

# **“The Undiscovered Self” by CG Jung**

## **Exploration and Discussion**

Fall 2021 Adult Forum: Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Nevada City, CA

Moderator: David G Davidson-Methot, MDiv, PhD

### **Session 1 (17 Oct.): Chp 1. “The Plight of the Individual in Modern Society”**

“The bigger the crowd the more negligible the individual becomes. But if the individual, overwhelmed by the sense of his own puniness and impotence, should feel that his life has lost its meaning ... then he is already on the road to State slavery and, without knowing or wanting it, has become its proselyte.” (p 10, page #'s refer to the pdf version)

The challenge of “mass-mindedness” to the individual in modern times.

### **Session 2 (24 Oct.): Chp 2. “Religion as the Counterbalance to Mass-Mindedness”**

“The individual who is not anchored in God can offer no resistance on his own resources to the physical and moral blandishments of the world. For this he needs the evidence of inner, transcendent experience which alone can protect him from the otherwise inevitable submersion in the mass.” (16)

### **Session 3 (31 Oct.): Chp 3. “The Position of the West on the Question of Religion”**

“The Churches stand for traditional and collective convictions which in the case of many of their adherents are no longer based on their own inner experience but on *unreflecting belief*, which is notoriously apt to disappear as soon as one begins thinking about it. ... Belief is no adequate substitute for inner experience, and where this is absent even a strong faith which came miraculously as a gift of grace may depart equally miraculously.” (26)

### **Session 4 (7 Nov.): Chp 4. “The Individual’s Understanding of Himself”**

“These ‘archaic vestiges,’ or archetypal forms grounded on the instincts and giving expression to them, have a numinous quality that sometimes arouses fear. They are ineradicable, for they represent the ultimate foundations of the psyche itself. They cannot be grasped intellectually, and when one has destroyed one manifestation of them, they reappear in altered form.” (35)

“... the salvation of the world consists in the salvation of the individual soul.” (40)

*“Resistance to the organized mass can be effected only by the man who is as well organized in his individuality as the mass itself.”* (43)

**Session 5 (14 Nov.): Chp 5. “The Philosophical and the Psychological Approach to Life”**

“The rupture between faith and knowledge is a symptom of the *split consciousness* which is so characteristic of the mental disorder of our day.” (53)

“Separation from his instinctual nature inevitably plunges civilized man into the conflict between conscious and unconscious, spirit and nature, knowledge and faith, a split that becomes pathological the moment his consciousness is no longer able to neglect or suppress his instinctual side.” (58)

“Aside from the political difficulties, the West has suffered a great psychological disadvantage that made itself unpleasantly felt even in the days of German Nazism: the existence of a dictator allows us to point the finger away from ourselves and at the shadow.” (58)

**Session 6 (21 Nov.): Chp 6. “Self-Knowledge” and Chp 7. “The Meaning of Self-Knowledge”, Conclusion**

“Since it is universally believed that man is merely what his consciousness knows of itself, he regards himself as harmless and so adds stupidity to iniquity. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and still go on happening, but it is always ‘the others’ who do them.” (67)

“None of us stands outside humanity’s black collective shadow. Whether the crime lies many generations back or happens today, it remains the symptom of a disposition that is always and everywhere present – and one would therefore do well to possess some ‘imagination in evil,’ for only the fool can permanently neglect the conditions of his own nature.” (68)

“... our lack of insight deprives us of the *capacity to deal with evil*.” (68)

“It is not that present-day man is capable of greater evil than the man of antiquity or the primitive. He merely has incomparably more effective means with which to realize his proclivity to evil.” (70)

“It is in the nature of political bodies always to see the evil in the opposite group, just as the individual has an ineradicable tendency to get rid of everything he does not know and does not want to know about himself by foisting it off on somebody else. Nothing has a more divisive and alienating effect upon society than this moral complacency and lack of responsibility, and nothing promotes understanding and *rapprochement* more than the mutual withdrawal of projections.” (72)

“I am neither spurred on by excessive optimism nor in love with high ideals, but am merely concerned with the fate of the individual human being – that infinitesimal unit on whom a world depends, and in whom, if we read the meaning of the Christian message aright, even God seeks his goal.” (79)