

## **Why the World Needs the Religion of Ethical Culture/Ethical Humanism**

Through its uneven history, religion, while holding a central position in every culture as the institution that articulates the society's official world-view, has resisted change. While through the centuries other aspects of human culture evolved, religion persisted in offering traditional, increasingly untenable answers. Since the Enlightenment some religious groups have attempted to save the sense of yonder ultimacy while accepting the legitimacy of human reason and science as windows on truth. For many people that has meant sidelining religion to the artistic periphery, leaving Western humankind the religious options of Eastern Religion, New Age and Nature religion. While millions of people have found their own way to meaningful living without the help of organized religion, traditional religious institutions continue to dominate the meaning or purpose territory of our culture while in actuality the culture as a whole offers consuming as the meaning of life.

Our present consumer culture is the actual religious base of our culture and that is the primary enemy of an ethical culture. So many of the social problems that concern us have their source not so much in policy as in the culture's individualistic understanding of human life and in our lifestyles - people don't take responsibility for the life they create. The world needs a religion that explicitly offers the relational, communal experience as its foundation, a religion that says life is not about being good, but about making the good. The good is what we do.

Humankind needs religion that frames the meaning of life not in individualistic spiritual terms but in the communal relational experience, religion that has made the full break with the supernatural and in the cold light of the human condition offers meaning in involvement, in creating life together, in respecting the diversity in living.

I believe Ethical Culture/Ethical Humanism can be a religious perspective that helps transform humankind's understanding of the meaning of life. Starting from Adler's idealism and evolving through pragmatic humanism, our perspective is a religious challenge to transcendent religion and consumer culture or "populist conformity". While the essential message of the Ethical Culture Movement can be found in the value systems and behavior of many individuals and groups beyond our orbit - the uniqueness of every person, respect for that individuality, commitment to equality, even the understanding of life as a relational experience - there is value and power in presenting our view of life as a full package, a context within which to live, one that speaks to a relationship with nature and a place in the human journey.

That is my case for this project. Now the step-by-step pieces of an Ethical Culture/Ethical Humanist religious approach: