

# Karol Jasiński

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## Nature of Religious Truth

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Studia Warmińskie 52, 23-36

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2015

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

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Ks. Karol Jasiński  
Wydział Teologii  
Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie

## Nature of Religious Truth

**Słowa kluczowe:** wiedza religijna, prawda, egzystencja, człowiek, Bóg, sens życia.  
**Keywords:** religious knowledge, truth, existence, man, God, sense of life.  
**Schlüsselworte:** religiöse Erkenntnis, Wahrheit, Existenz, Mensch, Gott, Sinn des Lebens.

One of the important goals of life and human cognitive effort is to know the truth. The very notion of truth, however, may be understood differently. In general, there are two basic ways to approach it: epistemological and ontological (metaphysical). In the first regard the truth involves a compliance that occurs between thought and thing, while in the second there is conformity of thing with the mind (intention). Moreover, we have to deal with other ways of understanding of the truth: coherence (compliance of sentences with other sentences), pragmatic (utility theorem), evident (obvious object or conviction), consensual (acceptability of sentences on the basis of compliance of the discussants) or existential (authenticity, openness and spontaneity of being)<sup>1</sup>.

The concept of truth plays an important role in religion. In general, it stresses the epistemological (cognitive) nature of truth, which is reflected in the adoption of new content and internal consensus to it. However, it seems that the epistemological understanding of truth, though undoubtedly important for the religious person, is not sufficient in the context of a living and dynamic relation between man and God. In this case, it begins to dominate rather the existential notion of truth, according to which man opens his entire life in the presence of the Absolute and is responsible for with the specific style of his existence.

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Adres/Adresse/Anschrift: ks. dr Karol Jasiński, Katedra Prawa Kanonicznego i Filozofii, Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie, ul. Hozjusza 15, 11-041 Olsztyn, karoljasinski@op.pl.

<sup>1</sup> B. Niećko-Bukowska, *O niepewności prawdy*, *Investigationes Linguisticae* 22 (2010), p. 105–106; A.B. Stepien, *Wstęp do filozofii*, Lublin 2001, p. 137–139, 392–393.

The following analysis is an attempt to show the truth of religion as a kind of existential truth. First will be presented the specificity of religious knowledge, then existential recognition of the truth and its relationship with religious truth.

## The specificity of religious knowledge

Very often the leading role of cognition in the religious attitude is emphasized, and thus its relationship with epistemological truth. Depending on this religious knowledge it then shapes emotional reaction and practical action. However, the issue of knowledge is not simple. There are important two things: the ultimate source of various religious truths and the way of their assertions. With regard to the first case, it should be noted that the knowledge of the truths in religion has the character of the acceptance of revelation. The revelation is not only understood in the sense of the supernatural, but rather as a way to get the truth not through empiricism or reasoning, but rather on the basis of the testimony and the authority of the person. Regarding to the second case it would emphasize that the assertion of truths is a necessary condition of religious experience. It is done under trust. An important moment in religion is therefore a revelation, where the transcendent being by certain signs assures its presence for the man. The manifesting signs can be very different. They include, among others, historical events, people and nature. In these signs a man is to recognize the presence of supernatural beings. Revelation is always directed „to” and „for” someone. So it is done in an „I-thou”-relation. The recipient must read and interpret the signs by which God is present. Then it shall be included in the written form of the document and forwarded to others. The language that is used for this purpose is never explicit, but rather symbolic. It is worth noting that religious cognition also has an emotional factor. In addition, the religious cognition has three different characteristics: commitment (desire for knowledge, desire for acceptance, experience of a binding values), practicality and orientation of life<sup>2</sup>.

In the context of the above remarks, it should be emphasized that the revelation seems to have a noetic nature. Some, however, stressing the existential dimension of revelation, deny the noetic nature (M. Buber, E. Levinas). In their view, the truth of the content of revelation can not be included in words in the form of a coherent system. The value of revelation lies rather in the fact that a person becomes a witness to the dialogic reality, which comes to the fore

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<sup>2</sup> Z.J. Zdybicka, *Człowiek i religia. Zarys filozofii religii*, Lublin 1993, p. 186–190.

thanks to the authenticity of the human being<sup>3</sup>. A man does not experience any content in the revelation, but the presence orientating his life. He experiences the being in a relationship, through which is shown to him the meaning of life, and ordered his execution in the world. This situation opens up new dimensions of human life, which lead in consequence to its transformation. The meaning of the life is to be achieved by a unique human being in its concrete existence<sup>4</sup>.

M. Heller also notes that the recent theological recognitions treat the revelation primarily as an existential and interpersonal dialogue between man and Revealing. In this perspective, the strangeness of cognitive attitudes (especially science) and faith is essential and impossible to remove. Heller emphasizes, however, that this message of faith should be adapted to the scientific mentality of modern man. Speaking of the truths of religion, we use a model. The religious truth is associated with this model in an analogous way, similar as the physical reality to its scientific description. It should also be borne in mind that the knowledge of man's relation to God is ever given in an easy and finished way<sup>5</sup>. Heller talks about the impossibility of closing the truths of faith in one system. In his opinion, it is too transcendent and for this reason there are many acceptable ways of its recognition and expression<sup>6</sup>.

To Heller the question about the meaning of human life and the world is also not strange. Religion should give the answer to this question. He emphasizes that one is linked with the other, because man exists as an element of the structure of the world. In his view, the meaning has been attributed on one hand by the Creator as a goal made ??in the rational structure of the world, which should be read. On the other hand, he speaks of the eschatological meaning of life, which is the salvation. A man in his freedom can accept or reject this salvation<sup>7</sup>.

The essential purpose of a religious man in the noetic concept of revelation would therefore be gaining new information and having specific knowledge expressed in the form of the judgements. It is worth noting that the dominant cognitive relationship in this case is subjective-objective. The object of knowledge is frequently seen as an object with certain characteristics that a man wants

<sup>3</sup> A. Anzenbacher, *Die Philosophie Martin Bubers*, Wien 1965, p. 72; M. Jędraszewski, *Relacje międzypodmiotowe w świetle dyskusji między Martinem Buberem a Emmanuelem Levinasem*, Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne 6 (1986), p. 465.

<sup>4</sup> M. Buber, *Die Erwählung Israels*, in: idem, *Werke. Zweiter Band. Schriften zur Bibel*, München und Heidelberg 1964, p. 1040; idem, *Ich und Du*, in: idem, *Werke. Erster Band. Schriften zur Philosophie*, München und Heidelberg 1962, p. 152–153, 157; idem, *On Judaism*, New York 1967, p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> M. Heller, *Wszechświat i Słowo*, Kraków 1994, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> M. Heller, *Sens życia i sens Wszechświata. Studia z teologii współczesnej*, Tarnów 2002, p. 168, 186, 189, 193–197, 202–204.

to recognize. Thus, it seems that the cognitive moment can not be the dominant element of religion, because a human being tends to establish interpersonal relationships (subject-subject). Taking place cognition in this relation has thus a specific character, because it is based on respect and trust between people. In addition, it has a character of personally involved cognition, which leads to a certain lifestyle. Religion is, above all, a way of human existence, involving the participation in the existence of transcendent being. It emphasizes the personal relationship with God in the religion, which is recognized as the definitive source of life and meaning. There is indication of the transcendent dimension of human existence regarding her source (origin) and the target (destination). The purpose of human life is the fulfillment of man in community with others and God. In this point, religion differs from knowledge, specifically scientific knowledge, whose goal is only to get an ordered collection of information about reality. As already mentioned, it is associated with a different type of relationship, namely, the subject-object relationship. Knowledge is therefore based on a different type of reason and religion on a personal relationship<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, it changes the nature of truth. It seems that it is not only the truth in an epistemological sense in the religion, but also in an existential one.

According to some people the religious cognition is characterized by another important feature, which is the dynamic nature of truth. It undermines therefore the absolutist conceptions of truth, because God is not exhausted in any of them. In addition, this truth can not be understood in the objective way. The weakening of this tendency of religion to absolutizing of truth is important to discover what it actually is. The religions often function so, as if they already reached the truth and informed about God in His essence. Meanwhile, every religion is also on the way to the truth about God and the informations about Him are related only to the specific situation of man. Every event, which has a religious nature, took place at some point in human history, moreover, it does not end at the time of the incident, but it becomes through the new interpretations an open and „unfolding” event. So it can be said that we have in the religion two important pillars: metaphysical and historical-cultural. Therefore, the religious man is not the holder of the truth, but he rather hopes for it. This hope shapes the world of religion, and no transfer of immutable dogmas. The religious man has right to answer the specific questions of life on their own behalf, and not to be a slave of the doctrines that can sometimes falsify the spiritual realm<sup>9</sup>.

It is worthy to note, that the practice of theology was often reduced in the past to a rationalization of the revelations made in the metaphysical perspective.

<sup>8</sup> Z.J. Zdybicka, *Człowiek i religia*, p. 207–208, 379–381.

<sup>9</sup> M. Szulakiewicz, *Filozofia jako hermeneutyka*, Toruń 2012, p. 252–253, 255.

The task of theological knowledge was then to fulfill the cognitive needs of man. The quotes about God grew up in communication with the metaphysical thought. God was often understood as an object of knowledge. Meanwhile, the speaking of God can not be associated with the objectification of Him. In addition, it must be emphasized that it is said of Him always only from a certain point of view. A man stands so in the face of the constant exploration. This exploration can not also be ignored in the understanding of revelation, which is not only a simple transfer of information with bypassing the recipient. The revealing God is affirmed by the human thought, which is alive. Furthermore this thought grows from a specific experience, which can never be closed due to the processual nature of reality<sup>10</sup>. So we can say that the revelation changes a man, but it is also changed by him. A man is in fact active in the adoption of revelation, which he experiences with his whole existence<sup>11</sup>.

The religious cognition should therefore be freed from objectifying of a „subject” and open to the Mystery<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, there is not sufficient the theoretical approach to religion, because it can not separate the religious experience from the first person perspective. In addition, the people have no dealing with the abstract God of the philosophers, but rather with the living God of religion, who lives and works in ordinary human existence. In this way it shall be rejected that religion should be understood as a set of objective and independent of specific human ideas<sup>13</sup>.

## The existential nature of truth

It seems that in order to determine what is the existential nature of truth, it should specify the same concept of „existentials”. It has many different meanings. In these considerations it will relate primarily to the attitude of commitment with entire existence of the man in a given situation. The result of it is transformation of the man. Furthermore, the term „existential” will be related to some contents that are not detached from the person, but rather they are combined with the way of life. In this context, the existential truth shall reveal the specific logos of human life and the sense of the existence in the world. It is essential to becoming a man in an authentic way. The man can not make the truth a neutral object (as in the case of scientific truth) and be indifferent to it. It

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<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 263–264.

<sup>11</sup> M. Bierdiajew, *Głoszę wolność. Wybór pism*, transl. H. Paprocki, Warszawa 1999, p. 89.

<sup>12</sup> M. Szulakiewicz, *Filozofia jako hermeneutyka*, p. 256.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 264–265.

is used for a man to be himself. He needs the unveiling of the sense to know what it means to be human. The existential truth does not necessarily have to be objectified in any language in the form of the sentences. Rather, the truth enlightens the human mind and reveals to it the meaning of man's existence. This is done through various forms of contemplation and reflection on the normal and borderline situations of the life. For this reason, the existential truth is somewhat subjective in nature, because it is associated with subject and personal reading of the meaning of life, which is difficult to embrace in inter-subjective and meaningful language and to communicate to other people. It seems, however, that it dominates the objective dimension of the truth, because it is not freely designed by man, but rather discovered in meditation on life. In addition, a human being does not create it only for himself, and the truth should be important to all people<sup>14</sup>.

R. Guardini notes that existential truth is a kind of cognitive attitude, in which understanding of a thing comes from actually knowing the subject. This truth becomes clear to a person when he builds it into his life. It sets the mood, behavior and action of a person. However, it calls for the involvement of the whole person, because only then it is not indifferent to him, but it becomes a serious issue<sup>15</sup>.

J. Pieper, referring to the views of Plato, emphasizes that man as man has to live the truth. And not only he, but also the whole society is somehow stuck with it, like for food. Living the truth contributes to the fact that the existence both in the individual and social dimension becomes richer. He notes that a natural place to discover the truth is in conversation with other people. The truth in fact happens in a kind of dialogue, discussion and conversation, and therefore also in some language and word. In this language, however, is not important its formal perfection, but rather disclosing of a certain reality<sup>16</sup>.

In a similar way speaks M. Buber. According to him, a man comes to the truth in the encounter with „the other”. He understands the truth like Heidegger. The truth is a way of „being discovered”<sup>17</sup>. The truth would not refer in this context to the content of judgement, but rather to the attitude of man and it would express the authenticity of the relationship. It would have the structure of the triad, which has three essential elements: reference to the reality, encountered „you” and himself. In each of these areas, it would lead to share

<sup>14</sup> A. Siemianowski, *Śmierć i perspektywa nadziei*, Bydgoszcz 2009, p. 178–181.

<sup>15</sup> R. Guardini, *Bóg daleki, Bóg bliski*, transl. J. Koźbiał, Poznań 1991, p. 40–41.

<sup>16</sup> J. Pieper, *O trudnościach wiary – dzisiaj. Rozprawy i mowy*, transl. T. Kononowicz, P. Waszczenko, Warszawa 1994, p. 200–201.

<sup>17</sup> M. Buber, *Nachlese*, Heidelberg 1966, p. 136–137.

fully together<sup>18</sup>. In this perspective, the truth and falsehood would not be so much a matter of articulated words, but rather a form of being. A man would not say so much true or false, but he would be true or false<sup>19</sup>.

The existential understanding of truth leads however to some problems. The principal difficulty is the impossibility of its communication. The only way of access to the existential truth would be a certain type of experience that would open us to the experience beyond the rational discourse<sup>20</sup>.

## Existential truth and religious truth

Given the specificity of the knowledge on the ground of religion and the existential notion of truth we can now show some connection between the existential and religious truth. It seems that the emphasis on this relationship we, thanks to the representatives of the philosophy, know as existentialism. The leading representative S. Kierkegaard insisted that the task of the believer is not enough understanding of sciences, but living according to them. In his view, to know the truth is synonymous with the life of truth. If the man understands the truth in a no-existential way, then he lives in illusion. The consequence of this is the belief that man does not know more truth than he is it. Moreover, the truth is virtually impossible to know, because knowing it, a person must know that to know it is to be it<sup>21</sup>. Faith gives so to the man primarily the existential truth, and a necessary condition for her understanding<sup>22</sup>.

In this context it is worth mentioning the difference between science and building text. The first one transmits objective truth (logic feature of the sentences), and the other one subjective (characterized by a person). The scientific truths may become widely recognized because of their objectivity. The subjective truths, however, are related to the desire for a moral and religious ideals. They can not have a universal character, because then they would lose then their character building. The scientific truths are transmitted directly and objectively,

<sup>18</sup> M. Buber, *Elemente des Zwischenmenschlichen*, in: idem, *Werke. Erster Band. Schriften zur Philosophie*, München und Heidelberg 1962, p. 274–275; idem, *Das Wort, das gesprochen wird*, in: idem, *Werke. Erster Band. Schriften zur Philosophie*, München und Heidelberg 1962, p. 451–452.

<sup>19</sup> M. Buber, *Die chassidische Botschaft*, in: idem, *Werke. Dritter Band. Schriften zum Chassidismus*, München und Heidelberg 1963, p. 764, 886–887; K. Dzikowska, *Ver-Antworten. Martin Buber über Sprache und Dichtung*, Poznań 2006, p. 99.

<sup>20</sup> S. Judycki, *Fenomenologia i filozofia dialogu – aspekty historiozoficzne*, in: A. Bronk (ed.), *Filozofować dziś. Z badań nad filozofią najnowszą*, Lublin 1995, p. 259.

<sup>21</sup> K. Toeplitz, *Nad Kierkegaardem i egzystencjalizmem*, in: S. Kierkegaard, *Okruchy filozoficzne. Chwila*, transl. K. Toeplitz, Warszawa 1988, p. XXVIII, LV.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. XLII.

and the subjective truths, after their quasi-objective knowledge, are the only kind of appeal addressed to the man and calls him to respond subjective, internalization and processing in action. The reaction for them should be no reflection, but engagement and transformation of the abstract content to a piece of personality<sup>23</sup>. It seems that this is the task of religious truth, which is not enough to fulfill the intellectual needs of man, but it should contribute to his development.

M. Scheler sets the issue of religious truth in the perspective of the purpose of religion, which is not so much the rational knowledge of the principle of the world as man's salvation through communion with God. Therefore, the source of religious truth is not scientific considerations, but rather the experience of the reference to God. The relationship with God impresses a human being. Knowing the truth is so well-established in the ontological relation to the divine being, which shapes the personality of the man. Shaping of the man precedes any theoretical knowledge<sup>24</sup>.

As J. Pieper noted, the truth of religion consists primarily of approval of a state of affairs. The believer does not know it, but finds it real. The believer, however, has to deal not only with a certain state of affairs, but also with someone who guarantees that state. He can rely on him. This person is a witness<sup>25</sup>. According to Pieper, the truth in the case of a believer is not, however, the recognition of a state of things, as it happens in the case of ordinary knowledge. On the basis of religion the recognition of the state of affairs is enabled through the understanding that it is a good thing for a man to consider a given state for real on the basis of statements of someone. The special role in an act of recognition plays human will. The man believes not because he realizes something is real, but rather because he wants a good associated with it. The will of the believer is directed primarily at the person of the witness and his surety. The believers affirm the witness finding true what he says. This act of affirmation can not be forced. It is not determined neither repudiation of the state of affairs, nor the weight of arguments. The believer tends to a community with a witness and acceptance of the truth of the matter himself<sup>26</sup>. The mediator in this event may be the language, which words, if true, transfer of certain information<sup>27</sup>. Pieper points out that the important issue is the credibility of the witness. The credibility is a feature, which we can meet in the way in which we come to the knowledge of a person. The syllogistic arguments

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. XXI–XXII.

<sup>24</sup> M. Scheler, *Problemy religii*, transl. A. Węgrzecki, Kraków 1995, p. 55–56, 343–344.

<sup>25</sup> J. Pieper, *O miłości, nadziei i wierze*, transl. I. Gano and K. Michalski, Poznań 2000, p. 202, 206.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p. 214–217.

<sup>27</sup> J. Pieper, *O trudnościach wiary – dzisiaj*, p. 191.

are not always helpful in this cognitive process. The dominant role is rather played by intuition<sup>28</sup>. The consequence of the meeting with the witness is not only affirmation, but also engagement in a certain state of affairs. This commitment is simply something necessary, because faith as a living human act will not occur without the experience of his subject. As a result, a man is involved not only in the knowledge of God, but also in His life<sup>29</sup>.

The relationship of religious truth with experience emphasizes R. Guardini. He understands this truth, however, in a specific manner. He highlights the fact that a person does not look for a rational truth, but the truth of being, that is a sense of all reality. Guardini, sharing the position of Plato, notes that a man wants not only to know this truth, but to experience her. A man should therefore assimilate and live the truth in its full meaning. The truth is not so limited to the judgment, but it provides a sense and the dignity of the human life<sup>30</sup>.

On the basis of religion, according to Guardini, the religious truth expresses the religious experience. This experience refers to the inner life of man, by which is meant not only some mental content, but also, assured by empirical facts, the depth of being. The religious language uses then some contents coming from the outside world, which however indirectly gaining new opportunities of expression. The contents point to the fact that they are only the expression of other contents, which are the objects of the human thought. Guardini also stresses that we can distinguish authentic and inauthentic religious language. With the authentic language we have to deal when a man comes from his own experience or empathizes with the experience of another person. On the other hand, the inauthentic religious language occurs when someone refers to the religious contents for social, aesthetic, or political purposes, wakening the pseudo-religious experience<sup>31</sup>. The task of man is not, however, to establish the truths of faith in the concepts, but to turn them into reality. A living faith is not only pronouncing of the certain sentences, ascertaining of the states of affairs, knowing the truth of the system of concepts, but also its goal is the accomplishment of certain contents and values<sup>32</sup>.

We can not forget that many people pointed often to the difference between the „truth of Galileo” and „truth of Socrates” in philosophical thought. The first of them does not require a testimony of fidelity of human life, and therefore probably no one would blame the scholar, if he would not be willing to give his

<sup>28</sup> Idem, *O miłości, nadziei i wierze*, p. 224.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, p. 216, 259.

<sup>30</sup> R. Guardini, *Bóg daleki, Bóg bliski*, transl. J. Koźbiał, Poznań 1991, p. 143, 300.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, p. 296–298.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, p. 84.

life for any scientific claim. There is a quite different situation with the ethical or religious truth. This truth lives the life of witnesses. Therefore, the death of Socrates is the seal of the truth of his teaching and life, and the resurrection of Christ needs the witness of the disciples, who are ready even to die. The special nature of religious truth makes, that a person can remain closed for it more than for the truth of the facts of everyday life or scientific truth. The religious truth calls for the witness, which is intrinsically directed towards the other man. If so, an authentic witness turns sometimes against someone, it is only a matter of a man who remains closed. On one hand, the witness may be rejected, on the other hand it can occur that a witness testifies in a garbled way or he bears witness to something that is only a pretense of truth. There are not only false witnesses, but also cheated witnesses. Therefore, the witness should not live without dialogue. The witness is therefore influenced not only by communication and education in a particular community of faith, but also by entering into dialogue with all living outside people<sup>33</sup>.

The religious truth thus relates to the whole man. It touches the very beginning and the source of his identity. It includes a human being who is fully immersed in it somehow. He experiences it as a pre-existing. The scope of this truth also includes the question of its ultimate future. In this situation, we need to approach issues of religious truth differently than other questions that we can build as a problem for us. The rationalistic thinking seems to be insufficient, because it puts the questioner in the situation of the viewer. It is because of its nature, which is objective, that religious truth is not an appropriate tool to solve this issue. The only answer to this situation is the involvement of the whole of human existence in the form of faith. This answer is expressed in the existential entrusting growing out of the decision. Man gives himself completely in the act of entrusting to something or rather to Someone who completely transcends it, unknowable and always different. A man risks so completely himself in the faith. Ultimately, therefore, in the knowledge of religious truth man comes to the meeting with God and living, personal relationship with Him. This is also the meaning of religious knowledge in the Bible, where it is not limited only to the contemplation of God, but it is about finding oneself in Him. Thanks to our relationship with God man receives a new and unique identity. Although in the relationships between people, there are some general truths and principles that can be read in the life. They are not arbitrarily imposed, but rather are rooted in the present human truth that exists between „I” and „you” (person ) and „I” and „You” (God). Ignoring these truths and principles leads to killing the same

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<sup>33</sup> J. Gorczyca, *Wartości potrzebują świadectwa*, Przegląd Powszechny 9 (1994), p. 209–211.

relationship. The more because they arise from such liabilities appearing in specific meetings. They base ultimately on a personal relationship. In addition, life and meetings with other people are always richer than the standards. If it is in the mutual relations between people, the more it relates to religion and our relationship with God himself. It is richer than all the truths and standards formulated by us. Above all, the relationship with God either is alive, or it does not exist at all. In this context, knowledge on the basis of religion is an existential experience and understanding through this experience, and not just merely an intellectual concept based on logical and rational premises. To know the essence of God, we must enter the living experience. The truth refers then to the personal ties. In contrast to the truth of intellectual cognition, which is a symbol of light and approval, the right metaphor here is the rock on which you can rely and build your future. On the basis of Christianity it can be seen as well in the example of Jesus of Nazareth. He did not bring the people any doctrine or moral teaching, and this can be read in the Gospel, but most of his preaching was the message of the Kingdom of God, the new life, the God who is love. He called in addition to “metanoia” – transformation of thinking and a new understanding the meaning of life and the world. Therefore, the Christian faith is not a set of truths in the likeness of a set of principles and scientific theses, to which there may be another competitive scientific theories and hypotheses. The Christian faith is a faith in the new life given to us in the particular and unique Person and religious truth seems to have the same personal and vital character<sup>34</sup>.

## Conclusion

The above analysis was an attempt to show the truth of religion as some kind of existential truth. First was presented the specificity of religious knowledge. In this kind of cognition particularly important is the issue of the sources of religious truth and the way of its assertion. The source is always some form of revelation based on the testimony and authority of the other person. It can also be made by the other signs (historical events and nature). The assertion of religious truth shall be made pursuant to the trust. It demands commitment, practice and appropriate focus of life. The revelation of religious truth can have a noetical character and then it can be carried out in the subjective-objective model, or no-noetical character and then it can be carried out in the model subjective-subjective model, aiming at the community of life with another per-

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<sup>34</sup> W. Zatorski, *Refleksje o Kościele i prawdziwości wiary*, *Znak* 7 (2003), p. 100–102, 104, 105.

son. In the latter case, we can note the shift from objectification of God in favor of opening up to his Mystery. An important feature of religious knowledge is the dynamic nature of truth, which can never be fully possessed. Man lives rather in hope for its achievement. Moreover, it is connected with the experience of an individual subject and his influence on one and no other receiving of revelation.

The next step was to present the concept of existential truth that lies in the involvement of the subject in the conducting of a particular way of life. The result is not only his transformation, but also revelation and implementation the meaning of his life. He experiences the authenticity of his existence. The existential truth does not need to be objectified in the form of judgments, but rather it illuminates the human mind and reveals the meaning. It combines the subjective (personal reading of sense) and objective elements (meaning is not freely designed, but discovered in the benefit of all people). This kind of truth demands the commitment of the whole life. A special opportunity to reveal of truth are meetings with other people, where a man can discover his being in front of another person.

On this background, shown is the connection of the existential truth with the religious one. It seems that religious truth is not revealed in order to fulfill the human need for knowledge, but rather in order to live according to it and form a special style of the personal being. Its foundation is the relationship of a man with God, which should impress the human being. The key role is played by the authority of a witness, so that man can come to establish a personal relationship with God and to entrust his whole life. From this moment he starts to involve the implementation of appropriate values that flow from the relationship with God. The essence of religious truth would be, in this situation, the relationship with God, which would lead to the vital consequences in concrete human existence.

As it has already been mentioned the purpose of the religious truth is not primarily to gain the human cognitive curiosity by providing him with a specific set of knowledge, but rather to change its mentality and to shape everyday life. The religious truth is not so given for the theoretical purpose but rather the practical one. It seems, however, that attempts to strip it from all content must be fruitless. There is no religious truth without content, because man would not know what to do and would have a problem with its communication. It was highlighted that the special moment to read this truth is the encounter. We have to note, however, that there are no meetings without content, but we have to do with some set of contents in every case.

It is worthy to note the emphasis on the subjective-subjective condition of the discovery of religious truth. Every religion is based primarily on a living,

holistic and existential relationship between man and God, who gives a new perspective and a new meaning to human life. He also directs the call to man that he shapes his existence according to a given sense. It seems that in this case God can not be reduced to the order of dead ideas, and human life can not be formed by a rigid principles. Both God and human existence are richer than we think. Man should be more ready to engage in the existential dialogue with God, who by signs indicates His presence and wishes to direct the human fate by unveiling its meaning and calling for its implementation.

## NATURA PRAWDY RELIGIJNEJ

### (STRESZCZENIE)

Autor podejmuje próbę ukazania prawdy religijnej jako pewnego typu prawdy egzystencjalnej. Artykuł podzielono na trzy części. W części pierwszej została omówiona specyfika poznania religijnego (objawienie przez znaki jako źródło prawdy religijnej, sposób asercji prawdy na mocy zaufania oraz zaangażowania życia) oraz dynamiczny charakter prawdy religijnej (związek z doświadczeniem indywidualnego podmiotu). W części drugiej przedstawiono egzystencjalną koncepcję prawdy (zaangażowanie się podmiotu w prowadzenie określonego sposobu życia prowadzące do jego przemiany, odsłonięcie przed człowiekiem sensu jego życia, doświadczenie autentyczności swjej egzystencji). W części trzeciej zostały ukazane związki prawdy egzystencjalnej z prawdą religijną (zasadniczym celem prawdy religijnej jest kształtowanie bytu osobowego prowadzące do nawiązania osobowej więzi z Bogiem).

## NATURE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH

### (SUMMARY)

This paper is an attempt to show religion as some kind of existential truth. It consists of three parts. The first part discussed the specifics of religious knowledge (revelation by signs as a source of religious truth, the way of the assertion of the truth by trust and commitment of life) and the dynamic nature of religious truth (connected with the experience of an individual). The second part presents an existential conception of truth (commitment of the individual in conducting of the particular way of life leading to its transformation, recovering to man the meaning of his life, experiencing the authenticity of his existence). The third part shows the connections between the existential truth and the religious one (the main purpose of the religious truth is to form the personal being leading to establish a personal relationship with God).

## DIE NATUR DER RELIGIÖSEN WAHRHEIT

### (ZUSAMMENFASSUNG)

Der Artikel ist ein Versuch, die Wahrheit der Religion als eine Art der existentiellen Wahrheit zu zeigen. Er besteht aus drei Teilen. Der erste Teil bespricht die Besonderheiten der religiösen Erkenntnis (Offenbarung durch die Zeichen als eine Quelle der religiösen Wahrheit, Weise der

Anerkennung der Wahrheit durch das Vertrauen und das Engagement des Individuums) und die dynamische Natur der religiösen Wahrheit (Verbindung mit der Erfahrung des einzelnen Menschen). Der zweite Teil präsentiert eine existentielle Auffassung der Wahrheit (Engagement des Individuums in der Führung einer bestimmten Art des Lebens zu seiner Verwandlung, Entdeckung des Sinns seines Lebens und die Authentizität seiner Existenz). Im dritten Teil wird die Verbindung zwischen der existentiellen und religiösen Wahrheit gezeigt (das Hauptziel der religiösen Wahrheit ist die Gestaltung der Person zu einer persönlichen Beziehung mit Gott).