

affected the lives of everyone who will pick up this book in 2011 and beyond?

His pantheon included Carnegie (of course), Edison, Ford, and Rockefeller. Each of these tycoons has been subsequently analyzed and reanalyzed by historians, economists, and biographers and their personal flaws placed in the glare of public scrutiny. To Hill, they were not historical figures but contemporary leaders on the world stage—as were Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. He did not critique Rockefeller's ruthless competitiveness, and he was probably unaware at the time of Ford's anti-Semitism.

For Hill, American society and the free market system held the best hope for the world as it teetered on the brink of conflagration—and even with the evident imperfections of his native country (what he saw as its susceptibility to the Devil's machinations), there was nothing on earth that could compare with it.

For individuals who made the personal choice to succeed in life, who resisted the temptations and weaknesses of irreligion and sought, instead, the help of God (called by various names in the book), there was no limit to how far they might go. Limits were self-imposed, or imposed by the negative outside force of evil, personified by the Devil.

So what is Hill's religion? Frankly, that is not important to me. As much as I have been influenced by Napoleon Hill's philosophy and fascinated by his life, it has never mattered to me what church he attended or whether he attended any church at all. More important is the question: What is he teaching us today about the role of faith in our lives?

The answer to that question is for you to decide. I think it is a foundational issue that affects every line he writes. After