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## Response to a Response--Quaker Religious Thought, no. 74

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WILSON TO PITMAN

Ruth Pitman has responded to my effort with much grace, truth, and wit—all of which are most appreciated. Only a few clarifications are in order.

As regards my discussion of plurality in relation to the divine image, I fear I must simply confess that I was seeking to bring light to a difficulty encountered in the text. Why *does* the God of Israel, whom they took such pains to declare as the one and only (“Hear, O Israel, YHWH our God is *one* YHWH!”), speak of himself here in the plural? This assumes greater importance since it occurs in the context of the declaration that “man” is to bear the divine image. The remainder of the argument follows a progression: individuals alone do not possess the image, plural males do not display the fullness of God, even plurality of males and females is insufficient if they do not relate rightly to one another and to God.

As far as the Westminster Confession is concerned, perhaps I have been a bit harsh. It is after all a beautiful and powerful statement of the faith. If, as Pitman suggests, “glorify God” is taken to mean “extend his authority to the earth,” then I have no quibble and endorse it wholeheartedly. On the other hand, I am reacting to those I see around me every day who seem to equate “glorify” with “praise” and would limit our chief human responsibility to what amounts to “lip service.” I want to direct our attention away from the rather selfish, interior experience of praise (so often these days accompanied by the repetition of “praise” choruses) and out to the world—God’s world—outside our closed eyes and uplifted hands. Service to this world (including the environment) is at least as much a part of our act of true worship as praise! So, in all that we *do* and *say*, let us glorify our Father in heaven.