything but clear. Aristotle, Aquinas

and R. Taylor certainly didn't (or don't) think so. There

are surely better arguments against the cosmological proof

than this. Further as indicated earlier Taylor is much

clearer about what he means by 'first cause' than Ramsey is.

In fact Ramsey is always much clearer in rejecting positions

than he is in embracing them. Ferré's concept of agape is

fairly straightforward and intelligible. Ramsey's ideas of

'love' and 'good' do not seem to be nearly as lucid.

The second major problem Ramsey has is that of coherence.

Here Austin is relevant, although he perhaps points the way

out of the dilemma with his 'complementarist' interpretation

of models. As we saw he said that models should be expected

to cohere since they are interpretations of experience and

Ramsey himslef stipulates coherence as one of the criteria for

evaluating models.

This was one of the four points that left Austin 'uneasy'

about Ramsey. (and was one of Hurlburtt's points) Now it is

all too easy to point to the wave-particle duality in optics.

Ramsey himself cites this in <u>Religion and Science</u>.[54] Even

if this is taken as a useful parallel he still has problems.
But even this is dubitable. Austin points out, perhaps
correctly, that Ramsey is over-confident about the wave-
particle duality.[55] Further the physicist can point to the
consistent mathematical formalism of quantum theory 'Theology
does not have anything corresponding to this formalism,'[56] nor
can an ostensive definition of 'God' be given as it can be
for 'light'.

At any rate there are still two further problems for
Ramsey even if we grant that the wave-particle duality is a
parallel to theological paradox. First, if contradictory or
incompatible models can be used by theologians to interpret
'religious experience' then it is difficult to see the point
behind Ramsey's coherence criteria. It becomes a dead letter
that can never be applied. If someone points out an apparent
anomaly, contradiction, paradox or whatever in Ramsey's theory
and between his models he will merely reply that these are
not picture models and are not descriptive so the problem
does not arise and anyway scientists have similar problems.
The coherence criterion in fact is no criterion at all. It
is made inoperative by these moves and Ramsey's models do
die the death by a thousand qualifiers.

Second the appeal to the wave-particle duality is one
of Ramsey's arguments for regarding the scientific map as
fragmented and in need of integration by a theological model.
But if in fact the theist himself has similar models his own
map is fragmented and therefore in need of integration.

'God' like 'light' is referred to by using imcompatible models.
But how can 'God' serve an integrating function if the word
itself is in need of integration?

The third major problem for Ramsey is that of 'empirical
fit'. This is related to a number of problems most of which
have been raised by the writers referred to earlier. I have
suggested already that religious language is intelligible,
at least as interpreted either in a traditional sense (if
there is such a thing - there are probably at least 57 varieties
of 'traditional' theism) or as reinterpreted by a 'reformer'
such as Ferré.

The real problem with religious language it seems is
not its meaningfulness but its truth. The conclusion Flew
should have come to if his insight is valid is not that
'God loves us' is meaningless but that is is false. Take as
perhaps a better example the statement 'God created the heavens
and the earth in 4004 B.C! One might be tempted to call it
meaningless but it is more likely to be regarded as false,
and whatever the defects of traditionalChristian theism it is
least has the virtue of being falsifiable, to this degree.

Ramsey himself implicity concedes this in discussing
the Fall of man. He admits that it can describe no historical
event and that Christians who try to maintain that it does
are playing into the hands of the enemy and have lost the
battle before it begins.[57] Why? Presumably because the
empirical evidence against this position is very conclusive
even if not absolutely conclusive. But again at least this

position has the merit of being falsifi<u>able</u> (because <u>falsified</u>)
while it is not at all easy to stipulate what would dis-
confirm let alone falsify Ramsey's position.

But perhaps this is being too harsh or unfair to Ramsey.
I am prepared to grant that what Ramsey is saying is intelli-
gible even if I can't understnad all of it partly at least
because there does after all seem to be confirming or dis-
confirming evidence for it. The disclosures Ramsey talks
about do give him an empirical anchorage no matter how weak
it may seem.

The real problem is to justify the objective, ontological
reference of these disclosures. Now here a great deal can
be conceded. First of all he does have a firm basis for
arguing that we have a self-awareness that is not reducible to
observables and transcends the spatio-temporal aspects of
our behaviour. Second, it does make sense to speak of a
'sense of duty' and even of a sense of freedom (but not free
<u>will</u>)[58]

I would even be prepared to add to this list items that
are objects of extrasensory perception - space, time even per-
haps aesthetic experience. I am further prepared to concede
that the concept of 'empirical fit' is a tenable and accep-
table alternative to experimental verification even if Ramsey
exaggerates the difference between these two. I am even
sympathetic to the whole project of constructing models and
theories to elucidate the phenomena of religious experience.
As a program it is very interesting and possibly fruitful.

I see no a priori reasons for ruling it out of court. But
it does seem that a great deal more is needed to justify
the enterprise not as process but as product.

But granting all this we still have this problem: all
the concepts that involve 'more than observables' - 'duty'
'freedom' 'space and time' etc. also involve observables and
are categories needed to make sense out of observation. Is
the same true of 'God'? Here Ramsey would claim that the dis-
closure situation justifies positing the term 'God' as other
disclosure-situations justify positing 'I', 'freedom' etc.
But the critiques of Ferré, Lewis and Austin become relevant
here as well as those of Miss Emmet.

How do we tell a genuine disclosure from a false one?
(Austin) What about the disclosures and odd languages of
Hindus and Buddhists? (Lewis) What about hallucinations and
dreams? (Ferré) Are disclosures perhaps not fantasies or
perhaps wishfulfillments? To experience an oasis (or mirage)
as objective is not to have experience of an objective oasis.
Ramsey has exhibited the peculiarites and logical oddity of
religious language but he needs both to elucidate the meaning
of it more clearly and indicate how it is validated much
more cogently and lucidly. This, of course, does not mean
it can't be done. I don't know if it can be but it does seem
to be clear that Ramsey has not yet done it.

What about Ferré and Austin? I find myself more sym-
pathetic to Ferré (than to Ramsey) mainly because he seems
more intelligible and straightforward and also because

his concept of models is closer to that of philosophers of science and hence seems to have a greater cognitive significance.

But even here there are problems. Once again one can make important concessions. One can certainly sympathize with any attempt to reform the Christian model by emphasis on agape as an antidote to certain undesirable moral consequences of the old model (although it should be noted that Ferré fails to show this undesirability). Whether these consequence are due to the model is a moot point but it is difficult not to sympathize with the proposed reform.

But do all the consequences he wants follow from making agape the dominant model? This will undoubtedly help us adjudicate conflicting value stances within Christian theory, lead us to modify or reject certain doctrines and help us unpack the moral attributes of God. But what about the metaphysical (or natural) attributes of God? Do, say, simplicity, infinity, aseity et. al. follow from the agape model?

Further what justifies us in choosing the agape model? It would be nice to believe in the ultimate rightness of things but can such a belief be sustained? Perhaps it can but Ferré offers no reasons for it other than a value judgement about the importance of Agape.

Why for example not accept a hell-consigning God and simply deny predicating agape of him? Or why posit the moral attributes of God or even God himself? Ferré himself ac-

Knowledges that:

> theological statements are not the only ones
> which provide possible models for the oblique
> understanding of the nature of things. Many
> rival conceptual syntheses are urged from
> different quarters. All, including theism,
> suffer apparent weakness;   (59)

He does offer interesting criteria or adjudicating principles

for deciding about models:

> if some models are capable of providing
> greater coherence and adequacy than others,
> we may begin to suspect that this tells us
> something not only about the models but also
> about what reality is like: reality is of
> such a character that a metaphysical system
> based on model X is more capable of inter-
> preting our experience and unifying our
> ideas than is a metaphysical system based
> on model Y.   (60)

I see no reason to quarrel with this but then Ferré is

still left with the problem of demonstrating the greater co-

herence and adequacy of the theistic model to that of "quanta

of energy without purpose or intrinsic value"[61]

Perhaps it is possible to demonstrate one to be more co-

herent and adequate than the other but Ferré does not show

this in any great detail. The same point, it seems, arises

for Ferré as for Ramsey. Judged in terms of empirical fit

or coherence and adequacy do the models of Ferré and Ramsey

survive their own criteria? Perhaps they can. But I think Ferré

and Ramsey both have to offer a more convincing case.

The suggestion of Austin is also interesting and per=

haps fruitful. Again no a priori reason that I can see in-

duces me to reject it. If physicists can use a wave-particle

dualism and speak of space as both finite and unbounded why

can't the theist speak of God as both merciful and just and
of Christ as both Son of man and son of God? (and therefore
presumably both finite and infinite i.e. unbounded!)

The answer to this question leaps to the eye. After all
the physicist presumably has good empirical reasons and com-
licated mathematical formulae for regarding light as both
wave and particle. Certain experimental phenomena require
explanation of light in terms of one concept and other
phenomena require explanation in terms of the other. Similar
reasons, I assume, dictate the paradoxes about space. Indeed
one need not know much about relativity theory to realize
there are paradoxes of space and time. Zeno and Kant pointed
some of these out long before Einstein.

The problem then for the theist is to present empirical
evidence for his 'paradoxes' and models. Can he show, for
example, that there are good reasons for treating the pheno-
mena as revealing God as just in some cases and merciful in
others? Can he give empirical anchorage for the claim that
Jesus, to be understood, must be regarded in some way as the
son of God? (the first aspect of this paradox- the humanity
of Jesus -: would be relatively easy to demonstrate)

If the theist can do this he will have a tenable case
for his models and paradoxes. If not he may be able to main-
tain the intelligibility of his concepts but will have no
cogent reasons for accepting their applicability to reality.
Ramsey as we have seen claims to maintain both - intelligi-
bility and applicability to reality. He asserts "the very

aptness of the word I use - disclosure - is that the ob-
jective reference is safeguarded, for the object declares
its objectivity by actively confronting us".[62]

Now theology is unique compared to the sciences for
(among other reasons) it's object is peculiarly elusive. The
physicist can point to electrical, optical, magnetic etc.
phenomena. As the biologist can point to living things so
the social scientist can point to human beings and the pheno-
mena of economic, political, social and cultural systems.
Perhaps it may seem that the chemist and historian and archaeo-
logist are in a similar position. "No man hath seen God at
any time"[63] but no man hath seen sub-atomic particles nor
doth the historian or archaeologist see the events of the past.
They can of course point to phenomena (chemical reactions,
documents, inscriptions, relics etc.) that clearly testify to
some objective phenomena that they study. But God is
singularly elusive. Does Ramsey help us here?

He claims that the stories of immutability and impassi-
bility are the "foundations in fact for assertions about
God's immutability and impassibility"[64] But while the
examples help us to understand what is meant by calling "God"
immutable and impassible they don't justify applying these
attributes to God all they justify is their applicability to
the universe. Precisely how do we leap from "The universe
discloses situations of permanence and impassibility" to
"God is immutable and impassible"? There are too many logical
and epistemic gaps here that Ramsey fails to fill in.

This is a good example of Ramsey's ambiguous use of 'disclosure'. In these stories there are at least two types of disclosure: (a) one in which we gain an understanding of A in terms of B whether or not B or A exist and (b) the case where we grasp something more in an existent. Ramsey accomplishes (a) in the case of immutability and impassibility but not (b) although he claims to have done so.

Ramsey has similar problems with 'goodness' although here the issue is complicated by an additional difficulty. In chapter three we saw Ramsey place 'God' outside of mutable and passible language. But he also placed the term outside of 'good' language. Here Ramsey has a serious problem. (1) Is God outside of 'good' language as he is said to be outside of mutable and passible language? If so God is not good, a rather disastrous consequence. (2) Is God outside of 'good' language as a stone, tree or even an animal might be? Then he is amoral.

Assuming that Ramsey can escape the horns of this dilemma and draw an analogy between infinite goodness and infinite sums we still have the problem of reference. Why predicate of God infinite wisdom and infinite goodness, that is, why assume there is a "spirit infinite in his being wisdom, goodness, justice, and truth" (Westminster Confession)? There is just as great an epistemological and logical gap between "There are infinite sums" and "A circle is a polygon with an infinite number of sides" on the one hand and "God is infinitely good and wise" on the other, as there was in our previous

examples of immutability and impassibility.

The problem of meaning in short is a bogus problem. But the Flew-Hepburn challenge is by no means confined so narrowly and while Ramsey, Hick, Ferré and Austin to a large extent meet the challenge on the ground of meaning it may well be a Pyrrhic victory if the real problem of verification (reference) is not met and as of yet it has not been. From this, of course, it does not follow that it cannot be met but certainly the theist has a great deal of logical-epistemological homework to do.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

1. John Wisdom, "Gods" <u>Proceeding of Aristotelian Society.</u> (1944-45) and Anthony Flew "Theology and Falsification", in A. Flew and A. MacIntyre (ed.) <u>New Essays in Philosophical Theology</u> p. 96ff.

2. Flew, <u>Op. Cit.</u>, p. 97.

3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 99.

4. Flew, <u>Op. Cit.</u>, p. 97.

5. A term I have coined as the adjective corresponding to 'theodicy'.

6. See Nelson, Pike (ed.) <u>God and Evil</u>.

7. I Cor 5^8, Phil 1^{21}

8. John Hick, "Theology and Verification" in R. Santoni (ed.) <u>Religious Language and the Problem of Religious Knowledge.</u> (Bloomington, 1968).

9. Ian Ramsey, <u>Models and Mystery</u>, (London 1964) p. 40. (Henceforth M.M.).

10. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 53

11. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 60

12. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 1

13. <u>Ibid.</u>,

14. <u>Ibid.</u>,

15. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 2

16. The former term is borrowed from Max Black. The latter term is preferred by Ramsey

17. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 23

18. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 24

19. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 4

20. <u>Ibid.</u>

21. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 5

22. _Ibid_., p. 7.

23. _Ibid_.

24. _Ibid_., p. 7.

25. _Ibid_., p. 8.

26. _Ibid_,. p. 9.

27. _Ibid_., p. 9.

28. _Ibid_., pp. 9 - 10. Unless otherwise indicated all emphases in quotations are the author's not mine.

29. _Ibid_., p. 10.

30. _Ibid_.,

31. _Ibid_., pp. 10-11.

32. _Ibid_., p. 11.

33. _Ibid_.,

34. _Ibid_., p. 12.

35. _Ibid_., p. 12.

36. _Ibid_., p. 13.

37. _M.M_., p. 13.

38. _Ibid_., p. 13.

39. Ian Ramsey, _Religious Language_, (New York, 1963). Hereafter referred to as _R.L._

40. _M.M_., p. 14.

41. _Ibid_., p. 14.

42. _Ibid_., p. 15.

43. _Ibid_.

44. _Ibid_.

45. _Ibid_.

46. _Ibid_., p. 14.

47. _Ibid_., p. 15.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

CHAPTER II

1. Ramsey, *Op.Cit.*, p. 38.
   The following abbreviations will be used for
   Ramsey's works:
   C.D.   -   Christian Discourse.
   R.S.   -   Religion and Science.
   P.F.M. -   Prospect for Metaphysics.
   O.B.S. -   On Being Sure in Religion.
   R.L.   -   Religious Language.
   F.I.   -   Freedom and Immortality.

2. *P.F.M.* p. 163.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

4. *R.L.*, p. 42.

5. *R.S.*, p. 72.

6. *M.M.*, pp. 23-25.

7. As Ramsey points out "to participate in a kiss for
   example is vastly different from merely observing one".

8. *M.M.*, p. 25.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

12. *Ibid*., p. 26.

13. *Ibid*., p. 27.

14. *Ibid*.

15. *Ibid*., pp. 27-8.

16. *Ibid*., p. 29.

17. Richard Taylor, *Metaphysics* (Englewood Cliffs, 1963), p. 5.

18. *P.F.M.*, p. 164.

19. *R.L.*, p. 42.

20. *Ibid*.

21. *R.S.*, pp. 31ff.

22. *Ibid*., p. 37.

23. *Ibid*., p. 38.

24. *F.I.*, pp 11-12.

25. *Ibid*., p. 12.

26. *Ibid*., p. 26

27. *Ibid*.

28. *Ibid*., p. 26.

29. *Ibid*., p. 31.

30. *Ibid*., p. 32.

31. *Ibid*., p. 34.

32. *Ibid*., p. 35.

33. *Ibid*., p. 36.

34. *Ibid*., pp. 36-37.

35. *Ibid*.,

36. *Ibid*., p. 38.

37. *Ibid*.

38. *Ibid*.

39. <u>Ibid</u>.

40. <u>Ibid</u>.

41. <u>Ibid</u>.

42. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 39.

43. <u>Ibid</u>.

44. <u>Ibid</u>.

45. <u>Ibid</u>.

46. W. Austin makes a similar suggestion that we shall consider later when we discuss his writings.

47. But was this ever true? Was Aristotelian physics and Newtonian physics absolutely falsified?

48. Flew, <u>Op.Cit</u>., p. 97.

49. Thomas Kuhn, <u>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</u>, (Chicago, 1962) for example "No process yet discovered by the historical study of scientific development at all resembles the stereo type of falsification by direct comparison with nature." p. 77.

50. Imre LaKatos "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in Imre LaKatos and Alan Musgrave (ed.) <u>Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge</u> (Cambridge, 1970).

51. Plural- since there are various evils, that is, various <u>types</u> of evils.

52. Note how this expression 'God loves men' fits the '<u>a</u> loves <u>b</u>' personal fit model of Ramsey.

53. Basil Mitchell, in Flew and MacIntyre, <u>Op.Cit</u>. p. 103.

54. I.M. Crombie "Arising from the <u>University</u> Discussion" in <u>New Essays in Philosophical Theology</u>.

55. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 124-25.

56. I take assertions like the latter to be <u>False</u>. If I tell someone 'My second wife used to nag me' and I know I have had only one wife, I am clearly lying, that is, telling an untruth.

57. M.M. p. 40.

58. Ibid.

59. Ramsey himself seems to leave room for this. The language of Shakespeare, he tells us, can, in some (personal) situation be more reliable currency than that of mathematical models.' M.M. p. 28.

60. I mean Antony and Cleopatra not as historical figures but as characters in Shakespeare's play.

61. C.D., p. 82.

62. Ibid.

63. P.F.M., p. 171.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. He uses it in F.I., p. 175.

67. Ibid., p. 40, see also R.L., p. 34.

68. F.I., p. 42.

69. Ramsey uses the term 'intuition' inter changeably with 'insight' and 'disclosure' in "Religion and Science: A Philosopher's approach "in Dallas High (ed.) New Essays in Religious Language (N.Y., 1969).

70. R.L., p. 49.

71. The words omitted are perhaps significant: "as some intuitionists may have done."

72. R.L. p. 48.

73. R.L. p. 32.

74. Ibid., p. 34.

75. Ibid.

76. R.L., p. 51

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid., p. 83.

79. Even if we assume that Zeno has obviously committed a logical blunder there still remains the problem of the

infinite divisibility of space and time.

80. Kant's antinomy that the world must both have a beginning and not have a beginning is perhaps paralled by the Incarnation. Christ must be both all-powerful (as God) and weak (as man) unbounded by space-time (as God) yet finite because of his human body. See the next footnote.

81. Consider, eg., the concept of space as finite but unbounded.

82. Models and Mystery, p. 41.

83. Compare R. Taylor, Op.cit. perhaps they are not as different on this matter as I suggested earlier.

84. M.M., p. 43.

85. Ibid., p. 44.

86. F.I., p. 48.

87. F.I., p. 48.

88. R.S., p. 79.

89. Ibid., p. 78.

90. Ibid., pp. 77-78.

91. Ibid., p. 79.

92. P.M.F., pp. 163, 173.

93. R.S., p. 73.

94. Ibid., p. 74.

95. Ibid.

96. R.S., p. 74.

97. Ibid.

98. C.D., p. 83.

99. Ibid., p. 84.

100. The 3 options are to: (1) use a concept indigenous to both personal and non-personal language such as 'activity' or 'power' or 'energy'. (2) use an absolutist approach such as Bradley's or Lotze's (3) Let 'person' be the dominant model.

101.   Ibid., p. 86.

CHAPTER III

1.   P.F.M., p. 167.

2.   R.L., p. 20.

3.   R.L., p. 15.

4.   Ibid.

5.   Ibid., p. 16.

6.   Ibid., pp. 15-16.

7.   Ibid., p. 16.

8.   Ibid.

9.   Ibid., p. 17.

10.   Ibid., p. 18.

11.   Ibid., p. 19.

12.   Ibid.

13.   Ibid.

14.   Ibid., pp. 20-23, 29.

15.   Ibid., p. 27.

16.   Ibid.

17.   Ibid.

18.   Ibid., pp. 27-28.

19.   Ibid., p. 26.

20.   Ibid.

21.   Ibid., p. 30

22.   Ibid.

23.   Ibid.

24.   Ibid., p. 31.

25.   Ibid., p. 32.

26. _Ibid._,

27. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

28. That is, the case of the drowning child.

29. _R.L._, pp. 33-34.

30. _Ibid._, p. 34-38.

31. _Ibid._, p. 37.

32. _Ibid._, p. 39.

33. _Ibid._

34. _Ibid._, p. 40.

35. _Ibid._, p. 41

36. _Ibid._

37. _Ibid._

38. _Ibid._, p. 42.

39. _Ibid._, p. 44.

40. _Ibid._, p. 45-47.

41. _Ibid._, p. 53.

42. _Ibid._

43. _Ibid._

44. _M.M._, p. 7.

45. _M.M._, p. 48.

46. _Ibid._, p. 50.

47. _Ibid._, p. 48.

48. _Ibid._, pp. 48-49.

49. _Ibid._, p. 52.

50. _Ibid._

51. _Ibid._, pp. 52-53.

52. _Ibid._, p. 53.

52. _Ibid_., p. 53.

53. _Ibid_., p. 53.

54. _Ibid_.

55. _Ibid_., p. 55.

56. _Ibid_., p. 58.

57. _Ibid_., p. 59.

58. _Ibid_., p. 60.

59. _Ibid_., p. 60.

60. _Ibid_., pp. 60-61.

61. _Ibid_., p. 61.

62. _Ibid_.

63. _Ibid_.

64. _Ibid_., p. 60.

65. _Ibid_., p. 58.

66. _R.L_., p. 56.

67. _Ibid_.

68. _Ibid_., p. 56.

69. _Ibid_., p. 57.

70. _Ibid_.

71. The '...' are Ramsey's not mine..

72. _Ibid_., p. 57.

73. _Ibid_., p. 58.

74. _Ibid_.

75. _Ibid_., p. 29.

76. _Ibid_., p. 58.

77. _Ibid_.

78. _Ibid_., p. 59.

79. _Ibid._, p. 59.

80. _Ibid._

81. His expression is 'logical synonym.'

82. _Ibid._, p. 59.

83. Particularly as applied to space and time, illustrating another interesting parallel between these two concepts and God.

84. _Ibid._

85. _Ibid._, p. 60.

86. _Ibid._

87. _Ibid._

88. _Ibid._, p. 61.

89. _Ibid._

90. _Ibid._, p. 62.

91. _Ibid._, p. 63.

92. _Ibid._, p. 68.

93. _Ibid._

94. Ramsey italicizes the qualifiers and puts the model in capitals.

95. _Ibid._, p. 69.

96. _Ibid._

97. _Ibid._, p. 70.

98. _Ibid._

99. _Ibid._

100. _M.M._, p. 61.

101. _R.L._ p. 70.

102. _Ibid._

103. Taylor, _Op.cit._, pp. 85-94.

104. Taylor, _Op.cit._, p. 94.

105. _R.L._ p. 71.

106. _Ibid._, p. 72.

107. _Ibid._, p. 73.

108. _Ibid._, p. 73.

109. _Ibid._, pp. 74-76.

110. _Ibid._, pp. 74-75.

111. _Ibid._, p. 77.

112. _Ibid._, p. 67.

113. _Ibid._, p. 79.

114. _Ibid._, p. 77.

115. _Ibid._, p. 78.

116. _Ibid._, p. 101.

CHAPTER IV

1. Abraham Kaplan, _The Conduct of Inquiry,_ (San Francisco, 1964) pp. 256ff.

2. Ernst Nagel, _The Structure of Science_, (N.Y., 1961) Chap. 5 & 6.

3. Frederick Ferré, _Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion._, (New York, 1966).

4. _Ibid._, p. 333.

5. _Ibid._, p. 335f.

6. _Ibid._, pp. 335-49.

7. _Ibid._, pp. 349-70 The last of these three, 'heuristic function' is 'quasi-cognitive'.

8. _Ibid._, p. 371.

9. _Ibid._, pp. 354-6.

10. _Ibid._, p. 356.

11. Ibid., p. 356. The assertion "All men are God's children" with its implication that Jews, negros and slavs are also God's children might be one important difference between christian _agape_ and Nazi hostility.

12. Dorothy Emmet, _The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking_, (London, 1946), p. 191.

13. _Ibid._, pp. 197-98.

14. _Ibid._, p. 196.

15. _B.M.P._ p. 357.

16. F. Ferré, "Mapping the Models of Theology" in Dallas High (ed) _New Essays in Religious Language_.

17. _B.M.P._, pp. 375-8.

18. The three major components (in Nagel's view) involved in model construction are: (1) the "abstract calculus" or logical skeleton of a theory (2) 'rules of correspondence that link the statement forms of the theory with experience and (3) the 'model' itself which provides an interpretation for the theory. It scarcely needs to be said that this is quite remote from Ramsey yet number (2) 'rules of correspondence' are desparately needed by Ramsey.

19. _M.M.P._ pp. 409-35.

20. _Ibid._, p. 374.

21. _Ibid._.

22. _Ibid._, p. 375.

23. _Ibid._

24. _Ibid._, p. 376.

25. _Ibid._, p. 376.

26. _Ibid._, p. 377.

27. _Ibid._, p. 376.

28. _Ibid._, p. 377.

29. _Ibid._

30. _Ibid._

31. Ibid., p. 378.

32. Ibid., p. 379.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p. 380.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., pp. 380, 383, 384.

37. Ibid., p. 381.

38. Ibid., p. 383.

39. Ibid.

40. He appeals to Nagel here Op.Cit. ch. 11.

41. B.M.P. p. 384.

42. Ibid.

43. C.D. p. 82.

44. B.M.P. p. 384.

45. Ibid., p. 385.

46. Ibid., p. 385.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., p. 384.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., p. 387.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., pp. 387-88.

54. Ibid., pp. 388-90.

55. Ibid., pp. 392-93.

56. Ibid., p. 393.

57. Ibid., p. 395.

58.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 395-6.

59.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 409.

60.   <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 410-12.

61.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 413.

62.   <u>C.D</u>., p. 82.

63.   <u>B.M.P</u>., pp. 413-415.

64.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 414.

65.   William Austin, "Complementarity and Theological
          Paradox", in <u>Zygon</u>. p. 365. (hereafter
          <u>T.P</u>.)

66.   <u>Ibid</u>.

67.   <u>Ibid</u>.

68.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 367.

69.   <u>Ibid</u>.

70.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 370.

71.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 371.

72.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 373.

73.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 379.

74.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 379.

75.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 380.

76.   <u>Ibid</u>.

77.   W. Austin, "Models, Mystery, and Paradox" in Ian
          Ramsey" Journal for the Scientific Study
          of Religion Vol. VII, 1, 1968. p. 42,
          (Hereafter <u>M.M.P</u>.)

78.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 53.

79.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 45.

80.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 46.

81.   <u>Ibid</u>., p. 47.

82. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 48.

83. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 49-50.

84. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 50 f.

85. Cited in <u>M.M.P.</u> pp. 53-54.

86. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 54.

87. Cited in <u>M.M.P.</u> p. 55.

88. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 53.

89. <u>C.D.</u> p. 82.

90. <u>R.L.</u> p. 196.

CHAPTER V

1. See for example Carl Hempel "Problems and changes in the empiricist Criterion of Meaning" in L. Linsky (ed.) <u>Semantics and the Philosophy of Language</u>.

2. I. Lakatos "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (ed) <u>Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge</u> (Aberdeen, 1970.)

3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 100.

4. <u>Ibid</u>.

5. Cited in Lakatos, <u>Op.Cit</u>. p. 100.

6. Karl Popper, <u>The Logic of Scientific Discovery</u> (N.Y., 1968) 2nd ed. p. 40 f.n.

7. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 41.

8. A. Flew in his introduction to <u>Body Mind and Death</u> (London, 1964) p. 9.

9. William Alson is dubious on this point, see his <u>Philosophy of Language</u> (Englewood Cliffs, 1964) p. 74. He points out at the same time that the empiricist criterion is confined to one segment of language only. This is probably its major drawback.

10. Again Alston makes a similar point on <u>Op.Cit</u>. p. 75.

11.   J. Hick "The doctrine of the resurrection of the
          body reconsidered" in A. Flew (ed.) Body,
          Mind and Death p. 27 of. (Here-after the book
          will be designated B.M.D.

12.   Ibid., p. 271.

13.   Ibid., p. 273.

14.   Hick "Theology and Verification" in R. Santoni Op.Cit.,
      pp. 370-71. This article overlaps with that in
      Flew B.M.D.

15.   Ibid., p. 367.

16.   Ibid.

17.   Ibid., p. 375.

18.   Ibid., p. 376.

19.   Ibid., p. 378.

20.   Ibid., p. 379.

21.   Ibid., p. 380.

22.   This is part of the definition of 'God' in the thirty-
      nine articles of the Anglican Church.

23.   J. Shaffer Philosophy of Mind. (Englewood Cliffs,
          1968) p. 73.

24.   P. Geach "Could sensuous experiences occur apart from an
          organism?" in Flew (ed) B.M.D., p. 268.

25.   Ibid., p. 269.

26.   Ibid., p. 269.

27.   Ronald Hepburn Christianity and Paradox (N.Y., 1958)
              p. 58.

28.   Ibid., p. 84.

29.   Richard Hurlburlt III Hume, Newton and the Design
                          Argument, p. 209.

30.   Cited in Hurlburtt, Op.Cit., p. 201.

31.   R.L., pp. 20-22, 28-29.

32.   H. D. Lewis, Philosophy of Religion (London, 1965)
              p. 105.

33. _Ibid._, p. 106.

34. _Ibid._, p. 107.

35. _Ibid._, p. 108.

36. _Ibid._, p. 109.

37. _Ibid._, p. 109.

38. Austin, _M.M.P._, p. 43.

39. _Ibid._, p. 44.

40. _Ibid._, p. 44.

41. _Ibid._, p. 50.

42. _Ibid._, p. 50.

43. _Ibid._, p. 50.

44. _Ibid._, p. 51.

45. _Ibid._, p. 52.

46. _Ibid._, p. 52 and 52 footnote.

47. F. Ferré, _Logic, Language and God_, (N.Y., 1961) p. 141. (Hereafter _L.L.G._)

48. _Ibid._

49. _Op.Cit._, p. 180.

50. Consider for example the stratonician principle that Flew defends in _God and Philosophy_. (London, 1966) pp. 69-74.

51. _C.D._, p. 5.

52. This does not affect the issue of meaning. Only if we understand the meaning of _p and q_ can we determine if they are contradictory.

53. _R.L._, p. 99.

54. _R.&S._, p. 82.

55. _Models and Metaphors_., p. 53.

56. _Ibid._

57. _R.L._, pp. 93-4.

58.   This is another vexed subject into which I do not want
       to diverge. Sufficient to say that is seems better to
       speak of _man_ as free not his will and if any faculty
       of man is free it is his _reason_ not his will.

59.   _L.L.G._, p. 165.

60.   _Ibid._, p. 165.

61.   _Ibid._, p. 166.

62.   _M.M._, p. 58.

63.   John 1[18]

64.   _R.L._, p. 59.

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