

People who are never aware of this dimension lose the possibility of resting in the present. As the letter to the Hebrews describes it, they never enter into the divine rest. They are held by the past and cannot separate themselves from it, or they escape towards the future, unable to rest in the present. They have not entered the eternal rest which stops the flux of time and gives us the blessing of the present. Perhaps this is the most conspicuous characteristic of our period, especially in the western world and particularly in this country. It lacks the courage to accept "presence" because it has lost the dimension of the eternal.

"I am the beginning and the end." This is said to us who live in the bondage of time, who have to face the end, who cannot escape the past, who need a present to stand upon. Each of the modes of time has its peculiar mystery, each of them carries its peculiar anxiety. Each of them drives us to an ultimate question. There is *one* answer to these questions—the eternal. There is *one* power that surpasses the all-consuming power of time—the eternal: He Who was and is and is to come, the beginning and the end. He gives us forgiveness for what has passed. He gives us courage for what is to come. He gives us rest in His eternal Presence.³⁾

Accordingly we could say time represented to Dilsey is *kairos*, a divine, redemptive present grounded by eternity. Tillich explains awareness of *kairos* is a matter of vision. It is not an object of analysis and calculation such as could be given in psychological or sociological terms. It is not a matter of detached observation but of involved experience (STIII 370–1). While time represented to Caddy is *chronos* which is passing to death, proving human finitude. None of the Compson brothers accepts human finitude, chronological time as it is. They measured time by their own selfishness and never seize the opportunity of Christ's time. The anxiety of having to die reveals the ontological character of time so potentially present in every moment. This anxiety concerning temporal existence is possible only because it is balanced by a courage which affirms temporality. Without this courage man would surrender to the annihilating character of time. We are aware of the fact that it is not the objects with which the Compson brothers struggle that produce the anxiety, but the human situation as such. In contrast, Dilsey's singing, "repetitive, mournful and plaintive, austere" (SF 232), is symbolic of the realistic courage which allows her to find "de power en de glory" (SF 256) in the midst of the most depressing evidences of meaninglessness, to experience life at once realistically and meaningfully. The name of her realistic courage is faith.

Again as Tillich clarifies that faith is the experience of the self-affirmation of being in spite of nonbeing: by the encounter of God and man in the divine-human Savior:

Faith is the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself. The courage to be is an expression of faith and what "faith" means must be understood through the courage to be. We have defined courage as the self-affirmation of being in spite of non-being. The power of this self-affirmation is the power of being which is effective in every act of courage. Faith is the experience of this power.

But it is an experience which has a paradoxical character, the character of accepting acceptance. Being-itself transcends every finite being infinitely; God in the divine-human encounter transcends

3) Paul Tillich *The Eternal Now*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1963), pp. 130–2.

Also Tillich explains the eternal present is a symbol of eternity:

And eternity is not the endless of time. . . . "What is the relation of eternity to the modes of time?" An answer demands use of the only analogy to eternity found in human experience, that is, the unity of remembered past and anticipated future in an experienced present. Such an analogy implies a symbolic approach to the meaning of eternity. In accord with the predominance of the present in temporal experience, eternity must first be symbolized as an eternal present. But this *nunc eternum* is not simultaneity or the negation of an independent meaning of past and future. The eternal present is moving from past to future but without ceasing to be present. The future is genuine only if it is open, if the new can happen and if it can be anticipated. (STI 275)