Design for Living

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Regard, Concern, Service, and Love

Robert Friedmann
Edited by Maxwell Kennel
With a Foreword by Leonard Gross

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DESIGN FOR LIVING
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To my students

at Western Michigan

College of Education

Kalamazoo, Michigan.

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Foreword

Robert Friedmann: His Life, His Philosophy

Born in 1891 in Vienna into a liberal, non-practicing Jewish family, Robert Friedmann first studied at the Technische Hochschule, earning a civil engineering diploma in 1914. He served as an officer in the Austrian army from 1914 to 1918 and witnessed the war first-hand. Postwar disillusionment deeply affected Friedmann, and he entered the University of Vienna in 1920, majoring in history and philosophy. Oswald Spengler, Leo Tolstoy, Nikolai Berdayev and Leonhard Ragaz influenced him deeply during his doctoral studies. His 1924 dissertation was called *The Principle of Harmony in Metaphysics* (*Das Harmonieprinzip in der Metaphysik*), and after its defense he taught at various colleges in Vienna from 1925 to 1938.

Friedmann began his scholarly work on Anabaptism in 1923 when he prepared a seminar paper on the contents of three Hutterite codices, which gripped him profoundly, setting the course of both his scholarly pursuits and his faith for the rest of his life. That same year, the *Verein für Reformationsgeschichte* commissioned him to edit a volume of Hutterite epistles. Friedmann's first publications on Anabaptist themes came in 1927, and his scholarly efforts led to a host of publications in Anabaptist studies over the next four decades. In 1934 he was baptized into the Christian faith.

On November 10, 1938, Friedmann was imprisoned in Vienna, along with other Jews, and after twelve days he was freed by friends who counseled him to emigrate immediately. He left Austria, reaching the United States via England in the following year. Through the efforts of Yale professor Roland Bainton and Goshen College dean Harold S. Bender, in 1940 he became an

Honorary Fellow at the Yale Divinity School; and shortly thereafter, Visiting Lecturer and Research Fellow in Anabaptist Studies at Goshen College (a position he held from 1940 to 1943). During this time he formally joined the Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, Indiana. He was assistant editor of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1947-1959), responsible for Anabaptist-related articles relating to the former Austrian-Hungarian territories, and for those concerning the Hutterian Brethren—himself writing more than two hundred entries. He was a perennial contributor to *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, and his published books include *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* and *The Theology of Anabaptism*.

From 1945 until his retirement in June 1961, Friedmann was Professor of History and Philosophy at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It was during this time that I learned to know him personally, thanks to his visits to Goshen College where he lectured regularly on Anabaptist themes. He died in Kalamazoo in 1970, and in 1971 a new Western Michigan University seven-story edifice, Friedmann Hall, was named in his honor. Friedmann Hall currently houses classrooms and offices for the Economics and History departments, advising for Arts and Sciences, and is often used for art exhibits.

All of this leads up to the story that Robert Friedmann told me, how a book-length manuscript titled *Design for Living* came into being. In 1954 he taught a course in philosophy dealing with this exact theme. Friedmann was known to prepare meticulously for his presentations, but would then lecture extemporaneously using only a brief outline. So when, several days after the end of the semester, one of his students who had typed everything out stenographically unbeknownst to him, presented it to him, Friedmann was taken by utter surprise. Friedmann then edited and retyped the manuscript, transforming what had been an oral presentation into a text that would read well as a published volume.

Friedmann also told me the following about the nature of *Design for Living*: at a secular university, it would not have been appropriate to reference Anabaptist core values directly—theologically and historically—especially in a philosophy course. Believing that the Anabaptist approach to life held clues to life's meaning, however, he attempted to describe such a synthesis indirectly, via the voices of many philosophers and thinkers throughout history who arrived at some of the same conclusions. *Design for Living,* consequently, was Friedmann's attempt to get to the very center of what a meaningful life is supposed to be about—described philosophically

and ethically, rather than solely historically and exclusively on the basis of theology.

Robert Friedmann never formally studied theology, and was, in his training, a philosopher. But as a philosopher, he came to the firm conclusion that, regarding the probing of the meaning of life, philosophy has its built-in limits. It cannot, ultimately, fathom spiritual truth, which does indeed exist as an existential reality, and which transcends our thought processes, only to be found in another dimension: "Love is no longer a philosophical concept to be defined by reason. It is rather the manifestation of a spiritual reality belonging not to the realm of philosophy but to that of faith" (p. 144). He writes that "Stronger than reason is life itself" (p. 63), and "Meaning is always first-hand experience (what the Germans call *Erlebnis*) and not a rational idea" (p. 93). In *Design for Living* he stresses that humankind "belong[s] to two worlds, the world of the natural (with its urges, appetites, etc.) and the world of meaning and value which would best be called the 'spiritual' world" (pp. 93–94).

In *Design for Living,* Friedmann defines the nature of the meaningful life in a manner that is simultaneously, and to a great extent, the sum and substance of the Anabaptist view of discipleship, close community, and the way of love and peace—without using the term discipleship, yet describing the same in philosophical terms, using the term "design." He writes that "'Design' thus is always maximum ethics for the individual, no dictation from outside, but absolutistic and total from the inside" (p. 116). As for the content of discipleship, Friedmann turns to the Sermon on the Mount: "[T]he Sermon on the Mount, purposely exaggerating in its demands, proclaims to achieve just this: giving direction and meaning to life in its totality, representing a maximum ethics; a 'design,' in the purest sense of the word, 'for living'" (p. 97).

Friedmann has a whole chapter on community, a relatively rare commodity in general society, yet essential for fulfilling life's meaning. At the same time, community needs to be balanced by the individual who possesses infinite worth. Friedmann recognizes that both a radical individualism as well as a radical collectivism miss the mark, forgetting that an I/Thou relationship is integral to a true We-Philosophy. He concludes his whole thesis with a detailed description of the substance and spirit of *the* design for living, divided into Regard, Concern, Service, and capped by Love, which is the undergirding Spirit and reality behind everything else encompassing the Design for Living, for both individual and community.

He dares to say, at one point: "Perfect love was achieved possibly only once" (p. 139), and that "Love alone will eventually redeem this world of man. Gandhi, Schweitzer, Kagawa, Quakers, Mennonites, Brethren—they all believed and believe in this self-propagating force of love if rightly offered. It is like the ripples on the surface of water when a stone is thrown in—they spread into ever-widening circles" (p. 142). Friedmann clinches his inquiry, declaring that the Design for Living is "less a philosophy than a faith" (p. 152).

As noted above, Friedmann developed his ideas within *Design for Living* in the year 1954. He noted that at that time, "although love is the core of Jesus' teaching, . . . it has to be rediscovered in every generation, and in times of confusion like ours, its reformulation seems doubly needed" (pp. 120–121). He spoke to the prevalence in the 1950s of popularisms that in no way led to meaning and fulfillment—such as hedonism, self-interest, self-realization, and even minimal ethics (including the limitations of the Golden Rule as an end in and of itself). But such "isms" are not unique to the 1950s. Each one of Friedmann's categories concerning what Design for Living is *not* are as equally valid in this day and age.

Friedmann held *Design for Living* to be one of his central writings, and wanted it published. He told me shortly before his death that this was his best work! He hoped that it would find the light of day as a published tome. He gave me a copy, entrusting it to me with this in mind. And here we owe Maxwell Kennel our deepest gratitude for having taken on the intricate task of editing the work and seeing it into print.

– *Leonard Gross, February 2017*

Acknowledgments

This book would never have been published were it not for the help of Leonard Gross, who took an interest in my work on it in 2015 and provided extensive editorial suggestions and important biographical details during the editing process. For help in moving *Design for Living* from manuscript to publication, I am grateful for the assistance of the Mennonite Church USA Archives staff, particularly Jason Kauffman who assisted me with acquiring the relevant permissions. I am grateful for the work of Brian Palmer and Matthew Wimer at Wipf & Stock, both for their editorial assistance and for their support of the project. I also would like to express my deepest appreciation to both of Robert Friedmann's sons, John† and Martin, for their substantial support and interest in the publication of *Design for Living*. Lastly, and most importantly, I am grateful for the unflagging support of Dr. P. Travis Kroeker of McMaster University, whose guidance and appreciation of existential Anabaptism continue to inspire me in my doctoral studies.

Editor's Introduction

Discovering the Other Friedmann

As we learn in Leonard Gross's preface, Robert Friedmann (1891-1970) is a well-known historian of early Anabaptist sources, widely recognized for his major English-language studies: *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* (1949), *Hutterite Studies* (1961), and *The Theology of Anabaptism* (published posthumously in 1973).[1] In addition to these book-length research projects, Friedmann wrote numerous articles on Anabaptist history and contributed extensively to both the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* and the *Mennonitische Lexikon*. He grew up in a Jewish family in Vienna and completed his doctorate at the University of Vienna while working on Hutterite codices—a subject that fascinated him and motivated his lifelong study of Anabaptist history. Fleeing Vienna, Friedmann moved to the United States, first to the Yale Divinity School at the invitation of Roland H. Bainton, and then to Goshen College at the invitation of Harold Bender. Beginning in the mid-1940s, Friedmann began to teach history and philosophy at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. He died in 1970, and a memorial issue of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* appeared in April 1974, which included an appreciation by Walter Klaassen, an interview with Leonard Gross, and an extensive (if incomplete) bibliography of his work.[2]

1. See Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries*; *Hutterite Studies*; *The Theology of Anabaptism.*

2. The bibliography of his writings in the 1974 *Mennonite Quarterly Review* issue fails to mention *Design for Living*, but it does include a reference to another unpublished two-hundred page manuscript entitled *Abenteuer eines Täufers in der Türkei, 1607-1610*. The issue also translates a pseudonymous account of Friedmann's own brief political

This is the established history of Robert Friedmann's life that has been disseminated in the Mennonite theological world, but this story is not whole. Several interesting facts complement and enrich this narrative, as distributed on the dust-jacket covers of his books and in the secondary texts on his work. In one exceptional appraisal—the 1987 *Mennonite Encyclopedia* entry on Robert Friedmann by Leonard Gross—there is mention of a work that enriches this story in important ways. At the end of the encyclopedia entry, Gross mentions that "[a]n important book-length manuscript that was never published is Friedmann's "Design for Living," which defines the nature of life in a manner that is to a great extent the sum and substance of the Anabaptist view of discipleship, but described in philosophical terms."[3] In addition to this reference, the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* entry on "Philosophy" by J. Lawrence Burkholder also mentions *Design for Living* as one of the few expressions of Mennonite engagement with philosophy.[4] Apart from these two entries, however, the manuscript has barely been cited in the years since Friedmann's death.

During my research on the relationship between Mennonite theology and philosophy,[5] I encountered these two intriguing references and wondered: how could such an interesting manuscript by a major Anabaptist historian sit unpublished (and largely unmentioned) in an archive for so many years? When I acquired a copy from the Mennonite Church Archives in early 2015, I found my answer. After reading the page-length endorsements of the manuscript by Leonard Gross and Clarence Bauman, and contacting Leonard Gross, I learned that the manuscript had a fascinating history. Along with the manuscript for *The Theology of Anabaptism*, Friedmann had also entrusted *Design for Living* to Leonard Gross with the aim of eventual publication. In the end, unfortunately, only *The Theology of Anabaptism* was published, and *Design for Living* was rejected for publication on the grounds that it would not have a significant-enough readership. But upon reading the manuscript I began to believe that this assessment was not the case, not merely because the manuscript could enrich the reception and understanding of Friedmann's work, but because the text communicates something fundamentally valuable, and potentially perennial.

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imprisonment in Austria before he fled the country in 1939. See Klingelsmith, "A Bibliography of the Anabaptist Mennonite Writings of Robert Friedmann," 255.

3. Gross, "Friedmann, Robert (1891-1970)," para. 5.

4. Burkholder, "Philosophy," para. 9.

5. Kennel, "Mennonite Metaphysics?", 403–421.

In *Design for Living* we encounter another Friedmann, one who—in addition to the inspiration he found in the history and lived experience of the Hutterites—also found his way to Anabaptist principles through the study of philosophy, particularly existentialism. *Design for Living* represents nothing less than a sustained inquiry into the human condition; not from religious, Christian, secular, or Humanist perspectives alone, but drawing on the fullness of each (and defying the categories of each in its synthesis). Citing what some call the "classic" works of philosophy, theology, and literature, Friedmann takes the reader on a journey toward what he calls "the educated heart." Beginning by clearing the ground with a critique of the ethical and psychological sentiments of his day, Friedmann then draws upon sources from Ovid and Confucius to Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, and he initiates the reader into a "Design for Living." Truly ahead of its time (perhaps even prophetic), *Design for Living* not only deals with the aforementioned existential questions, but critiques the racism, sexism, and ableism of the 1950s, anticipating many changes in theology, philosophy, and cultural studies that we now take for granted, but which must have been revolutionary in 1954. Let the reader take notice *not* when the text sounds dated, but when the text feels far closer to the present day than it does to the 1950s.

Design for Living confronts the reader with another Friedmann: someone who was not only an Anabaptist historian but also a philosopher and literary commentator, someone who was not only a theologian of existential Anabaptism but also an individual deeply affected by the Russian personalists and existentialists, like Berdayev and Tolstoy, and someone who was not only a member of Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen but a professor at a public institution, and someone whose breadth of interest reflected the openness of the Quaker meetings that he attended with his wife in his later life. *Design for Living* is presented here in edited form with the goal of giving not only the Mennonite reader, but curious readers of any background, a more complete picture of Friedmann as a person and a scholar.

In the manuscript Friedmann's writing is both elegant and abrupt, and his method of critique is both fair and unapologetic. My editorial process began with the task of creating a version of the text that matched the typescript found in the MCUSA Archives. Following the completion of a faithful copy I then produced an edited version that corrected the few extant typos and smoothed some of Friedmann's more Germanic sentences.

While the majority of my editing was relatively non-invasive, I did insist upon altering Friedmann's use of gendered language (very often changing 'mankind' to 'humankind'), given that Friedmann himself also uses non-gender-specific language throughout the text, and especially given that he makes arguments that resonate with the spirit of feminist critique, obviously considering his use of 'mankind' to refer to humanity in general. Occasionally I have retained the use of terms like "mankind" and "brotherhood" where the context appeared to be descriptive and historical, rather than prescriptive. In making these changes my goal was to prevent the interrupting effect that constant reference to "mankind" may have on contemporary readers, so as to ensure that this text could not again be relegated to an archive. I have not, however, "sanitized" or "updated" the text in such a way that would veil Friedmann's views on marriage or psychology (to cite just two examples) that might cause some readers discomfort. Apart from these editorial changes, my only other interventions were the removal of two extensive composite quotations from Buber and Nietzsche in the interest of retaining the flow of the text.

I have added some references throughout the text (marked by "–Ed") and provided a select bibliography. However, I have not been able to provide a citation for every case of direct quotation, given both my limited access to Friedmann's sources (most of which are now housed in the Friedmann-Sakakibara library in Tokyo),[6] and the fact that he does not consistently provide the title of the work from which he is quoting. The editorial footnotes are meant to supplement the few references that Friedmann himself included in his typescript, and at times they only specify the work that I suspect he is quoting from and not the page number. In the case of quotations from the Bible, I have generally retained Friedmann's use of the King James Version. In some cases of Biblical quotation, as well as many quotations from Tolstoy and Ghandi, the reader ought to treat the use of quotation marks lightly, as many of these quotations appear to be Friedmann's paraphrase. In general, my goal has been to regularize and modernize the structure of Friedmann's sentences, but not to change the substance or content of his work,[7] meaning that I have not endeavored to provide a critical edition of *Design for Living* but instead a popular edition

6. Von Schlachta, *From the Tyrol to North America*, 222-223.

7. See Kelemen, *Textual Editing and Criticism*, 24.

that can be widely read, and also one that would contribute to the scholarly understanding of Friedmann's work.[8]

Robert Friedmann's contribution in his first book, *Mennonite Piety Throughout the Centuries*, was in part to argue that the Anabaptist focus on outward *Nachfolge* (discipleship) was superior to the inner preoccupations of Pietism. Mennonite historical theologian Thomas Finger suggests that Friedmann linked together Harold S. Bender's Anabaptist Vision with social ethics, implicitly connecting the transcendent theological claims of Bender with the existential and lived discipleship of Anabaptism (Bender was important for Friedmann, both personally and theologically, with Friedmann going so far as to call Bender an "existential event"[9]). Although his reading of Pietism and his historical justification of existential Anabaptism are both deeply contested, I suggest that through *Design for Living* Friedmann can come to be appreciated anew for his philosophical depth and breadth.[10] Friedmann's book *A Theology of Anabaptism* also received very critical reviews, one by Vern Ratzlaff in *Direction: A Mennonite Brethren Forum* and one by C. Norman Kraus in the memorial issue of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. Both reviewers accuse Friedmann of straying from his sources, and both fault him for projecting his categories onto the historical materials that he drew upon.[11] Although these interpretive moves do not make for good historical writing (especially by contemporary standards), they may still have theological value. For example, P. Travis Kroeker has held up Friedmann's existential Anabaptism as reflecting a greater tradition of inquiry from Plato to Augustine, and as evident in the dramatic unfolding of certain great works of literature.[12] This understanding of theology as existential—whether evident in Plato's *techne*, Augustine's *caritas*, Dostoevsky's asceticism, or Menno Simon's *agon* of rebirth—for Kroeker, the existential nature of theology troubles simple divisions between church and world.

8. One such contribution may be to confirm the findings of Levi Miller, who argues both that *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* uses "Tolstoyan categories," and that *Theology of Anabaptism* is "a Tolstoyan reading of Anabaptist theology." Miller's essay also mentions *Design for Living*, calling it "a philosophical mix of moral betterment and secular discipleship." Miller, "Leo Tolstoy and the Mennonites," 176.

9. Finger, *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology*, 48-50.

10. These critiques include Roth, "Pietism and the Anabaptist Soul" and von Schlachta, "Anabaptists and Pietists: Influences, Contacts, and Relations."

11. Ratzlaff, Review of *The Theology of Anabaptism*; Kraus, Review of *The Theology of Anabaptism*.

12. Kroeker, "Anabaptists and Existential Theology," 69-88.

This notion of an Anabaptist existential theology as encompassing a broad experience of church and world resonates even more deeply when considered alongside *Design for Living* and its secular (or postsecular) source base and concern. Even more so, the secularity of existential Anabaptism resonates with the life of Robert Friedmann, who himself was not always a clearly defined confessional Mennonite, but also a self-described "Jew who sides with Christ" (circa 1930), and someone who considered himself to be situated between religious socialists and Anabaptists (circa 1952).[13]

Beyond these questions of Anabaptism—which risk remaining in the provincial realm of Mennonite theological and historical reflection—*Design for Living* presents the reader with a unique mixture of ethical and spiritual reflection that cuts very close to the bone of everyday experience. Although Friedmann freely abstracts and distances himself from lived experience at many points in the text, he always returns to it, leaving the reader with insight into both their everyday interactions with others and the workings of the self. Unbinding ethics from its theoretical moorings, and releasing the question of the good life from both Christian and secular shackles, Friedmann's *Design for Living* is nothing less than a call to be instructed by the "world," understood in the broadest sense of the term, between and beyond both secular and Christian visions. These two streams merge in Friedmann without the kind of paralyzing contradictions that many expect from such a confluence. Friedmann seems to suggest that the Christian and the secular individual could indeed become friends and engage in dialogue with one another in the common pursuits of regard, concern, service, and love. As a contribution to both the theology of the Mennonites and the literature on the ascents and descents of the human spirit, *Design for Living* is incomparable, especially given its wide-ranging sources and massive scope. In no other Mennonite thinker of Friedmann's generation do we see such a broad range of interests and sources in the areas of philosophy and literature, and for this reason and the reasons outlined above, *Design for Living* is a late but essential contribution.

Maxwell Kennel, July 2017

13. Von Schlachta, "Robert Friedmann—Searching for the Meaning of Faith for the World," iv, vi.

Introduction

The Educated Heart

"A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

—EZEKIEL 36:26

Strictly speaking, this book deals with one topic only: the description and discussion of what might best be called "the educated heart." Since it will take an entire book to elucidate this idea, one should not expect a definition or sufficient description in this first paragraph. The subject of this book has to do with the business of living. There are many sciences to learn from but there is none that can help us in the most important concern of all our human existence, namely the building up of a life that would meet its challenges and intricacies in their fullness. Too important is life, and too great are its stakes, to allow us just to ride on the waves of chance wherever they may take us. The proper design for living and the endeavor toward a meaningful conduct of our existence cannot be dismissed lightheartedly as a secondary matter, at least not by people who are serious. Life is not child's play, and it demands more than practical skill or cleverness. In a sense, the "educated heart" is just the answer to this central search after a design for living. In other words, it leads to an ever-present and most real concern for the things that matter most in human existence. It will need a good deal of earnest thinking and a wide detour through the thickets of philosophy, psychology, and religion, to make obvious the importance of such a basic concern.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a big word today, and it has a noble connotation. It is almost a keyword of today's civilization, and many efforts and means are directed toward it. Unfortunately a good deal of effort is of an intellectual nature, dealing with the accumulation of knowledge. It is true that modern educators are interested, too, in the education of a well-rounded person, a category which includes sports, the graces of the body, manual skills, and other extracurricular activities. But this "progressive" program grievously neglects the most vital element of the human personality: its moral character, or figuratively speaking, "the heart." Now, should and could this heart be educated? Is there not enough common sense everywhere around us, not enough general decency that by merely living together human beings get all they need in this regard? Or to say it otherwise: while there are many well trained people to guide in academic knowledge or in extracurricular activities, there are hardly any leaders available who could help us in this most central concern of all: the proper design for living, or as we called it before, the concern for the things that matter most. We do have certain moral standards, mores, etiquettes, and conventional patterns which regulate our social life. Whatever goes beyond these standards, however, is considered a private affair in which each individual is left completely on their own. This absence of directives is often praised as the height of personal freedom, allowing everyone to find their own solution. And if they do not find it, or if life becomes hard to bear or even a complete failure, then we just call it the individual's own responsibility. And here the case would rest.

I think that actually much more is involved, and the simple answer above is in reality no answer but the acknowledgment of knowing nothing better. Here then begins the search for a design for living that goes beyond the conventional standards of everyday routine. Such an Odyssey is, of course, not undertaken to judge fellow people but only to find a more meaningful existence, a life of value and worthwhileness, which can stand up to the often-terrible predicaments and the tests and trials through which people must pass. Who can teach us such wisdom and lend us a guiding hand in the confusion of practicality and value? Many books have been written in this field, practical and theoretical ones, books on ethics and the art of living, books on wisdom and the way to "peace of mind (or soul)"—in fact, books on any moral issue whatsoever. Obviously there should be no lack of information on this topic. Likewise, modern psychology supplies us with a new language refined enough to satisfy even the most sophisticated minds. And yet, the general confusion persists, and with it our

predicaments. For it is a long and intricate process by which one's "heart" may or may not be educated, and ever-renewed attempts should be made to help in this direction.

This is no book on "ethics," for it has no theoretical concern at its core, as befits a study in ethics. Yet it will deal with ethical situations. It is no book on wisdom, either, for its intentions are merely practical. I would say that it is a book fitting into the new trend of thought called "existential"; that is, it is interested in the ways by which values can become concrete and real in the human person. Perhaps we could best call the book an existential philosophy of life. The "educated heart" is just a well-suited term for this concern: how to make life truly meaningful and worth its tremendous prize. The *quest for meaning*—is it not a subject worthy of the most serious endeavor and self-search?

Our way will not be a psychological one—although psychology will be considered, too, along the way—but rather one "beyond psychology," for which no ready name is at hand. "Spiritual" would perhaps come nearest to what is intended here, if this word is properly understood and defined. "Things that matter most" can be met existentially but on such a spiritual level, and an educated heart is just this delicate organ which is sensitive to its requirements and receptive to its exigencies. The impersonal objectivity and relativity of the scientist will have little place in an undertaking of this kind. Decisions stand at the very outset of life's adventure, and of such decisions we will have much to say. Modern ethics usually tries to evade decisions in an attempt to be urbane and noncommittal, for such is the attitude of so-called educated persons. Everything else would be looked at as somewhat provincial.

And yet, someday every one of us will arrive at a point where all civilized relativism comes to naught and where we find ourselves at a loss as to how to proceed further. Nervous breakdowns are then often the answer—or rather no answer, as they lead into a blind alley. Life has never been merely a big play, although at times it has been looked upon this way. One cannot shut one's eyes to the fact that conflicts exist everywhere, even under the most favorable conditions. There are conflicts between the sexes, conflicts in the community and in international life, and above all there are bewildering conflicts in the mind itself. Everywhere we are confronted with a need for decisions that exclude easy subterfuges and escapes.

A good case study in this regard is supplied in the life story of Count Leo Tolstoy, the great Russian author.[1] He was wealthy and gifted, widely acknowledged, an aristocrat admitted to the highest society. Happily married, he had a large and healthy family, he was a great writer, he had a robust physique which never tired—could there be anything more to make a life perfect and a man happy? Only one small item was somewhat hazy to him: the meaning of all this bountiful life, and the dark threat of death. Could he forget about it? Conflicts did not delay, and with them tragedy and suffering, ending in a flight from home and a painful break with the companion of half a century of married life. Perhaps Tolstoy was oversensitive. It is true that he was a "thin-skinned" person (as his wife used to call him), and this made life difficult for him. But is not such sensitivity an excellent indicator of an "educated heart," with its awareness of the uniqueness and responsibilities of life? Even though his life was by and large a failure (heroic though it was), we might nevertheless learn much from it. He was no saint and often lacked consistency in his actions. But perhaps it is just for this reason that his life provides us with such a perfect lesson in the art of right living, or rather the art of finding the right design for living. We do not propose that it was a life to be emulated, but we may learn both problems and possible answers from such an example. In the search for permanent values, it was a deeply genuine and concrete life. If it was a failure, it was one of a man down to earth who longed to realize in his existence something which cannot be called something other than spiritual. Only on this spiritual level can be found the answer to meaning and design, and to the question of what, after all, matters most. Yet, the design for living is at an elusive level, and failure to comply with its principles is part of the human tragedy.

All responsible life begins (or at least should begin) with a decision. Often enough it is not a conscious and deliberate act, but nonetheless it is a decision concerning the kind of life that one wants to live and work for, and if need be, to suffer for. One could call this an "existential decision" since it implies a judgment concerning value and design. We have but this one life to be used for a possible design and to be filled with meaning and purpose; there is little excuse for dallying around with it. Of course, changes are always possible as long as life goes on, for decisions can be revised and the directions of life can be altered. If such changes lead to higher planes, we call it conversion. Design for living, as it is understood here, is never a rigid frame or pattern into which life is pressed. Many possibilities are always

1. See Friedmann, *Leo Tolstoi*.—Ed.

open if only we take the business of living seriously enough to visualize the nature and the consequences of our decisions.

Just by way of illustration of what is meant here, let us look around and study some of these possibilities for or against which we make a decision. They will make us recognize what actually could be at stake, and at the same time they will also show what we mean when speaking of the things "that matter most." I propose to consider here, in brief, four such typical designs—understanding of course, that such a discussion has but a preliminary nature without prejudicing any final stand. The four "designs" then are: (1) The Christian way, the term standing here for the ideal of love and brotherliness; (2) The Stoic way, which in a general sense means the preference for calmness of the mind and peace of the soul, in short, dispassionate detachment; and (3) The Nietzschean way, the affirmation of life in its effervescent richness and multifariousness. However, it might, and most likely will, result in a sheer lust for power—if restraining principles are absent. And finally (4) the conventional pattern of modern middle-class life. Its ideals might be described by the slogan: "earn as much as you can and enjoy it as intensely as you can." Whether it be called "pursuit of happiness" or "gospel of wealth," it is a way seemingly more tempting than any of the aforementioned ones. Whether or not it actually offers things that matter most may remain undiscussed at this point. Of course, many more such possibilities exist, and perhaps there is not a single formulated one that would satisfy the fullest yearning of a particular person. But these four named ones are good examples and may serve, in a general fashion, to make intelligible what we mean when speaking of a design for living. Each of these ways has its special value and its special appeal. But such is modern life that all too often we stop at this point and dare not make further distinctions lest we become narrow and too much committed to one particular way.

It is, however, not the philosophy of the present study that all values are relative and equally good, depending on the person who uses them. We do not solve problems by "riding on the fence." Actually even the "liberal" evasion of any decision is, basically, also a sort of decision, although it lacks a real design behind it. The much-praised idea of the free development of a well-rounded personality with its unpredictable potentialities is certainly enticing at times, but its complete lack of directives cannot help but lead to confusion and bewilderment. No, decisions belong to life and cannot be shirked. It certainly makes a great difference whether we decide for the

Christian or, say, for the Nietzschean way, existentially to be sure, and not only as a theoretical predilection. Many pay lip service to the Christian ideal and flock to the pulpits. But it is a hazy picture that they claim or wish to follow, and they rarely go so far as to think through all the implications of the ideal in their absoluteness and challenge. Of course, we admire an Albert Schweitzer, a Toyohiko Kagawa, or to name a noble American: John Woolman, the thirteenth century Quaker; and books dealing with such men find wide acclaim. But here the story usually ends. Existentially we make our home nowhere, being inclined rather to follow the conventional pattern; or as the saying goes, to keep up with the Joneses. Yet that means forfeiting a design, or the chance of making life genuinely meaningful.

To be sure, no simple answer regarding the ranking of designs or the proper choice between them can be given here off-hand. To be dogmatic would be of no use. And to be critical would require a groundwork not yet available. In fact that is, in part, just what we are out to search for—principles of a spiritual nature which govern and constitute life. It could be easily argued, however, that the decisions we are talking about concerning the real life-pattern and the giving of meaning to one's existence are of the most personal nature and therefore beyond the scope of general discussion. It almost appears as if there is no real way toward an effective education of the heart. Preachers and teachers may try, but how is it possible that anybody advises or guides to what is well-nigh the most private and personal concern of a person?

And yet, there seems to be good sense in an attempt like the present, if only the approach remains dynamic enough. Let us make this search a sort of adventure in thought, with the arguments flexible and the mind open for the unexpected. Figuratively speaking, let me invite the reader to a trip into yet-uncharted land, or even better to a certain mountain climb (with a descent afterwards, to be sure). From the summit, high above the lowland in which we are wont to live, we might get a view permitting us, so to speak, to arrive at distinctions as yet foreign to our thinking. Such a climb will prove most necessary in case we genuinely want to separate that which matters most (and therefore is truly meaningful) from all the rest which but fools us and cheats us into false and illusory patterns of life.

It is certainly correct to say that in the last analysis it is but the heart that makes the final decision and tells us which way we should go. It is the heart which sets the goal high, rather than low, and which makes us long to extricate ourselves from the confusion and bewilderment of modern living.

But to this end it must be an educated heart. And here is where we may begin, namely with a study of how to educate the heart. It is the theme of this book—an exciting one, though not an easy one.

Life is given unto us, so to speak, for one purpose only: the realization or the actualization of genuine values. That means that we face everywhere what we have learned to call "the existential situation." It means the need for decisions, and at the same time the human predicament of how to translate into concrete acts what is otherwise known to us as abstract values. That is no small program, and it will require a good deal of serious thinking together. But perhaps the goal is worth the effort.