

reading, I returned to Ithaca in January determined at least to find a church and resolve my indecision, regardless of where it led me, to faith or unbelief. As that unintentional pun indicates, I was led to ... Church where, on January 31, I repented of my sins and asked Christ to enter my heart as my personal Savior.

Since becoming a Christian involved such a sweeping change in my perspective on the world, causing such a breach with my old humanistic philosophy and all that I attached to it, my first inclination was to leave school and pursue my education in a Christian setting. I felt that my brains were being prostituted by forcing myself to imbibe the kind of pluralistic philosophy which, implicitly or explicitly, is foisted upon me every time I read and discuss a text. When I discussed this with someone at the church, however, I was encouraged to stay for the doctorate, since there are so few Christians in that field. I have, for the time being, decided to remain as I was, but I cannot do that without a clear sense of how my studies can be dedicated to the Lord and how I can plan them in such a way that I can get the most out of them in my future Christian service. Although Pastor E. and I have not had a chance to discuss this at length, a brief conversation with him indicated to me that he sees my primary goal as cultivating an ability to write. At this point in my career, however, I can either write or I can't; the purpose of studying English at this level (as you well know) is to develop a deeper and broader knowledge of the literature, to acquire critical skills and methodologies, and to prepare for a teaching career. How, within the framework of that program, can I approach my work as a Christian?

I am still not convinced that I'm not trying to fit a round peg into a square hole, but if a Christian can use his English Ph.D. for the Lord (and that is the only condition under which I still want to work for one), I need to know the best way to do that. Fortunately, the program at Cornell is fairly flexible, as I'm responsible for putting together a committee of three faculty members, one to represent my major area of concentration, the other two the minor. There are only three required courses and I have taken them all this year. By the end of my third semester I have to take a Qualifying Exam ("Q") based on a broad sweep of all literature, but stressing areas not covered by my majors and minors; by the end of my third year I have to take the Admission-to-Candidacy Exam ("A"), a fairly rigorous set of written exams dealing with