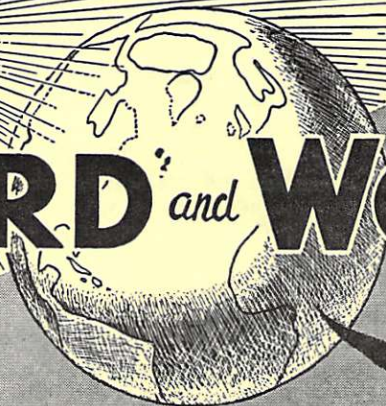


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JULY, 1984

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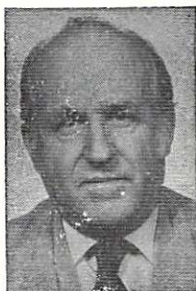
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God's Family

W. R. H.

Loyalty to the Local Church

Why is it that many of our young folks are going to other churches, and feel no responsibility to the group where they were brought up?" This question has been asked in more than one elders' and deacons' meeting. Church leaders equate loyalty with attendance, and the more empty seats, so much more the "loyalty" theme surfaces. In this page, I plan to show that "loyalty" may not at all enter into the question, at least in the hearts of many. "Preference," (even scriptural preference), might be a better name for it. Let's examine the matter under three main heads:

REASONS TO REMAIN STEDFAST

There are valid reasons to stay with the local work. First, the congregation is a family, and, like our human families, it ought to be held together. In these days, many young folks move out of home to be on their own in some distant apartment. It may prove a boon to the adventurer, but the rest of the family feels (or should feel) great loss. But whatever real goals the church family has, there is strength in numbers. Every congregation needs aims that are challenging and worth fighting for. Perhaps we need first to alter our goals, and then advertise them.

There is blessing in the virtue of consistent, dependable teamwork. No great things are accomplished alone.

Again, many who are dissatisfied with the program of the church are absent at meetings where they need to express themselves. There is no greater boost to a business meeting than the influx of several young men, with their criticisms as well as their willing hearts.

A third reason for staying on the team, is the taking advantage of the present sphere of influence. Young people are the chief leaders of other young people. The tide can ebb or flow in reaction to the course of a few good young leaders. Optimism and victory are contagious.

BUT THEY HAVE REASONS

Perhaps the poorest reason (and not unheard of) is a feeling of illwill toward a brother or sister in the congregation. This may be an uncomfortable feeling toward the leadership, due to some untactful remark of the past. Some think that the eldership is "old Fogey" en masse, but have no desire for a closer acquaintance. Still others feel friction from within their own kinfolk, and move out to ease this uneasiness. These reasons, which are personality conflicts, can be and ought to be settled in prayer before the Lord.

There are some who feel that they don't fit in with the group of believers, locally, so they seek compatible surroundings elsewhere.

Many have a basic hang-up with certain dogmas or traditions at the home church. (As one person who left Portland years ago was heard to say: "the Bible, Oh, I never believed that anyway.") There is a place for honest differences, however, and such was the cornerstone of the great reformation and the restoration movement.

Some have the urge to join with a much larger fellowship, so that their young people will have many "friends" from whom to select life partners. While they are personally gaining a larger fellowship, they leave their former group that much smaller by exportation of their own young. This group of "floaters" needs to be very honest in explaining their motives to God, for they may have forgotten that "all things are possible" with Him.

Some are natural born spectators, and like to enjoy a winning team. The pleasantness of blooming program, in which they can leisurely participate, erase the memory of past joys of being among those who carried the load.

A better (and frequent) reason for change is to seek out some more truth on a particular subject of need, as "where to get help for depression," or "living with drink," or divorce, or afflictions. Others feel need in areas of "faith," "gifts of the Spirit," "victory over demons," "how wide is my fellowship," and the like. I trust that all of our congregations are committed to teach the whole counsel of God, but in practice, how can we possibly cover all the ground that we should? We leaders should try to pick topics to fit various needs. May God give us His grace to do so.

There are many today who seek for deeper joy in worship, and having gotten an occasional taste of it, seek (and rightly so) for it as a regular portion of their service. If anything smacks of pomp or empty formalism, the Spirit of God is quenched. If there appears showmanship or artificial eloquence—Ichabod! The glory has departed. Jesus said it all when He said "they that worship me must worship in Spirit and in truth." This has become a must for sincere hearts, and it must be guided and provided through the Spirit. Some are searching elsewhere for this heartfelt talk with God.

WHAT TO DO

Growth is inevitable, both in the pews and in the pulpit (Is there really any distinction?). Our local work must have a clear and proper goal, if it is to merit an audience. Christian education, for real. Bible classes, for real. Worship, for real. Missions, evangelism, neighborhood outreach, counseling, ministration to the sick, prayer ministries, benevolent works. If these be our sterling and sincere aims and reason for existence, then we ought to constrain everybody to join and go with us. Our young people, if interested in God's things at all, don't want to just "play" at church.

We need to get our doctrines and order of worship from the Bible, not the brotherhood papers or schools. Our formalities and traditions need to be examined in the light of the open Bible. We need to be able to give to every man the reason for the faith that is within us.

Every man, in this verse, includes our younger men and many older ones too!

Words of Life used to use for its by-line, "The blood, the book, and the blessed hope." (Credit to E.L. Jorgenson.) This is a tremendous order for our heritage, but it is proper and correct. How far are we missing out? Only the Holy Spirit of God can enable us. He must be our teacher in Prayer, in understanding the Bible, in shedding love into our hearts, in helping us worship, in reaching out to the lost world, in daily teaching and witness.

Lord, answer today's need in our churches by the out-pouring of your Holy Spirit in revival power. Amen.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

THE PUBLISHERS OF **DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS**, has hired Dr. Joyce Brothers as its public representative. It is, of course, a good business arrangement for the publishers to use this wide-known psychologist to spread the idea around the country that **Dungeons and Dragons** is "only a challenging and harmless game." There is much evidence to the contrary which Joyce does not discuss. Dr. Brothers contends that the game is good even though it involves conflict. In a television interview she said that it is beneficial because it shows that good triumphs over evil. The witness of knowledgeable players of the game is that they much prefer the role of **EVIL** characters because they have so much more **POWER**. They testify that the usual thing is for evil characters to triumph. If you or your youngster is involved in this game, you should send to Pro-Family Forum, P.O. Box 8907, Fort Worth, TX 76424 for **Dungeons and Dragons: Only a Game?** 5/\$1.00.

ABORTION AND THE CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION is the title of a new book by President Ronald Reagan. He examines the philosophy underlying the pro-abortion arguments and exposes the "quality of life" ethic in opposition

to the "sanctity of life" ethic. Available from Pro-Family: \$7.95 (address above) plus postage. * * * *

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1984. The main thrust of this bill is to forbid "discrimination" on the basis of race, creed, or sex in any institution which has a recipient of federal funds. I am opposed to discrimination in some forms. But it could be very bad to have to discriminate according to the discrimination of immoral, humanistic, and Marxist-leaning judges. This law would forbid a Christian school from "discriminating" and refusing to place a homosexual on the staff if one pupil were on free or reduced lunch. And you probably thought that our government already had as much raw power over the people as we could take. Well, be assured, it is still hungry. Only Godly vigilance will gain back and retain our precious freedoms. * * * *

A GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE IN TEXAS MAKES THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS: The committee recommends a code of conducts for **parents**, agreement to which would be acknowledged by enrollment of their children in the public schools. Upon enrollment in a guidance center/alternative

program, the district, parent, and student shall develop a contractual agreement that specifies responsibilities of both parent and student to include: 1) student behavioral and learning objectives; 2) parent required attendance at specified meetings / conferences for teacher review of student progress; 3) parent written acknowledgement of understanding and accepting outlined responsibilities to attend conferences and to meet other objectives as defined by the district to aid student remediation; 4) district superintendent authority to seek a district court order requiring parental compliance with the contractual agreement, enforced with court power of contempt.

And there is more, too much more, in these fascistic recommendations. Say not, please, say not, "O, this is in Texas, it cannot come nigh me." There are the same kinds of minds in all the states right now planning and developing this and similar programs to deprive children of parents and home.

CONGRESSMAN JOHN RARICK, SEPT. 17, 1971: (when Walter Mondales fascist child-care legislation was being debated) "If Congress or the bureaucrats were to come right out and proclaim that they were going to take America's children from parents and home and put them all under Federal control, custody, and ownership, the parents of America would rise up in protest and indignation. The program would be reminiscent of Hitler's children. So, what is bad must be disguised to appear good or at least economically beneficial in order to be sold to an unsuspecting citizenry."

COLUMNIST DON FEDER COMMENTS ON GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDIZED DAY-CARE CENTERS. "Accompanying government-subsidized day-care centers, which so many now advocate as the answer to the child-care problem, will come government guidelines, and, inevitably, government control. Day-care involves more than playground games, milk and cookies, and story time. It can also be a learning experience, more appropriately termed indoctrination." Pointing out that the human mind is incredibly impressionable at an early age, Feder says, "No wonder feminists, welfare statisticians and others interested in social engineering are so keen on having the state play nanny. It's an important part of their

overall strategy to Orwellize America."

COMMUNISM IS AN INTERNATIONAL PHENOMENON. So says Soviet Resistor, Vladimir Bukovsky, in an exclusive interview in the Review of the News, July 4, 1984. "Communist regimes are mutually interdependent especially in matter of military and internal security affairs. Right now you have Russian troops stationed in Central Asia and Central Asian troops stationed in Russia. Other Russian troops are stationed in Cuba, and they take the Cuban troops and put them in Nicaragua, Angola, and Ethiopia. Ethiopian troops are stationed in South Yemen and Yemini troops are sent to Ethiopia. Russian troops go into Poland and East Germany, and the East Germans and Poles are sent to such countries as Libya and Angola. They do this so that the military units are always occupation forces as well as having other duties." As to peaceful coexistence: "Let us take their term 'peaceful coexistence,' a term accepted, more or less, by Westerners since the time of Khrushchev in the 1950's. Unfortunately, that term is very much misunderstood. What sort of 'peaceful coexistence' can you have with a country that makes your destruction a major theme of its policy? And what sort of 'peace' can you have with a regime that cannot even send its sportsmen to the Olympic Games without demanding a virtual declaration of martial law in California, a censorship of the press, a sort of concentration camp for its own athletes; and, which insists on the explicit condition that if any of its captive athletes defect they must be returned to the Soviet custody in chains? What sort of 'coexistence' can a free and democratic society have with a regime whose basic premises of totalitarian rigidity are so fundamentally different?"

A STORY RECENTLY RECALLED BY TOM ANDERSON about an organization which once wrote to David Livingston: "Have you found a good road to where you are? If so, we want to know how to send other men to join you." Dr. Livingston replied that if you have men who will come only if they know there is a good road, "I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all." We will lose in all endeavors if we will move only if there is a road.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“Dead, Discharged, and Serving!”

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter. (Romans 7:4-6, ASV)

I hope that you will read verses one through six of Romans seven before reading this article, I will treat the first three verses briefly as preliminary to the three we have printed above, and they should be in mind before reading further.

This chapter of Romans starts with a look back to 6:14, “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” The “or” in 7:1 then takes you on to speak more about the dominion of the law. If Paul is speaking of the Law of Moses, then he has in mind Jewish believers, but we can almost remember that by nature we who were Gentiles were under the law of our conscience, God’s means of letting all men see their inability to live by regulations that demand something of the flesh.

But Paul goes on here to make application that show that other kinds of law are in mind also. For example, our country has laws about marriage. Originally they were made in a background of belief in God’s law, but even aside from that, the laws of our land demand certain things of a husband and a wife. We will not debate here about the divorce laws and other things men have made to set aside the sacredness of marriage and its vows, but the principle remains as Paul gives it—when two are married they have a relationship to each other that they have to no one else and trying to set up that relationship with another brings one into conflict with the law or laws of marriage. On the other hand, when one of the two that are bound together in marriage dies, the other is still living, but no longer is he or she married and that one is now free so far as the marriage law is concerned to be joined to another, to marry and carry on normal marriage relationship without being an adulterer or an adulteress. (Incidentally, if you know Greek, do not look at “hath a husband” in

verse 2, and knowing that it really reads "is under or subject to a husband" and then raise a point about subjection. Paul is here using the woman as an example; if he had used the man, then he could have talked about the subjection of love that requires a man to love his wife and be ready to die for her.)

The point Paul is making, of course, is that people under a law are not necessarily under that law all their lives. In verse four he moves to the point that he wanted, where he points out that when Christ died, He not only died *for* us, He also died *with* us. It was Christ *made sin* (2 Cor. 5:12) that died and our old man was crucified with him. We are now identified with Christ raised from the dead. One of the many paradoxes of the New Testament is stated here we died with Him that we might bear fruit unto God. The dead bringing forth fruit they couldn't bring forth before dying!

In verse five Paul points out that before we died with Christ we also bore fruit, but that was fruit that is "unto death." Could I pause at this point to ask you a question—which fruit are you bringing forth? If you have placed your faith in Christ for your salvation, then you can bear fruit for God, but if you have not done that but are still depending on your own "goodness" for salvation, then any fruit you bring forth is only to lead to death, eternal death. And please do not point to any high standard of moral laws that you feel you are living by. The finest set of laws ever known to man are set forth in God's Law given to Moses and the people of Israel, but that simply demanded what the flesh could not do and led, as Paul here points out, to sinful passions. Come to Christ for cleansing.

The last of our verses this time shows that Christians all have a "degree"—D.D.S.—but we are not necessarily dentists. The title I gave to the article this month shows just what I mean by that. We are dead to what we were held to before, so we are discharged from that law, and now we can serve, as we could not serve before. Paul says, "so that we serve," but can you say, "I serve"? Everything that is necessary to make it possible for you to serve God in the manner He wants has been done to and for you, but God never takes away our choice. Are you serving? I don't mean are you attending "services," as we refer to our meetings. I mean, do you go from your meetings to serve God or to serve yourself? Offer yourself to Christ as His obedient slave from love, desiring to shed forth His love to all around you, so that they can experience the same wonderful thing that has come to you through faith in Christ.

A GREAT WINNOWING TIME

"The time is come when there shall be no more truce or parley between God's servants and time-servers. The time is come when those who follow God must follow God, and those who try to trim and dress themselves and find out a way which is pleasing to the flesh and gentle to carnal desires, must go their way. A great winnowing time is coming to God's saints. Oh may the Lord gird up your loins for the nearing battle."—Spurgeon.



GLEANINGS

Larry Miles

"CHRIST CAME"

Christ came to light the path,
That men might walk therein.
So they might escape God's wrath,
and not reap the wage of sin.
He came to pay the price,
On Golgotha's tree.
To make the perfect sacrifice,
That men might be free.
He came to conquer death,
And reigns with God on high.
So that when man takes his last breath,
His soul need not die.

—Floyd Embry, elder, Farwell,
Texas, in *The Voice*

I AM EXCITED ABOUT BIBLE STUDY

Brethren, what will happen to you on judgment day? What excuse will you give to God as why you are ashamed as His workman? Will it be, "I was too tired to study", "Bible study is boring", "It is too hard to learn the contents of 66 books", "It takes too much time?" etc. Repent! Be ready and thankful to have the privilege to study. Learn its great message and lovingly try to apply it daily. . . . Get excited about Bible Study!

—Steve Eckstein, Director: Church of Christ
Bible Chair, Portales, New Mexico

"DO YOU PRAY?"

"Before I went to sleep last night, I asked my God to forgive me for every wrong that I had committed in His sight, whether I knew about it or didn't, since that last time He pardoned me and I stood clean before Him. I believe in that sense in the continuing cleansing of the Blood of Christ. And I don't believe that I got up this morning guilty of anything that I did yesterday that was wrong that I asked my God to forgive me—am I wrong about that?"

—Connie Adams, in *Searching the Scriptures*

CONSTANT CLEANSING

"Constant cleansing is the hope in the heart of every child of God—the "strong consolation" and "hope which is the anchor of the soul"

(Hebrews 6:18, 19). Please consider the following:

1. Constant cleansing for the faithful child of God is a real necessity: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). We have to have it or else we are lost at any time we make the slightest error in God's sight.

2. Constant cleansing for the faithful child of God is a genuine reality: "If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Thus, if we continue with a contrite confession, a humble penitence and an effectual prayer, God forgives the faithful one.

3. Constant cleansing for the faithful child of God is without a satisfactory alternative. If it is not this, then it is utter hopelessness, despair and futility. Only the arrogant and proud would dare hope without the assurance of constant forgiveness through the blood of Christ—Rev. 1:5.

—Leslie Diestelkamp, quoted in *Vanguard*

THE GRACE OF GOD

In the self-reliance position, the grace of God becomes a system of Russian roulette in which the Christian prays that he will die with the chamber empty, but never knows or has any real assurance of salvation. If I believe this, I would give up any attempt to live the Christian life in hope of salvation. I believe that Daniel Sommer was about right when he said, "The time will never come, while we shall remain in the flesh, that we shall be able to do everything that we know to be good and do it in a faultless manner."

—Earl Kimbrough

Until next time, Maranatha!

Two Kinds of Sin

C. Dennis Kaufman

Snakes! The vast majority of people are frightened by unsuspecting encounters with them. There is a lady in our congregation who finds it extremely difficult to see a snake and remain conscious at the same time. To most, all snakes are bad, but as we know there are some that can kill.

As we closely examine Scripture we also find that sin falls into similar categories. All sin is abhorred by God, but both the Old and New Testaments make it clear that one category of sin is considerably more destructive.

The first notice of this distinction came as I studied the lives of Saul and David.

When Saul became king he was a very humble man (1 Sam. 10:17-25). God blessed him in his rise to power and helped him in his battles against the Philistines. As Saul grew in power he also seemed to grow in his pride. Two vital mistakes were made which cost him his throne. The first sin occurred when he failed to wait for Samuel to offer a sacrifice (1 Sam. 13:8-14). The battle looked bad. Samuel was late, and he felt as if he had to invoke God's blessing. Knowing that only a priest was legally able to offer a sacrifice, Saul took the

matter into his own hands. God was outraged. On another occasion Saul was explicitly told to annihilate an Amalekite city. The sins of the Amalakites had brought God's wrath upon them and Saul's army was to be the instrument of this wrath. However, rather than obey God completely Saul kept the best animals and took Agag the king as a captive. When Samuel found out about this he condemned Saul with intensity and it seems at this point God departed from Saul and looked for another to reign over his people (1 Sam. 15:1-35). Saul digressed from God's way more and more until he was finally wounded in battle and chose to fall upon his own sword. God's judgment of Saul was indeed severe.

Now let's depart temporarily from this scene to examine the life of David. He also was a very godly man and all the days of his life he strove to please the Lord. However, at one point David noticed a lovely young woman bathing on her rooftop. He summoned her to his home and the result of that meeting was the conception of a child. David panicked and tried to cover the potential scandal by bringing her husband home from battle that it might appear he fathered the child. This did not work because Uriah would not go home to his wife while others were fighting on the front lines. So David arranged for Uriah's commander to have him put in the heat of the battle so his death would be assured. Uriah was killed. So in a short time David had committed adultery and murder.

Now considering the outcome of Saul one might think David too would be ousted from the throne. But not so!

Although David was sternly rebuked by Nathan the prophet and suffered many earthly consequences as a result of his sin, God continued to bless him as a king and expand his empire.

At first glance this seems very puzzling. Why remove His Spirit from Saul but continue to bless David? Many would even consider David's more serious than Saul's. Is God a respecter of persons? Is He unfair in His dealings with man? I believe the answer to these questions is found in Numbers 15:22-36.

This passage from the Old Testament Law enlightens us concerning two kinds of sin. The first category is unintentional sin and seems to include sin that occurs as a result of weakness and ignorance. On the other hand the law sternly condemned rebellious high-handed sin. This means a flagrant presumptuous breaking of a well-defined command. The account of the Sabbath breaker in this section is an example of sin with a high hand. This person must have decided that he did not care what God said, he was going to do what he wanted.

Notice the unintentional sin can be forgiven by the compassionate high priest, but the rebellious sin brings separation from God and the community.

To show this is not simply an Old Testament concept we see the same idea repeated in the epistle to the Hebrews. Hebrews 4:14-5:2 shows the compassion and mercy of Jesus as our high priest when we are wayward or ignorant. Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:26 however re-emphasize the fact that those who abuse God's grace and rebelliously sin against Him after knowing the truth are cut off from God.

I believe this explains the treatment of Saul and David. Saul knew he could not offer the sacrifice but he did it anyway. He knew God's plan for the Amalekites but he must have thought his plan was better so he openly defied God's clear command. This exposed his proud, arrogant heart and brought God's judgment.

David's sin while of great magnitude never changed his feelings about God Himself. When confronted with his sin his heart melted and he realized what a horrible thing he had done. He humbly repented and thus God was still able to use him as king.

Thus Saul's sin proceeded from the heart, a rebellious intentional departure from God's will, while David's sin was a sin of the flesh which resulted from his weakness.

If this deduction be correct, God's treatment of others in the Scripture is seen more clearly. People like Cain, Nadab and Abihu, Ananias and Sapphira obviously had rebellious hearts. Abraham, Moses, Noah, and Peter committed sins that were just as severe in our eyes but their failures were because of weakness and ignorance. Their hearts remained open to God's will and their faith continued throughout their lives.

I believe this rather deep concept can be simplified by way of the following parable. There was once a certain teacher who had two students. One student did his very best. He always made an effort at his home homework, always was attentive in class, and even stayed after school on many occasions to receive special tutoring. However, despite all of this effort the student was not able to muster a passing grade. The other student was considerably brighter but he never did his homework and habitually disrupted the class and rebelled against the teacher's authority. When it came time to give report cards, the two students had exactly the same numerical grade. Now I ask you to which student would the teacher most likely show mercy. And so God is with us.

When examining this truth at the practical level we see the manifold wisdom of God. As we look at these examples we see great encouragement for the Christian who is striving to do God's will. We find mercy and grace and Jesus Himself as our high priest ministers compassion to our weary hearts, even though our righteousness is far from acceptable in God's sight.

However for those who would abuse God's grace and harden their hearts, there is greatest of warnings.

My Love/Hate Affair with Fasting

Neil Gallagher

Yesterday, I fasted. I hated it. It was 20 degrees and gray. I was cold, hungry and pouting. I stopped at a long red light beside Dunkin' Donuts. I resented people seated on pink-cushioned stools, pressing hot, white-porcelain cups against their lips and sucking in streams of creamed coffee. I watched them rip chunks of chocolate-glazed doughnuts between their teeth and lick sugar flakes from their fingers. I resented that they were warm and full.

I fast each Monday. I have a love/hate affair with it. But I stick with it for six reasons:

One, I'm addicted to food. Once I start eating, I don't want to stop. A drug addict thinks only of the next fix, the alcoholic, of the next drink. When I eat, stacking my stomach with pizza, smashing a hamburger between my teeth, or bathing my tongue with strawberry shakes, I want to keep going. I'm tempted to think not of work or service, but food, food, food.

"Yuh, okay, Sweetie . . . and, uh while you're there put a little more gravy on it." (Well, I *have* to eat seconds; It makes my wife feel good.)

9 P.M.: !!Uh, Sweetie, while you're in the kitchen, bring me out some sherbet please." (Well, *everyone* snacks at night.)

Along with sherbet, I plunge my fist in a vanilla-wafer box. (Can't eat sherbet by itself, you know.)

This is followed by an apple, a sandwich, a glass of milk or something else "so that a sweet taste won't stay in the mouth."

Once I start shoveling forkfuls of food and crunching snacks, I will not stop. I keep on shoveling and crunching, regardless of time, weight, or expenses. And I always find excuses to deceive myself.

Fasting on Mondays kicks me in the slammer, protecting me from food. It's a slap in the face, stinging all week. I'm no longer driven to food. "I'm in control of it, not vice versa.

Two, I don't have a weight problem, and I don't intend to wait until I have one to say no to food. Fasting screams at me: Your body is a divine building, a home for God's Spirit.

Teaching me to be a good housekeeper, fasting shoves me on the track. Not just on Mondays, but all week.

Fasting reminds me that it's dumb to wait until belly swims over belt before I discipline my body. It reminds me that if I wait to exercise until I am a flabby 40-year-old, I risk straining a weak heart muscle .

Three, fasting rearranges my priorities.

We eat to stay alive and healthy. I know that now. I didn't before.

I used to arrange my schedule around: (1) breakfast, (2) coffee and doughnuts at 10, (3) lunch at 12, and (4) big supper at 6 (I used to spend more time eating at night than reading to the kids). Very subtly—almost unconsciously—I arranged my schedule to meet someone at lunchtime who'd probably suggest lunching while talking (it didn't matter who paid for it as long as I got the chance to eat). I arranged to visit people at home not always on the basis of their needs, but on the basis of who'd most likely feed me cake and coffee.

My schedule revolved around food.

Fasting on Mondays reminds me that I need to go to the "filling station" only once in a while; that food is for fuel, not mainly for fun.

Four, since fasting cuts not only excess food but *substance* food, I'm remembering each week that the world's hungry will be fed only when the rich are willing to give from substance, not just excess. And the world's definition of "rich" is: people who eat three meals a day,

or can if they want to.

Since I began fasting, I've had more dollars to send to hungry people. I estimate that by not eating on Monday, I save at least three dollars, which I'm then able to send to a famine-fighting organization.

Five, fasting reminds me of hunger and provokes me to count my blessings. It's been a long time since I've felt forced hunger in a freezing tenement.

Living in a slum-tenement, my mother refused to yield to slum-mentality and so she inspired me to try college. I got a degree and got rich, earning \$75 a month while a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand. I ate three meals a day. That was ten years ago, and I've been eating three meals a day ever since (or can, if I want to). I forget what hunger is. On Mondays I remember.

Six, fasting cripples Satan, reducing the sphere of his attack on me. God gave Satan temporary reign over the earth and its material parts, one of which is my body (Job 1; 1 Peter 5:8). My body is his bait, prey, and hunting ground. The more I deny the fleshly appetites of the body, the more I deny Satan access to my body. Constant eating—meal after meal, day after day—depletes energy, rapes discipline, smothers my intimacy with God, and opens avenues of attack for Satan. Relentless eating makes both flesh and spirit flabby. And twenty-one meals a week is (for me) relentless eating. Fasting on Mondays is a punch in Satan's face, driving him away from this body.

There are extremes of fasting, I've discovered. Fasting does not mean I deny food and its proper enjoyment. I now enjoy food more since I'm in control of it and not it, me. My wife bakes Mexican enchiladas dripping with yellow cheese and fire-red sauce, onion rolls—soft, hot and tangy—bursting with a cloud of steam when ripped open, and chocolate cheesecake, laced with white, crunchy coconut. I love them and want to enjoy them, but not be controlled by them.

And no one forces me to fast. Nor I, others. Whenever priests, preachers, deacons or elders dictate a decision that on such and such a day everyone must fast, they're out of line. Fasting is voluntary, between each person and God.

Another extreme is dictating how to do it. I fast from Sunday night to Tuesday noon, usually with water and sometimes juice. I know Christians who fast for 10 days, taking only liquids. I know other Christians who can fast only from bedtime to noon the next day. Everyone's metabolism is different.

Another extreme is not fasting at all. —from *World Vision*



God's appalling words: 'I never knew you. Depart from me.' "In some sense, as dark to the intellect as it is unendurable to the feelings, we can be both banished from the presence of Him who is present everywhere and erased from the knowledge of Him who knows all. We can be left utterly and absolutely outside—repelled, exiled, estranged, finally and unspeakably ignored. On the other hand, we can be called in, welcomed, received, acknowledged." —C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

PRICE TALKS:

RIGHT TO LIFE

William A. Price

Our Declaration of Independence states that men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. That among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The founders of America saw that man is entitled to life and that life under God should be free. Actually, liberty is something which only God can give. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians tells us, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Jesus instructs that we might have life, and that more abundantly.

Since life is part of God and in the eternal sense there is no life apart from Him, it is appropriate that we consider man's right to life. In World political circles much is being said about *human rights* although there has never been a time in history when more men are being deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Even in America the rights of the citizen erode away day by day because of the inertia of the people and the diligence of those who would subjugate them.

"Right of Life" has become a phrase around which many people have gathered various beliefs and practices. Initially, it was primarily a Roman Catholic movement to stop the killing of the unborn. It has been expanded to include efforts to combat euthanasia or mercy killing. Abortion and euthanasia actually go hand in hand in their philosophy and political activism. Massed behind this movement we find such organizations as the National organization of Women, the ERA movement, League of Women Voters, American Civil Liberties Union, and just about every liberal organization one can call to mind, including some Protestant denominations. The principles of abortion and euthanasia are part of the Bolshevik philosophy. Tens of millions of people, many of them Christians, have been destroyed in Russia since 1918. This has also been true on a dreadful scale in Communist China. How much easier for those who are involved in negating God to destroy the people before they are born, so that they never have a chance to accept Christianity.

When we begin to kill and to accept killing as a way of life we are well on the way to our own self-destruction. Today we see on every hand good men doing evil in the guise of doing good. The great and total immorality launched into the world by Lenin, Stalin and Hitler has become acceptable as a way of life. Even some accept it as a part of Christianity. If this were not so, there would have been a great outcry of indignation by someone, be it Pope or President, or some man who represents God or humanity. But there is silence.

England, Canada and America did not come about by accident. Christians are well aware that God Himself established our civilizations. Apart from Him there would be only paganism and darkness. Jesus has given us our lands, our hopes and in Him lies our future.

May we truly thank God for the accomplished redemption of this world and for His Hope, our only Hope for life in future days.

May we who love His life in us continue to labor without ceasing to guarantee that the right to life, to eternal life not be deprived to anyone.

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Martin Luther

James C. Hefley

"I am the son of a peasant," Martin Luther declared. "My father was a poor miner and my mother carried the wood from the forest on her back."

And it was true: far from being an emperor or a pope, Martin Luther was a humble churchman with peasant ancestors, but he became the most influential man of 16th-century Europe. Because of his words and deeds, the history of Christendom and the world were decisively changed.

At five years of age Martin went to a school where the application of knowledge was assisted by a handy teacher's switch. He readily learned the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, rudiments of reading and writing, and Latin grammar. "During one single morning," Martin recalled, "I was beaten with 15 strokes." Yet he loved school.

"Martin, I want you to be a lawyer," his peasant father told him. "I am poor, but God giving me strength, you will have the best of schooling."

At 14, Martin was sent to school at Magdeburg. Tuition was free but students had to pay for their keep. With other poor lads, he sang before the houses of the wealthy and begged for food.

"Whoever wants to study thoroughly must go to Erfurt," was a common saying. In 1501 the name Martin Luther was penned on the matriculation book of Germany's most renowned university.

Luther began his school day with prayer, following his motto, "He who prays aright has finished his studies more than half." He listened attentively, asked questions that revealed a brilliant mind, and when not in class was found in the library.

"Here's a whole Bible!" he exclaimed one day as he prowled among precious books. Never had he seen one before. Eagerly thumbing through the musty pages, he thought in amazement, "There is much more here than I have heard the priest read." He happened to look first at the story of Hannah and Samuel. Falling to his knees, he prayed, "Lord, make me as pious and as useful as Samuel."

In 1502 Luther was given the Bachelor of Philosophy degree. Three years later he received his M.A., ranking second in his class. Next was scheduled law studies and after that a legal career. But Luther had a terrible dread of death, and when a lightning bolt struck perilously close during a violent electrical storm, he cried out a desperate vow that he would become a monk, and make sure of going to

Heaven. On July 17, 1505, the heavy cloister doors of an Augustinian monastery opened to admit him.

He pushed himself to become a model of monkish piety. Sometimes he fasted for three days. He cast off his blankets and almost froze in penance for his sins. Still his unbearable burden of guilt hung on his soul. "My sin, my sin!" was the constant cry of his heart.

Dr. John Staupitz, the vicar-general of the order, encouraged Luther to read the Bible. For weeks Luther meditated—particularly upon the doctrines of Paul. "The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth . . . For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16, 17).

Then Luther and another monk were sent on a fateful trip to Rome. "Hail, thou Holy City!" cried Luther beholding the city. "I must get for myself and my relatives all the spiritual benefits available here."

He plunged into a frenzied activity of saying confession, celebrating mass at sacred shrines, visiting the catacombs, and venerating every sacred relic he could find. But the Italian priests' levity and irreverence in observance of mass dismayed him. "Hurry up," they would say impatiently as he devoutly intoned the prayers.

On his knees, he climbed the steps of the Scala Sancta, reputed to be the staircase from Pilate's palace in Jerusalem. "Surely if I ascend the steps Jesus climbed, I will satisfy God," he told himself. But peace of heart did not come; instead he remembered the lack of piety and purity in the church's capital city, and he returned to Germany in despair of soul.

In 1512 Luther was appointed professor of moral philosophy at Wittenberg University. That same year the school made him a doctor of theology.

More and more Luther read the Bible; Romans, Galatians, and The Psalms became a part of him. Slowly a new light dawned: the righteousness of God is not only an attribute of Diety, but God in His love freely gives His righteousness to the believer. "The whole of the Bible, even Heaven itself, was open to me," exclaimed Luther.

The professor began to lecture from the Bible. Preferring to be called doctor of the Holy Scriptures instead of doctor of divinity, he began drawing some of Germany's keenest minds to his lectures. "We cannot merit the forgiveness of sins by our own works or by the discipline of the law," they heard him maintain. "Jesus bore our sins and His favor is to be received by faith alone."

Luther's star rose higher in scholastic and religious circles. His printed sermons sold so fast that a reprint of the first sheets was necessary before the last ones came off the press.

Then on October 31, 1517, the battle lines began to form. Wittenberg was crowded with visitors who came to celebrate the anniversary of the Castle Church. That morning, students discovered tacked on the church door a set of 95 written subjects for discussion. Signed by Professor Luther, they boldly challenged the Roman church on several important doctrines.

"In four weeks they had spread through Christendom as though angels were the postmen," wrote an observer.

"Ho, Ho!" cackled an aged churchman. "The man has come who will banish darkness from our schools and churches."

Luther's sentences hit broadside the indulgence-peddling of the notorious Tetzal. This collector of money for the pope was hawking the forgiveness of "any and all sins" about Germany.

"As soon as the coin rattles in the chest, the soul ascends from purgatory to Heaven," Tetzal promised the superstitious people. But when Luther publicly declared that "a true Christian can enjoy remission of sin without letters of pardon," Tetzal's revenues began dropping. With the support of the church leaders, Tetzal thundered,

When Pope Leo's attention was called to the theses, he merely remarked, "Oh, some drunken German has written them; as soon as he is sober he will speak differently." However, the following August the pope took action. "You are summoned to appear in Rome within 60 days and answer the charge of heresy," the papal letter said.

Luther knew a trip to Rome meant death. He petitioned his powerful political friend, Prince Frederick the Wise. Frederick asked Pope Leo to "grant Luther a hearing before the papal legate at Augsburg." Not wanting to widen an already existing breach between the German princes and the church, the pope gave consent. After he received a safe-conduct promise from the German emperor, Maximilian, Luther met Cajetan, the pope's legate.

"Show me my errors." Luther asked courteously. Cajetan mentioned two of the theses. Luther started a discussion. The cardinal broke him off: "Revoke today, or I shall condemn all your theses." There were two more meetings, but the legate was adamant, finally demanding, "Revoke, or do not come again before my eyes."

Luther escaped from the city in the dead of night and went immediately to Wittenberg. Germany held its breath, waiting for the sentence of excommunication. But the pope cautiously decided to wait.

Then Dr. Eck, a prominent theologian, challenged Luther's colleague Carlstadt to debate in Leipzig. Luther soon interjected his voice in the debate, declaring, "The head of the Church is Christ. The Church can exist independent of the pope and cardinals. No Christian can be compelled to hold any doctrine which is not contained in Holy Scriptures. Only the Bible is infallible. Even councils may err, and have erred." Eck closed the dispute by pronouncing Luther a heathen and publican.

Luther started writing and began giving a steady flow of orders to his printer. "Your opinions may result in overthrowing the tradition of centuries," timid friends cautioned.

"What do I care for that?" Luther retorted. "The Word of God must take the precedence."

On June 15, 1520, Pope Leo X signed the decree severing Luther from the Roman church and ordering any faithful Christians to arrest him on sight. The powerful Prince Frederick protested and insisted that Dr. Luther be tried before impartial judges.

Emperor Maximilian died and the crown went to his grandson Charles, king of Spain. Aware of Luther's influence with the masses, the emperor's confessor called Luther before the Diet of Worms "to

give information concerning his books and doctrines."

Though riding in a plain wagon, Luther received popular acclaim in Worms that would have honored a great king. Waiting in the bishop's court was the cream of German nobility, the emperor and his princes, and the leading churchmen. On display was a pile of books.

"They are all my books," Luther admitted after examining them.

Denied anything but a "yes" or "no" answer, Luther pleaded for time to consider. He was given until the following day when again he stood before the great assembly. Trembling with emotion, he launched into such a brilliant defense of his convictions that his opponents could not silence him until the end.

"I am a man, not God," he said humbly at the conclusion. "Show me my errors by proofs from the Bible, and I shall be the first to throw my books in the fire. But unless I shall be convinced by the testimonies of the Scriptures, I cannot recant anything, since I cannot act against my conscience. Here I stand! I cannot do otherwise!"

Luther's words shook Worms like an earthquake. Princes and nobles thronged Luther's house. Fearful of an uprising from the people, the emperor extended Luther's safe-conduct. Finally he signed a paper that ordered the arrest of Luther and his followers, but the controversial monk had already slipped out of the city.

Where was Professor Luther? Had he been kidnapped? Had he fled the country? His enemies searched in vain while Luther was securely hidden in a mountain castle under the protection of the powerful Prince Frederick.

Even while in hiding, Luther was busy. He set to work translating the New Testament into the German language. Two years later it was on the market. Five thousand copies were snapped up in less than three months. For the first time the common people could read and study the Scriptures in the language close to their heart.

Luther, now excommunicated and under the ban of the emperor, boldly came out of seclusion and returned to his university post. Anarchy was simmering in the peasants' discontent with their rulers and opposition to a discredited church. Within a few weeks after his return, he temporarily stilled the storm. It broke out later in terrible fury, with religious passions added to the social revolution. The wars continued intermittently across Germany for many years, though Lutheranism was safely established.

Luther had not planned to organize a new church. The pope had forced separation from Rome. When the emperor called upon all Germans to "oppose the pestilence of Lutheranism, and to bring back the erring members into the folds of the church," the followers of Luther handed in a formal protest. From this point on the dissenters were called "Protestants."

At 42, Luther married Katharina von Bora, a former nun. Criticism from friend and enemy rained down upon him but the reformer stood his ground. He desired to put his stamp of approval upon marriage and restore honor to womanhood. The marriage proved to be a happy one. Six children, two of whom died in infancy, were born to the couple.

Luther died in 1546 near his birthplace. He left behind him a

veritable library of Biblical commentaries and scholarly writings. One of his most famous works, the hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," is still a shining memorial to the faith and courage of its author. Few men in history have faced such formidable opposition and triumphed in God's strength.

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"I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED"

by A. W. Tozer

I AM crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

This is Paul's testimony, a bit of beautiful-type personal theology thrown into an epistle which is not so beautiful, for the Galatians were backsliders. But in this verse Paul put a little diamond.

"I am crucified with Christ," said the apostle. Probably every version of the Bible except the King James reads, "I have been crucified with Christ." And that is the meaning: I have been crucified with Christ.

Note that this is a little verse with a lot of contradictions in it. "I am crucified"—"I have been crucified." There's a contradiction: anybody that had been crucified wouldn't be there to tell about it. Either he had not been crucified and could talk, or he had not been crucified and could not say this. But here was a man saying, "I have been crucified," and still writing it down with pen.

No one ever said, "I have been hanged," except of course if he were not in his right mind. No one ever said to a doctor, "Well, doctor, send for the undertaker—I have died." If he had not died he wouldn't say he had died and if he had died he wouldn't be talking to the doctor. And yet here is a man who says, "I have been crucified," a contradiction.

But grant that by some wonder a man could say, "I have been crucified," as though he were speaking from the next world back to this one. Then he contradicts himself by saying, "Nevertheless I live." If he had been crucified, how could he live? The verse says, "I live," and then contradicts again by the statement "Yet not I."

Later he says, "The life which I now live in the flesh"—I who have been crucified and yet live, yet am not alive—"the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

I have deliberately accented the apparent contradictions in this, not because I believe there are any basic contradictions but because I want you to see you cannot pass this verse over like you do the Lord's Prayer or the 23rd Psalm. I believe not only that this means something but that it can be made practicable and workable and livable in the lives of all of us.

Paul says, "I have been crucified," and the personal pronouns

referring to himself are used fourteen times. Paul is not bashful about saying "I."

"I" is the sum of my total being. Christianity recognizes and solves the problem of "I." Most of the shallow psychology religions of today try to deal with the problem of "I" by jockeying it around. But Christy deals with the problem of "I" by disposing of it finally.

There are two "I's" found in every believer. First is the natural "I." That is what Paul means when he says, "I, my natural I, have been crucified." Then there is another "I." That is the real man and that "I" now lives. I have been crucified, I live, and yet I who was crucified do not live but I live in Christ and Christ lives in me.

There is no contradiction here, only an apparent one. This "I," the natural "I," stands in the just anger of God. It is the essence of everything that is anti-God, and let me say simply that whatever does not go through the process of crucifixion and transmutation and the passing over into the new creation in Christ is anti-Christ.

We try to smooth it over, but all which is not with Christ is against Christ. "If you are not on My side you are against Me, and if you do not gather with Me you scatter abroad," Jesus said (see Luke 11:23). This is the day of tolerance, yet the most intolerant book in the whole world is the Bible and the most intolerant teacher who ever addressed an audience was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

There is a vast difference between being tolerant and being charitable. Jesus Christ was so charitable that He took in all the great, wide world and gave Himself for those who hated Him. But He was so intolerant that He said, "If you are not on My side you are against Me. If you do not believe that I am He you shall die in your sins."

It was an either/or drawn so tight and fine that it was either get on His side and live or get on the other side and perish. There was no middle ground. There was no twilight zone in the teaching of Jesus, no in-between place.

In this matter, Christainity deals with my "I," and it deals with it by an intolerant and final destruction. God pronounces a stern condemnation upon it and flatly disapproves of it and fully rejects it and says that this "I," this rebellious "I," this anti-God "I," is filled with sin, the essence of rebellion and disobedience and unbelief. This "I" God will have nothing to do with.

There are two kinds of religion. Within the framework of Christainity there are two positions. One is that the Lord came in order to help me, to help my "I" and to take out the complexes and twists that I got into because my mother scolded me when I was a baby.

The other position is that Jesus Christ came to bring an end to this self. We ought not to educate and polish it but rather to put an end to it—not to cultivate it and give it a love for Bach and Beethoven and Leonardo da Vinci but to bring an end to it.

In repentance and self-repudiation and the putting of myself out, I turn my back on my old self and refuse to go along with it anymore and desert its ranks and come over onto the side of Jesus Christ and walk under the banner of the cross from that hour on. That disposes of the old self finally.

That is what baptism is supposed to mean. Baptism is an outward, visible sign and symbol of what is supposed to have taken place inside—that the old self has been repudiated and put away. “I have been crucified with Christ”—down—“and now I live” up.

I do not believe that we ever ought to try to dovetail those two positions. Either Jesus Christ came to put an end to self and start a new life or He came to patch the old self up. He didn't come to do both. He won't do it one way for some people and another way for others. He does it alike for all men around the world.

The whole burden of New Testament theology is that the old self is ruined completely. Its values are false and its wisdom is questionable and it has no goodness at all. But there is a new self in Christ Jesus—a new man in Christ. Only He must live. And from now on we must recognize ourselves to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

The natural “I” takes inventory of what it requires. It hopes to find something by which to escape the wrath of God, something that will make it pleasing to God and that will enable it to do God's work satisfactorily and to develop to the fullest all the potentialities of its nature.

We are all created with a blueprint, and I suppose not very many ever build the whole blueprint. We may build a little plot in the middle and maybe after a few years of hard work get a little addition on it. But there stretches the blueprint in all four directions.

God made the blueprint, and we, as we build, never come out to the edge of the blueprint, never roll it up and put it on the shelf and say, “Thank God, I've got the last wall up and the last self raised and the last arch formed.”

That is what a man looks for in himself, something that will enable him to live a full human life and a full Christian life pleasing to God.

What does man actually find when he looks in his own heart? He finds he is nothing, that he knows nothing, that he has nothing, and that he can do nothing.

The difference between the educated and the uneducated man is that the educated man knows there are things he does not know. The oracle declared that Socrates was the wisest man in Greece and Socrates explained that the reason the oracle said this was because he was the only man in Greece that knew he did not know anything.

So the self, your natural self, will say, “But I'm of Swedish descent.” Well, you're human. “I'm Dutch.” Well, that's nice, but you're human too. I'm a cross between English and German and I'm human. We are all alike—regardless of our racial strains, whether we be from Africa or India or any other country. And myself, I know nothing. I have nothing I can do.

But the new “I” takes control in my life. What does the new “I” have? Ah, my friends, the new “I” has Christ. The new “I,” the new person, has Christ and says, “It is no longer the old, ignorant know-nothing, do-nothing, be-nothing person. He died when I believed in Christ.”

Now it is a new man in Christ Jesus the Lord. And now I am

not ashamed or afraid to say "I" because when I say "I" I mean not "I" but Christ living in me. I mean the new man in Christ.

Colossians 1:27 says, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." In Ephesians 1:6 I am "accepted in the beloved." In Colossians 2:10 I am "complete in him." In First Corinthians 1:30 Paul wrote the "Christ Jesus . . . is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

So Jesus Christ is what we need. He has what we need. He knows what we need to know, what He can do in us, working in us what is well pleasing in His sight.

You say, "That rather leaves me out, then. Where's my ambition? Where's my fame? Where's my publicity? What do I get out of this?"

You get Christ and glory and fruitfulness and the world to come and the spirits of just men made perfect and Christ and the everlasting covenant and the innumerable company of the angels and the church of the First-born and the New Jerusalem, and before that you get all the service on earth for mankind.

That's what you get out of it. But God loves you too well to let you strut and boast and cultivate your egotism and feed your eye. Christ works in us to complete Himself and make Himself over in us.

What a great Christianity we evangelicals have these days, but what a bunch of unworthy people we are—daring to stand up on our feet and preach to intelligent audiences that the essence and final purpose of Christ is to save men from hell.

The purpose of God is not to save men from hell. The purpose of God is to save them unto Christlikeness, to make them like God. And God will never be done with us until the day when we shall see His face and His name shall be on our foreheads. We shall be like Him, as He is.

What a cheap, low-grade, commercial kind of Christianity it is that says, "I was in debt, but Jesus came and paid my debt." He did indeed. But why emphasize that? "I was on my way to hell and Jesus stopped me and saved me." He did, but that is not the big thing to emphasize.

What should we emphasize? That God saved me to make me like His Son and that His purpose in catching me in my wild race to hell and turning me around and renewing me and bringing the old self to an end and creating a new self in me—the purpose of God was to reproduce in me the beauty of His Son. And no Christian is where he ought to be until that beauty of the Son has been reproduced in his Christian life.

That is necessarily a question of degree. Certainly there is never a time when anybody can look at his heart and say, "Well, thank God, I see it finished now. The Lord has signed the painting. The profile, the beautiful picture, has been painted—I see Jesus in myself."

Nobody will say that—nobody—even though he be Christlike and Godlike and charitable and full of love and peace and grace and mercy and kindness and faithfulness. He won't know it and he will be asking folks to pray for him and reading his Bible with tears and saying, "O God, I want to be like Your Son."

God knows that he is like His Son somewhat, and the people around him know it, and I suppose the angels, but he doesn't know it. Humility never looks in on itself. Humility always looks out.

Now comes the practical operation. "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). More and more of Christ and less and less of me. That is the bitter cross. I was crucified with Christ, and now God wants to make it actual. This actuality comes by degrees—peace and power and fruitfulness increase according as it is no longer I but Christ who lives in me.

Which is it going to be—my way or Christ's? Is it going to be *my* righteousness? No, Christ's righteousness. Is it going to be my honor and praise? No, Christ's honor and praise. Is it going to be my choice? No, Christ's choice. My plans? No, Christ's plans.

The only time we hear this anymore is in hymnology. We sing about it, but we don't do anything about it. We are like the man who looked in the mirror and forgot what he looked like. We sing, "Oh, to be saved from myself, dear Lord!/Oh, to be lost in Thee!" and shut the book.

It must become practical. It must become operative. That rich objective truth must become subjective experience or else Christianity is a farce, a delusion. When it is I instead of Christ, it is ugliness.

One of the most beautiful verses in the Bible is found in Psalm 90: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." The anonymous writer of the *Theologia Germanica* said nothing burns in hell but "I, me, my and mine." That is the fuel of hell. How ugly it is, how unutterably ugly. How ugly Nero was. How ugly is that man who murders, the gangster. You say, "I'm not a Nero, I'm not a murderer." No. But the Bible says, "Let him that is unholy be getting unholy still" (see Revelation 22:11).

Culture, education, twentieth century modern ways of looking at things keep the world from going to hell faster than it would otherwise. But we all have it in us. There is no sin committed that you do not have the seed of it in you. As soon as God takes away the salt of preservation, we shall rot overnight. How ugly is self and how beautiful is the Lord our God.

Aldous Huxley said (I certainly don't quote him as an orthodox man, but he said something I appreciated), "My kingdom go' is the necessary corollary to 'Thy kingdom come.'" And yet we dare to pray every Sunday, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done."

What are we praying for? His kingdom can never come till my kingdom goes. When I am no longer king of my life, He will become King of my life.

"I am crucified, I have been crucified with Christ," said the dear old man of God. "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

We must not be satisfied just to quote words. They must become living reality.

Do you want God to do something for you so that it is no longer you but Christ living in you?—from *The Alliance Witness*

Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

Peter Defends Proclaiming the Good News to the Gentiles

Acts 11:1-18

In the previous chapter the Apostle Peter adventured in faith and obedience to Caesarea to proclaim the Good News to the Gentiles. He had overcome, for the present, his hatred of the Gentiles. The chapter ends with the Gentiles being added to the Body of Christ. As we enter into a study of the first eighteen verses of the eleventh chapter we see that not all of Peter's fellow-believers were happy with his actions. Peter is glad that he took six witnesses with him on his journey of faith. Please study along with us as we strive to open up the Scriptures.

PETER IS CALLED ON THE CARPET: Acts 11:1-3

It seems by the reading of the text that Peter and his fellow-workers spent some time in Caesarea after the conversion of the household of Cornelius. It is also apparent that the news of Peter's actions preceded him to Jerusalem. Gareth Reese writes the following,

In Acts 8:1 Luke has told us that the apostles stayed in Jerusalem, even though the Church was scattered by the persecution that arose at the time of Stephen's death. The 'brethren who were throughout Judea' would be many of those who were dispersed by that persecution. 'Throughout Judea' is the correct translation, and we are apprised of the fact that news of what happened at Cornelius' house spread like wildfire across the length and breadth of Judea. It was something the Christians were talking about.

It seems that one of the things the Jewish Christians could not understand was the Gentiles had received the word of God.

Gareth Reese further writes,

Gentiles also—i.e., as well as Samaritans! Cornelius and his friends were representatives of Gentiles in general, and their baptism and welcome into the Church was a precedent. 'Receiving the Word' is equivalent to their belief and obedience. We do not know how long after the conversion of Cornelius and his household it was until the news reached Jerusalem, but the context implies that the news reached Jerusalem while Peter was still staying in Cornelius' house in Caesarea.

In verse 2 we have the phrase, "And when Peter came up to Jerusalem." Was Peter summoned to appear or did he come on his own accord? This is a question that only eternity will yield the answer. In verse 12 we're told that Peter was accompanied by the same 6 witnesses he took with him to Caesarea. In the latter half of the verse the brethren of the circumcision took issue with him. This opposition would later evolve into the Judaizing Party which would plague Paul later. That fellow-believers were taking issue with a position that Peter favored has caused some problems for those who like to claim that Peter was the first Pope. Barnes wrote the following,

This is one of the circumstances which show conclusively that the apostles and early Christians did not regard Peter as having any particular supremacy over the church, or as being in any peculiar sense the vicar of Christ upon the earth. If he had been regarded as having the authority which the Roman Catholics claim for him, they would have submitted at once to what he thought

proper to do. But the primitive Christians had no such idea of his authority. This claim for Peter is not only opposed in this place, but in every part of the New Testament.

It seems, here, in verse three, that they were more concerned about Peter's entering and eating with Gentiles than anything else. This apparent violation of ceremonial rules was not based upon the Law of Moses but rather on tradition. When the People should have been giving God the glory for the victories in Peter's ministry, they were busy arguing about "unclean" foods. Do we argue about unimportant things while the world goes to Hell?

PETER RECOUNTS THE VISION FROM THE LORD: Acts 11:4-10

Here in the next seven verses, the Apostle Peter recounts the events that transpired to those who have assembled. He tells them what led him to be with the Gentiles. Peter had prejudices based on tradition. Even today we in the Lord's Body have prejudices based on traditions. He begins to explain about the vision. In verse 4 we're told that he proceeded to explain to them in an orderly manner what had transpired.

In verse 5 Peter relates to them that he was in Joppa praying. He tells them that it was at this time and place that he went into the trance. It was at this time that the object came down to him.

In verse 6 Peter says he fixed his gaze upon the object. It was then that he saw the unclean creatures. In verse 7 came the voice to Peter saying, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat." Peter recalls his arrogant answer based on hatred and prejudice. Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for nothing unholly or unclean has ever entered my mouth."

In verse 9 Peter recounts what the voice from heaven replies. In verse 10 Peter tells them and us that this event happened three times. Also he tells them that the object was drawn back into the sky.

PETER IS INSTRUCTED TO GO TO CAESAREA: Acts 11:11-12

Here in verse 11, Peter tells those assembled that it was at that time the three Gentiles appeared before him. In verse 12 Peter says that he was commanded by the Holy Spirit to go with the Gentiles without any misgivings. Gareth Reese writes the following,

The verb translated "without misgivings" is the same verb translated "took issue" in verse 2 Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, raised no such opposition as the Jewish Christians were raising.

Further on in this verse Peter tells of the six brethren that accompanied him to Caesarea. He makes it clear that both he and the six entered into the house of Gentiles. Reese writes further on the subject,

"Here we learn that the six that accompanied Peter from Joppa to Caesarea have also accompanied him to Jerusalem. Perhaps we have now learned the purpose for which Peter had these brethren accompany him to Caesarea. They were witnesses with him of what had been done.

Not only Peter, but the six brethren too had broken traditional rules, because they had been instructed to do so, without any misgivings in their hearts about what they were doing. The six brethren have learned from Peter's instruction, it is implied. Can the brethren in Jerusalem also learn?

PETER RECOUNTS CORNELIUS' EXPERIENCE: Acts 11:13-14

Peter tells those assembled of what Cornelius had told him hap-

pened in his life. Cornelius had been instructed to send for Peter. Why had Cornelius been instructed to send for Peter? In verse 14 we have the answer, "And he shall speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and your household."

PETER RECOUNTS THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Acts 11:15-17

Here Peter relates that he had begun to speak to Cornelius and his household. This message appears in Acts 15:34-44. Peter says that as he was speaking, "The Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He did upon us at the beginning." What does at the beginning mean? It is here that we have the only date of the beginning of the church, the Day of Pentecost.

In verse 16 Peter recalls the words of Jesus in Acts 1:5. In verse 17 is the phrase "If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also." The same gift is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and "us" has reference to the apostles. Further in the verse Peter says that since they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ he felt that he could not stand in God's way. Gareth Reese writes the following,

Peter is saying that to take issue with what was done, as his opponents in Jerusalem were doing, was an attempt to oppose or resist God. Who wants to do that? Peter's presentation causes the other apostles and Christians in Jerusalem to withdraw their opposition to Peter and to begin to commend him for what he did, and they rejoice with him for what he did in the conversion of the Gentiles.

THE RESPONSE OF THE FELLOW CHRISTIANS: Acts 11:18

Luke tells us that when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God. They were, as Peter was, convinced that the Lord was behind it all and they were ready to praise Him.

In our next essay we're going to study about the beginning of the work in Antioch. The events took place prior to the events that we have been studying about. It is believed that they fit into the narrative after Acts 8:1-4. Please read Acts 11:19-30. Until next time, **MARANATHA!!**

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN:

Our Hearts God's Home

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

John 14: 22-24

St. Augustine uttered many famous sentences, but one of the most famous is his word concerning the fundamental character of the heart of man. "Thou hast made us for Thyself," Augustine exclaimed, "and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee."

Of course Augustine did not intend by that word to deny the depravity of the heart of man. What he sought to say is that man, simply because he was created in the image of God and prepared for the deepest of relationships with Him, could not ignore God. At

man's inmost being there exists a persistent hunger for God. The fall, however, has wrought complications, and now that persistent hunger is refused, repressed, and suppressed, but it is still there. That is one of the reasons why Isaiah says so often, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (cf. Isa. 48:22; 57:21; 59:8). At the heart of unsave, depraved man is conflict.

Man knows that there is a God, but he does all that he can to deny that he does. Paul puts it this way, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (cf. Rom. 1:18, NASB).

Westminster's great affirmation, "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever," is an unattained goal, because there is no resolution of man's nature and later fall in the harmony of peace with God. That only comes through the acknowledgement of sin and the reception of the peace with God that flows from reconciliation with God through the cross of Christ (cf. Rom. 5:1-11). Man, therefore, is troubled and disturbed in his soul.

It is not surprising, then, to discover that one of the major themes of the Bible has to do with God's initiatives in the remedying of the situation. From the beginning of the Bible to its end the theme of God's presence in harmony and peace with men is told forth. The promises of the Old Testament period look on to the solution in the cross of Christ, and the remainder of the Bible describes all the details in the program that leads to God's presence with men in the new heavens and the new earth. Driven out of Eden after the fall (cf. Gen. 3:24), man's tortured path through the promises and the fact of the historical cross lead on to the consummation, described in these magnificent words of the Apocalypse, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (cf. Rev. 21:3). In the meantime, spiritual man longs for the day, exclaiming with the psalmist, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God" (cf. Psa. 42:1).

The section to which we now turn in our study of John's Gospel suggests an important condition for the full experience of the presence of God in the present day, an earnest of an even greater experience in the days to come in the new earth.

It is Judas, the other Judas the apostle and not Judas Iscariot, who asks the next question in this continued conversation that Jesus had with His apostles in the upper room. It is clear that there did exist a relationship of friendship between the Lord and His apostles, for otherwise they would not have felt so free in asking Him questions (cf. 15:13-14).

THE QUESTION OF JUDAS

Our Lord has been provoking the questions from the apostles by concluding His answers with statements that demanded further explanation, or at least so the apostles thought. In the lengthy answer to Philip's question the concluding word was, "He that hath my com-

mandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and WILL MANIFEST MYSELF TO HIM" (cf. John 14:21).

That word, "manifest myself to him," is too much for Judas, the son of James (cf. Luke 6:16). Incidentally, this apostle, who is expressly distinguished from Judas Iscariot, is only mentioned here in the gospel. He is mentioned once in Luke and once in Acts. From these references it seems that he was the son (perhaps the brother) of James (see Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13). It is possible that he is to be identified with Thaddeus (cf. Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18). Very little, it is clear, is known of him.

The heart of his problem is seen in the verb that Jesus uses in His word in verse twenty-one. It is the word, "manifest." The verb in the original means *to make visible* generally (cf. Exod. 33:13, 18, LXX). Moses wished just such a visible manifestation of the Lord God in the Exodus account. Our Lord, of course, is using it in a different sense, although He does not explain the sense to the apostles.

The clue to the force that Judas sees in the words is found in the emphatic "us" of verse twenty-two: Let me render the sentence to display the emphasis. Judas said, "Lord, how has it appeared that it is *to us* that you are about to manifest yourself, and *not* to the world?" Both the word "us" and the final negative "not" are emphatic in the Greek text. The thing that puzzled Judas is the manifestation to them alone, as He took Jesus' words to suggest.

It seems clear that Judas held the view that most of the Jews held at the time, namely, that the Messiah in His coming would usher in the millennial kingdom upon the earth. Jesus' words, however, are difficult for him to harmonize with that hope. In fact, His preceding sentences have also contributed to his problem. Jesus has said that the Paraclete is soon to come, but the world cannot receive Him (cf. v. 17). And now it is said that the Lord will be seen by them, but the world will not behold Him. He will be manifested, but only to the ones who love Him. What has happened to change the expectations that spiritual men had?

THE ANSWER OF OUR LORD

The condition for manifestation (John 14:23a-b). The important words are, "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me . . ." At first glance it might appear that Jesus does not really answer Judas, but He really does. His answer is something like this: Judas, revelation or manifestation is only possible where there is openness to the Lord, or obedience. And Judas, there is no relish for obedience in the world. The world hates me; it does not love Me. How, then, can I manifest Myself to the world? As a matter of fact, Judas, if you knew what the world and man are by nature, you would have asked, "How can You reveal yourself to anyone?" There are only two classes of men, receivers and refusers. Revelation can only come to the former, and that is why He will be manifested only to them.

In other words, Judas, there are two *parousias*, or comings. One is visible, and that is destined for the future unveiling of the Messiah at His second advent. The other is invisible and has to do with His

spiritual manifestation in significant communion to those that love Him. One, then, is future, but the other will come presently.

"If a man love me" is the clause that sets out the condition for the manifestation of the Son to the believer. Now, of course, this indicates that it is to believers that the manifestation comes, for all believers love Him, while unbelievers cannot love Him, for they do not know Him (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14). That all believers love Him is seen clearly in 1 Corinthians 16:22, where Paul writes, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." From this statement it is evident that native to a believer is love for Christ. In fact, the text is one that bears heavily upon any discussion of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. When believers believe, they truly love. It is the necessary and constant evidence of the genuineness of faith in Christ.

The consequences of manifestation (John 14:23c-f). The first of the consequences flowing from the love of Christ is the keeping of His word (the original text has the singular instead of the plural, "word," as in the AV). In verse twenty-one He had said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." To have His commandments is to make them our own, it seems. Further, to keep them is to observe them, not simply have them as part of our intellectual equipment. Love to our Lord is not merely a matter of words. There must be evidence of it in deeds. One who loves follows with deeds. Morris is right in noting that, "Once again love to Christ is expressed in ethical terms (see v. 15)." And he adds in a footnote, "Augustine describes the man who fulfills this saying as one 'who hath them orally, and keepeth them morally' (LXXV.5; p. 336)."

And the consequence that flows from loving obedience is the love of the Father. The promise seems to have reference to a deeper experience of the love of the Father. One may know a spring's water, yet not fully understand its source. One may know that God loves us, and yet not fully know the depths of that love.

And then our Lord promises a united indwelling of the Father and the Son. Jesus says, "and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." There is a great deal of personal interest expressed in the words of our Lord. We might even render the verb translated by "make" by the words, "make for ourselves," due to the voice of the original term. The abode that our Lord refers to is not a temporary one. The expressions connote a permanent indwelling, probably through the agency of the Holy Spirit (cf. vv. 16-17). Here is the *parousia*, or the coming, to which our Lord had referred, when He provoked Judas' question. It is a reference to a fulness of residence of the most intimate nature.

In other words, between the first and second advent of the Lord Jesus there is another coming of a different kind, one that involves the personal manifestation of the Father and Son in their abiding residence in the believing and loving disciple's heart.

There are three stages in God's indwelling of man according to the Scriptures. In the Old Testament period of time men were indwelt for purposes of indument with power and for limited periods of time.

In the life of Jesus Christ we have an instance of a man indwelt by the Holy Spirit in the fullest sense (cf. John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16). In the Church age all believers are permanently indwelt by the Spirit through the accomplished redemption of the cross (cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 2:16). Paul also adds that there is a corporate indwelling of the entire believing church (cf. Eph. 2:21).

Prepositional phrases in Scripture express in interesting ways the relation that the Lord has with His people. Seven of them are these: He is with us (cf. Matt. 28:20), above us (cf. Eph. 1:20-21), beneath us (cf. Deut. 33:27), before us (cf. John 10:4), behind us (cf. Exod. 14:19; Psa. 23:6), around us (cf. Psa. 34:7), and —greatest of all— within us (cf. Gal. 2:20).

Gossip has written a lovely paragraph touching these things. "It is a poor place that we have to offer him, not worthy of his entering it. Yet the upper room too was a shabby little garret, up under the roof. There were some couches and a table, and a waterpot and a towel and a basin set behind the door; but not much else. Yet Christ had dreamed about that simple room, had chosen it, asked for it, planned to be with his followers there alone. And a believing heart, however simple, means much to him too. And if remembering our many failures and disloyalties, our hearts misgive us, Zacchaeus also had a sorry record. Yet Christ asked for his hospitality. *Our home*, says Christ, speaking of himself and God. *Our home!*"

What a gracious word is Christ's "our abode!"

Norman B. Harrison, a well-known Bible teacher of the preceding generation, has told this story. "A missionary, upon returning from India, told this experience. It seems that the governor of the province was accustomed to making a tour of the villages, the better to know the needs of his people. Often it was a problem to find lodging for himself and his retinue. Our friend, seeing that such a problem existed in his village, invited the governor to occupy the missionary home, while he and his family moved into a tent pitched in the courtyard.

"Then came an invitation from the governor to dine with him. Of course the missionary accepted, but what a unique experience! He found himself enjoying a feast royal as a guest in his own home.

"What a picture of Christian living! Nothing short of this is our privileged experience. He moves into the home of our hearts, occupies as fully as we yield to Him, spreads the sumptuous banquet of His love and joy and peace, inviting us to feast to our utter satisfaction, and His. His joy—our joy, "That we should be to the praise of His glory."

The hindrance to manifestation (John 14:24). The answer to Judas is completed in verse twenty-four by the expounding of the opposite truth.

One additional solemn thought emerges, and it is this: The word our Lord speaks is not simply His; it is the Father's. Thus, we are ultimately responsible to Him, and it is important to remember that, even when we neglect our opportunities, our responsibility is unaffected. We must be judged by His Word (cf. Heb. 4:12-13).

And notice also that nothing is said about the indifferent. One is either for Christ, believing in and loving Him, or one is an unbeliever and does not love Him. There is with Christ no place for neutrality.

THE SUMMARY OF THE TEACHING

The basic character of trust in Christ. Standing out is the fact that faith in Christ does lead to obedience, the obedience of faith. Faith itself is obedience to the message concerning Christ, and it leads to further obedience. Here it is the obedience that is expressed in love. Faith is necessary for our salvation (cf. Heb. 11:6), but saving faith leads on to Christian obedience in love.

The blessedness of united indwelling. The united indwelling of Father and Son should lead to deepening worship, fellowship, instruction in the truth, and guidance. How marvelous to realize that he that is joined to the Lord has part in a union that is the most intimate that one can imagine.

1 Corinthians 6:17, "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit," is one of the most remarkable of many short statements in the Bible. It suggests to us the greatest and most intimate unity between a believer and the Lord. No other figure of union in the Bible seems to be so clear and revealing as this one. An old Bible teacher wrote many years ago, "The sheep may wander from the shepherd, the branch may be cut off from the vine; the member may be severed from the body, the child alienated from the father, and even the wife from the husband; but when two spirits blend in one, what shall part them? No outward connection or union, even of wedlock, so emphatically expressive of perfect merging of two lives in one."

Alexander Maclaren used to say that we must learn to tremble in the presence of the wondrous mystery that we are the habitation of God. May we reflect upon the fact and meditate upon its great meaning for us until the glorious truth come home to us. Then let us yield ourselves to Him, giving Him the privilege of taking possession of our lives. May God have His way in the temple of our bodies!

REPRINTS:

An Old Man's Wisdom

R. H. Boll

The views and counsels of an old man are not always true and good. They ought to be, and they are if his path through the years has been guided by the light of God. It all depends on what sort of old man it is. The hoary head is a crown of honor (says Solomon) if it is found in the way of wisdom. The wisdom and experience of a man who has fought his way through and kept the faith and hope and love, is worthy of deepest respect and consideration. Fierce are the tempests that beat upon the sea or about the lofty mountain peak; but they are not as fierce and wild as are the storms a true soul must face in the course of a life-time. And precious are the lessons such a one has gathered in the stress of the years.

An irreverent modern day despises the wisdom of virtuous old age. But the word of God holds it up as a light and a help. Such a voice comes to us in the 37th psalm. "I have been young, and now I am old," says the writer—the psalmist who is inspired by the Holy Spirit to recall and interpret his experiences aright. And what had he found in his long life? "I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." That was worthy of note. In all his days he had never come across a case of that sort. He observed some other things also. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green tree in its native soil." That may have been perplexing to him at the time. "But one passed by, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." The triumph of evil is after all short-lived.

Yet another thing or two he marked as God led him through the school of life—for example, that a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked (verse 16); that in time of great calamity the righteous are sustained, but the wicked perish (vs. 19, 20); and that the man of God need not be distressed if anyone takes the advantage of him, but in the face of it can afford to be magnanimous and generous always. For it is the blessing and the curse of Jehovah that makes all the difference in a man's welfare (vs. 21, 22). And that life's changes and plotting of the wicked, and the threats of enemies, and the like, are not as serious as they seem at the moment. We are in God's hand. We need not fret, or be anxious, or envious. One thing only is needful: "Delight thyself in Jehovah, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart." Three times over he tells us to "fret not thyself"; and again, "Cease from anger and forsake wrath." What is the need, and what boots it if you do? There is a better way: "Commit thy way unto Jehovah; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." Nothing and nobody can keep you out of your own if you do that. And then "Rest in Jehovah and wait patiently for him." The outcome is certain and it can not fail.

These are some of the precious lessons of peace and trust, proved and tested out in the crucible of a long experience, and recorded for us by the Spirit of God. We need those lessons! Read Psalm 37.

WITHIN THE HOLIEST

Revelation 1:5, 6

*His priest am I, before Him day and night,
 Within His Holy Place;
 And death, and life, and all things dark and bright,
 I spread before His face.
 Rejoicing with His joy, yet ever still,
 For silence is my song;
 My work to bend beneath His blessed will,
 All day, and all night long—
 Forever holding with Him converse sweet,
 Yet speechless, for my gladness is complete.*

—Gerhard Tersteegen

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