

The INTERCESSOR

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

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The Origin of Evil

by Norman Grubb

The Law of Opposites

Having established the fact that the only way by which God could create sons or “fellows” with whom He can live in fellowship is by creating spirits with whom He can unite, we must search into another question. In this predestined union, what is our exact relationship? What do we contribute? What does He? How much of me? How much of Him? We touch a terrible subject here, for we probe into the existence of evil and hell. To do it, and to get some understanding of it, we must go right back into origins.

First, let us ask this question. What is self? Of what does it consist? How does it function? For our answer we must go to the first Self of all selves, the I AM, and of Him we are told that God is love. So love is the essence of self. Self is compounded of love. But what does love do? It is desire. It wants. It draws to itself: It must satisfy itself. It is continual hunger. This characteristic of self is found in the lowest to the highest of God’s creatures. It is the consuming hunger of fire (and God is a fire); it is the endless upreach of vegetation to the sun; it is the instinctive urges of the animals. Of God Himself it is written, “Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.” I remember as a

callow youth how those words startled me, and in my ignorance of the elemental meaning of self, I boldly said, “Then God Himself is selfish!” And I felt myself further confirmed in this when I read that Jesus “for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.” Not for God’s glory, not for our blessing, but for Himself, I said! Yes, self’s hungry love must be satisfied. It is

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self’s unchangeable nature which caused the Saviour to say, “Love thy neighbour as thou lovest thyself,” to give a legitimate paraphrase: and Paul to write, “No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.”

But now we meet with a basic law of existence, which must take a little examination; a law which is obvious through Scripture and experience, and had its earliest mention in the solemn warning against eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, a plain hint that disobedience would bring the

consciousness of two warring opposites in life, good and evil, instead of one harmonious experience of good alone. That law is the basic fact of nature that life can only be manifested through the rightful interaction of opposites; for basically everything has, and must have, its opposite.

Look at it this way. Everything in life is by its very nature duoform and we can only perceive or feel or know anything by the interactions of the two forms. There can be no yes, for instance, without an exactly equivalent no. If there is sweet, there must be bitter. If love, there must be hate; if male,

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female; if light, darkness. And so ad infinitum. Those direct opposites make life. If there were no such contrasts, nothing could be known or felt or done. How could we know light, except in contrast to darkness? How could we say yes, except in distinction from no? How could there be movement, except in opposition to inertia? There could not be, for each pair of opposites are part of one whole: one cannot be without the other, when one is inactive so is the other. To say yes to one thing is to refuse to be still. If a thing tastes sweet, there has been a conquest over its innate bitterness.

Sweet is the positive, bitter the negative, and sweetness is pleasant just because it can make bitter things palatable: the one is the raw material for the other.

The Positive and the Negative

The trouble is not that all things are pairs of opposites. Indeed not, for the pairs so make one whole that one cannot function without the other. One is the strength-giver of the other. But the whole trouble arises when what should be subservient dominates, so that the true nature of things is reversed. For in all pairs of opposites one is equivalent to the positive, and one to the negative, and the positive is meant to be in the ascendancy, and the negative to be the hidden servant. Take a pair like motion and inertia. All life is motion, but the very material which motion utilizes for its activities consists of inert objects. Motion consists of still things made to move. But supposing inertia could con-

quer and quench motion, supposing the atoms ceased to whirl or the earth to rotate! Sweet is the positive, bitter the negative, and sweetness is pleasant just because it can make bitter things palatable: the one is the raw material for the other. But supposing bitterness was permanently in the ascendant! Love must also have its reverse form of anti-love or hate of all that is the opposite of love, but supposing hate is in the ascendant! World history is the tragic commentary on that. Faith has its reverse form, its opposite is doubt. While it places confidence in one direction, it must as vigorously doubt and disbelieve in anything that diverts it from the object of its trust. But what times of desperation a soul goes through when doubt, the negative, is more in the forefront than faith, the positive. Indeed no man can live in doubt; he must in the end make his doubts his faith, if his personality is not to disintegrate.

So we see that opposites, contraries, are really the reverse sides of the same quality, an essential part of its one whole: but that in all the infinite numbers of pairs of opposites the positive exists to be in the forefront, in the ascendancy; its negative is its necessary and friendly background, its food and fuel, its servant and safeguard, its mate which gives form and manifestation to its offspring. Look again at light, for instance. Are not dark opaque substances made beautiful by the shining of the light upon, in, and through them? Does not the marriage of light with darkness in this way bring into glorious manifestation the otherwise hidden marvels, and even the very existence of light? The light conquers the darkness, deprives it of its dominion, says "no" to it, but it is a friendly "no,"

for the existence of its opposite, the dark objects which in their mass appear to obstruct the free, pure, shining light, in actual fact gives light its foil and playmate, the raw material for its activities, the mother of its children, its “opposite sex,” by interrelation with which, in light and shade, in transparency and solidity, all its wonders are manifested.

From this emerges that most important truth that opposites, the positive and negative sides of all qualities and powers in the universe, are not in their original enemies but friends, mates, one the complement of the other; but not as equals; they are meant to be as husband and wife in the Scriptures, the woman originally taken out of man, the man the head of the wife, the wife subject to the husband, yet in a mutual relationship of loving service to each other.

Self-for-self or Self-for-others?

Now take this back to God Himself, the first Self. A self is immediately confronted with its opposite—others. Now what? Is the hungry self going to use others ruthlessly just for its own satisfaction? Or is it going to satisfy its basic hunger by giving itself for others? Is it to be self-seeking or self-giving? Which of the two opposites predominates in this first Self of all selves? For life cannot be a manifested life without the interaction of these two opposites in the self: Self-love or other-love? The answer has been given from eternity and never was otherwise. God is love, expressed first in the love of His Son, begotten in His exact image: subsequently in the love of all His creatures: the eternal will to all goodness, from whom pro-

ceeds every good and perfect gift, and with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God’s self-love finds its eternal satisfaction in otherlove. The opposites are wedded, the negative self-love is the willing servant and mate to the positive otherlove. Polarity is achieved and from it all loving activity. As the Father to the Son, so the Son to the Father, ever delighting to do His will, even to the cross; and from their union proceeding the Spirit of love to complete His loveplans for the universe.

So we see that the will and wisdom of Him who is from the beginning, that

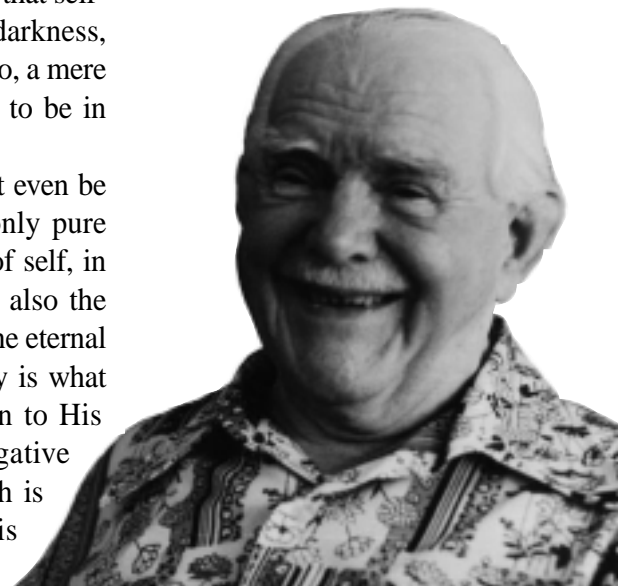
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first Self, manifests the true interacting balance of all pairs of opposites. In Him they are “in temperature.” Where then are the opposites in Him, that self-love would produce? Hate, darkness, evil? They are in the eternal No, a mere potentiality of the self, never to be in existence.

In His nature, who cannot even be tempted with evil, there is only pure other-love; but in the nature of self, in its implicit freedom, there is also the potentiality of self-love; and the eternal No of God to that potentiality is what gives form and manifestation to His positive lovingness. The negative No is the womb out of which is born the positive Yes. One is within the other, as when

Paul says, “Death is swallowed up in victory”: is not destroyed, but swallowed up: death dormant, merely potential, within life. So only the love is seen and known in God: only goodness, truth, and righteousness. That is all there is in God: “In Him is no darkness at all.” The pairs of opposites are polarized: the positive has swallowed up the negative, yet the negative by its potential existence is the necessary, inseparable, manifestor, energizer, form-maker of the positive.

So we see that Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, dwelling in each other, loving, serving, glorifying each other, one love, one light, one truth, is “that eternal life” to which the Scriptures point us. But deep in the heart of that life, in its very essence is the eternal reconciliation of opposites, the interaction of which can alone make life manifest, the eternal “No” to a potential selfishness, the eternal “Yes” to selflessness; and this reconciliation is accomplished by the yielding up of the self-loving self to find its completion in other-love, the opposites made one in the creation of a kingdom



of heaven which is for ever a kingdom of love.

Lucifer's Choice

How then did evil manifest itself, and when? The Bible gives us the answer in the history and activities of the one who is called the father, the originator, of lies, and the sinner from the beginning, the murderer from the beginning, who would not abide in the truth and now has no truth in him (John 8: 44; 1 John 3: 8). He held a chief place among those principalities and powers in heavenly places, the innumerable company of angels, who also are spirits (Heb. 1:7) and flames of fire, mighty and holy servants of the Most High. His name at creation was Lucifer, Lightbearer, with rank as "the anointed cherub that covereth," perfect in beauty, with every precious stone as his covering, walking up and down amidst the stones of fire, choir-leader of heaven. As in the description of the Throne of God and the New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation, so in this account of Lucifer in Ezekiel 28:11-17, we can only surmise what glories are depicted in these descriptions for which necessarily only earthly terms can be used.

But it is manifest that Lucifer and all these heavenly beings we call angels, being spirits, were created of God free and intelligent selves, like Himself. The tragic history of Lucifer alone tells us that. They therefore were faced with that choice between opposites which is in the essential nature of a free, intelligent self. The choice for Lucifer and his angelic host was the choice every being created in the image of God must make. In his own created self there is a mere hunger, an eternal

desire for satisfaction, which is the first form of self. By his own free choice he can turn this in on himself, and seek the meaning of life in self-centredness. He has his created powers of mind, will, affection: spirit, soul and body.

There is only one alternative: to receive into the centre of his being, into his heart, the seat of will and affections, the only Spirit of light and love that the universe can ever contain, the living God. He only, by an inward birth, joining Himself as Spirit to spirit, can lift the hungry self from the plane of self-seeking to the new life of self-giving. He becomes the love and light within, and as the created self yields itself up to Him; it is irradiated and transfigured, changed into the same image from

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glory to glory, its hunger satisfied and its powers occupied in the love and service of God. Let it be clearly stated that there is no alternative for the creature. By himself, according to the nature of self, he can only be a mere hunger. If remaining in himself and living for himself, he can only produce the horrors of hell, as we shall see. Just as in God, the eternal Son was begotten in the heart of the Father, so that God is not one, but three, the Spirit of life and love proceeding from the union of Father and Son in love; so in every created being, there must be a begetting of the eternal Son in the centre, if the hell of self-centred self is to be transformed into the heaven of God-centred self.

Lucifer, the first in history, made the great refusal. His heart lifted up, we

are told, by his beauty, he deliberately chose to be his own god. He reversed the law of the opposites; instead of yielding up his negative self-seeking self to be the servant and bride of the positive Spirit of love, he would enthrone his own self and dominate all, yes, God Himself, for his own ends; the negative must swallow up the positive, not the positive the negative. "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit upon the mount of the congregation; I will be like the Most High" (Is. 14: 12-15). A realm, hitherto unknown in the universe, was brought into being, previously but potential in the eternal No of God to self-centred self, now actual and visible in Satan and his hosts. He was the first egoist of existence.

The Forms of Self

For self, when turned in on itself, is a kingdom of darkness, a wheel of anguish. James speaks of the "wheel of nature" (3:6 marg.). The hungry self, if left to itself, is bound to an eternal wheel of ferment. By its first form of hungry self-seeking it draws all it seeks to itself. But, by the law of opposites, there immediately arises from the contracting impulse its counteraction-expansion, movement. Think for a moment. If you draw something towards yourself, that is a contracting movement which, if taken to its limit, produces immobility, stillness, hardness. But the very action of drawing something to myself produces movement, expansion, the opposite of contraction, as flowing water is the opposite to hard rock. It is the equal and endless tug of war between these two opposing tendencies of the hungry self, when not given over to the service of God, which produce the whirling

wheel of anguish. We want things for ourselves, we are acquisitive, greedy, lustful; we get them, house, furniture, money, car, loved ones. Are we satisfied? No. Out we go from ourselves, searching for other worlds to conquer, more pleasures, other interests, other achievements, other possessions or people. It is the meaningless whirl of the dark natural life, unlit by the light of the Spirit. It is the vanity of vanities of the preacher, after he had tried all that money or invention, privilege and human wisdom could give him—all under the sun is vanity.

These are the three basic forms of self. They are the mighty forces that drive the world. They are the hidden fires, the selfhood of God and man. Attraction, expansion, rotation. The minuteness of the atom and the immensity of the solar system bear witness to the same law, with the rotation of the electrons round the nucleus, and the planets round the sun. But unyielded to God, they are as James describes them: "Whence come wars and fightings . . . Is it not the passions that war in your members?" We lust and desire, but do not obtain the true satisfaction that way. We rush into activity or society; go after wealth, position or knowledge, but none give us what we truly seek. All are broken cisterns that hold no water. We seem bound to the dizzy wheels of fate. This is the kingdom of darkness, the closed circuit of selfhood, the warring and disintegrated ego first brought into manifestation by Lucifer. In the self-centred self all the hidden, unmanifested opposites to the beauty, goodness and truth of God came into being, potential forms of self-activity which were never meant to be known, but which are now the common experi-

ences of everyday life—lying, hatred, murder, cruelty, envy, covetousness, lust, anger, and so on, through all the list of evil. For that reason the Bible calls Satan the father of lies, the sinner from the beginning, who abode not in the truth, because no truth is in him.

And here too was hell manifested for the first time, a hell that is in God and must be, startling though it sounds, a hell which Jesus said "was prepared for the devil and his angels," for they first brought it into being.

Fire and Light

The best illustration of nature, indeed a material form of these very spiritual realities, is fire and light. You

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cannot have light without fire. It is a child of fire and the main purpose of its existence. But what a difference between the consuming father and the gentle son. And all depends on our relationship to them according to the laws of our being. If we obey those laws and live in the benefits of the light, but do not penetrate to the fire-source, we bless both fire and light, and they bless us. But if we should break those laws, and find means of penetrating the sun instead of living at a proper distance from it, then its blessing becomes our scorching, consuming curse. The sun is not to blame, which only exists to be a source of life.

We are to blame, who defy the laws of its and our nature. Such is the wrath of God, the consuming fire.

To us, hidden in the Son of His love, He is the blessed eternal light, the life and joy of the kingdom of heaven. To the disobedient, who tamper with the awful laws of their mighty selfhood, an outbirth of His, and retain their egoism in their refusal to be the temples of the Holy Spirit, to them the selfhood of God, of which they are a part, becomes a consuming fire of wrath; they are "children of wrath;" wrath is their nature; they touch the fire-source and are eternally burned; they find that their basic selfhood, derived from His, but separated from His Spirit, is a horror of great darkness, a hell which kindles with its dark fire the sphere it controls, even as the wicked tongue with its kindling power, we are told by James, sets on fire the wheel of nature, and "is set on fire of hell": in other words, the spiritual fire which kindles a fiery tongue, those fires of the rebel self, are themselves the fire of hell.

Yes, fallen angels and men are still "in God," for all are in God for ever. All (things and people) were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made. All maintain their life through Him, and truest of all, "in Him all live and move and have their being." Devils and fallen men and a cursed world are "in Him." They are in the opposites in God which were never meant to be known or experienced. If God is love, He must equally be hate of all that is opposite to pure other-love. What fallen creation loves, God hates. If God is gentleness, lovingkindness and mercy, He is equally anger against all that is cruel, merciless, unrighteous.

History's Darkest Moment

Here there is a potential kingdom in God of darkness, misery, wrath, which was only potential and undiscoverable, if there had been no fall of angels and men. But when Satan reversed the polarity of Creator and creation, the loving submission and service of the one to the Other, he opened a kingdom of selfhood, potential but eternally unknown in God and the kingdom of heaven. He plunged into the forbidden opposites; he reversed the eternal "yes" to all goodness and "no" to all evil, and said "yes" to the hitherto unmanifested evil, and "no" to the good. He entered what one has called the hidden "dark principle" in God, and was exiled from the "light principle." Here everything is discord in place of concord, war for peace, hate for love, selfishness for selflessness. Hell has been discovered, but it was and still is in God, for no creation in heaven, earth or hell can have an existence apart from Him: not God as He is eternally in Himself, all light, love, meekness, humility and goodness: but God as He is and must be towards all who desert his eternal "yes" to all goodness and enter in themselves into his eternal "no" to all evil. They are in the hidden, unmanifest side of God, the basic selfhood of that almighty Self which streams out for ever in the love of His Son. They have that same basic selfhood derived from Him; but in them, whether in the world of spirits or on earth, their selfhood has not been given over to the Christ of God, and they taste to their eternal woe what self-centred selfhood could have been in God, and is in themselves.

There is a future lake of fire as sure as there is a new Jerusalem, the Book

of Revelation leaves us in no doubt about that: but we are able to see that it is not some punishment outwardly designed by God for the wicked, but rather the consequences of an inevitable law of our being, God's and ours: the rebellious, by the law of their selfhood, have the fires of hell and the wrath of God burning in them. They have plunged into the "No," and the hate, and the anger of God: and the fires of hell that burn in them here in subdued form, owing to the counteracting restraints and goodness of God in this present world, will burn in all their consuming fierceness in the world to come, and be that lake of fire which

burns for ever and ever.

For many years after his retirement as General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, Norman Grubb traveled extensively sharing the truth of our union with Christ. He also carried on a huge personal correspondence with individuals throughout the world. He was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubbabel Book Ministry. Norman lived with his daughter, Priscilla, in Fort Washington, PA. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.

THE CALL OF CHRIST

The terrible war in which the Allies are engaged is a righteous cause. The War of Christ is trebly so. The call of patriotism is loud. The call of Christ is louder still. War to destroy all the works of the devil everywhere. Shall the call of Christ among Christians produce less results than the call of country among patriots? To answer "Yes" is to blaspheme the name of Christians, and yet listen:—The poor, the rich, and the middle classes have gone in crowds to the war. Peers have gone in such numbers to shed their blood for their country as to cry shame on those who have spoken evil of them. Such is the noble answer of our patriots to the call of their country! There can surely be but one answer to the call of Jesus Christ to His world-wide war against the devil and his empire. Shall we serve our Saviour, Who died for us, and to Whom we owe every blessing we enjoy, with less devotion than that which we gladly give to our King and country?

—taken from *World Wide War: Real and Sham*
by C.T. Studd

Editor's Note

In this issue of *The Intercessor* we continue our investigation into the Biblical foundations of our union with Christ. "The Origin of Evil" tackles some of the more difficult issues Christians face. Let Norman pose the questions: "In this predestined union, what is our relationship? What do we contribute? What does he? How much of me? How much of Him? We touch a terrible subject here, for we probe into the existence of evil and hell." Norman moves from the basis of all life, the law of opposites, to the very nature of self, and explains that what was to have been God's hidden "opposite"—darkness, wrath, self-for-self—was brought into manifestation by Lucifer, when he refused his role as a vessel to contain the light. "The Sole Function of the Human," a complementary article, brings the problem closer to home in a thorough discussion of man's role as a vessel and how we got "out of gear"—indwelt and controlled by Satan.

A powerful reminder of the necessity of brokenness and repentance to escape the ravages of Satanic control, "What Constitutes a Revival?" is Norman's vivid and moving account of a revival in the Heart of Africa Mission in 1935. After the death of C.T. Studd, the founder of the mission, Norman and others were carrying on his work in the Congo. Norman writes, "No revival, we believe, is just an isolated incident. Its roots lie deep in the faithful labours of the years that precede it." This theme is echoed by Jamie Risset in his tape review of "Our Spiritual Lineage," in which Page Prewitt details our debt to the "faithful labours" of Norman, C.T. Studd, and their predecessors in the faith. Jamie

acknowledges our own debt to Page herself, as it has largely been her perseverance and dedication to the truth taught to her by Norman which has resulted in what we now call Zerubbabel Ministries.

Norman's summary of this truth is titled simply, yet boldly, "Total Truth—My Last Message to the Whole Church in the Whole World." It is, in Breda Sunderland's words, Norman's "spiritual last will and testament" to us, passing on the distillation of his lifelong search into the things of God. And don't miss Brett Burrowes' insightful Bible Study, "God's Sovereignty and Freewill."

Our younger contributors demonstrate that another generation is now passing along its own understanding of the truth of our union with Christ. In "Wisdom" and "Christ on Campus," Joanna Langley and Crystal Hoffmann share their own testimonies to the relevance of Galatians 2:20 in their lives. Allison Laffin tells of the inner workings of *Z-News*, and Scott Prewitt presents an excellent report of summer camp 2001.

On a more somber note, an anonymous writer provides the story of his addiction to pornography and its childhood beginnings. Fowler Cooper, a marriage and family therapist, tackles this difficult topic from a clinical vantage point. Both articles implore those caught in this devastating sin to seek help. The former writer eventually found freedom from the bondage of sexual sin through confession, repentance, and choosing to believe the truth of who he is. He warns: "If you are someone who needs help, please seek it now! Don't let Satan use you as an instrument of destruction.... God so wants you to be a clean vessel for Him." A clean vessel and how to be one—that is the thread that runs throughout this issue.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this magazine is to further the great high calling of the Lord Jesus to carry His Gospel to the whole world. This calling is known in the Christian world as the Great Commission. Our interpretation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ was the second member of the Trinity, fully God, made manifest in the flesh. He was tempted in all points as we are, but totally without sin. He was crucified for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He gives the power to become the sons of God to all who receive Him.

Beyond this forgiveness of sins, *The Intercessor* is committed to proclaiming to every creature the mystery of the Gospel, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost means that Christ has joined Himself to us as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Thus we see that Christ has reproduced Himself in our flesh, and we Christians are really Christ living as us (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also a life in Christ of knowing we are dead to sin (Rom. 6). Furthermore, we are dead to the Law (Rom. 7), since the power of sin is through the Law. Christ is the only Lawkeeper (Rom. 8), and there is no independent human nature that can keep the Law, though we are continually tempted to believe so.

Belief in an independent human nature is Satan's lie and the root of sin. Non-Christians are really Satan-indwelt, expressing his lusts (John 8:44), just as we have come to learn that Christians are Christ-indwelt, expressing His righteousness (2 Cor. 6:16). Humans have no moral nature of their own, meaning that we are simply expressions of the indwelling deity nature, either of Christ or Satan (the fallen created being who is the spirit of error). Sin in a Christian is a result of believing again Satan's lie that there is a human nature which can do good or evil.

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is "intercession," the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). *The Intercessor* is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

Summer Camp Report

by Breda Sunderland

Late one evening as Summer Camp drew to a close—replete after the fish fry—we sat outside the youth house viewing a slide-show that recorded just some of the week's highlights. Darkness fell imperceptibly. Then there flashed upon the screen a sequence of images, taken during the youth hike, of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Captured in their breathtaking, lofty majesty, evocative of the awesome power of the Creator—what a perfect backdrop for a wonderful Camp!

In so many ways Colossians 1:28, “We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present every one perfect in Christ,” encapsulates the essence of Summer Camp 2001. At the heart of our time together were those sessions when, thanks to videotape, Norman taught the mystery “once hidden, now made manifest to His saints” (Col. 1:26): “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). Sharing from his personal experience, Norman is emphatic and excited that for him the big revelation was 1 John 4:16: “God *is* love”—not that God *has* love, but rather that love is a Person. As Norman says, there are no two human natures; there are two divine natures and we are simply vessels containing either Christ or Satan.

Every other activity at Camp emanated from the biblical bedrock that Norman set before us. God's love was out-poured for us through His vessels not only in workshops and teaching, but in every detail of the warm hospitality extended (Rom. 12:13). Page Prewitt's wise input and insights throughout the week ranged far wider and deeper than her informative hands-on workshop, unassumingly and wittily entitled



“Dis & Dat Agin”! For the fourth successive year Steven Prewitt's art workshop was inspirational. Steven is a gifted and humble teacher who shares unstintingly from the deep well of his artistic talent.

The ladies were privileged to have a 5-session fashion workshop with Leah Feldon, acclaimed author of *Does This Make Me Look Fat?* and *Dress Like a Million—On Considerably Less*. Billed as “a truly wonderful opportunity to learn about your best lines, styles and col-

ors, and to address personal style issues,” it was all that and more. A memory that abides with me is of the supper we ladies partook of in Page's home during Leah Feldon's workshop. It brings to my mind one of Keats's great lines: “A thing of beauty is a joy forever!” We had a joyful evening in the midst of great beauty.

Meanwhile, the men gathered around a campfire to discuss their divinely given responsibility to lead their families as the spiritual head of the home. According to Eph. 5:21-33, God calls the husband to love his wife just as Christ loved us. The husband is not to selfishly dominate the wife, which would be an expression of Satan's self-for-self spirit, but to nurture, provide for and protect his wife, just as he would his own body. As the head of the family, it is ultimately the husband who will answer to God if something is wrong spiritually in the home. Fortunately, Christ lives through us to fulfil this awesome responsibility.

The following day, the men had a fabulous time learning to fly fish in the Blue Ridge mountains with the help of some expert guides from *The Appalachian Angler*. The men truly appreciated the efforts of Tony and Ginny Mansoor in arranging

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A Look at a Book

by Breda Sunderland

BOOK REVIEW:

Total Truth: My Last Message to the Whole Church in the Whole World

by Norman Grubb

I hold in my hand a precious inheritance. It is Norman Grubb's "Last Message to the Whole Church in the Whole World." In many ways it's his spiritual last will and testament. This pamphlet, written when Norman was 95, is so intense and focused, so clear and inspiring. Above all it is direct and honest, shooting, as it were, "straight from the hip." As one of the "'rising army' of co-knowers" who continues to be blessed abundantly by Norman's "Total Truth" teaching, but who never actually met him, I found this message spoke to me very powerfully and personally.

The fundamental urgency of this pamphlet is palpable: Norman reiterates over and over that the Total Truth is a *radical* message. Someone else writing a last letter might be tempted to temper the urgency—with an eye, perhaps, to nostalgia or the "regard" of future generations. Not so Norman—knowing that this might well be his last message, he is keen to cut straight through to what the Spirit impels him to share. He defines the radical core of the Total Truth thus: "Simply put, it is that there is no such thing as independent self in the universe."

Norman's commission, which he supposes is a last glorious intercession, is for "a world-wide harvest" of "precious believers knowing who they already are." The cost is unvarnished—the cutting off of reputations...ostracism and opposition. But his excitement is infectious as he describes the first evidence of completion: "Right now we are relatively few.... We are a 'rising army' of co-knowers, witnesses and teacher-sharers, until that great day when 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea' (Is. 11:9)."

An aspect of the pamphlet I found particularly helpful is how Norman traces the Total Truth very concisely through the Bible and shows how, starting with Paul's earliest revelation, it has been manifest to the great mystics, from Boehme through William Law to George Muller, "the father of all present-day faith movements." So, as Norman emphasises, the Total Truth is nothing new—it's simply "God's restored truth for our generation."

It is well worth reading what Norman writes about "the problem of resistance from fellow believers" and "direct management" of the flock by "the Chief Shepherd." His vision is of the body of co-knowers remaining as structureless as possible. I smiled at how Norman embraces the accusations of elitism and answers his accusers thus—"Yes, but that is just

what you are also!' Can you be more holy than a walking Christ in your human form?"

Before this review becomes almost as long as the pamphlet itself, perhaps I should stop and urge you to read it for yourself!

Breda is vice-principal of a local second-level school in Ireland. She lives in Athy, County Kildare, with her children Maria (12) and Niall (11).

Pass It On??

Do you have a friend or acquaintance, or even a group with whom you would like to share *The Intercessor*, but hate to give up your copy? If there is any reason you could use multiple copies, please let us know and we will be glad to accommodate you.

BIBLE STUDY:

by Brett Burrowes

In our society it is common to hear people say that they act or are a certain way because of their genes, because of the way they were raised, because they didn't have the privileges that others had, because their father was an alcoholic or because of some other traumatic event in their childhood. While all these things may be factors that influence our behavior in the present, such a view conflicts with two scriptural teachings: God's sovereignty and our free will. God's sovereignty is His absolute control over the universe He created, so that everything that happens in our lives—every situation—is His perfect circumstance for us. Free will, on the other hand, is our freedom to respond to our Creator in obedience or disobedience, without coercion and without our choice being predetermined, whether by God, Satan, or by our childhood or biology. It is our freedom that distinguishes us from animals. At first glance, however, God's sovereign control and our free will appear to contradict each other. This is just an apparent paradox, however, stemming from our faulty understanding of what free will is.

Freedom or free choice is at the core of our personhood. Why is this so? What makes us persons is our capacity to have meaningful relationships with other persons, and especially with God, the One Person in the Universe. Our relationships with others are meaningful because they are moral. I don't mean as opposed to immoral, but rather that personal relationships always have a moral quality to them; I can either treat another person rightly or wrongly, with love or in callous and selfish disregard for their welfare. So whatever way I treat another person, a moral quality to the relationship is always present, whether good or evil. We are inherently moral beings, as well as inherently relational beings, even if we are morally wrong and selfish. Right and wrong, good and evil, righteousness and sin are facts of human life: God created us this way because He Himself is a moral and relational being. After all, we are

made in His image (Gen 1:26-27).

When God placed Adam in the garden, the first thing He did was to give Adam the command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17), for it was through this tree that humanity would become aware of themselves as moral beings. The knowledge of good and evil was a good thing, and humanity would acquire this knowledge either by obeying or disobeying God: by obeying God they would be choosing the good and rejecting the evil, and by disobeying they would be choosing evil and rejecting good. Through this choice Adam

So God is sovereign over all that exists and all that happens. This includes all events of nature—from the tiniest atomic reaction to hurricanes and tornadoes to the formation of stars and planets. God's sovereignty also includes everything that happens in the human world, from the least important, such as a chance meeting with a stranger I will never meet again in my life, to the most significant—such as when we received Christ as our Lord and Savior.

and Eve would be exercising the personhood which up until then was only a potential, a possibility. After giving Adam the command, He created a woman to be a helper to him (Gen 2:18), another person with whom he could be in relationship. Thus, from creation God created us to be moral beings who personally relate to other moral beings. We have the capacity to choose between right and wrong. Without this choice, we would not be moral beings, and therefore we would not be persons, and God could not hold us responsible for our lives. We would be nothing more than animals with a higher capacity to reason and we would be unaware of the moral quality of the effects our actions have on oth-

ers. We would not have to answer to God for anything, because we would lack the awareness that our actions were right or wrong.

Someday all of us will stand before God and give an account of our lives on this earth: "It is appointed for humanity to die once and then to face judgment" (Heb. 9:27). At that time God will expose the secrets of our hearts and Christ will judge us all (Rom 2:16). So it is extremely important that we understand on what basis we will be judged, on what grounds God will hold us accountable. Very simply, we will be judged by our obedience or disobedience to what God has revealed to us. Since God has made Himself known in some form to all human beings, everyone is without excuse for their sin (Rom 1:20). Nevertheless, each of us has a choice to obey or disobey God. This choice must not be coerced or predetermined in any way by God, since unless the choice is free, we cannot be held responsible for our actions.

But Scripture never uses the phrases "free will" or "free choice." How do we know that we have such thing? In the book of Deuteronomy, God says to the people of Israel: "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life" (Deut 30:19-20). God does not set before people two alternatives and then predetermine what choice they will make. It would be a mockery for God to command the people to choose when He knew very well they could not. Moreover, Elijah commanded the people to choose and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." (1 Kings 18:21). Elijah obviously believed the people were capable of making a choice to follow the Lord. In Genesis 2 and 3, God placed the tree of knowledge in the garden of Eden precisely in order to give human beings a choice: He commanded them not to eat of this tree (Gen 2:17), and placed the serpent in

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND FREE WILL

the garden to be the mouthpiece of Satan to tempt them. Without the tree and without Satan, Adam and Eve and all humanity would have lived in paradise forever—but not as full persons. God wanted them to confront good and evil and make a choice. God did not predetermine the choice, although He knew beforehand which way they would choose. Free will was built into our humanity from the Garden of Eden.

But if God gave everyone free will, how can He maintain control over His universe? How can He work all things together for our good (Rom 8:28) unless He is in control of everything that happens not only in our lives individually, but in the whole world? How can God mean for good what human beings (and Satan through them) intend for evil? Think of it, six billion people in the world, all of them with a free will—it seems like there would be nothing but chaos with all those conflicting wills! In giving His creation free choice, did God surrender control of His universe to them? Surely not, for then how could Jesus be crucified at the hands of evil men according to God's definite plan and foreknowledge unless He was in control of human events (Acts 2:23)? God was not waiting around for the opponents of Jesus to make up their minds whether they were going to crucify Jesus. The plan for Jesus to die for the sins of the world was not Plan B, since the lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8).

That means that whatever human beings choose, their choices cannot disrupt the plan of God for His universe. God is sovereign over His universe: though evil truly exists in the world, nevertheless it cannot disrupt God's plan and control over His universe. Whatever evil exists in the universe, God turns and uses it to accomplish His goals. So though the devil intends to kill, steal and destroy (John 10:10), it is God who created the destroyer to do His work (Isa 54:16). We should take great comfort in this fact, since it means that absolutely nothing can stop God's loving plans for His people. As Paul says, "Nothing can

separate us from the love of God" (Rom 8:39).

So God is sovereign over all that exists and all that happens. This includes all events of nature—from the tiniest atomic reaction to hurricanes and tornadoes to the formation of stars and planets. God's sovereignty also includes everything that happens in the human world, from the least important, such as a chance meeting with a stranger I will never meet again in my life, to the most significant—such as when we received Christ as our Lord and Savior.

But there are really no insignificant happenings in our lives, since God is behind each and every event, even if He is not the direct

The choices we make about what to do next or how to react to a situation are never directly under our control at all, but the product of a spirit who operates and motivates us from within.... Our choice is simply this: we choose to obey or disobey, to take God at His word, or to disbelieve Him and trust what Satan tells us. This fundamental choice determines which spirit operates us and controls our actions.

cause of it. Even if someone is treating us in a cruel and selfish manner; God wills us to have the experience and intends some kind of good through it; otherwise, God would not be in control of our lives and evil could take God by surprise. But God knows and declares the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10), since He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (Rev 21:6; 22:13). God doesn't simply react and use the evil for good, as if the evil stumped Him and He had to think for a few minutes about what to do. No, God intended the evil thing to occur. He intended for us to go through the pain, but always and only out of His good and loving purposes.

On the other hand, if God is in total con-

trol of His universe, what room is there for free choice? After all, if my choice is truly free, then God does not coerce or control it in any way; otherwise, it would not be a genuine choice. God would be making my choice for me. If everyone can do exactly what they like, how can God be sovereign?

But wait, that's just the problem—how we define free will. Most people, including Christians, understand "free will" to mean the freedom to do whatever we choose: to control our actions, to decide what we are going to do in the next moment. But this sounds more like a definition of independent self rather than a definition of free will. I suggest that the real reason that most people and even most theologians have difficulty reconciling free will with God's Sovereignty is that they operate from the view that they are independent selves who control their own actions. But Scripture is quite clear: we are either slaves to sin or to righteousness (Rom 6), and are operated either by the Spirit of Christ (Col 1:29, Gal 2:20) or by the Spirit of Satan (Eph 2:2, 1 John 4:4).

The choices we make about what to do next or how to react to a situation are never directly under our control at all, but the product of a spirit who operates and motivates us from within. When we were unbelievers (or if as believers) we enter into sin, it is Satan who is acting through us, making decisions through us, even perceiving our situation and other people through us. When we are obedient to God, it is Christ who is living, planning, perceiving our situation through us. Where then is our free choice? Our choice is simply this: we choose to obey or disobey, to take God at His word, or to disbelieve Him and trust what Satan tells us. This fundamental choice determines which spirit operates us and controls our actions.

That is why our free choice never threatens the sovereignty of God: God ultimately controls everything we do, since even Satan can only do through us what God permits him to do and ultimately intends him to do,

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Zerubbabel Focus: Z-News

by Allison Laffin

Z-News, the daughter magazine of *The Intercessor*, has had quite a history. Started in 1989, the goal of *Z-News* was to reach out to young people with the truth of Jesus Christ in you, as you. Although founded by an adult, Dottie Tupper, older members of the Zerubbabel youth group progressively became more and more involved in the making of the magazine. Beginning with contributions to the writing of the articles, they then worked their way into the design, layout, and publication of the magazine. Soon, *Z-News* was published completely “for and by youth”! Their aim was to reach young people in a creative way, through the use of articles that dealt with issues pertinent to youth.

From the start of *Z-News*, up until recently, the magazine catered to a very wide age span, ranging from children to young adults in their teen-aged years. Although God was able to use the magazine for several years in this way, the *Z-News* crew recently had to reevaluate the target age range for which they were aiming. Readers began requesting articles about topics directed more towards young adults. It seemed as though the *Z-News* readership was getting older and the main constituency was in their high school years. Although we can never be too old to hear the Biblical basics and “Bible stories,” *Z-News* felt that there were more mature issues that needed to be addressed to these older readers.

Consequently, *Z-News* changed its

image and content. Taken from the first issue of the “Exciting and New *Z-News*,” the inside cover reads: “Our focus on topics from the Bible has remained the same, but the content is aimed more toward an older audience. We hope you’ll jump right in with us and check out our current topics for today’s Christian youth.” The magazine featured segments such as “On Campus,” which focused on student issues, and “Tune In/Tune Out,” which gave Christian perspectives on the popular music of the day.

The magazine was successful and looked fantastic, but...one problem needed to be addressed. There was still a group of children that had once enjoyed receiving *Z-News* and who now were not getting the message sent to them. So, how could *Z-News* provide the older readers with more sophisticated and mature articles while still providing Biblical basics to lay a foundation for the youngest readers? As always, God had it all figured out.

The young adult readers of *Z-News* are now the newest subscribers to *The Intercessor*! You may or may not have noticed some of the articles in our Spring 2001 issue that cater to our now youngest readers. Articles such as “A Movie Classic,” a movie review by Fowler Cooper, “Garbage In...Garbage Out” by Scott Prewitt, and “God’s Sovereignty in Success and in Failure,” Elliot Coatney’s interview with Dr. Tommy Prewitt have all incorporated

information on issues pertinent to maturing young Christians.

So, where does that leave *Z-News*? Under the leadership of Dacia Trethewey, the magazine is now completely dedicated to laying a Biblical foundation for children in a fun, creative way! And Dacia, an aspiring elementary school teacher (and always brimming with creative ideas), is God’s perfect person for the job. The issues are jam packed with easy to read Bible story articles, word search puzzles, color-by-number, etc.

So, even throughout all the changes *Z-News* has seen, the initial goal has been continually strived for. The goal being...to spread God’s Word to young people.

Allison is a senior majoring in Computer Information Systems at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. She is a youth leader and helps with production of Z-News.

Z-News is always trying to increase its readership, so if you know of any young people that need or would like to receive the magazine please send in their name(s) and address(es) to:

Z-News
PO Box 1710
Blowing Rock, NC 28605
or email:
ZnewsBoone@aol.com

Questions? & Answers!

Q: I believe that I am Christ in my form, but people in my life sometimes tell me that I am getting hyped up or frantic in certain situations. At the time I am told that, I do not realize that I am frantic. How can I trust that I am Christ going on in these situations, or should I?

A: All we are ever called to do is to do all that we know to do at the time and to be comfortable with that as long as we are not in any known Biblical sin. Then if someone points out behavior that we are not aware of but that they are aware of, the thing to do is to be open to the suggestions (not necessarily immediately taking their view), avoid all defensiveness, take a deep breath, and give our insides a quick check. By doing this we can see if we are in some kind of unnecessary panic or if we are simply expending energy that is necessary for an immediate task. If the former is true it is good to stop for a short time—recognize who it is going on (Christ)—and know that He will get the job done when and how He

wants to. Proceeding in this mode should put an end to the franticness. If the latter is true simply proceed, keeping in mind it is Christ going on in and as you.

Q: How can Christ be living my life right after I've been in unbelief?

A: Whether our believing is right or not does not alter our oneness with Christ. That union with Christ is never broken. He is always our life even when we are in sin. Sin (unbelief) simply gives Satan a temporary power to do his misdeeds. He does this on the soul level—our members, as Paul says. There is no spirit take over that puts us back in the state we were in before we became born again. Once we admit or confess our sin of unbelief and its fruits, God's light and life are again free to flow through us and from us. As a result Satan is eclipsed by God's cleansing and piercing light. Satan who is darkness posing as light cannot co-exist with God, who is the Light.

Q: My sister and I each received a similar gift. I was very grateful for my gift, but I soon began to want her gift because I thought it was better than mine. How do I keep from wanting what she or someone else has and be satisfied with what I have received?

A: We can never stop our wanting of things. Wanting (desire) is a very important part of our makeup. Desire is the very warp and woof of personhood. It's not our wanting that is wrong. Like all things in right use it is right, Right desiring is the beginning of our having for ourselves the right things God intends us to have. Our problem is the wrong use of our desire. The Bible calls this misuse covetousness. Not that I want a thing but that I demand to have it for myself. I will have it for myself. Once this believing takes us over, "alone I" becomes our choice. "We" (really Satan misusing us) will go to any length to make the coveted thing (or person, or place) ours.

Tape Talk

by Jamie Resset

TAPE REVIEW: *Our Spiritual Lineage* by Page Prewitt

I've noticed that in the last few years there appears to be more interest taken in tracing ones genealogy. No doubt a lot of this has been fueled by the advent of the Internet and its vast databases that are available to anyone. Modern technology has certainly made the search easier, but throughout time there have always been people interested in the history of their families, their cultures, their countries, and their religious heritage. History provides a sense of where one fits in the "big picture." An understanding can be gained about the factors that contribute to how one came to be who he is. Obviously, much of who one is is determined by the choices that individual makes. But, there should be no discounting the impact—either positive or negative—that those who have gone before us have made.

On this tape, Page Prewitt provides a historical overview of some of the people and events that have had a huge impact on how Zerubbabel Ministries came to be, often times using excerpts from many of Norman Grubb's books. She begins by telling of Hudson Taylor, an Englishman in the 1800's who made a decision to do whatever God wanted him to do. God gave Taylor a vision to evangelize

inland China during a time when it was basically closed to foreigners. Persevering in faith, Hudson was able to open up a mission and blaze a trail for others to continue evangelization.

One of these men was C.T. Studd, a cricket player well known throughout England. He along with 6 other Cambridge graduates followed Hudson to China. Later C.T. went to India but eventually was forced to return home because of illness. God then called C.T. to evangelize the heart of Africa. With no money and poor health, C.T. believed, in spite of impossible circumstances, that God would get him to Africa, and He did! C.T. founded the Heart of Africa Mission and was soon joined by others, including a young military officer named Norman Grubb.

Norman Grubb, along with his wife, Pauline, one of C.T.'s daughters, became an integral part of the mission. It was during a difficult time in Africa, that Norman learned what would be the cornerstone of his writings and Zerubbabel's mission—that we do not receive love, patience, peace, etc., from God. We instead receive the person of God in the form of the Holy Spirit who is all of these things. We receive all in Christ at our rebirth and our old life has been put to death.

Page then tells of the dark times when almost everyone in the mission, with the exception of Norman and Pauline and a few others, wanted to remove C.T. from the ministry he

founded. C.T. had caused controversy with his hard stand against sin and his use of morphine for his physical pain (it was illegal in the African country he was in).

In the midst of the controversy C.T. died, leaving Norman and Pauline with a fractured mission. Despite this fact, God told them to keep going. The mission now known as WEC (Worldwide Evangelization Crusade) learned from reading the story of Joshua crossing the Jordan, that if there is a need that only God can supply, He already has, provided they speak a word of faith for that supply. Norman wrote that this principle "they were to repeat in an endless succession of instances for an endless variety of needs." In a matter of years, this little band of believers became a mission of thousands who went to all parts of the world, as they continued to apply this principle.

After Norman retired from the WEC, he settled in the U.S. and began traveling around visiting those who expressed interest in what he had been writing and teaching. He began to teach with much more clarity the Biblical truth that as Christians, the Spirit of Christ operates us and that previous to our born again experience, Satan operated us. Page tells of how conferences began to be held, so that Norman could teach many of them at once. At one of these conferences, Page spoke of her desire to have a fellowship that believed the

Biblical principles that Norman taught. Norman spoke a word of faith for her and that word materialized into the fellowship and ministry known as Zerubbabel.

Page leaves what has transpired in the last 15 or so years to be talked about on another tape, but suffice it to say that the positive fruits born of these faith ancestors are still being enjoyed and built upon by us today. As I listened, it is clear how much our predecessors have meant to Page in her life of faith. Similarly, as I listen to her talk I am so grateful to her for the influence she has had in my faith life. I find much encouragement in the words on this tape, particularly as I think of a personal word of faith I have and think of others close to me who have their own words of faith. We rest on the fact that God already has the supply in hand.

Any Christian who listens to this spiritual "history lesson" will gain much from these men and women of faith. Give it a listen. You'll be glad you did!

In addition to contributing to the Tape Talk column, Jamie is active in the Zerubbabel music ministry. He and his wife, Robyn, live and work in Boone, NC and are Zerubbabel Contacts.

Summer Camp Report

continued from page 8

this experience!

The Bible is the bedrock of our fellowship and what a blessing to have Bible scholar, Brett Burrowes, on hand to share his meticulously researched insights with us. One evening, under the tent, he explained the complex theme of God's sovereignty and human freedom. The core point at which the paradox unraveled was when Brett demonstrated how knowing that there is "no independent self" means that ours is not the freedom to do one thing or another; rather it's the free choice to say *Yes* or *No* to God, and hence be a vessel operated by Christ or Satan. The predes-

tinued end of those who choose Christ is heaven and of those who reject Christ is hell; quite simply, in Norman's words, "There is no independent self."

The editorial of the spring edition of *"The Intercessor"* ended thus: "*See you in Boone!*" That salutation, looking forward to Summer Camp 2001, was prefaced by a succinct account of the word of faith that is realised in our fellowship's Total Living Center in Boone. Just writing this report has impressed on me how "total" that "living center" is. I am filled with gratitude that summer after summer my children and I are blessed to participate in a Camp which strives to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:28).

Breda is vice-principal of a local second-level school in Ireland. She lives in Athy, County Kildare, with her children Maria (12) and Niall (11).

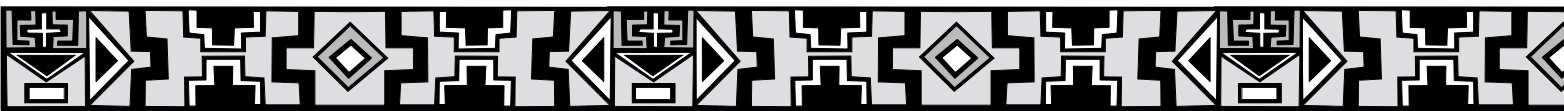
Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body . . . So then death worketh in us but life in you...

—2 Corinthians 4:20, 12

When I was born again it was only my own life I was living, and always rejoicing in my salvation. The Holy Spirit said, "If you will allow me to come in I will take out the natural life, the life of the Fall, in you and replace it with the spiritual." I went through this process bit by bit in the village after he came in: it was dying daily. It was not

that he found fault with me but he was changing my nature. If the Holy Spirit is fighting the devil he must have a clear channel, and then, when the devil also has found a channel, there is a straight fight between the two. The Saviour had his own prepared body in which to make the atonement, but the Holy Spirit had to use a body affected by the Fall. He began to change me from self to others, and it was not a temporary change: I could not change back.

—from *The Intercession of Rees Howells*
by Doris Ruscoe



What Constitutes a Revival?

by Norman Grubb

The following article is a chapter from Christ in Congo Forests, Norman Grubb's moving account of the beginnings of the Heart of Africa Mission, founded by his father-in-law, C.T. Studd. Published in 1945, it is a rare and startling look at missionary work in Africa during the early 1900's. More importantly, we see a timeless picture of the crystal clear honesty necessary for true confession and repentance.

Revival is God visiting His people, the Lord suddenly coming to His temple. A revival stands in a class by itself. It is different. It is unmistakable. It is the highest peak of Christian privilege and experience. By it God does in a few weeks what years of labour do not seem able to produce. A revival fully satisfies the heart's longing; in it the prayers and supplications of God's faithful servants have their complete answer. The labouring husbandman at last reaps the hundredfold harvest. That lyrical outburst of liberated Israel bursts forth again from overflowing hearts: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." A revival is holy ground, for the Saviour draws very near, the veil grows very thin, and sin is seen to be exceeding sinful. A revival leaves an ineffaceable impression on those who experience it. They can never be the same again. They have seen God as others have not seen Him.

God gave a gracious visitation of this kind at Imbai's during 1935. Quiet, costly, deep, bearing the very fruits in the people

which it is the life ambition of every missionary to see, it was indeed a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

No revival, we believe, is just an isolated incident. Its roots lie deep in the faithful labours of the years that precede it. One sows, another reaps, that both may rejoice together at the harvest. Imbai's had had many years of faithful and fruitful ministry, since Mr. Studd helped the natives to build their first "cricket pitch" church in a forest clearing in 1925, in particular the labours of Gilbert and Mrs. Buckley, and Miss Muriel Harman. The station was now in the hands of a brother and two sisters, Jack, Lily and Ivy Roberts. Jack and Lily had worked there since 1931, Ivy being a newcomer. They had seen blessing, especially in an increase of missionary enthusiasm among the people. But they were conscious of a block somehow in the work. It reached a climax by Christmas 1934. They felt convinced that they could not go on as they were. In an endeavour to bring the people face to face with God, they cancelled the usual Christmas festivities and called them to prayer. The meetings, however, were a fiasco, with a "sour sullenness" on the faces of the congregation. No other meeting was announced and the usual conference was postponed for a week.

The trio went to their own room terribly burdened. Throwing themselves on their faces before God, they spent the rest of the day alone in prayer. The next three days were given to secret intercession, and there grew a calm confidence that something out of the ordinary would happen when the conference opened. It began rather oppressively. Roberts preached on, "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." But before he had

finished the atmosphere changed. Obviously the Holy Ghost was working. At the noon meeting he spoke again from the same text. It was five o'clock before he stopped. At the close he said quietly, "Will those of you who want to get right with God do so now? The meeting is open for public confession of sin."

Confessions began with some of the leading Christians—their lack of love for God's Word and prayer, their slackness in giving. Then came a real break. One after another stood up and confessed to stealing: some were recent cases since their conversion: others, for which no restitution had been made, were years before they knew the Saviour. But a desperate battle was going on. The station people were still very hard. They seemed to wince, as broken humble confessions continued around them at intervals till dusk. No one apparently noticed the approach of night: they just sat on as though glued to their seats. At half-past six one of the house lads slipped out and brought a storm lantern to the platform. Unconscious of time, they sat on till ten o'clock. It was then that one of the other house-boys made a confession and stopped short. He was labouring under great conviction of sin. Roberts, knowing his life, knew that he was only half-way through and told him so openly. But he denied it, and sat down.

Imbai's was strangely still that night. The people dispersed silently, even the children slipping off to bed as quiet as mice. Previously in conference times everybody was very much alive; an animated conversation would be heard till the small hours of the morning. This time all was hushed. Satan was putting up a terrific resistance in the station Christians. They



persecuted and scorned those who had made confessions, particularly when the sin confessed was the one of which they themselves were guilty. That night they were made the subject of concentrated intercession.

At 6:30 a.m., to a full audience, Roberts spoke again from "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." In conclusion he told them that the 3 o'clock service would be open only to those who were right with God or willing to make things right. Numbers in the afternoon were small. Except for those who had acknowledged sin the previous day, there were very few indeed. The majority of the station people and their wives were absent, as were also the schoolchildren. The text was unchanged.

As the service continued, however, quite a little crowd collected outside, mostly Christian people. They were trying to listen without being seen. By and by, one by one, they started creeping in, and taking their places with the others—30, 40, 50, 60 of them! When an opportunity was given for prayer and confession, the first break came with the station workmen. Consciences were very tender and the sense of sin deep and real. It was well understood that confession meant restitution, but the shame and humiliation of the uncovering of sin cost those proud Babudus infinitely more than any material restitution.

One man acknowledged that he had been a source of annoyance on the station, always grumbling. Carpenters made confessions that they would not have made for any money and which no threat would ever have forced from their lips, the stealing of timber, nails, screws and hinges. The house-lad who had gone halfway the day before rose again and confessed to some minor thefts, such as taking salt from the salt box. "Is that all you have to confess!" he was asked from the platform. "No. That's not all," he said, recounting a few more instances. "And is that all?" Then he would

add a few more. At last a faithful rebuke made him find his balance. "You are a hypocrite," cried Roberts. "You are confessing only what you think is known to me. But remember all is known to God." After that he confessed to gross sin. Many afterwards were the confessions of immorality. Young people told how they had been to all-night dances and drinking feasts. The breaking through with the schoolchildren came last and was every bit as real. Many lads owned up to stealing animals out of other lads' traps. Older boys admitted attending heathen rites and being guilty of impurity. Even wee toddlers confessed to taking cooked food, hidden by their mother for the evening meal, but found in her absence and eaten. With tears running down their cheeks, they would say, "I told mother I didn't take it, but I did." The girls' confessions were astounding—painting their bodies in black, white, and red, as a substitute for dress. Blackening their eyebrows: plaiting straw hats with the object of making themselves attractive, wearing their hats obliquely over one eye with a feather stuck out at another angle to be conspicuous, running away from school and going to dances on the quiet. These confessions came from the breaking up of the deep well springs of the heart.

The blessed Holy Spirit was doing what He came to do, to convict of sin and to reveal the Saviour. The words of Malachi were finding their fulfilment: "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple . . . But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." The Lord had appeared to His own; and it meant a "going under" in every case.

But if conscience had been deeply wounded, Calvary had healed the wounds of all who had found their way there. Something snapped on that Monday night, which brought a different relationship between the native Christians and the missionaries. There had been suspicion

and estrangement before, that undefined barrier to mutual confidences, partly racial, partly social, that spoils so much work for God on the mission field.

It meant that Jack could share with them that evening the burden for revival that God had laid on his heart. A good many on the mission premises were still holding out, harbouring unforgiven sin. These became harder than ever. But as for the others, for the most part their captivity was turned and their tongues tuned to song. They sang hymns from morning till night and worked as they had never worked before. A few of the sawyers had been confessing to slacking in their jobs; so this morning for the first time they were sent to the forest alone. The putting up one huge log—some twenty feet long—ready for sawing, was reckoned a day's work: but in three hours the men were back with the job completed, lined up on parade, ready for the next! No sneaking into their villages for food! No hiding in the forest to kill time! From that day each sawyer was his own foreman and needed no supervision.

On the Thursday of that week a young carpenter asked if he could say something. "I have to confess to you," he said, "how I have wronged my sister and sinned against God. I wanted to get married, and my father had no money to pay for a bride; but he suggested selling my little sister of twelve years to get me the purchase price. I knew that my sister should be at school, and I knew that this transaction meant her slavery, but I consented. She was sold to an old pagan, who has several other wives; and the money has already been paid towards the purchase of my bride. But I have been a traitor to Jesus Christ." "You know what to do, don't you?" Jack asked him. "Yes, I know, Bwana: get my sister back, return the old man the money, and give up for the present negotiations for my bride." He went through with it. The child, happy to be released, came to school, and he took up his cross and followed his Saviour.

Christ on Campus

My First Year at College

by Crystal Hoffmann

The first year of college can be tough—it certainly was for me. Not only do I have a hard time with academics, but also I was experiencing for the first time living away from home and having to get along with a roommate. On top of it all, I experienced doubt in God. But looking back, I definitely grew by facing these challenges.

Academics have never come easy for me. I have always had trouble with reading and writing. At college I could no longer have my parents proofread my papers. I had to get help from other people, which I did.

Now, academics were more important than ever because I knew I needed to find a major that would determine my future career. Since the beginning of high school, I thought maybe God wanted me to be a teacher. In high school I even took a class called “Working with Children” and received a certificate to be an assistant daycare director. My parents and other people told me that I would make a good teacher. Most importantly I believed God put his desire on my heart to be a teacher. By the time I got to college however, I no longer wanted to be a teacher. Even though I thought teaching was “cool,” I thought being a doctor or a medical person would make me more important. So, I chose Biology as my major.

I ended up having an awful semester, and I almost failed my biology

class. I remember studying for 11 hours for one test. In fact, no matter how little or how hard I studied, my test scores did not get any better. As a result, I was a complete mess. Twice, I called home and cried. All I remember hearing from my parents was “God obviously has a different plan for you other than being a Biology major.” When they said that, I knew clearly what God wanted me to do. Therefore, by the end of first semester, I changed my major to education.

In addition to trouble in the classroom, I was having serious trouble with my roommate. I now know that my roommate is one of the best people God has ever put in my life. First semester, however, we did not get along at all, so I tried to stay away from my room as much as possible. I did not want to deal with having to say anything to her. To me, my roommate was bigger and stronger than I was. Needless to say, I was not believing right—I believed that I was not important and that what I had to say was not significant. As a result, many people pushed me around, especially my roommate. I was so upset by the end of first semester I wanted to have a different roommate. Through many of our arguments I did not say what I was thinking, and I hated the outcome. Finally, I decided to believe that Christ through me, Crystal, could be bold and say what was on her mind. Suddenly my roommate and I started

realizing we could compromise if we both said what we were thinking. As a result, I became grateful for my roommate; in fact I found that I needed her. So, even though we did not get along first semester, we decided to room together our sophomore year.

Doubting God, now that is a scary thing. You have no clue whom to turn to when you have serious questions. My assistant residence director, a good friend of mine, took a theology class that caused her to question the existence of God. This class caused many people to question God. One day during our weekly Bible study, she brought her doubts to our attention. I asked her how could there be no God. All she could say was she did not know. After that, I started to wonder myself. I remember asking myself questions like “Is God a crutch for me?” “Is having Christ in me a made up story?” But I also thought, “How can so many people be changed by accepting Christ if He is not real?” There were times I would go for a walk at night and ask myself, “How could nature and all it’s beauty be made from some big bang and not be created by God?” When I talked to other people about my doubts, they would tell me that it was sin to doubt God. After hearing that, I was so scared that I did not even talk to my parents about my doubts. The deeper I got into doubting the more I felt like I had a heavy rain cloud hovering over my head.

I was so upset and scared, that for many days right after class I would lock myself in my room. I was in no shape to see other people.

For comfort, I turned to Hebrews 11, the faith chapter, and found answers. Hebrews 11 showed that even against any physical impossibility, God made and still makes things possible. It was so inspiring to me that I shared it with my residence director. Although it did not seem to help her, you never know how God uses that sort of thing.

I also turned to *Yes I Am* by Norman Grubb. Through reading it and the Bible, I slowly realized and decided to believe that I was a vessel and a container of Christ. The most fitting passage I read from Norman's *Yes I Am* states: "Now if we were in the old two-nature conflict, we should be swinging between faith and doubt, but we, knowing we are He in us, dissolve the temptation by saying, 'I'm not taking that temptation to doubt. That is an external assault on me. I'm not double—I'm single. And Christ is my wisdom.' The stand of faith dissolves the doubt" (pg 159).

We believers have Christ living through us even when we are doubting. Doubt is just a temptation. In fact, it is an external conflict, not Satan's spirit of doubt in us. The greats in Hebrews 11 had faith against any physical impossibility—against any temptation to doubt. Like Norman said, "Faith will overcome doubt." When I have doubts, I know it is only a temptation. I put my faith in Christ, and He overcomes the doubt. *He* overcomes the doubt, not me.

Crystal is a sophomore at Olivet Nazarene University in Illinois. She is a member of the cross country team and is majoring in Elementary Education.

Psalm 32

Oh, what a joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out or sight! Yes, what a joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer of heat.

Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Therefore, let all the godly confess their rebellion to you while there is time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment.

For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord. So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

—New Living Translation

Youth Camp Report

by Scott Prewitt

Summer Camp has come and gone again this year, and once again the youth program was a big hit. Each time I think we find more and more fun activities for the young people, plus the children keep learning more and more about God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Living Holy Spirit.

Camp started on Friday night as usual with a time of singing and fellowship for everyone, and by Saturday morning we really hit the ground running, wasting no time. We divide the youth up into age groups appropriate to be together, and each group has two counselors that teach Bible lessons throughout the week. This is the heart and soul of camp and the focus of everything we do. Each group has a central theme or book of the Bible that they study for the week, and the teachers do an excellent job working with the age group they are teaching.

The youngest group worked this year on stories from the Old Testament. Some of them included Joshua at Jericho and Daniel in the lion's den. This group always loves to make crafts and costumes that go along with what they are learning, and it's a great way to help them learn and make it fun. I particularly enjoyed the lion costumes they made out of simple brown paper grocery bags. The lions came complete with tails, and the outfits looked great. The youngest ones also marched around camp like the Israelites did around Jericho to help learn the story of the conquering of the Promised Land. They blew kazoos like they were trumpets, and they had a great time learn-

ing their Bible stories.

The next group up worked all week on a puppet show for the rest of the youth at camp. This group studied the New Testament story of the lame man who was lowered through the roof by his friends in order to be seen by Jesus. On the last day of camp, they told the story to the rest of us in the form of a puppet show, and they did a super job. All week these young people spent time making their puppets from scratch, plus they had their own specially designed stage for the show. They spent



lots of time practicing and working on their production, and it really paid off in the end. The show was wonderful and they all were proud of the job they did.

The next group up spent their week studying lessons from the book of John in the New Testament. Wow! They covered lots of ground and learned so much about Jesus, the Son of God. This group really takes studying their Bibles very seriously, and this is the right time for them to start developing the desire to read God's word. These nine to twelve year-olds showed that they could read their own Bibles to study about God and Jesus rather than be taught more simple lessons from a Bible

storybook. This age group really set the stage for more serious study and understanding of God's word as they grow older, and I can promise that they will be ready!

The oldest group studied the book of Esther, and appropriately, this group was all girls this year. Esther tells about a young beautiful Jewish girl who becomes queen of Persia in a most unlikely way. Of course, nothing is unlikely in God's kingdom. God's hand steers events so that Esther can be in position to appeal to the

king to save the Jews after an evil royal counselor orders that all the Jews in the kingdom be killed. Esther's story is one of great courage as well as wit and diplomacy. I had the pleasure of working with the young women in this group to teach them about Esther. I really enjoyed showing these ladies that God uses women and men alike to get the job

done, and each and every day, our obedience to His will always makes an impact on the world around us.

Truly, the Bible lessons are the focal point of our camp, but we have lots and lots of activities each year, and this year we seemed to pack more in than ever before. Several years ago, we began incorporating a community service work project into camp. This year, we decided to go back to a place back in the woods of the mountains here called the Genesis Project. This organization is practically one local woman's crusade to save wild animals that have been injured or become too sick to survive in their natural habitat.

Numerous types of birds, raccoons, groundhogs and rabbits are just a few of the animals that she takes in and cares for until they are ready to be released back into the woods. Our youth camp spent time helping Genesis clear areas for new cages so that Genesis can increase the number of animals it can house. Plus, all of the children really enjoyed seeing the animals up-close. In fact, while we were there working, the local sheriff brought in a baby deer that was injured by the road side. The young people really appreciated being able to make a difference by having a part in helping God's creatures in the animal kingdom.

On Sunday afternoon, we all went to a concert of a most unusual kind. This was a one-man show performed by a guy who makes musical instruments out of junk he finds in garage sales, dumpsters, and trash cans. Pots, pans, bottles, cans, washboards, and saw blades were just a few of the items he used to perform percussion pieces that were high in energy and entertainment. The show was done in an audience friendly format that included participation from the crowd. At the end of the show, everyone was invited to take up different "instruments" that he brought along as extras. Our girls and guys from camp became performers as the whole audience played along.

Everyone at camp looked forward to Monday as they do every year. This is the day we take the older youth inner tubing down the new river while the younger youth go to a local amusement park called Tweetsie Railroad. We kept the outdoor theme through Monday evening as we went on an old-fashioned hayride. The mountains are a beautiful backdrop to spend time together worshipping God and His great creation. We traveled the back roads of the area singing praise songs to God as we enjoyed

the beauty of the mountains.

Tuesday night was another enjoyable night as we traveled an hour away to see a Hickory Crawdads baseball game. The Crawdads are the single A affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and the stadium sits in the foothills of the mountains. It is a beautiful place to watch a ballgame. God provided us a special treat by taking negative circumstances and turning them into a blessing for us. It had rained most of the afternoon at the ballpark, so our picnic was going to be cancelled. However, the Crawdads set us up in an indoor skybox where we could watch the ballgame and watch all of the youth in a more controlled environment. The skybox came complete with all of the hamburgers and hotdogs we could eat, and we even had our own private restroom. Right in front of our box was a set of private box seats outside so we could enjoy the convenience of an indoor box as well as the enjoyment of outdoor seats at the ballpark.

On Wednesday we went on a nature hike right under Grandfather Mountain off of the Blue Ridge Parkway. God has blessed me with the privilege of traveling over three continents, but I believe one of the most beautiful and stunning places on earth is the mountains at Grandfather. The hike up the trail is well maintained by the U.S. Park Service, so most of the age groups at camp were able to take this hike. Along the way, there are several places to stop and soak in the view, and it is awesome. Whenever I take this hike, I always stop and wonder how anyone could believe that there is no God who made the earth. We were all reminded that God's majesty is really His fingerprint on the world around us. Finally at the top of the hike, everyone enjoyed a special treat as wild blueberries grow everywhere, and we enjoyed truly enjoyed the "fruits of the

Creator's work."

On Thursday, we again put on a carnival for all of camp including adults and youth alike. We came up with this idea last year, and everyone enjoyed it so much that we did it again this year. Everyone really enjoyed games such as the water gun race, the Grand Prize Game, the apple bob, and the cakewalk. The most popular attraction though still is the air walk. Many of the younger youths, however, made out like bandits this year playing in the sand. We took a sandbox and added pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and golden dollars, then we let the children gather as much of the money as they could find. Some of our more aggressive youngsters left with over ten dollars in coins. The climax to the carnival came with a new addition this year...the dunking booth. Several of the youth counselors were chosen as "volunteers," but it was all in good, wet fun.

Every year I say, "This was the best camp ever," and I am glad to say it again after this year. I love my job as youth camp director, and I am grateful that God has put me here to help lead the children in His way. Our camp is a fantastic mix of serious Bible study along with old-fashioned fun. The children never seem to get bored, and the counselors always come away with a great sense of accomplishment. I take my responsibility of teaching and training these young people in the ways of God our Father seriously, and summer camp is our special time each year to make it happen all at once. I am already looking forward to next summer, and I hope to see you there.

Scott Prewitt is the youth director of Zerubbabel Ministries. He lives in Blowing Rock, North Carolina and is an owner/ manager of Back Yard Burgers in Boone, Lenoir and Hickory.

Wisdom

A Young Woman's Search

by Joanna Langley

On the eve of Easter Sunday, God guided me through a series of questions I had on my heart about wisdom. This experience is very precious to me and I would like to share it with you.

Proverbs (a favourite book of mine) tells us that “getting wisdom is the most important thing you can do!” (Proverbs 4:7). This verse is so clear and precise I couldn't ignore it. Proverbs is packed with verses like this about wisdom and these had left me hungry to find out how I can get my hands on some! Then God's light shone.

On Saturday night I read that “A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash” (Prov. 15:14). “That's it!” I thought. “I have been hungry for truth—this means I am wise!” This seemed like good news to me and I sat back in my bed, excited at the thought, but within a few seconds I realised how independent that statement was. I knew as a vessel I could do nothing apart from Christ (John 15:4) and was left wondering, “So what is wisdom?”

In “The Key To Everything,” Norman describes how he used to think he could have love and power channeled into him, and he would then be more loving and more powerful. God showed him that this was impossible, as love is a Person—Him! (1John 4:8). I thought that sure-

ly the same is true of wisdom. I knew there was more to see and as I lay in the dark, I realised I could ask God to show me, and He would (James 1:5). Seconds after asking Him, I saw an image of a huge bunch of flower buds. In the space of a second or two they grew and exploded into magnificent flowers in full bloom (similar to the way nature shows speed up the film to illustrate the process of flower growth). Immediately I sat up and thought, “Wow—what was that?” I tried to visualise the image again but couldn't. I knew it was from God and wondered what He was illustrating. Then I remembered again how Norman talks about receptivity and utilisation through abiding in the vine: “...though the vine is the life and the branch the channel, yet the branch does things—it utilises the sap and produces leaf and flower and fruit.” I thought that maybe this is what wisdom is—the fruit of receptivity. As we continue to say yes to Christ (receptivity) and be obedient to all God has shown us thus far (utilising the sap—Christ) we bear the fruit of wisdom and grow and blossom in our faith, just like the flowers.

However, God had more for me to see. My eyes fell on Romans 16:27, “To God, who alone is wise.” As I realised I was wanting what Norman wanted, to be wiser, God told me “No, only I am wise!” At that

moment, a sudden stillness came upon the room and I felt very afraid. My heart was beating faster as I read “Fear of the Lord, is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10). God showed me in many more verses that wisdom is a Person. In particular, I read Proverbs 8—a chapter that intrigues me—in a new light. Wisdom is talking: “The Lord formed me from the beginning, before he created anything else. I was appointed in ages past at the very first, before the earth began.” Then as I read Colossians 1:15 I made the connection: “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He existed before everything else began and he holds all creation together.” Jesus Christ is Wisdom. Therefore, as a vessel containing Jesus Christ, I have wisdom—I have the Person! Further confirmation came in 1 Corinthians 1:30: “God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made Christ to be wisdom itself. He is the one who made us acceptable to God and He gave himself to purchase our freedom.” Hallelujah!

While this is wonderful news for all of us, it is important also to remember that each of us is still

responsible for utilising the sap. God cannot reveal His wisdom through us if we do not take the light we have already been given and walk in that light. "To whom much has been given, much will be required; to whom much has been entrusted even more will be demanded" (Luke 13:48).

Joanna is a part-time student and works at Tesco in Leicester, England.

Bible Study: God's Sovereignty and Freewill

continued from page 11

though with a far different purpose in mind. The only real—though totally free—choice we have is to determine whether we will be vessels of Christ or of Satan. As Paul has said, "Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work" (2 Tim 2:20-21). We can be vessels of honor or of dishonor, of Christ or of Satan. We may not control what these two spirits do through us, but we are responsible for the consequences, since it is our choice that determined which spirit operated us. That is why God can hold us accountable for our actions, even though we do not directly control those actions: our free choice determined which spirit is expressed in our actions.

So our free will and God's sovereign control over His universe are really not in conflict. When we realize that we are not independent selves, but vessels operated by one of two spirits, we can see that our free choice is not the ability to control our actions, but our fundamental response of obedience or disobedience to God. Free will is a central doctrine of the Christian faith, for without free will, we could not be held responsible for our actions, and God's judgment would be a mockery. On the other hand, unless God were sovereign, His promises could not be trusted, for He would lack sufficient control over His universe to ensure that their fulfillment. Fortunately for us, God is both sovereign and entirely loving in giving humanity the same freedom that He Himself possesses.

Brett has an M.A. in New Testament and a Th. M. in Biblical Theology from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and is currently working on his doctorate at the University of Durham in England. He currently lives in Poughkeepsie, New York, and is a Zerubbabel Contact and Teacher-Sharee.

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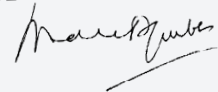
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The Sole Function of the Human

by Norman Grubb

There is only really One Person in the universe—God Himself. The creation is the means of manifesting Him. Human beings, created as persons in His image, only exist to contain and manifest Him as The Person, for they alone as persons can do that. But likewise, being persons, and therefore self-conscious and free, they can and did refuse to “retain God in their knowledge,” and thus became the containers of the false spirit of self-love in place of the Divine Spirit of self-giving. The way they became like this, and the way back, we will go into later.

But at the moment I want to stress most plainly the complementary fact to God being the only real Person. It is that we humans are basically containers, and nothing else. I have already referred to our misconception of the function of the human self, and here it is. Through the self-sufficiency we inherited from the Fall, we instinctively regard ourselves as something very much more than containers. “Vessels” the Bible calls us; it was the first description given by the Ascended Christ of the most dynamic Christian of history, the Apostle Paul: “He is a chosen vessel unto Me”: just a vessel, that was all. Were all the dynamism, the wisdom, the revelations, the passionate love, the self-sacrifice then attributes of the vessel, or of Him whom it contained? And Paul himself

went on to call us all “earthen vessels”. Not even tin cans, but nearer to crackpots! Humbling, self-emptying, an offense to any man not enlightened to facts by the Spirit of God. But let us get it plain, and without equivocation. If God is the All, and we are merely the means of His Self-manifestation, is it not a fact that we must be just containers? “Christ is all and in all.” “Temple”

Life is surely based on receptivity, and the Bible word for receptivity is faith. Can anything be simpler? How wonderfully God has made us: to live, spiritually and materially, by exercising a capacity which is as near as possible to doing nothing—just receiving.

is another like metaphor, for a temple has no reason for existence except to house its god: “Ye are the temples of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.”

The point then is that a vessel or temple has only one function (and you will remember that we humans have a misconception of the function of the human self). Activity is not the function of a vessel, but receptivity. Here we reach right down to the roots.

Receptivity is the simplest, most child-like human function. In Bible terms, it is not works, but faith. But what we have to re-learn is that receptivity is not a function, but the function. All other functions are by-products. The whole of life is a parable of this. Is not everything some form of the self-giving of God? And do we not totally live by what we receive—food, air, the floorboards beneath our feet, the clothes on our backs? And in most cases something has died to give us life. Life is surely based on receptivity, and the Bible word for receptivity is faith. Can anything be simpler? How wonderfully God has made us: to live, spiritually and materially, by exercising a capacity which is as near as possible to doing nothing—just receiving. Not reaching up to drag things down, but things poured upon us in such abundance that we just open our mouths and they are filled: and the gift of gifts we receive is Himself.

Wait a minute, you may object, but we do have to act also. Certainly, activity is a product of receptivity, but not a substitute for it. But remember we said that we must take extreme measures to expel the human self from its false position before we can replace it in its true one. Certainly, we are real persons. We think, we will, we act. Yet it is not safe or even true for us to regard ourselves as such until first we have

“died” to our independent selves, and begun the life of constant recognition (reception) of Another as the Real Self in us. We must start at the bottom and remain forever at the bottom—mere containers, vessels, capable only of receiving, and with no other capability.

Do we see then what this means? Not that we have a life to live with God as our helper. Not that we must pray more, give more, love more, witness more. Not basically that we are God’s partners or fellows or co-workers, but that God Himself is the All in us. He is the One who prays, gives, loves, witnesses. He lives our life, our common everyday life—as we shall see more clearly later.

When we have really seen this, then we can add to it the other fact—that we humans are obviously more than inanimate pots and pans. We are people! Humanity has spent all the years of its history running amok with the claim to be autonomous selves, like a horse with the bit between its teeth. Therefore again we say, active self must be thrown right out, as it were, and replaced by receptive self, before we can allow the usurper back into favour again. But if the expulsion has taken place once and for all, and the lesson learned, then the self-in-action can be recognized again in its rightful function, although all our lives it will have to be reminded of where it belongs and snubbed when it tries to take over again. Its rightful place and function is portrayed for us by Christ’s parable of the Vine and branch, and Paul’s analogy of Head and body. The Vine and branch truth emphasizes the indissoluble union of Christ and the believer. We are organically one. One tree, one life; yet in

that relationship Jesus underlined the fact that we, the branches, are merely channels of the sap from the vine. A branch is more than a channel, because a branch is alive whereas a pipe is not, and a branch does absorb and utilize the sap to produce the fruit. It is not entirely inactive, though entirely dependent. But it was the dependence Jesus was pointing to: “apart from Me, ye can do nothing.” So that illustration is taking us one further than the vessel. First, we are merely containers. Then, having absorbed and accepted that fact, we are more. We are united to Him whom we contain in a way a vessel can never be united to the liquid in it. We are united because we are living people as He is the Living Person; yet in that union, as branch to vine, we remain as totally dependent as the vessel. Without the sap flowing through us, we can do nothing. Yet it is this time a living dependence, for we are to “abide in the Vine.”

Once more then, Paul’s illustration takes us further. We are body to head. Again that makes one Person, just as it was one Tree. So one that the Bible even speaks of the body (not the head) as Christ (1 Cor. 12:12). Yet the body is as solely the agent of the head, as branch of vine. The total dependence is maintained. The union is maintained. But in head and body, the activity of the members comes to the fore. A body is made for action. A head is useless without a body, so the body in Eph. 1:23 is specifically spoken of as the fullness of the head, as the head of the body. They are necessary to each other. So here we come back full circle to active self, but dead, risen and ascended, and thus forever knowing

itself as basically containing the Other, motivated by The Other, He living His own life and expressing His own Self through ourselves; yet we freely in action, just as if it was we, thinking, willing, working, laughing, talking, living as normal human beings in normal situations, and the world thinking it is just we, except for something unusual they can’t identify about us. What? We know: “your life is hid with Christ in God . . . Christ our life.”

But to get all this into focus, we must probe deeper. To recapitulate, God is the one real Person who lives. We live as persons, so that our derived personalities can be the means of manifesting Him. Humanity, as all creation, lives, exists by His life, all are forms of Him; but we being persons, spirits, are the only creatures who can refuse to be what we were made to be—persons who contain The Person. This is what happened, we humans receiving and containing another spirit—the satanic spirit of self-love, the enemy of God. Thus, though we live and move and have our being in Him, we actually live the life that is the exact contrary of His, the life of self-centredness; we express the reverse of God, and are therefore in His No, not His Yes; in His wrath, not His good pleasure; in His darkness, not His light; in His judgments, not His mercy. How then can we become that for which we were created? Nothing can function harmoniously, except according to the laws of its being. Humanity in all its history is thus so patently out of gear, right down to each of our personal lives. How can we get into gear?

—from *God Unlimited*

The Ravages of Pornography

by Fowler Cooper

This article discusses the effects of pornography from my perspective as a marriage and family counselor. Before doing that, however, I want to take a quick look at what God says about pornography. First Corinthians 6:19-20 states: "Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." In Genesis 1:26-27, God tells us that we are made in His likeness and image. Both passages refer to our bodies as houses through which God wants to work. God is sacrificial love for others. Pornography is purely for the self-gratification of the user and is debasing and disrespectful to God's house (the body) by the modeling participant. How then can the Holy Spirit work through such bodies? He can't. So, scripturally there is no way to reconcile pornography with God.

God designed humans to reproduce sexually, and the sexual drive is a wonderful gift from God. The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that it should be utilized to the full within its proper context. That context, however, is only in marriage and only in a giving way with one's marriage partner, not simply for self-gratification. The Holy Spirit living out through believers is for others, not for self. This is all we really need to know—since pornography and its use are ungodly, it is sin. The fact that it is sin ends any discussion about whether it

is good or bad, right or wrong.

Regrettably however, the fact that a behavior is sin often does not deter people from doing it, and this is why God, in His grace, provides consequences. The use of pornography is no exception—the consequences are great and often tragic. Of course, the defenders of pornography would have us believe otherwise. They say that pornography is harmless entertainment. Some even argue that pornography can act as a "safety-valve" to keep potential sex offenders from acting out criminally.¹

Research has strongly suggested that pornography is not harmless entertainment and that it does not work as a "safety valve." In a nationwide study, University of New Hampshire researchers Larry Baron and Murray Straus found a "strong statistical link between the circulation rates of pornographic magazines and rape rates." In states where circulation rates were high, they found that rape rates were also high. Conversely, where circulation rates were low, rape rates tended to be low as well.¹ This correlation does not unequivocally show a casual link between pornography and rape, but it certainly makes it harder to justify pornography as harmless entertainment or as a safety valve.

Several other studies, which entailed extensive interviews with rapists, incest offenders, and child molesters, also suggested this cause-and-effect relationship by finding that many of these sex offenders used

pornography to arouse themselves both prior to and during their assaults. Interviews with assault victims conducted by Dr. Mimi Silbert of San Francisco and by Ayala Pines of Berkeley echo these studies. Without being asked, 24% of the women who had been raped said that their attackers specifically mentioned their use of pornography as they raped them. Similarly, 22% of those molested as children said that the molester had either used pornography or mentioned its use while enacting the crime.¹ A study conducted by the Michigan State Police showed that, out of 48,000 sex offenders, 42% of them used pornography either before or during the sexual assault.² There are many other specific rape and molestation studies that indicate the same apparent connections.

In an FBI study, the bureau interviewed 36 serial murderers and found that 29 of them or 81% identified pornography as one of their highest sexual interests. The Attorney General's Commission on Pornography also found a link between pornography and rape. The diverse 11 member commission, which disagreed on many things, unanimously ruled that "in both clinical and experimental settings, exposure to sexually violent materials has indicated an increase in the likelihood of aggression," and that aggressive behavior directed at women will cause an increase in the level of sexual violence against women. An earlier study found

continued on page 29

My Story of Sexual Addiction

Anonymous

From a young age, my parents never instructed me how to live in the real world. I was always reading something—this was my escape from reality. This maybe sounds good to many, but I was allowed to do it all the time to the exclusion of any skills needed for living life. Consequently, I grew up in a fantasy world where everything always worked out if you just kept turning the pages. This kind of mentality conditioned me perfectly to enter the world of sexual bondage.

When puberty hit with all its physical and emotional chaos, I resorted to the way I had already been resolving my life—through fantasy. As a child I escaped through books; as an adolescent I escaped through pornography. I certainly was not helped by my parents, particularly my dad. Through the years, I would often find where he kept his personal stash of pornography. For some years this was in his nightstand by the bedside, so I know that my mother must have been aware of it. But as far as I could tell, she did nothing about it. By the time I was 13, I became obsessed with obtaining pornography for myself, whether I got it from friends, or stole it, or found it in the dumpster of the local quick-mart. I would hide it in my room and then pretend to read in bed while having the door cracked open enough so that I could stash it under my covers if someone was coming up the stairs.

The women in pornography were always beautiful and perfect, and I did

not have to risk anything to have a relationship with them. The fact that they were in these magazines exposing themselves to me was enough to instantly satisfy my drive for a relationship. Or was it enough? I was certainly satisfied after each incident, but as in any addiction, one begins to build a tolerance so that he needs something more, something bigger, something better. Through the years, I would spend lots of time experimenting with all kinds of perverted things I read in these magazines. By God's grace, I never acted out physically with another person; nevertheless, anyone who was in my life was victimized by my sin.

There were many times during those years when I would hate what I was doing, ask God for forgiveness, and try to start anew to no avail. The consequences and feelings of guilt I had did not outweigh the high that I loved so much in doing it. As I have come to understand how Satan worked through my life (with my cooperation), I can see how I allowed Satan to convince me that it was a price worth paying.

As long as I can remember, I had always gone to church and Sunday school and had always believed in God and the Bible and the fact that He had sent His Son to die for my sins. I was always drawn to anything spiritual but continued to act out sexually as well as drink and occasionally do drugs throughout high school. The summer before my first year of college, I finally got caught drinking and partying. My

parents grounded me for the summer, and I decided to straighten out my life and follow Jesus. I quit all of the blatant outward sinful lifestyle—with one exception. I hung on to a couple of pornographic magazines.

My freshman year at college, God was gracious enough to give me a Christian roommate. Soon I felt too guilty to continue to keep the pornography and finally threw it away. I quit my sexual sin for a time, mainly because I was excited about college and the opportunity to fellowship with Christians my age. Having grown up in a small church in a small town, being away at college was a tremendous experience to me. I acted out less—during semester breaks or when I felt lonely or bored—but I was never totally clean.

As college progressed, I found myself less enthralled with the experience. The discipline and the responsibility needed to be successful in college overwhelmed me. Things got particularly bad shortly after my junior year began and my mother died. There I was, a young adult unable to cope with the depression of my mother dying and my growing struggles in school. Growing up, I had simply not developed the emotional and spiritual tools I now desperately needed. I began to draw into myself and handle life's pressures the way I always had—through fantasy, in particular by acting out sexually.

Over the next 6 years, my life gradually began to become more and more miserable. Sure, there were many

moments when I would have some clarity on what my life in Christ could be. But even these revelations only further depressed me as I continued to engage in sexual sin. The more I sinned, the less capable I was of functioning in life. The less capable I was, the more I ran to my sin to escape. I recently read a book on sexual addiction in which the author likened it to a deep dark canyon in your mind. This description had an impact on me as I thought about how I had worn that stream of sexual sin as a young person into a terrible canyon. No part of my life was left unaffected.

Eventually, with the help of the ministry that produces this magazine, I became accountable to others and honestly took stock of the sin in my life—not just my sexual sin, but the attitudes and believing behind it. This process of coming clean has been unnecessarily long, with me turning back to my former sin life several times. But God has been merciful to me again and again, giving me opportunities to confess my sin, repent, and make restitution to those I've harmed.

Now here I am, a man approaching middle age, getting to live a life that I do not deserve and would not have apart from God's grace. Let me make something perfectly clear though: my sin has not come without painful consequences that will affect my loved ones and me for the rest of my life. God's grace is not an elixir for these consequences. My family and friends will probably always have a fear that I will choose this sin route whenever my life gets tough. I have thousands of pornographic images in my brain that I can never erase and that regularly flash in my mind. With each image I placed in my

mind, Satan has one more inroad he can use to tempt me into sinning. The effort it takes to diligently commit to solving long term problems often feels too overwhelming and at times impossible. Responsible behavior that to many has been a lifelong habit begun in youth and done quite naturally as an adult is often a struggle for me. I liken many of these skills to mastering languages: people who learn a language as a youth find it much easier to use as an adult.

Many addicts indulge in self-pity or expect pity from others, as if their consequences have just come upon them for no reason. But just like any other addict, I chose to sin and reaped what was due me. It did not have to be this way. Had I remained pure in this area and lived a relatively sin free life, I still would have the weakness of simply being a human as is common to all including Jesus, but I would not have had to deal with the ongoing consequences that sin brings about. At any time I had a way out (the Bible makes this quite clear), and yet I chose to continue defying God and His law. One of God's many paradoxes is that these consequences are also God's blessings. These areas of weakness in my life are what continue to drive me into knowing that only by believing on a moment-by-moment basis that Christ is living His life through me will I bear any of His fruit in my life.

If you are a young person who is just now experiencing the trials of your developing sexuality, or if you are one who has already begun sexual sin, please take this message to heart. God has given you a great gift in your sexuality that he possibly wants you to share with someone else in the context of marriage. To some he has given this gift

so that you might bring glory to Him by your testimony of remaining a virgin for the rest of your life. Whatever the case, please guard this God-given gift, and do not allow Satan to pervert it by pornography and other sexual sin. The Bible states that human sexuality is one of the most important pictures of our relationship with Him, and Satan, who knows this fact, does all he can to tempting us to misuse this gift so he can destroy us and pervert God's plan.

If you have already committed sexual sin or are regularly committing sexual sin, stop! You have chosen to be an enemy of God by tearing apart his beautiful gift. If you have become addicted to this sin as I was, you are destroying something within yourself as well as harming all those around you. You do not know to what depths this addiction can take you. You have Satan calling the shots in your life. Confess your sin to another Christian who is committed to living life as it is laid out in the Bible. Ask God for his forgiveness and begin establishing right habits, knowing that it is Jesus Christ living His Life through you. Continue to be accountable to someone so that you will not choose this path again. So often, what helps to trigger sexual sin are thoughts and feelings of resentment, self-pity, and fear. These are not necessarily sin, but we have to take each one captive and let Christ swallow them up in victory.

If you are someone who needs help, please seek it now! Don't let Satan use you as an instrument of destruction. If you don't know anyone you can trust, please contact any of the people listed as in the back of this magazine. God so wants you to be a clean vessel for Him. Make it happen.

The Ravages of Pornography

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that 86% of rapists admitted regular use of pornography, with 57% admitting actual imitation of pornography scenes in committing their crimes.²

There are several specific cases that profoundly underscore the connection between pornography and crime. One of these cases is that of Ted Bundy, who was executed January 24, 1989 at a Florida state prison for the sex slaying of a 12-year-old girl. Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family Ministry interviewed Bundy the day before his execution. Bundy said categorically that pornography fueled his murder of many women and girls. Bundy went from soft-core pornography (drug store magazines as he put it) as a boy of 12 or 13 years old to even more explicit, potent, graphic and hard-core kinds of materials to satisfy his craving—much of the hard-core pornography employs violence against women and implies that women actually enjoy being raped (known as the rape myth). Finally, to satisfy his addiction, Bundy began acting out his pornography-nurtured fantasies. I have read the transcript of Bundy's interview with Dr. Dobson. It is frightening in part because Ted Bundy seemingly came from a stable and, as he put it, "Christian" home, yet with the help of pornography, he evolved into one of the worst serial killers in history. Pornography was assuredly not a safety valve for Ted Bundy.

In an analysis of 46 published studies, evidence confirmed an increased risk of negative development in individuals exposed to pornography. The results suggest that research in this area

can move beyond the question of whether pornography has an influence on violence and family functioning.³ Dolf Zillmann and Jennings Bryant demonstrated in a study that pornography can diminish a person's sexual happiness. They discovered that people exposed to non-violent pornography reported diminished satisfaction with their partner's physical appearance, affection, curiosity, and sexual performance. Those exposed to pornography were also inclined to put more importance on sex without emotional involvement. Zillmann and Bryant suggested that sexual dissatisfaction could "instigate many men and women to seek out conditions that promise more and better sexually gratifying experiences."¹

In my marriage and family therapy practice, I have personally seen problems caused by pornography among some of my clients. Even soft-core porn invariably interferes with a healthy sexual relationship with one's spouse, if for no other reason than because it can create a fantasy life that doesn't exist. It can also interfere with one's partner by becoming a substitute for the real thing. Furthermore, it can lead to hard-core activities such as telephone sex, chat

rooms, and adultery. Part of this process is alienation from the spouse who is not acting out, which is what normally brings them to therapy. The alienation is usually caused by a breach of trust and a sense of insufficiency on the part of the non-acting out spouse. It then becomes very difficult to rebuild that sense of trust and sufficiency, and a breach exists in the partnership for a long time, even if the offending partner ceases acting out.

There is no way to defend involvement in pornography—it is sin. It defiles God's house, the body; it destroys relationships; and it can lead to increasingly dangerous and even criminal behavior. If you are involved in pornography, stop. Find counsel in a mature Christian friend or, if you are able, in a Christian counselor.

Fowler is a Marriage and Family Therapist in Boone, NC. He and his wife Sanda have two children, Fowler (18) and Rebecca Jane (15).

Endnotes

1 Hartwig, Mark. "Pornography Warps Men's Attitudes." Focus on the Family Citizen. June 15, 1992. (pp. 10-12).

2 Reed, Douglas. "Scientific Evidence Shows Pornography is Harmful." Focus on the Family Citizen. June 15, 1989.

3 Oddone-Paolucci, Elizabeth; Genuis, Mark; Violato, Glandio. The Changing Family and Child Development. (pp. 48-59).

To Think About...

When at last we...transfer our believing from our outward suffering conditions and our consequent resistance to them and our defiance of Himself in them, and believe in Him and His word of grace with no strings of questioning attached, then we have found the key and turned it in the lock: our real suffering was our inner unbelief. We now see through to Him alone who purposed these outer sufferings to establish us—the only way to do so.

—Who Am I?

Postcards from **BOONE**

Memories from Summer Camp





Off to a foggy and fishy start!



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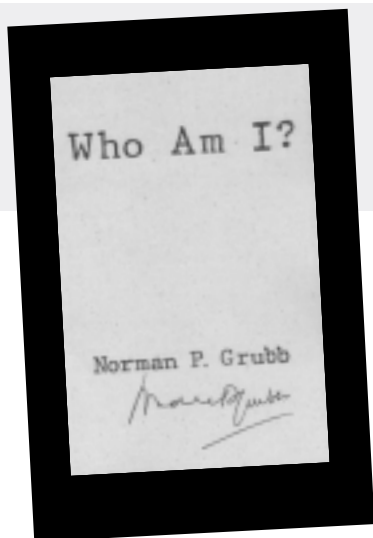
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New Life...

If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds it is for your benefit. Whatever we do, it is because Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for everyone, we also believe that we have all died to the old life we used to live. He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live to please themselves. Instead they will live to please Christ, who died and was raised for them.

-2 Corinthians 5:13-15
(New Living Translation)

Words to Live By...

Making Himself real to us in experience is God's business. Believing Him, quite apart from experience, is our business.

-from *God Unlimited*

Subscriptions

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Zerubbabel Tape Ministry

The following audiotapes are offered as an aide to affirming the Lord's revelations of "Christ in you." They will be of interest to those Christians who are seeking to further their understanding of living in union with Christ. All tapes have been recorded live at various gatherings and may contain some background noise. Editing has been kept to a minimum in order to preserve the precious truths these tapes contain.

NORMAN GRUBB

Introduction—Collected teachings and personal testimony providing an overview of the principles that have guided his ministry. Singing Hills, NH, 1987 Set of two tapes—\$10.00

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PAGE PREWITT

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Alphabet Soup—When the ABC's of life are all scrambled up and even saying "who you are" is not working. Blowing Rock, NC, 1987. One tape—\$5.00

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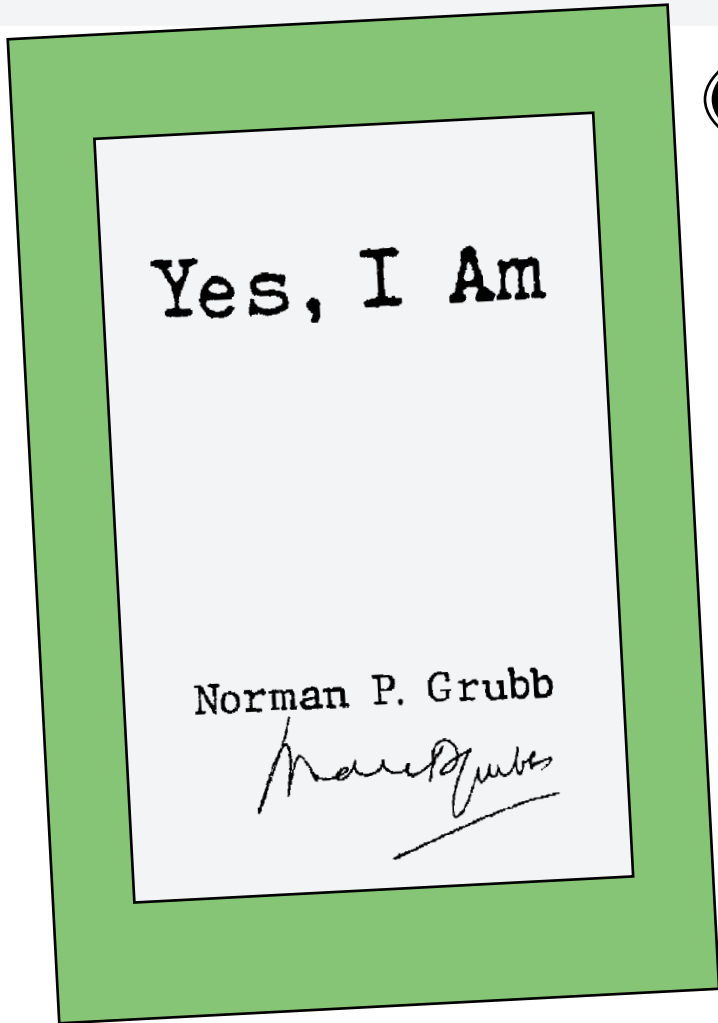
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