

2. *There is No Natural Religion*

London: The Trianon Press for the William Blake Trust, 1971

By asserting that "There is No Natural Religion," Blake found his own spiritual voice, what he calls the "Poetic Genius." His conclusion to this work, "God becomes as we are, that we may be as he is" unifies perception, knowledge, and the spirit of man. Because comparison and judgement limit thought, and because our organs of perception also limit us, neither our rational faculties nor perception can be trusted in our pursuit of true knowledge. The "Poetic Genius," Blake claims, exists beyond these accepted, conventional ways of knowing.

Blake presents God in completely humanistic terms; each person represents his or her own God, his or her own savior, his or her own "Poetic Genius." The root of existence is truth, and truth must be the intent of one's actions if he or she wishes to become the "true Man." No person can find the "Poetic Genius" if he or she desires the truth because the "Poetic Genius" exists beyond desire. God is not a deity in control or above human existence; God is an idea created by mankind and a misunderstood idea at that. The "true Man" knows this and so sees the infinite in all things. He experiences the eternal which lies both beyond conventional understanding and within himself. Living is an intense spiritual journey filled with misconstrued concepts of what is holy and what is true knowledge.

Though simple in design and language, *There is No Natural Religion* is filled with original and creative thought that each reader should use in everyday life. Blake's words and ideas in these two works are testament and proof that he has found the "Poetic Genius."

--- Drue Spallholz '04