

[1971. Or Vice Versa. Christianity Today 10 Sep.]

OR VICE VERSA

“Right Answers, Wrong Questions,” by Maurice Blanchard (Aug 6.) says that the Greeks asked, What is man's relation to God? Why this is a wrong question, even though asked by the Greeks before the time of Christ, is not clear. The answer, however, seems to be wrong.

According to the article the Greeks answered that “Man is finite, God is infinite; man is temporal, God is eternal; man is weak, God is almighty.” Later on, after the Gospel came to Greece, there was difficulty in adapting Jewish answers to Greek questions.

The answer quoted is wrong, [although] not in an absolute sense: it is a good question and a relatively good answer. But it is wrong in the sense that the Greeks never made this answer. Did the homeric Greeks say that God was infinite and almighty? Did the presocratics? Heraclitus and Anaxagoras may have come close to saying that God is almighty, but neither of them made God infinite. Plato subordinated his Demiurge to the World of Ideas—which itself was neither infinite nor almighty. Aristotle's God was ignorant of much or even all that goes on here below. Surely not the Epicureans. What about the Stoics? Who were the Greeks that gave the answer the author assigns to them?

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