

The INTERCESSOR

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

Volume 23

Number 2

What is Love?

by Norman Grubb

Every religion and philosophy seeks love, often exhorting their members to love one another. Norman reveals the impossibility of that challenge. He wonderfully defines love—God’s love—and demonstrates how only His love can be perfected in us.

God is love. John said that twice in that passage of his first letter, and it sets the final bounds to human destiny. If a man loves, that is the evidence of his union with God. If a man loves his brother, the invisible God is made visible in that act. That is the last word that can be said—for time and eternity. Love is selflessness. The last rung of the ladder of attainment has been climbed. God is total disinterestedness in what might be to His own advantage. When it speaks of Him vindicating His own righteousness, giving pre-eminence to His own glory, that is not because of what He gets out of it: it is because only in the sharing of His perfections can His creatures attain theirs. It is for their sakes, for the universe of His creation, that He maintains the inviolability of His Throne. Love must sometimes be wrathful, appear self-interested and demanding, appear to maintain its own rights and dignity. Only love can safely do that, just because of its total detachment from self-interest. Can we imagine a Being

whose sole occupation for the ages of the ages is to carry the burdens and provide for the needs of others, and when those burdens and needs add up to those of the whole creation? And when the only human race we know of, made to be His peculiar treasure, hates Him, rejects Him, takes all and gives nothing, not even thanks, and often denies His existence? And His answer is to set to work to win them back by giving His life for them!

Love: The Goal

The summit of revelation is that God has predestined man to be just that. And man knows it. Whether by this devious pathway or that, almost every philosophy and religion that has emanated from the mind of man ends up on the plateau of love. We might say that mankind has finally settled that one point—that brotherly love is the goal. Neither logic nor intuition nor revelation can offer an alternative. That could well be called the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

But pure disinterestedness? Total absorption in the needs of others? Service to others as a debt eternally owed to and eternally claimed by my neighbor? The command, “Be ye also perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect”? Can that be possible in human

experience in this life or the next? No in one way, and yes in another.

The “No” way, in which it cannot be, is the path of delusion trodden by frustrated millions through history, the theme of a thousand religions, the pious aspiration but never realization of moralist, philosopher, idealist—and the butt of the cynic and pessimist.

It is mankind’s subtlest self-hypnotism. We can love, we can be friendly, kind, co-operative, they say. Give us time and self-discipline and we can attain to perfect love. Are not we commanded in the Bible to love God and

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one another? Do not the churches exhort us to imitate Christ—“Be like Jesus all day long”? Do they not spur us on to climb the heights of good resolutions by an admixture of prayer and self-effort? The highest philosophers, returning from their explorations of the good life, tell us we ought, therefore we can.

Perfect Love

The roots of self-reliance are so deep in us all, so undiscovered, that only by the hard knocks of experience do we discover our vast error. This

We cannot love God, no man ever has or ever will love God: only divine love can love Him: for perfect love in the totality of its self-giving is so fearful, so devastating to anything less than perfect love, so offensive to self-interested love, that man can never love God, though he may often imagine and say he does.

mountain of perfect love has no route to its summit! It is inaccessible, unclimbed and unclimbable. Paul makes a revealing comment in Romans 5, as we have previously pointed out, which nicely exposes the eternal and impassable gulf between human and divine love: “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” There is a limit beyond

which human love cannot go—the limit of self-interest and human approval. We might even die for some one or some cause commendable enough, but it must be commendable to us. But pure disinterested love, unconditional, unrelated to the deservingness of the recipient, is divine. Jesus implied it when He said that man’s greatest love was to die for his friends: but (as Paul said) God for His enemies. John said the same when defining love as “not that we loved God, but that He loved us.” We cannot love God, no man ever has or ever will love God: only divine love can love Him: for perfect love in the totality of its self-giving is so fearful, so devastating to anything less than perfect love, so offensive to self-interested love, that man can never love God, though he may often imagine and say he does.

That is the “No” way. Perfect love cannot be obtained that way, despite the pathetic fact that the world through its centuries of its history has tried to proclaim that it could and does: and that is true, not only of human philosophy from Plato onwards, and of all non-Christian religions; it is also tragically true of the perversions of the gospel by “the works of the law” which Paul and John and the other apostles had to combat even in New Testament days. It is seen in the mixture of self-effort and grace through the writings of many of the Fathers: it found the fullest of perverted expression in the good-works Pelagian teaching of Rome, until the fallacy was so gloriously exposed and combated by Luther: yet only to have returned again in multitudinous subtle forms from the Protestant pulpits. A masterpiece of clarification on the subject is in the book *Agape and*

Eros by Anders Nygren.

The “Yes” way, however, by which such perfect love can be attained is made plain in the Scriptures, and has been preserved in purity of teaching and experience by “the little flock” through the history of the church. Of course it has. God has never left Himself without a witness. I have already given the grounds of it in the revelation of the Trinity: the Three-in-One. Here is divine, uncreated, spontaneous, unconditional, undeserved love. But here is the only such love in the universe for time and eternity. He only is love. That is the point at issue. Not half of one percent of admixture is possible. Human love—the love of the independent self apart from God—is the crippled growth of a monstrous birth. It is the use of the love-faculty for self-interested ends, instead of it being the means of the radiation of the selfless love of God; for, once again, its birth was when the first created being, Lucifer, refused to fulfill the only purpose of his creation and be the container and manifester of Him who is selfless love. Cutting himself off from union with the Three-in-One, it was inevitable that his created love faculty turned in on itself to be occupied by self-love. This immediately became its fixed nature. It could not be otherwise. Every outlook and instinct from henceforth was permeated with self-interest.

Selfless love was an eternal impossibility to him: and when Adam received the satanic spirit into his spirit by partaking of the tree of disobedience, it became equally and eternally impossible for any human being born of Adam to express anything but self-love. No matter what heights of ideal-

ism or religion were aimed at, the basis would always be self-love, for creature love can never rise above its source any more than water can, and can never change itself into uncreated love. *Eros* is of an eternally different quality from *agape*, and never merely a variation in quantity.

God’s Love Perfected in Us

But now we see the glorious end purposes of God. They are that we humans are an eternal expression of the divine, by the fact that He who is love has joined Himself eternally to us and us to Him, in Christ. *He* is love within and through us.

What then is a totally
committed Christian? He has
ceased to be his own—
neither people, possessions,
nor life is his. All he has is
Jesus. And what kind of
person is Jesus?
Unconditional love.

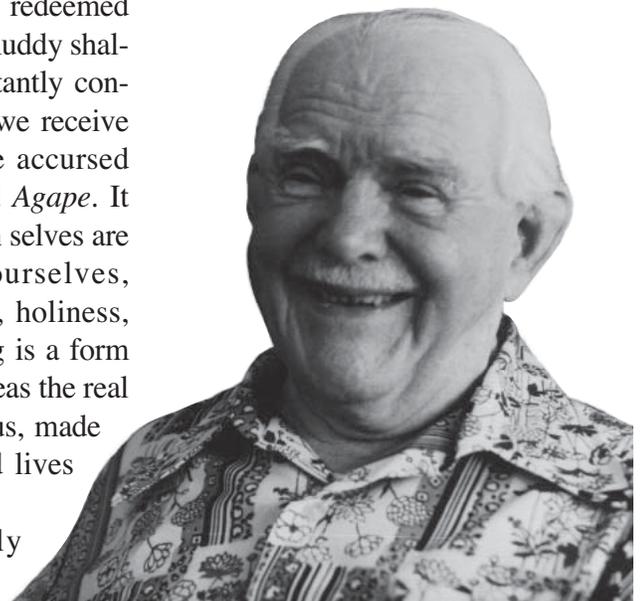
But that means that we redeemed people are paddling in the muddy shallows when we are so constantly concerned with what benefits we receive from Him. It indicates the accursed admixture of this *Eros* and *Agape*. It means that we in our human selves are seeking something for ourselves, blessing, guidance, power, holiness, cleansing. The very seeking is a form of self-effort, of *eros*. Whereas the real truth is that He has found us, made us His dwelling place, and lives His own life in us.

What then is a totally committed Christian? He

has ceased to be his own—neither people, possessions, nor life is his. All he has is Jesus. And what kind of person is Jesus? Unconditional love. Life’s occupation, life’s absorption, is expressing the love of Jesus in our world. Nothing one iota less. To me to live is Christ—all things counted refuse that I may win Christ (not by effort but by faith that He is what He is in me): and that means the life He will live out in me will be a participation in His power, His vicarious sufferings, and His death for sinners and enemies.

That is this life—Christ formed in us—no question about uncertainty of consecration or doubts about His permanent indwelling: no pursuit of personal revival, refreshment, renewal: but the clear recognition of this unchanging Other Person of love who has begun to live His eternal life of self-giving love through us. This has become our adventure for eternity, the upspringing well and the outpouring rivers.

See the way John takes us to the summit of living in his first letter. He tells that he is going to lay bare to us the meaning of eternal life, which is



Jesus Christ—and its implications for us who are joined to Him. He leaves no room for second-rate standards. He says we are to walk in the light as He is in the light, to walk as He walked, be righteous as He is righteous, purify ourselves as He is pure; for as He is, so are we in this world! This is no gospel of standing, but not state! Of imputed but not actual righteousness! Of reckoning but not reality!

Then how can it be? Nothing could be simpler. Keeping His commandments is a consequence of being *in* Him, and a proof of His love perfected *in* us: ceasing from sin is due to abiding in Him: loving the brethren is the same as saying that God dwells in us. That whole passage of 3:7-21 cannot be matched in the Bible in its presentation of the nature of God and the new man. It even surpasses 1 Cor. 13 in that a cause is more fundamental than its effects. A redeemed man must love his brethren. Why? Because being born of God he is born of love. God within is his new nature. God's love is no idle fantasy, for it is plain for all to see in the gift of His only begotten Son to give us life at the price of His own, and Himself pay the penalty of the wrongs done against Himself. This kind of love, reaching out to save the whole world, is the way He now loves others through us, and its manifestation in our love for each other is the only way God is seen by men. What could say more plainly that other-love, self-giving love is not of mere man, but God in a man? And be it noted that this passage which completes and consummates the declaration of the whole letter—that God who is light reveals to us in plainest outline God who is love—is saying not one word to us about His loving us for

our comfort and benefit. It is saying that if the marvelous union-relationship is a fact, if we dwell in Him and He in us, then He cannot but live His own quality of life in us—of love, truth and holiness. Let us see then that we live that life, and there is no difficulty at all: for we live by faith, and faith is the recognition of the fact of a Christ who conquered the world and the devil, and that the Conqueror is within us.

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.

Divine Love

The goodness of God breaking forth into a desire to communicate good was the cause and the beginning of the creation. Hence it follows that to all eternity God can have no thought or intent towards the creature but to communicate good; because He made the creature for this sole end, to receive good. The first motive towards the creature is unchangeable; it takes its rise from God's desire to communicate good, and it is an eternal impossibility that anything can ever come from God as His will and purpose towards the creature but that same love and goodness which first created it; He must always will that to it which He willed at the creation of it. This is the amiable nature of God. He is the Good, the unchangeable, overflowing fountain of good that sends forth nothing but good to all eternity. He is the Love itself, the unmixed, unmeasurable Love, doing nothing but from love, giving nothing but gifts of love to everything that He has made; requiring nothing of all his creatures but the spirit and fruits of that love which brought them into being. Oh, how sweet is this contemplation of the height and depth of the riches of Divine Love! With what attraction must it draw every thoughtful man to return love for love to this overflowing fountain of boundless goodness! What charms has that religion which discovers to us our existence in, relation to, and dependence upon this ocean of Divine Love! View the resurrection of the dead, and you will find nothing but successive mysteries of that first love which created angels and men. All the mysteries of the Gospel are only so many marks and proofs of God's desiring to make His love triumph in the removal of sin and disorder from all nature and creature....

Taken from *The Spirit of Prayer*, by William Law

Editor's Note

This issue of *The Intercessor* is dedicated to the topic of Love. We begin with a close look at the true meaning of love, in our lead article "What is Love?" Norman beautifully unravels the implications of that well known verse "God is Love." He then exposes the false belief that we can and do love God: "We cannot love God, no man ever has or ever will love God: only divine love can love Him." A shocking statement. However, he doesn't leave us there. Norman continues on to show us the one and only way that perfect love can be obtained.

On a personal note, Norman shares in "The All, in All" and in "Long on Faith, Short on Love" his own struggle to become more loving, only to find this is an impossibility: "I saw that we humans do not exist to become something but to *contain someone*." What marvelous revelation!

In "Divine Love," an excerpt from William Law's *The Spirit of Prayer*, we catch a glimpse of how God communicates his goodness and Love to His creation, by sending forth "nothing but good to all eternity". "But what about all the 'bad' things that happen in the world?" some might ask. If this is you, read *Only Two Alternatives—Which?* In this article Norman describes how God became eternally fixed as a Lover-Father and as a result everything He brings into our life is "always perfect love with a perfect outcome." Furthermore, we see in "We Only Know Right Through Wrong," that evil is necessary. Through a closer examination of Adam and Eve in the Garden, Norman reveals how the Devil is in actual fact God's "convenient opposite." Through

the existence of evil we learn what it is to be a person: to be aware of alternatives, to be free to choose between them and ultimately learn the right way, having experienced the consequences of the wrong way. Continuing in this vein, Norman digs further into "The Law of Opposites" expounding upon the relationship between the negative and the positive, and how each is necessary to the other.

This issue's Bible study, "Unconditional Love," tackles the issue of whether, as Christians, we should accept each other the way we are. Brett Burrowes considers how we deal with our brother if there is sin involved and furthermore, what if the person is not sorry or won't admit they have sinned? As always, Brett goes back to the Bible to find the answers. An examination of how God views sin and how He deals with people provides a clear answer: "God did not just accept us 'the way we were.' In spite of ourselves, He loved us and did something about our plight." Accompanying this insightful Bible study is a shorter article on the same topic, "About Unconditional Love." This provides further light on the true meaning of unconditional love.

Oftentimes, it is easy for us to mistake emotions/feelings for the reality. In particular, the word love is often misused as an emotion that comes and goes. But what about when we don't *feel* loving, or we have other negative feelings such as fear, doubt etc.? In Page Prewitt's article "Body, Soul, Spirit," Page draws the distinction between thoughts and feelings, which are temporary, always changing, and the Spirit dimension/reality. God as Spirit is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and He is joined to our spirit. "Our putting

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 is 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!

our faith in the reality of the changelessness of Him who is Spirit gives us a poise and stability to life that is unrealizable when we invest ourselves in something or someone other than Him." If we do invest ourselves in something or someone other than Him this can become an inordinate affection which Norman talks about in another poignant article "Inordinate Affection." Here we are reminded to "keep thy heart with all diligence." Even something innocent in itself, whether people or things, can

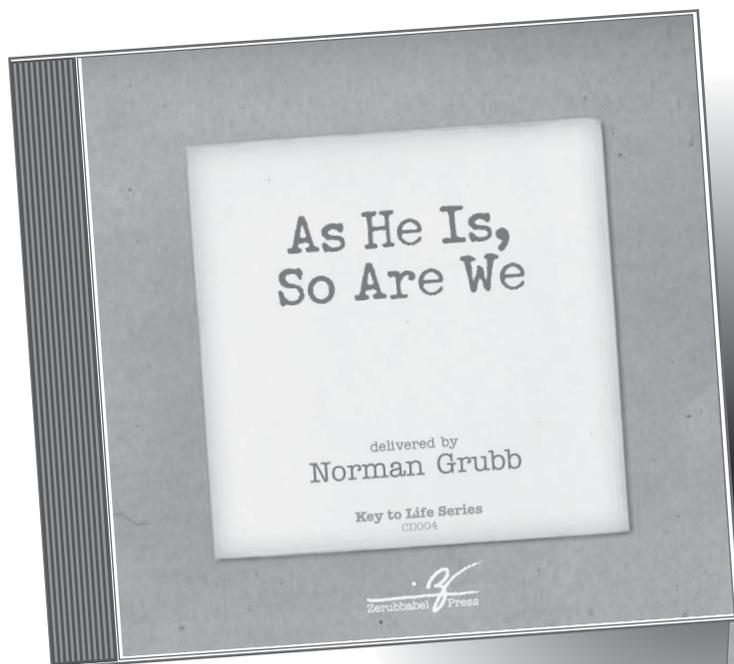
become idols that we believe we could not live without. Sadly, when we are pre-occupied and spend all our time and energies on some selfish, inordinate affection, God is unable to use us for what he made us for: "to have all things, to love all things, to serve all things. See "A Love Letter" for an example of someone who saw the danger of this before marriage and made sure the one Lord of his heart would remain his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Finally, for a catalog of devices and

defenses against Satan's commonest tricks read "To The Soldiers of God: Going or Gone to the Heart of Africa." Written originally by C.T. Studd in a pamphlet for missionaries in 1915, you will be sure to recognize some, if not all, of the Devil's favorite traps. In this cleverly written article, Satan is magnificently exposed.

We trust you will benefit from reading this issue's extensive collection of articles on Love.

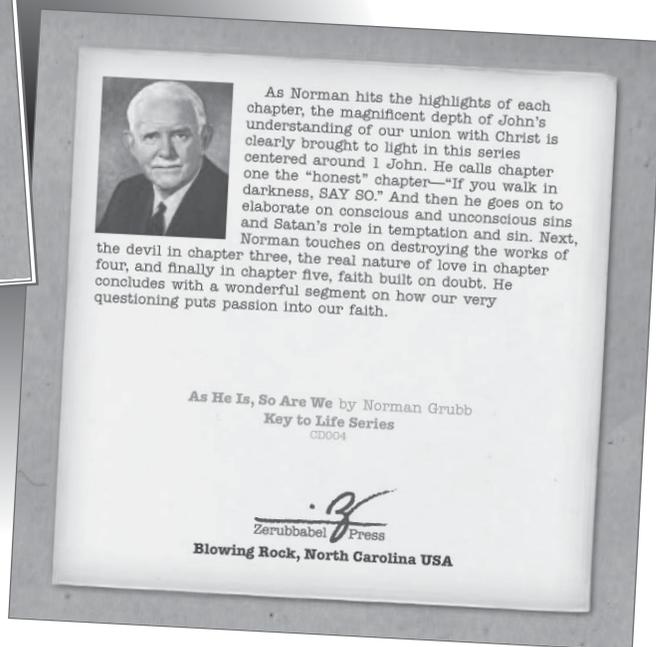
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Body, Soul, Spirit

By Page Prewitt

An important key to our being able to distinguish between soul and spirit is for us to come to know that there is a spirit dimension. It is in this dimension that He who is Spirit and we who are “joined to Him, one Spirit” operate right in the midst of this matter world. For us to be competent to do this, we must also discover that we are spirit people, not matter people, and that Spirit both personally and dimensionally is the only reality there is. To put it in Bible terms: “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18).

In our spirits we are desire, will, and mind. Desire is agape love. Will is choice and mind is knowing—spirit knowing—“What man knows the things of a man except the spirit of a man which is in him.” And that in me which says, “I know,” is obviously I, and that “I” is spirit. The “knowing” that I am discussing here does not mean knowing facts. The knowledge of facts is a function of reason (soul). For example, there are times, as born again believers that we feel like God is far away and we think we are spiritually dry. Both are soulular observations, and neither is true in the spirit dimension. The truth is that God has joined Himself to us, one spirit, so for us to be separated from Him is impossible. Our being spiritually dry is also impossible because God is an eternal well of living water springing up within our spirits. (Sin is the only possible block to the Spirit being what and who He is in us). The secret to life is for us as believers to know that we can know and live from spirit truth, in spite of any outcry of thoughts and feelings that are pouring in on us from our soul.

God is Spirit, and He exists totally outside of the soul/feeling dimension in which we as human beings live. Therefore, He does not change from moment to moment; He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Our putting our faith in the reality of the changelessness of Him who is Spirit gives us a poise and stability to life that is unrealizable when we invest ourselves in something or someone other than Him. The alternative is for us to be tossed to and fro on the waves of our ever-changing soul. Also, we are confident in God’s love for us because it is not based on some negative or positive feeling He has for us but because of who and what He is—fixed outpoured love and nothing but love for not only us but for the entire universe.

We Only Know Right Through Wrong

by Norman Grubb

The following excerpt from Norman Grubb's Who Am I? explores the only way God could fully condition and establish His sons to be joint heirs in His Kingdom of out-poured love.

Now we come down to ourselves. We have seen God's purpose—to “bring many sons unto glory,” glory being to total fulfilment, a vast family of sons brought to their highest conceivable destiny as co-sons and co-heirs of the universe with His own Son. He had this in hand before the creation, “according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world,” and this meant one thing—that the sons must be mature, capable sons, not a crowd of irresponsible little children, but knowing who they are as persons, knowing how to function as sons, and thus knowing their destiny and able to fulfil it. That means training and development from little children to sons, and thus to sons who can represent their Father and take over His business for Him. And this is the history of the human family.

There is one facet of mature experience which is often missed, yet it lies at the roots of capability on any level and none can be sure of himself and his proficiency in any profession without it. A thing is only a thing

because it has its opposite. It has a right and a wrong, and the one has overcome the other. Sweet has overcome or swallowed up bitter, smooth rough, soft hard. Life swallows up death, said Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:4; and it gets its strength from having an opposite which it has swallowed up. You cannot say a certain yes in a

A thing is only a thing because it has its opposite. It has a right and a wrong, and the one has overcome the other. Sweet has overcome or swallowed up bitter, smooth rough, soft hard.

decision, until you have first canvassed the alternatives and said an equally certain no to each of them. The strength of the yes is in swallowing up the noes! Not in having no noes, not in ignoring their existence, but in facing them and replacing them by the final yes. Then only is the yes a strong and certain one.

Proficiency is not in ignoring the wrong way of doing a thing, still less in denying that there is a wrong way; but proficiency is in having known the wrong way and tried it out and learning once for all that it doesn't work that way. Then the yes has its

strength in swallowing up its no. A carpenter, to be proficient, must first have learned that you don't use your chisel this way, or make your measurements that way, but then these are the right ways. No housewife can be confident in her kitchen until she first knows you don't cook that meat at this heat, or mix those ingredients in those proportions, then she is spontaneously at ease in her good cooking. And so through every conceivable activity of life. You must know the wrong way and have proved it wrong, before you are secure and confident in the right. The one must “swallow” the other up.

And here we have God's perfect wisdom in the birth of the human race, and in having a convenient opposite, the wrong one, the evil one, through whom He would bring his vast family of sons to maturity. This was His first way of making the devil His convenient agent. To have sons, they must find themselves in their freedom. They must discover that to be a person is to be conscious that there are alternatives and make their free choice; and ultimately their right choice through having first made the wrong one, and tasted the consequences. And the wonder of our perfect God is that He knew this was the way His predestined family of effi-

cient sons must take, from wrong first and then to right; and He knew the suffering that entailed for them with its possibility of a lost eternity. So he took it upon Himself to go that same way to its total final end, and in the person of His own Son, Himself in His Son form, to participate in the sufferings in their fullest measure. So Peter said we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world”: and the writer to the Hebrews takes it even further by saying that this involvement to the full in the sufferings of humanity was the only way the perfect Father, to be perfect, could go so that “it became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, to make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Tremendous!

So we find our first parents in the garden, and placed between two trees, one to give life and the other death. Why did not the Father just put them there conveniently with only one tree? It wasn’t very kind of Him to put the two! We might just have eaten of the tree of life—and then been what? A crowd of helpless babies who knew nothing and could do nothing! No, the first parents of these destined sons must first discover themselves, learn their potentialities, misuse themselves—and then they are ready to be reliable ones.

And at that tree of death the deceptive voice of that “old serpent, the devil” came to them, and what it did for them was to awaken them to discover what it is to be a self. Enormous awakening with its vast

potentialities. Thank you, devil. Through those tempting suggestions to have what *she* would like, Eve found she was a person! She had appetites in wanting to eat that fruit,

Eve, as representing us all, could only find and know herself by being solicited to be herself for her own self-ends. But more than that. She took that dangerous step which cut her off from being what we were created to be, sons in spirit-union with the Creator Son and the Father, and thus sons of self-giving love.

with all that goes with them in making us vibrant humans. She had the awakening adventure of new discovery through sight when she saw the fruit was “pleasant to the eyes,” all

So we partook of the tree which brought the human self into manifestation in the form it was never meant to be—the self-loving self, the evil self. Indwelt by the serpent-spirit of error, it appears as a rival and attempted conqueror of the human self in its true eternal form—indwelt by Christ as the self-giving self.

the limitless avenues of exploration in the visual arts and sciences. And the awakened mind, the topmost of all, by which she would know the truth of things and at the end of the

long trail would “know even as we are known.”

Eve, as representing us all, could only find and know herself by being solicited to be herself for her own self-ends. But more than that. She took that dangerous step which cut her off from being what we were created to be, sons in spirit-union with the Creator Son and the Father, and thus sons of self-giving love. Instead, in chosen separation from God, she, her husband and we all, became self-loving children of the god of self-centredness.

We became misused selves. We had to discover and experience what it is to be a wrong self before we are conditioned to be a right self. We have to learn misuse before we can settle into right use. One Person became a real human and did not go that way, and that was God’s Son “manifest in the flesh.” But He, to be a person had to be confronted with the devil and come under the temptation of the “evil” way of self-interest. By that means He found His human self as a self, with all its normal capacities and reactions.

Therefore we must say that Adam and Eve could have made the necessary discoveries concerning themselves by temptation without responding to it. They could have replaced the attraction of the wrong fruit by taking of the right one, as Jesus did by answering the devil with the word of God; but as they did fall, we need waste no time in theorizing!

So we partook of the tree which brought the human self into manifestation in the form it was never meant to be—the self-loving self, the evil self. Indwelt by the serpent-spirit of

error, it appears as a rival and attempted conqueror of the human self in its true eternal form—indwelt by Christ as the self-giving self. It has reversed the true order in which the self-loving form is swallowed up and ultimately unknown to the self-giving form it becomes in Christ, and progressively in us as we find ourselves in Him.

This tree of death has divided between good and evil and put evil in the ascendancy; but in so doing it has given us to drink of the full draught of its bitterness to fit us to reach out to the water of life. The tree of life, of which we are now able to partake, since that cherubim's sword of judgement which kept us from it, was plunged in His side instead of ours, puts evil back into good. It restores us from the curse of the divided two-power outlook to the single eye, by the glorious discovery of how God uses the evils of this world to His and our good ends.

We have become children of the devil, who, we say again, is quite simply the created being who brought into manifestation the potential there must be in freedom, of being the opposite to God; and if God is self-giving love and love is good, then Lucifer, Satan, is that opposite self-loving love, the evil which, if it had not been exposed, lies hidden eternally, 'swallowed up' in the good. And we have eaten by choice of that divided tree, and participated in this exposed opposite. But by doing so, we have gone along a necessary road by which a person must know and reject misuse before being established in the right use. And here is the meaning of the Fall, and its value.

What is God's Wrath?

But it is important to realize that there is a fundamental difference between the fall of Lucifer and the fall of Adam and Eve, our fall. Lucifer had made his ultimate choice from his centre, his spirit, where he totally rejected God and replaced Him with himself. He chose to be his own god. But Eve was tricked by the serpent (1 Timothy 2:14). She did not intend to reject her Creator, but just to bypass Him with an act of self-indulgence, hoping He would not notice! Her sin was of the flesh, not spirit; and Adam followed. So, thank God,

So it was the Father's special mercy, not wrathful judgement, when He told them three times over that they would have sorrow. Why? Because sorrow would mean dissatisfaction with their earthly conditions, and desire for a better way.

the human family are prodigal sons, and have never lost the inner consciousness of having missed the way, and knowing by the inner law of their being what they ought to be. Slaves of the devil, branches of the false vine, children of the devil, caught up in the devil's destiny, but not yet sons of the devil who by free choice become devils like their father.

For this same reason the Father revisits them in their disobedience, I always like that beautiful statement: "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day"; and because they were God-conscious, they "hid them-

selves." But it is our guilt that projects wrath on God, as if that was His chief characteristic, and which still so distorts our concepts of God as if He is a monster. Still our unenlightened eyes, including, I am ashamed to say, many liberal theologians, regard the Old Testament as the record of an avenging God, instead of the same unchanging God of grace shining through from the Garden of Eden, to the call of Abraham, and through Moses and the revelation of the Tabernacle of continuing grace, to the full sunlight of His grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. But the wrath of God is only manifest in those who have the wrong relationship to Him. It is not Him as He is, who is all love. But it is what He must appear to be to those who run counter to the law of His being. The wrath operates in them, not in Him. If I have a right relationship to an electric switch and turn it on as I should do, I get a pleasant light. If I defy any warnings and stick my finger in the apparatus, I get a nasty shock. The shock is what I feel within myself through my unlawful contact. So it was not God who hid from the disobedient couple, it was they who hid from Him. They projected on Him a rejection which was really in themselves. And this is the wrath of God. All He said was, "Where are you, Adam? Come out from your hiding, I haven't changed." And when they came, He talked with them, not in judgement and wrath, but in mercy. All He told them was that they would experience the inevitable effects of the discords self-loving self always brings on itself. Sorrow was what they would have, sorrow in the man's life, sorrow in

the woman's life. Sorrow is an inner reaction, for we are inner people. It is our inner response to suffering. Because we have fallen into our false material concepts of life in its outer forms, and have brought about total disruption in our outer living by our grab-and-hold and dog-eat-dog activities, life is a continual suffering: wars, diseases, poverty, anxiety, wrongdoings, and we regard it as if those sufferings are our problems, and why does God "allow" them? But we are on the wrong foot. Sorrow is our problem, for sorrow is our inner reaction to suffering, and we are inner people. Change our sorrow into inner joy, and outer sufferings are turned to praise.

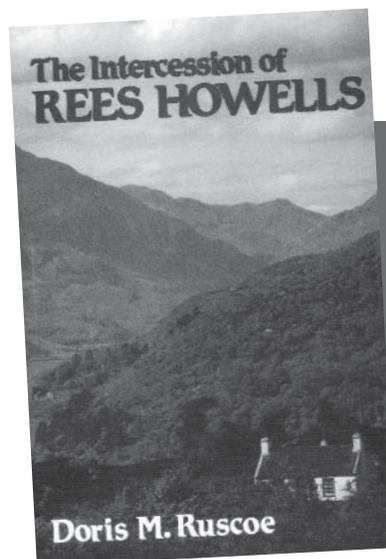
So it was the Father's special mercy, not wrathful judgement, when He told them three times over that they would have sorrow. Why? Because sorrow would mean dissatisfaction with their earthly conditions, and desire for a better way. Thank God for sorrow. Thank God the world is restless, fermenting, dissatisfied, rebellious at its present conditions. That is its hope. That's the best thing the Father could predict for His fallen children: and thank God, behind the sorrow and at its roots lies guilt for not being what we know we should be. But that was not all.

From that first moment of the Fall and its consequences, there was the pronouncement of deliverance; and the deliverance is in the seed of the woman which would bruise the head of the serpent. God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." What is the serpent's seed? The take-over of the human family created in the image of

God by a false father who would express his nature of self-centredness in them. Thus they would be the seed of the serpent. But they are still the seed of the woman, created in God's image, and into the woman's seed would come The One capable of destroying the works of the devil, and turning the devil's captives into His captives. And what is more, though He would come to do this in due time in human history, in God's timeless sight He was already, in the remarkable phrase in Revelation 13:8, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Therefore, He was already the true Adam, the last Adam, progenitor of the new race, and could be found in spirit, as the mercy seat for sinners, from that first day of the Fall. He was so found by Abel and by the countless thousands who, like the seven thousand in the days of Ahab's apostacy God was pleased to tell Elijah, had not bowed the knee to Baal. Abraham rejoiced to see His day: Moses counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: Israel in the

wilderness drank of that spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ. So mercy flowed out from the Garden and has never ceased flowing.

So this first stage, downward, not upward, was the necessary preparation for that vast family of sons of God. By this they could learn once for all, and reject once for all, not to be fooled again, the wrong way before the right, the misuse of the glory of being created self before its right use. And it is as if God said to Satan, "You have deliberately turned your back on Me and founded this false kingdom of the negative, the power of darkness. So now I will use you to my great ends. Through you I will bring to maturity my vast family of sons to rule this universe. When they have well learned the lie from you, they will be safe followers of the truth, and not be fooled by you again. They may visit you at times, while within your reach on earth, but they will never live with you again. Thank you, devil."



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About Unconditional Love...

by Brett Burrowes

There seems to be a real misunderstanding among Christians about the relationship between forgiveness and repentance because they are often confused about what God's unconditional love really is. This is not just a theological issue since most of us are daily faced with repenting of our sins and forgiving others who have sinned against us, as Jesus said in the Lord's Prayer. On the one hand, can we expect God and others to forgive us when we have not turned from our sin? On the other hand, can we forgive someone who won't admit the wrong he's done to us?

I believe this confusion is rooted in a failure to understand the true nature of God's love. First, people seem to think that "unconditional" means absolute tolerance for any kind of behavior, no matter how mean or evil it is and no matter what the consequences to others. In my mind this is mere indulgence, not love. For how is it love to let a person go on destroying himself and others when setting a limit might turn him around? It is true that God loves us without conditions, but that does not mean that He tolerates sinful behavior.

God's unconditional love means that He never stops desiring us to stop our sinful behavior and never stops acting to motivate us to stop. His love does not tolerate anything less than the best for us; no matter how far we wander from God, His love is always there for us, drawing us to Himself if we will only be honest with Him about what

we have done. In this sense God's love is unconditional. God does not give up on us.

Unconditional love does not mean, however, that God accepts our behavior no matter what we do. God's love is

God's love is unconditional, but it is neither tolerant nor indulgent. God's love is a consuming fire that burns and destroys anything that will keep us from being pure vessels for Him to dwell in.

unconditional, but it is neither tolerant nor indulgent. God's love is a consuming fire that burns and destroys anything that will keep us from being pure vessels for Him to dwell in. Accepting us as we are does not translate into

God does not just wish to deliver us from guilt, a consequence of indwelling sin, but from the indwelling sin-producer himself. Only repentance—a total rejection of the sin—can break Satan's hold over the person.

accepting "our behavior" as it is. God accepts us where we are in order to change where we are, or rather to change which spirit operates us and lives our lives.

For this reason, God cannot forgive

without the person sincerely repenting of his sins. It is not that God does not desire to forgive: He wants to with His whole being. His whole drive is to restore sinning people to Himself and to deliver them from Satan's misuse of them. But He cannot, as long as a person fails to come clean. If God forgave without requiring repentance, it would not be love—for the person would remain in Satan's grasp.

God does not just wish to deliver us from guilt, a consequence of indwelling sin, but from the indwelling sin-producer himself. Only repentance—a total rejection of the sin—can break Satan's hold over the person (see 2 Tim. 2:25-26).

Therefore, God's love demands repentance. It is not a burdensome requirement, for divine love can settle for nothing less than a total restoration of the person to God. To desire anything less is Satanic. "God is not willing that any should perish, but for everyone to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). So if a person does not repent of his sin when confronted, he cannot be forgiven by God or by other Christians—not out of meanness or revenge, but out of God's love.

So the idea that we must tolerate sinful behavior in people, no matter what the effect on self or others, is certainly not love. In fact, such tolerance is the supreme form of hatred, since it complacently allows the person to remain being operated by Satan and to continue getting the horrible conse-

quences of such a choice. It is not love; it is granting our approval to such wickedness (Rom. 1:32).

We must not encourage someone to presume on the goodness of God as if anything he does will be automatically forgiven without the internal change of mind that is called repentance. It is not that we do not want to forgive, but that forgiveness would produce the oppo-

site effect of what we desire, the restoration of the whole person. It would only confirm to the person that his behavior is really not all that bad, and as a result he would continue in it and continue to be operated by Satan.

God's fiery passion within us, His love, compels us to take a hard line on sin because God's desire is for every sinner to be fully restored to Himself.

Restoration cannot happen without repentance.

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The All, In All

by Norman Grubb

We have said that a conscious self is only such by reason of the capacity to choose; and every self being an outbirth of the original Self is compounded of love. Every self is love and loves itself. Confronted by the conscious choice of an either-or, it can either love itself by living for itself (in apparent illusory independence in its freedom); or it can love itself by giving itself to union with the divine Spirit of self-giving love.

Wherever there is need, love has a debt to pay, and need is the creditor. Love *has* to pay. That is why we can love our enemies, because a hurter is in greater need than the hurt. That is why in our rebellion and enmity against God, it is not His hurt that concerns Him, but ours. We are the needy ones, and love exists to meet need. Therefore, we boldly say God had to save. It was not a question of condescension or kindly action, it was a debt of love. God had to save, for love has to save: and we, when saved, have to be saviors.

I had the illusory idea that I needed to become something better than I was:

I must be a better representative of Jesus Christ, and so forth. I was looking for personal improvement and some further spiritual equipment which would set me on my feet. God and the Spirit were then to be my helpers.

I sought God and searched the Scriptures, as any earnest Christian would do. Surely there in the Bible the answer was to be found, for it talked of love and faith and power and freedom. But the answer I got was in very different terms. It was a confrontation, not this time with the law saying to me, "You ought," but with God turning my attention from myself to Himself by saying to me, "I am." The way it came to me was in that statement I have so often quoted, "God is love." But the emphasis was on the little word "is." It struck me that I had been seeking a God who would say to me, "I have and will give to you." But instead, He was merely saying, "I am," and not "I have." It was as if He were saying to me, "You've got it wrong. You thought love was something I had and could there-

fore share with you. But love is not a thing at all. I *am* love."

Then I saw that the only self-giving love in the universe is a Person, not a thing. Therefore, it is not something He could share with me, but it is Himself, and He can't take parts of Himself and give to me. He can only be Himself. It was my first sight of an exclusive God, the One Person in the universe, who gives nothing but is everything, and, therefore, His only giving is to give Himself and just be Himself wherever He does give Himself.

How then do I have my needs supplied, if God had nothing to give me, but in each instance I find that He is (not has) the power, He is (not has) the life; until finally I read that "Christ is (not has) all, and in all"? That last phrase gave me my key. I saw that my mistake was the idea that He would give me things, and that I would thus become something. Now I saw that we humans do not exist to become something, but to *contain someone*.

—*The Spontaneous You*

Long on Faith, Short on Love

by Norman Grubb

I wonder if we conservative evangelicals do not come short on the love of God. I know I do. For years my main occupation has been with faith. Do I believe God aright? Do I transmit to others “the faith once delivered to the saints,” Christ according to the Scriptures? I have no intention of belittling that. Forty years ago I fought the battle through at the university, whether I would stand on the Bible as God’s inerrant revelation of Himself to fallen man, despite questions some could raise to which I had no answer. Five years before, just before I joined the army in World War I, a faithful man, a retired Major, asked me point blank if I belonged to Christ. I was embarrassed, because I was supposed to be a Christian, but I had already begun to question the reality of God and Christ, for they meant nothing to me in my daily life. But (and that was the unrecognized work of the Spirit in answer to praying parents), I just managed to be honest enough to admit I did not. That is why I see that honesty is God’s one requirement of us.

That admission opened my eyes to my true condition. There could be no kidding myself I was right with God if I could not say I belonged to Christ. How did I know that? Because I had been taught the Scriptures from my childhood. Then if I could not say I was Christ’s, there was no heaven for me; and for the first time the truth flashed into me

that I was bound for hell, not heaven, and rightly so, for I was unfit for God’s holy presence. So, again for the first time in all sincerity, I asked forgiveness for my sins. Into my mind came another simple illumination: why, is not that why Christ died—for your sin? And at once I said to myself, or rather it was the Spirit saying it in me, “Then my sins are forgiven, I need not go to hell. Heaven is my home and God my Father!” Where did that come from? Solely from what I had long been taught from the Bible, and the Spirit now illuminated to me. And not only did the peace of God fill my heart, but my doubts of Him were settled, for I said to myself, “Here is a God that satisfies my highest possible conception of Him—a God who gives Himself as an atoning sacrifice for the very people who hate Him and sin against Him. I can never find a higher than that.” And where had I learned that? From the Bible.

I set out on the pilgrimage of faith, not only with a love shed abroad in my heart which compelled me to share Christ with others, but also with a firm foundation in the Bible as God’s sole revelation of Himself to man. When, therefore, five years later, my faith in the inerrancy of the Bible was severely assaulted by my lecturers at Cambridge, I came to another Waterloo in my experience. I could not answer some of their objections.

But I could and did know that the God of the Bible, the God of saving grace through Christ, was my God for all eternity. He satisfied my heart and had changed my whole outlook on life, and I was not going to be moved from the one medium of revelation He had given us, His written Word. I remember going to my room, and kneeling down, and though I am not given to dramatics, opening my Bible and laying my hand on it: and I made my vow there that I stood by that Book: if it was erroneous, I would be in error along with it: if the God I knew was a big mistake, I would be a little mistake along with Him. If there were portions of the book I couldn’t explain, or could apparently be proved wrong, well, to me the rights of the book were so overwhelmingly many, I would be content to leave those questions still unanswered, and boldly mould my life and witness on it. It would be “Thus saith the Lord” to me.

I told my tutor so, a professor of theology in Trinity College. He asked me how I was going to spend my life. I told him of my call to join C.T. Studd in the heart of Africa. “Well,” he said, “a naive faith like yours may be alright for teaching primitive people; but I think, if you come back in ten years, you will find that your mind will have changed.”

Forty years have now passed. I remain, by the grace of God, exactly where I then was. The Book has

opened up infinite riches, from Genesis to Revelation, as it unveils a limitless Christ. Every section of it is its own storehouse of treasure. Difficulties still remain and there are questions unanswered, but they too are as minor as they were forty years ago; and mind, as well as heart, has become deeply satisfied with the rationality of the gospel, as well as with its sufficiency. Face the world squarely on any level, in philosophy, psychology and science; in politics and economics; in problems of society and industry; there is no adequate alternative to the Christian faith worked out in human lives.

But through the years I think it true that faith has outrun love, and in that respect I have fallen far short of the very revelation I claim to adhere to. Nothing could shine out more brightly from the Scriptures than love. Of course all living faith is motivated by love: "Faith that worketh by love." But "add to your faith...charity," Peter wrote, with a good list of additions before faith reached its goal in charity! Perhaps that is what it is. Zeal for souls is wonderful. We had it in those university days when the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (I.V.F.) was born in a wave of passionate prayer burden, when groups of us would meet in men's rooms for as much as three hours of prayer at a time; and of bold witness which produced such fruits that the vision was given of a students' witnessing fellowship in every university and college in the world. It was my privilege to start my missionary life with another firebrand for souls, C.T. Studd: I think the small fire was attracted by the big

blaze, like to like; and I thank God that "C.T." died with the fire of love to Christ and the world burning as fiercely as in his youth. Paul was like that. In his letter to the Philippians, written from prison, "the furtherance of the gospel" was his occupation. "Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice and will rejoice": "Many of the brethren in the Lord...are much more bold to speak the word without fear": "I thank God for your fellowship in the gospel...in the defence and confirmation of the gospel." May my end be like these men! There is nothing that gives me more joy than to have been allowed these years to participate in a "Crusade" like this, the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade which C. T. Studd founded, which still burns with a single flame, to bring Christ to those who have never heard of Him, to see the power of God break into hearts, to see Christ formed in them, to help the church grow up in Him, living and witnessing.

But to faith love must be added. Here I have come short. There are reasons. The gospel has two sides to it—wrath and love. It divides the world into two camps, for as Paul said, it is the saviour of death unto death, as well as life unto life. The day of "the revelation of the righteous judgment of God" will bring eternal life to the one, and "indignation and wrath" to the other. It is much easier to have an easygoing shew of love to all, if, as many have, we sidestep the judgments of God, and throw an indiscriminate blanket of acceptance over all. The Bible does not do that, nor those that preach its message faithfully. A love

of that nature cannot be the pure love of God in us, for it is false to His Word. We must find another way of love, if it is to be the same as flowed out from the Saviour, Paul, John, and the others. It must have a foundation of faithfulness at any price, yet it must be clothed in a love which is more prominent than the faithfulness. But I think we often have those two in a reverse proportion: faithfulness is more prominent than love.

Though eager to witness and speak of Christ, for instance, I am not immediately at home with the "pagan," as Jesus so obviously was—the friend of publicans and sinners. I think for too long I have loved "souls" instead of simply loving people. I have instinctively had the two-camps approach, and taken it that everybody is outside the Lord's camp unless I have found out for sure that they are in it. I have not sufficiently just loved a person because he is a person, and sought the human touch with him which could lead on to sharing what Christ has meant to me. I shrink from contacts, when I should welcome them and refuse to judge by external appearances.

I think that most of us who know the internal condition of churches and missionary societies and other agencies who hold the evangelical faith, will agree that we have much to learn and practice in our ranks about loving one another. We do not face up at any price to the command the Saviour gave absolute priority to in His last prayer and last words to His disciples. Why not? Again I think that some of it is because we have occupied ourselves in safeguarding the truth, expounding the

Bible, regarding each other more as consistent or inconsistent believers, rather than as plain beloved brothers and sisters. I have fellowship with some movements and conferences where orthodoxy would not be named as their premier characteristic (though they are lovers of the Lord Jesus and His Word, but do not give the prominence to the latter that we would), and I have learned many lessons from them in the expressions of brotherly love. While they have welcomed me to minister the Word according to the light given me, they have ministered streams of the love of Christ for me to take back as my portion! Love must be expressed. "Beloved, we ought also to love one another...let us love one another...and this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

I have certainly found in my own ministry as a missionary secretary that I have much more commonly regarded my fellow-workers as agents of the gospel working according to certain missionary principles for which this Crusade "stands," rather than as those I love as God loves them. It is really a carry-over of the same outlook towards my brethren as I have had so much towards "outsiders." I am beginning to learn that I don't only love Christ in a person, but the person himself and for himself, because that is the love of God to us, and thus to others through us.

—*God Unlimited*

IF YOU LOVE ME...

"If you love me, you will obey what I command" —John 14:15

At Leicester C.T. Studd and Stanley Smith met F. B. Meyer, who wrote later: "The visit of Messrs. Stanley Smith and Studd to Melbourne Hall will always mark an epoch in my own life. Before then my Christian life had been spasmodic and fitful; now flaming up with enthusiasm, and then pacing wearily over leagues of gray ashes and cold cinders. I saw that these young men had something which I had not, but which was within them a constant source of rest and strength and joy. Never shall I forget a scene at 7 a.m. in the gray mist of a November morning, as daylight was flickering into the bedroom, paling the guttering candles, which from a very early hour had, been lighting up the Scriptures and revealing the figures of the devoted Bible students, who wore the old cricket or boating blazer of earlier days, to render them less sensible to the raw, damp climate. The talk we had then was one of the formative influences of my life. 'You have been up early,' I said to Charlie Studd. 'Yes,' said he, 'I got up at four o'clock this morning. Christ always knows when I have had sleep enough, and He wakes me to have a good time with Him.' I asked, 'What have you been doing this morning?' And he replied, 'You know that the Lord says, If ye love Me, keep My commandments; and I was just looking through all the commandments that I could find and putting a tick against them if I have kept them, because I do love Him.'"

F. B. Meyer continued: "How can I be like you?' C.T. Studd replied, 'Have you ever given yourself to Christ, for Christ to fill you?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I have done so in a general way, but I don't know that I have done it particularly.' He answered, 'You must do it particularly also.' I knelt down that night and thought I could give myself to Christ as easily as possible. I gave Him an iron ring, the iron ring of my will, with all the keys of my life on it, except one little key that I kept back. And the Master said, 'Are they all here?' I said, 'They are all there but one, the key of a tiny closet in my heart, of which I must keep control.' He said, 'If you don't trust Me in all, you don't trust Me at all.' I tried to make terms; I said, 'Lord, I will be so devoted in everything else, but I can't live without the contents of that closet.' I believe that my whole life was just hovering in the balance. He seemed to be receding from me, and I called Him back and said, 'I am not willing, but I am willing to be made willing.' It seemed as though He came near and took that key out of my hand, and went straight for the closet. I knew what He would find there, and He knew too. Within a week from that time He had cleared it right out. But He filled it with something so much better!"

—*Summit Living*

God is Seen God

by Norman Grubb

How can man love? Why does God? Norman answers these and many other questions about love.

It might be asked, if the basic self of God and man is self-love, yet God's self is eternally selfless love, is there not some alchemy by which man's natural self-love can be transmuted to selfless love? Why do we say that man can never by himself and in himself experience a self-change, and just become a selfless person, a God- and world-lover? On what grounds do we affirm that man by himself must and always will be selfish love, and God alone, and none else, is and forever will be selfless love? And that, therefore, if man is to know selfless love, he can only know it if his self-loving self is yielded to, joined to, indwelt by, and becomes the agent of the self-giving Self of God?

The answer is in the marvelous revelation from the beginning of revelation that God is a Trinity. God never has been The One Alone. If He had been, He would not be love, for love is outgoing. From the beginning He has been the Three-in-One. The Father begets the Son, who "from everlasting...was daily His delight." The Son "delights to do His will," saying to Him, "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine." The Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son that by Him God may dwell in us and we in Him; and as we love one another, His love is perfected in us.

One of the great misconceptions of our evangelical faith is, through ignorance of the significance of the Three-in-One, to anthropomorphize God as a lonely figure, "an old man with a beard," as John Wren Lewis says in his pamphlet, *Return to the Roots*, "seated on a distant throne, instead of being what the Bible says He is, Father, Son and Spirit who is the love-life of the universe." "Of Him, to Him, through Him are all things," "who is above all, through all and in you all."

Wren Lewis, a mathematician and physicist, first attacks the common conception of God as "a Being of immense proportions somewhere 'above' or 'outside' the universe of stars and galaxies, who created it all at some distant date in the past and now supervises it like a foreman," a kind of "Old Man above the sky." Crudely sounding, maybe, to us to whom He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet without doubt many earnest believers do have an understanding of Him not far removed from that description: at least we regard Him as a lonely separate Being, dwelling in some remote abode, looking down upon, guiding, judging our world. This sense of remoteness, this carping anxiety as to when and how He is approachable on His distant Throne, when we can be sure of His presence and when not, is the commonest misconception of thousands of believers.

Lewis then points out that the

Bible never regarded the universe as "a system of stars spread out in aeons of space, or as a space-time continuum, or anything of the sort," but as "an encounter with persons, a network of persons in relationship. Space, time and matter and so on are abstractions of certain aspects of our communication with each other.... The truth is that the universe is, as far as we can ever know, a *personal* reality, a system of encounters between people, and all the stars and galaxies and vast distances spoken of by the astronomer are just as much contained within the universe of persons as are the vast number of molecules and atoms and electrons which make up the air that carries our speech."

That gives us then the "clue to the meaning of God," which John summed up in his one immortal phrase, "God is love." Does that then, he asks, deny the personality of God? No. "To say that God means the creative power of love between people, the power we usually call love, is not to reduce God to any *thing*, but rather to increase our ordinary estimate of love, and that is just what we need to do if we are to see life the right way up."

And then we get to the heart of the revelation: God from eternity has been the Three-in-One, and that God is love. "The most detailed and most practical adumbration of Love's nature," says Lewis, "is the Christian doctrine of the Trinity." I would go

further, and say, not adumbration, but central and sole existence of Love is the Trinity. “Love, this doctrine asserts, is essentially a threefold activity of relationship, involving the exact equipoise of three highly personal activities of Fatherhood, Sonship and Interpretation.” God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. The Fatherhood of love is giving, the Sonship of love is acceptance, the Spirit of love is the interpretation, the outgoing, “which the theologians call the Eternal Procession: for every love-relationship must be open to the third person—to innumerable third persons. ‘In this Trinity,’ says the so-called Athanasian Creed, ‘none is afore and none is after another, none is greater and none less than another.’ Giving, acceptance, interpretation are all equal, and if they are not equal there is no love.... Similarly giving, acceptance, and interpretation are all severally infinite, spontaneous and eternal—yet they are not three loves, but one Love.”

This One, this Three-in-One, is the only self-giving love in the universe. The Uncreated Love. Where one Member of the Trinity is, All are, for the Three-in-One is indivisible; so all things are basically manifestations of the Glorious Trinity. As Browning wrote:

I but open my eyes—and
perfection, no more and no less,
In the kind I imagined, full
fronts me, and God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the
flesh, in the soul and the clod.
And thus looking within and
around me, I ever renew
(With that stoop of the soul

which in bending upraises it too)
The submission of Man’s
nothing-perfect to God’s all-
complete,
As by each new obeisance in
spirit, I climb to His feet.

Everything serves, for love serves,
except where the perverted spirit has
control.

We have already seen that in only one respect is God not yet seen as God in His true Self; and that is in created beings, made in His image, whose very creaturehood in all of its wonder of spirit, soul and body, has its permanent being in Him. These are they who have taken advantage of their privileged birthright as made in His likeness and have turned their backs, under the dominion of the first rebel, the author and instigator of this sin of sins, on the only source of selfless

love in the universe. They have substituted in themselves the only alternative—self-love; for the moment Lucifer, the author and embodiment of self-love, refused to yield his created isolated self to union with the Uncreated self-giving Self of the Three-in-One, he became the originator and embodiment of a love turned in to itself. Let us therefore get it clear. Love is not a lonely self by itself. From eternity Love has been God the Three-in-One, Father, Son and Spirit, giving, accepting, ministering Love. Created selves could not be or manifest that love by themselves, for love is not one by himself, but the Three-in-One. Therefore created selves can only express self-giving love through their love-faculty, if the Three-in-One, who is love, is united to them and manifests Himself through them.

—*God Unlimited*

God Is Love

Still under that old, false idea of being an independent self who could and should be improved as a servant of Christ, I had begun to seek for more love that I might identify myself with my brother Africans. I looked for more faith and power, and more deliverance from the normal pressures of the flesh and critical attitudes towards my fellow workers. The surprise I got, which put me on this right track, came when that simple word “God is love” became new to me. I did not then know that God is all in all, as I do now, and I really thought that God *had* love rather than *is* love, and He could therefore give me a share. But when the Spirit opened my eyes to the fact that God *is* love, then I suddenly saw that love is not some emotion which I might feel and express, but love is a person—in fact *the* Person, when it is *God* who is love. It was as if He was saying to me, “You’ve got it all wrong. Love is not something I *have* and can pass to you. I am that love!”

—*Norman Grubb*

A Love Letter...

*This is a portion of a letter that C.T. Studd wrote to his prospective bride,
Priscilla Stewart.*

It will be no easy life, no life of ease which I could offer you, but one of toil and hardship; if I did not know you to be a woman of God, I would not dream of asking you. It is to be a fellow-soldier in His army. It is to live a life of faith in God, a fighting life, remembering that here we have no abiding city, no certain dwelling place, but only a home eternal in the Father's House above. I just want to beseech you, darling, that we both make the same request every day to our Father, that we may give each other up to Jesus every single day of our lives, to be separated or not just as He pleases, that neither of us may ever make an idol of the other.

I must write and tell darling mother this mail, and others too, for I cannot keep it secret; only do I laugh when I think of how little I know of or about you, my own darling, not even your age or anything; only it is more than enough for me that you are a true child and lover of the Lord Jesus.

I love you for your love for Jesus, I love you for your zeal towards Him, I love you for your faith in Him, I love you for your love for souls, I love you for loving me, I love you for your own self, I love you forever and ever. I love you because Jesus has used you to bless me and fire my soul. I love you because you will always be a red-hot poker making me run faster.

—Summit Living

Inordinate Affection

by Norman Grubb

Concerning natural faith, there are two kinds: simple and advanced. One seems almost effortless, almost automatic; the other calls for concentration, adventure, persistence. It is the same in the life of the Spirit.

Saving faith is very simple. "Except ye become as a little child, ye cannot enter." A man sees his need, sees his Saviour, takes Him at His word, confesses Him, and lo, Christ is his; he knows it, he has the witness in himself, the Spirit Himself bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. His faith is consummated, for perfected faith possesses, and knows it possesses. It is as simple as the eating of bread or drinking of water.

The probable reason for this simplicity and ease of reception is that man can much more easily believe a thing that concerns the past or future than the present. When he comes to Jesus as a sinner, his main preoccupation is usually his past sins and their consequences, or his future destiny: past and future, rather than the present; and it is not very hard to take Christ at His word, that the past is blotted out in His blood and the future assured in His gift of eternal life.

But it is not long before a far more serious problem arises, more serious, that is to say, in the difficulty of its solution. As time passes, the young Christian becomes more and more conscious of the dead weight of his own corrupt nature. Truth can only be revealed to us in stages, as we become capable of accepting it, truth about ourselves and

corresponding truth about the fullness of deliverance in Christ. At first we see sins rather than sin. We are made conscious that we are lost and defiled, but that is interpreted to us by our conscience more in the light of the sins we have committed and the attitudes of rebellion and indifference which we have adopted, than by a sight of the sinful nature which has produced all these evil fruits. At first we see outwardly, rather than inwardly. Equally our first consciousness of cleansing is from outward defilements such as these; as "Christian" in *Pilgrim's Progress*, we know our sins as a load on our backs, and rejoice as the burden tumbled off at the Cross and rolls down into the empty tomb.

A further, but not final, stage in self-revelation and deliverance comes to many when they have their eyes opened to see what a hold the world has upon their affections. It might be called the stage of separation or consecration. Man is so made that he may have a multitude of interests, each of which has some claim upon his heart; but down in the centre there is always one master-interest, one master-passion. The heart of man, like a wheel, has many spokes, but one hub. That is what is meant by the constant emphasis in the Scriptures on the word "heart." It is the focal point of personality. When a man does a thing with all his heart, his enthusiasm is in it: his will, his affection, his imagination—himself. "Keep thy heart with all diligence," says the wise man, "for out of it are the issues of life." Where a man's

heart is, he is. And a man's heart is always centred somewhere. In its long, blind quest for its true Owner, the Beloved for whom it was made, it may flit from thing to thing, from passing interest to passing interest, or may twine firmly and fast round one object. The heart is held by what it holds. What a man possesses, possesses him. It is his idol and his master. This is the true meaning of the accursed thing the Bible calls idolatry. It is that thing which has mastered the heart and claims the centre of its affections, that heart which by right of creation and redemption belongs solely to Him who made it for Himself. "No man can serve two masters," said Christ: but he is always serving one, he is never without a master of some kind.

Before conversion it may be something gross, evil—sensual pleasures, dishonest practices, unscrupulous ambition. After conversion it certainly cannot be these, for he that is born of God does not keep sinning. But there may still be an "inordinate affection" for something innocent in itself, something which is useful, helpful, uplifting, if retained in the circumference of the affections, but a destructive idol if in the centre. It might be, and often is, a person, a loved one, and Jesus' warning voice is heard in those terrific words: "If any man hate not...he cannot be my disciple." It may be business interests, home, the pursuit of knowledge, politics, sport, society. It may be any of these good things of life which we are

given richly to enjoy, but not to adore and worship, not to hold or be held by in such entwining bonds that we cannot do without them.

Then to the younger Christian, or to the older maybe who has lost the first engrossing love for Christ, comes the rapier thrust of conviction: "Lovest thou Me more than these?" And it is borne in on us with a burning, smarting certainty that something is more to us than Christ. As C.T. Studd once said about his own early period of backsliding: "You can always tell where a man's heart is. What moves the heart, wags the tongue! I used to take every opportunity I could to speak of Christ. Then cricket came into the foreground, and Christ in the background, and I was talking cricket." Idolatry. And we doubt whether there is a single soul who walks the pilgrim way with God but the same discovery comes to him with devastating effect at some time or other; the precious citadel of his heart has opened its gates to someone, something, other than God. A usurper reigns there, be it as sacred a person as

mother, sweetheart, husband, wife: and the idol must be cast down and cast out.

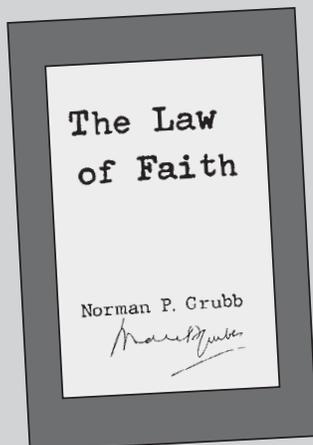
A ruthless struggle ensues. Every subtle argument is used to justify the retention of both. A share of the throne for Christ and a share for that other. But "My glory will I not give to another." Thank God, He will take no compromise. Thank God, He is jealous, as well as patient. He will be Lord of all or not Lord at all. And the reason is easy to see, after the battle is won and the surrender made, though not at all obvious to the storm-tossed soul in the throes of its life and death wrestling. What holds the heart absorbs and occupies all the energies of a man. Around that thing he thinks, enthuses, has his daydreams, plans and acts. Again we hear the word of Solomon: "Keep thy heart with all diligence." If, therefore, the heart is set on something selfish, limited, local, all man's God-endowed energies are centred round that temporal, trivial, personal interest. But God has made man to be universal, to have all things, to love all things, to serve all things. He is to be as

wide in his outreach, in his sympathies, in his activities, as his Saviour. Is he not joint heir with Christ, the heir of all things? Are not all things his: the world, life, things present and things to come? Is he not even to judge angels? Can such a one be parochially minded? Firmly, faithfully, must his grip be released from all inordinate affections' from too strong loves for special men and things, from every neatly disguised idol.

That he might be crippled, dispossessed, stripped? Does God delight in limitations, suppressions, negations? No, indeed, but that he might be filled with all the fullness of God, by having God alone in the centre of this heart, Christ only as his master-passion, and then, possessing God, he possesses all things. Does he regain what he lost? Let the poet answer: "All which I took from thee I did but take, not for thy harms, but just that thou mightest seek it in My arms. All which they child's mistake fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home. Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

—*The Law of Faith*

Norman Grubb's
Who Am I? and The Law of Faith
Unedited from the original.

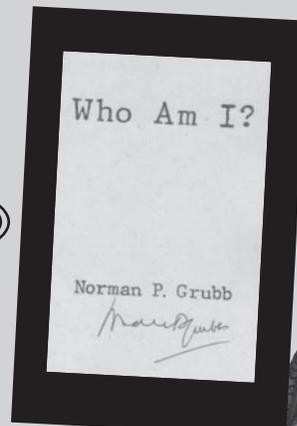


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BIBLE STUDY: UNC

by Brett Burrowes

Unconditional love—should Christians just accept each other the way they are?

At some time we have all said or heard someone say: “I just want to be accepted the way I am!” Isn’t this what Christian love is all about—accepting one another as God accepted us? After all, doesn’t God accept us the way we are? Isn’t God’s love unconditional? Shouldn’t we always be gentle and nice to each other, understanding that everyone makes mistakes now and again? So what if a Christian is disobedient for a time? God accepts them; who are we to judge? The old hymn appears to put it well: “Just as I am.” But I believe this view of God’s love and acceptance is a misconception, and ultimately, a deception. In addition, it is also a misconception of what Christian love for one another is all about.

We all want to be loved and accepted—it is a basic human desire. How many of us have spent years trying to gain the acceptance and approval of parents, even many years after they have passed away. The desire to prove ourselves worthy of our parents’ affection drives us to any lengths, and the knowledge that our parents don’t, won’t or can’t accept us feels intolerably painful. But we do not only seek acceptance from our parents—we also seek it from our peers. When we were teenagers we can all remember how the approval of our peers was paramount—we didn’t want to stand out in any way that might

cause us to experience rejection. Perhaps we had a terrible case of acne or even just one pimple and we didn’t want to leave the house for fear that someone might see us and either laugh at us or be repulsed by something so disgusting. Of course most of us are not teenagers any more, and having gained a little more perspective on life, don’t see a pimple as the end of the world as we know it. But we still want to be accepted by others, and to a large

So God did not just accept us “the way we were.” In spite of ourselves, He loved us and did something about our plight, something extremely costly to Him, a cost we can not even begin to measure: He sent His own Son to die in our place, to bear the curse of condemnation for us (Gal. 3:10, 13).

extent, this desire drives much of what we do and say. We do not want to be an object of shame and ridicule and will do almost anything to avoid being in this position.

But the facts are this: apart from Christ we have lived shameful lives worthy of God’s condemnation: in other words, we are sinners. The word “sinners” does not just mean that we made a few mistakes along the way. No, we have willfully gone our own way, even though we knew that God commanded differently: “There is no one who is righteous,

not even one; there is no one who has understanding; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one. Their throats are opened graves; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of vipers is under their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery are in their paths, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:10-18). So although we may want God to love and accept us, our sin has made it impossible for Him to accept us the way we are. Unbelievers, and many Christians as well, live in the delusion that they can be accepted just the way they are, without changes: the problem is other people won’t accept me the way I am.” Or else out of this hidden shame, knowing inside that we are wrong on the inside but living out this shame in the form of depression and all manner of addictions and habits. Pop-psychology, recognizing that shame is at the root of this self-destructive behavior, teaches that we have no reason to be ashamed of ourselves and that all shame is toxic. But perhaps, just perhaps, this shame inside us is not just because of how our parents and peers treated us, but because of who we are, because of what we have done. Maybe the solution to our shame is not by rejecting it as untrue, but by admitting to ourselves that we truly deserve to be

CONDITIONAL LOVE

rejected by God (Rom. 1:18-32).

Perhaps now we can see how shallow a solution it is to demand to be accepted just as we are—because we're not acceptable. The solution must run deeper than a dismissal of our feelings of shame as irrational. Fortunately (to say the very least) God chooses to accept us not as we are, but in spite of who we are, for "God proves His love for us in that Christ died for us while we were still sinners" (Rom. 5:8; see 1 John 4:10). God does not accept our sinfulness, and the hymn "Just as I am" refers to the only way we can come to God. We can come as sinners without a plea because we can come no other way and because God Himself has provided the solution in the cross. So God did not just accept us "the way we were." In spite of ourselves, He loved us and did something about our plight, something extremely costly to Him, a cost we can not even begin to measure: He sent His own Son to die in our place, to bear the curse of condemnation for us (Gal. 3:10, 13). It is impossible to know how deep and how great the cost that the Son paid for us; Paul describes it as a love that surpasses all knowledge! (Eph. 3:19). On the cross, Jesus experienced His Father's rejection: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). He endured such rejection and forsakenness so that God would never leave or forsake us (Heb. 13:5). And all this is true for us simply because God did not "accept us just the way we were." Had God just accepted us in our sin, there would be no hope

for us, no release from the shame and the spirit of sin that indwells us: we would forever be in a living hell. Only if God hated us would He "accept" us just as we are. Such acceptance is Satanic and rooted in a desire to be left as we are: sinful, self-centered people who have no regard for the good of anyone, except our feeling good in the moment. How grateful I am that God did not accept me in my sinful desire to be accepted "just the way I am."

Being utterly committed to our good and our salvation, He gave up His life to obtain forgiveness for our sins and to rid us of the Satanic spirit of sin. In the same way Christians should be committed to one another to cast out Satan when he gets a foothold in a fellow believer's life (Eph. 4:27).

But still, in our pride, we continue to demand to be accepted "as we are." I suggest that the real reason people don't want to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ is that initially it is very bad news to us and our prideful view of ourselves: we really are the objects of shame, wrath and condemnation that we fear we might be: "we were by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). We really are that bad. Only when we admit how deeply deserving of shame we really are, can we truly receive God's

solution in the cross. Receiving the message of the cross is death to us, to all the false and self-deceptive images we have of ourselves, but it is only in embracing that shame as real and deserved that we can come to the cross at all. So God's acceptance of us at the cross demands a price; it demands our very selves, the view we have of ourselves. That is why Paul says: "I have been crucified with Christ." (Gal. 2:20).

So since God does not accept us "just the way we are," then Christians shouldn't accept each other that way either. At the same time, Jesus Himself commanded us to love one another (John 15:12). But He adds: as I have loved you." Jesus' love was demonstrated in that He went to the cross for us and endured the most horrible punishment a human being could bear: rejection by His Father in addition to physical torment and death. But He went to the cross because He did not accept our sin as the final word: Being utterly committed to our good and our salvation, He gave up His life to obtain forgiveness for our sins and to rid us of the Satanic spirit of sin. In the same way Christians should be committed to one another to cast out Satan when he gets a foothold in a fellow believer's life (Eph. 4:27). This means that we do not accept or tolerate sin in our brothers and sisters in Christ, because such a Satanic infection will destroy them and others if it is allowed to continue. When sexual immorality was contaminating the Corinthian church, Paul told

continued on page 32

To the Soldiers of God Going or Gone to the Heart of Africa

by C.T. Studd

The following article was originally a pamphlet written by C.T. Studd in 1915. His description of the devices used by Satan to tempt missionaries is no less applicable to us today in the comfort of modern society.

“We are not ignorant of his devices.”

Many, great, and very subtle are the devices of Satan everywhere, but nowhere do they so abound as in a land, which has never hitherto been attacked by the servants of Christ.

In the Heart of Africa no man, whoever he be, no matter how good his past life, acts, devotion, or vows, unless he is extremely watchful, stands any chance of not being beguiled by the devil.

Of one thing we may be certain—the attacks will not be from the quarters nor persons we anticipated, and they will always be hits below the belt or stabs in the back.

The Climate

One great device of the devil is to get us to put down to the climate such workings of Satan as bad temper, a spirit of criticism, and the making of unkind remarks. Now, if we hold the climate guilty for our ill humours, we shall excuse ourselves, with the result that the canker will eat more deeply into our

souls, our natures, and our characters; whereas if we hold such things to be the works of the devil we shall with humility, contrition, and faith run to our Saviour, who came to destroy all the works of the devil, to save us to the uttermost, and so to make us like Himself.

When the Holy Ghost declared that our God and Saviour is able to keep us from falling, He did not add the words, “This applies to certain climates only,” so I trust we will not do so either.

Self Pity

“Pity Thyself, Lord,” was the fiery dart that Satan caused an Apostle to shoot at our Lord Himself. There was considerable heat as well as haste in our Lord's defence, and rejoinder, “Get thee behind Me, Satan,” and, being spoken to an Apostle, gives us the measure of our Lord's indignation.

True Soldiers of Christ do not go to the Heart of Africa to have an easy time of it, nor to save themselves, but others. Did we not count the cost ere we left England? Is it greater than we expected? That should be a cause for thanksgiving: “I thank Thee, Lord, that things are not nearly so easy as I had thought they would be.” What cost can be too great? If any cost is too great, or even a matter

for half a minute's murmur, we should never have pretended we were Soldiers of Christ, nor embarked for the Heart of Africa, for so we prove ourselves guilty of repenting of our solemn vows to God and man, registered ere we left England. The only healthy attitude for a Christian Warrior is that which causes him to pray for the privilege of suffering additional afflictions in the cause of Christ.” See Phil. 3:10.

Care

“Have a care,” says the devil. “Don't care was hung.” Quite so—on Calvary, and thus bought Salvation for all. “Go and do thou likewise.” “Be careful for nothing.” “HE careth for you.” So mind your own business, and keep off the grass, else you'll have trouble as well as care in abundance.

Loneliness

It is a favourite trick of the devil to suggest to us that we are “lonely.” Then have we lost our first love? Lonely in the presence of our Lover? “I am with thee always,” says Jesus. Is it possible for God to lie? Is Jesus not enough? If not, who is?

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want,

More than all in Thee I find.”

That sounds like “a bit of all right,” and corresponds with “if any man cometh unto Me, and hateth not...he cannot be My disciple.” Alone with Jesus should be Heaven upon earth. “Thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is thine.” To complain of loneliness on honeymoon is an outrageous insult to one's lover.

Discouragement

All discouragement comes from Satan, and generally through our vision becoming blurred. Abraham looked at his own body, then as good as dead, and Sarah's also, yet he wavered not through unbelief, and so gave glory to God. The Apostles knew what it was to “toil in rowing,” nor were they exempt from “storms.” Do we desire to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease? Has the Cross lost its attraction? What about the sufferings of the Apostle Paul? Where do ours compare with his? Yet he called them “light affliction,” and asked for more, for he looked forward to the eternal weight of glory to follow at the Throne of God.

Discord

Discord is the opera of hell. Don't let the devil call the tune when your band plays. “Oh, I can't stand or get on with so-and-so.” Then more shame for you! And how on earth, then, do you expect Christ to get on with you? There's a good deal of sound theology in “Love me, love my dog,” Slight His child, and you'll have an uncomfortable settlement with the Father.

But if you think your brother has erred, your duty is clear. Go and tell him (or write him if you can't), state your

case, and prove it. If he neither answers nor repents, leave him and the matter to God. If you won't meet him face to face to substantiate your charge when you have the chance, you are neither true nor brave, but contemptible. If, when face to face, you shook his hand, and were too cowardly to be straightforward and honest with him, at least when he has gone don't be a contemptible whisperer accusing him behind his back. To play the coward or act a lie does not become a Christian profession.

Cowardice

The fear of man is another temptation or inoculation of the devil; with it come many snares. He who fears man fears not God, and he who fears God fears not man. The fear of man leads to condonation of sin, and seeks to excuse itself by pleading the fear of scandal. John the Baptist feared no such thing, but boldly unmasked hypocrites, and so also did our Saviour. Peter saved the Church in its infancy by his bold rebuke of Ananias and Sapphira, fearless of the almost certain result, a grave scandal, which, however, of course never happened; God saw to that. Such is His business, not ours. He caused a revival instead. Paul and James similarly denounced sin and rebuked sinners, while John blurted out the unvarnished truth. “He that doeth righteousness is righteous, but he that doeth sin is of the devil.” “Justice and Judgment are the foundation of Thy Throne.” If we condone sin in others, we shall presently be found condoning it in ourselves, for Charity, true or false, has a knack of beginning or ending at home.

False Coin

Another specious device of the Evil

One is to make us the coiners of new sins other than those mentioned in the Scriptures. This was the curse of the Pharisees. The infallible Word of God needs not the additions of fallible sinners. There are quite enough sins mentioned in the Bible, without our manufacturing others. When we add to them we declare the Scriptures to be insufficient; to do so is folly and presumption. A manufactured sin is a mote which is the unerring proof of a beam in the factory. When you think you see a mote, look in the looking-glass for the beam.

Disloyalty

Disloyalty is the devil's submarine, a nasty, sneaking sort of thing like a crocodile or snake. Satan's whispers often seem so true and reasonable, and his agent as pretty as an angel of light, and some times even with a good record in the past. For three years Judas apparently did as good work as any of the other Apostles; none of his colleagues suspected him. Did not each say, “Is it I?” He healed the sick, cast out devils, and proclaimed the Gospel. His damning sin was a matter of a few days. Yet in spite of his good past we brand him with the ugly name of “Traitor,” while the Scriptures call him the “Son of Perdition,” and declare that he went to “his own place,” for he betrayed his Master with a kiss, and sold him for thirty pieces of silver. Traitors can be detected by our applying the simple tests of righteousness. If a man deliberately breaks his contract with God and man, if he speaks fair to a man's face, but falsely accuses him behind his back, that man is not of God.

Pride

Shun pride as you would shun the

devil and hell. Satan changes his methods of attack. When a man is unsaved he tries to keep him so by doubt and lusts and cares; when saved he seeks to make him barren. A proud Christian is a mule which produceth naught: a disciple lacking humility is a modern Samson shorn of his locks. To the unsaved Satan says, "You are unworthy"; to the saved, "You are worthy." When a man has sacrificed his all for Christ, the devil at once counter-attacks him with a view to get him to think he is better than so-and-so. The only safe position is that of the Apostle. "Sinners of whom I am the chief," or as the poet sang

"I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."
"Let each esteem other better than himself."

Priestcraft

Priestcraft is the patent plan of the devil to prevent progress. One of the tin tacks he strews on the road to cause punctures. We have One Great High Priest, and He says that all Believers in Jesus Christ are Kings and Priests unto God. God's Priests are all right, like Paul they esteem all others better than themselves.

Who is to baptize the converts? The best person to do so is the human agent that God used to convert them. What about the Lord's Supper? Who should administer it? Why, He Who presides. When Jesus is there He should preside, of course. When Jesus is not there, it matters not who presides, for any president is useless. If anyone can consecrate the Bread and Wine Jesus can, and if He can't nobody can. Jesus will always do it if we ask Him, and if we will keep out of the Chair ourselves. He that exalts

Christ is in the Apostolic succession, and he that doesn't isn't. When Christ is exalted HE draws us all unto HIMSELF, and so to one another.

So also the ordination of our Lord Jesus Christ is the one sine qua non for every Apostle, and such is worth more than ten million of the ordinations of fallible men whosoever they be. Christ's ordination is simple and direct, and all turns on the answer to His one question "Lovest thou Me?" Not Church, Chapel, Denomination nor Man, but Me.

Evangelism

"Oh! anything else," says the devil. Christ sent us to preach the Gospel to every creature, to be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Beware of getting things in their wrong proportions. Education is an excellent handmaid, but needs to be kept in her proper place. She is rather apt to give herself airs and desire to monopolise the conversation. Give her an inch, but take care she does not take an ell. You can sometimes use her as a decoy to enable you to get near the game to shoot it. But we are Evangelisers, not Educationalists. When the whole world has been given The Bread of Life, we will consider about becoming Educationalists perhaps, but not before.

Knowledge puffeth up, but love, especially that of God, breaks hearts and buildeth up. Preach Christ and teach the Scriptures—not to some, but to all. Your business is to cause every creature in your sphere of influence to know Christ and to feed on the Scriptures. For such purpose it is necessary to teach folks to read and write. Our idea of Higher Education is that Native Christians should go and impart the knowledge of Christ and the Scriptures to their fellows,

far as well as near.

The Cure

If one of these or other fiery darts finds its billet in you, go to Christ. He will not only extract the dart, but also the poison, and make you a whole, healthy soul again.

But prevention is even better than cure, and the only orthodox preventive is the Shield of Faith; it not only wards off, but quenches each and every fiery dart of the devil. It's a heavy shield with a motor attachment which enables you to lift and wield it. The motor is love. "Faith which worketh by love." Faith in Christ depends on our love for Christ, and that depends on our knowledge of His love for us, and such is imparted by the Holy Ghost. Hence we are told to watch and pray. "How much more will He give the Holy Ghost to them that ask Him."

Nobody doubts the one who loves him and whom he loves. No company so good as His. No sacrifice too great to make for Him. If we love Him we love His Relations, all of them, for so He desires. White, Black, Rich, Poor, Nobodies, Somebodies, Cranks and Critics. Faint-Hearts and Fuss-boxes. Thus He tests our faith and love. Don't serve Christ for Heaven; you cannot serve Him for naught—Serve Him for Love.

And if you do you will have three leading Characteristics :

1. Eagerness for the Glory of God.
2. Touchiness concerning the interests of Jesus.
3. Zeal for the Salvation of Souls.

May God melt us all and mould us into this image, "That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan."

SIN, SATAN AND THE FLESH

SIN, SATAN AND THE FLESH



A PRESENTATION BY BRETT BURROWES

Zerubbabel Press

A PRESENTATION BY BRETT BURROWES

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SIN, SATAN AND THE FLESH

For Brett Burrowes, what began as a personal quest for answers, taking him through seminary and the writing of a PhD dissertation, became a radical discovery of how early church theology changed significantly in the early 5th century. This affects how we interpret Paul in modern translations today.

Brett presents the main points of his dissertation on Romans 7 and 8 in a clear, easy to follow manner. He delves into the original language of the Bible to unravel the truth about Sin, Satan and the Flesh. Brett discusses questions such as: What is the identity of sin? What is the meaning of the word flesh and the phrase "old man"?

How does Christ redeem us from the power of Sin? And what does the indwelling of the Spirit mean for the believer?

Brett hones in on the views of one particular early church father—St. Augustine. All of western Christian theology, Catholic and Protestant, is based on Augustine's interpretation of the Bible. Brett builds a compelling case to show that until Augustine, the early church fathers believed that sin was an evil spirit that expressed itself through human beings. Augustine reinterpreted sin as a corruption of human nature which had profound effects on Christian theology thereafter.

Zerubbabel Press
Blowing Rock, North Carolina USA

Only Two Alternatives— Which?

In the following excerpt, Norman explains how God became eternally fixed as a Lover-Father, and thus we can have assurance that everything He brings into our life “is always perfect love with a perfect outcome.”

This brings us straight to the one and only total choice of our desire and knowledge—which totally controls all lesser choices of life. It is *the* choice between ultimate opposites; and remember, our choice always enslaves us and we become that choice. That one fundamental, total choice is between the only two alternatives a living self can and must make. I am made of love—and to love. I must and do love myself. I must satisfy myself. I must fulfill myself. In what direction—one of only two—shall my love by free choice, in which I become so fixed that I am its slave, take me? It can be by my fulfilling my self-love in self-getting, and “to hell with the interests of others!”; or, by my fulfilling my self-love by self-giving, meeting

others’ needs, and, if necessary, “going to hell for them.” When fixed in one or the other of these two, every lesser choice is but a temporary reflection of my one major fixed choice, to which I am a slave.

The most striking revelation in the Bible, almost incidentally recorded, is that the One Person in the universe, our living God Himself, has made the equivalent of that eternal choice. (Of course there is no such thing in Him as a choice in time, such as we make, but we have to use human terms.) This is when the remark is slipped in twice (in Titus 1:2 and Hebrews 6:18) that *God cannot lie*; not *did* not or *does* not, but *can* not. For a lie is one obvious form of self-seeking. A liar is seeking his own ends, no matter what the adverse effect on his neighbor. And the Bible says God cannot do that. In other words, He cannot be a self-getter, a self-seeker. Thus there has been that determined choice (to use human terms) by

the one conscious Self of the universe. *Of course* there has been—for a self is only a conscious self by confronting the alternatives: truth or lie, self-getting or self-giving. And “cannot” means that a self is only a self by its necessary choice, and this is the fundamental total choice. So we have this marvelous revelation: that the One beyond all knowing, in order to be a manifested self-conscious Self, had to make the fundamental choice and, as it were, made it. This self-loving Being (for we read, “For Thy pleasure we are and were created”) is eternally fixed as the self-giving Self of the universe. He is the God for others. His self-enjoyment is in self-giving. As John writes, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” That alone is the meaning of John’s supreme word, “God is love”; and that has its basis in, as it were, an eternal choice that He would not be the alternative, the self-getting God. As that great inner seer Jacob Boehme writes: “There is a cross in the heart of the Deity, not just of Jesus Christ, whereby He has eternally ‘died’ to being a God for self.”

That is why He is the *safe* God of the universe, because He is the Lover-Father and can be nothing else. That is why we can learn to have a *positive* outlook on a world of very negative appearances; for we know those are only temporary surface conditions, like barnacles on a ship, like ripples on the surface of a large, transparent lake; and we become those who live by “seeing through”—now, in this present time, seeing His

perfect creation, the kingdom of heaven, shining through the surface disturbances. That is why *the only sin is unbelief*, questioning the kind of person God is. We may say we can’t account for this horror or that tragedy, but we must never say, “What kind of a God are You to permit that?” We can only say, if we are not to have a cloud over our spirits: “What You do or determine is always perfect love with a perfect outcome.”

We may say we can’t account for this horror or that tragedy, but we must never say, “What kind of a God are You to permit that?” We can only say, if we are not to have a cloud over our spirits: “What You do or determine is always perfect love with a perfect outcome.”

And so we see the corollary that, if this universe has its safe foundation in its Lover-Father, it must necessarily also be owned, managed and developed by safe sons—lover-sons. And this is why we are so carefully investigating how we are to be “real persons,” experiencing our fixedness as safe lover-sons, and walking confidently in that fixity—now, in this thoroughly unfixed and confused world. And once again, there is a total answer.

-Yes, I Am

The Law of Opposites

by Norman Grubb

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 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, 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 say no to its opposite. To move is to refuse to be still. If a thing tastes sweet, there has been a conquest over its innate bitterness.

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 conquer 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.

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

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.

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 proceeds every good and perfect gift, and with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God’s self-love finds its eternal satisfaction in other-love. The opposites are

wedded, the negative self-love is the willing servant and mate to the positive other-love. 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 love-plans for the universe.

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

Bible Study: Prayer

continued from page 23

them that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (1 Cor. 5:6), meaning that if they allowed this man to continue in his sin, then everyone would be affected by the Satanic takeover of this man.

In our society “tolerance” is often praised as a great ideal. But God’s love is truly intolerant of anything that is not a manifestation of His character. God is committed absolutely to us, but is not tolerant of sin. He unconditionally accepts us, since we have no way of independently fulfilling the conditions laid down in His law, but He does not accept our sin. So Christians should not be tolerant of or accept sin in their midst, nor “accept people as they are.” Christian love means that we are so committed to one another that we will not allow any sin to contaminate our fellowship. And if someone willfully continues in deliberate sin despite the attempts of others to get them to repent, then Scripture ultimately calls us to hand the person over to Satan (1 Cor. 5:5), since Scripture commands us not to associate with people who call themselves Christians but act in certain ways (1 Cor. 5:11). But even in handing such a person over to Satan we are still unconditionally committed to their good: the hope is that in experiencing the full consequences of their sins, God will lead them to repentance and restored fellowship with them. So outwardly rejecting the person is a form of unconditional love. A temporary rejection of a person may be

the only way of driving home the absolute unacceptability of the sin. At the same time God’s love is always willing to receive a repentant sinner, as the parable of the prodigal son attests (Luke 15:11-32). Although God’s love is unconditional, our experience of that love is conditional upon our repentance. God’s unconditional love, both on the cross and in us, is not uncondi-

tional acceptance of someone in their sin, but an unconditional commitment to save them from that sin.

Brett Burrowes received his Ph.D. in New Testament from Durham University in England and two Master’s degrees from Gordon-Cornwell Theological Seminary. He currently teaches Biblical studies at Siena College near Albany, New York, and is a Zerubbabel Teacher-Share.

His Love Perfected in Us

John says, “No man hath seen God at any time”; and at once with our separated outlook, our eyes go upward and we say, “No, we have not seen Him”; but John as good as says, “You have got it wrong, He is not up there. I am not talking of a vertical but a horizontal God. If we love one another, that is God dwelling in us and His love perfected in us.” God is actually the love *between* us when we are just spontaneously loving one another without direct consciousness of Him at all (1 John 4:12).

What then matters is, if He is the One Person in the universe, what kind of Person is He? The Bible makes that plain. To the three-worded statement, “God is Spirit,” we add John’s “God is love.” Then we can see, what we said at the beginning, how we humans are right to find life’s answers within, not without; but how we are brought to a final full-stop, when we cannot solve the ultimate “within” problem of man himself, who is not love, and cannot and does not want to live by living for his brother.

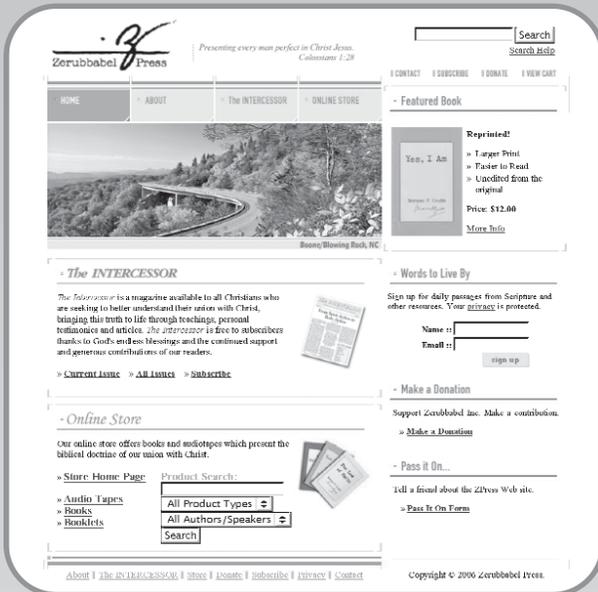
We are rightly brought to a full stop, for we are here faced with the ultimate and only meaning of the existence of persons. It is exactly here that the true revelation of God and man makes the only ultimate sense and is the only answer; for God as being love means something very different from our watered-down version of love. We mean by love, “give some, but keep plenty.” But God as love means that He really is other people. Love is living other people’s lives, and that is the whole meaning of life, its purpose, its fun, its gaiety, its seriousness, its fulfillment.

If the Only Person in the universe is love of this kind, and if, being Spirit, the Within One, He has as His means of manifestation a human race living this same kind of life, spontaneously and delightedly through His unity with them, so that they also are love, then the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle of the human race is in place and the picture whole—every limitless development of our human potential at full stretch, yet all geared solely to me for my neighbor; my neighbor for me. God and his universe have then come home.

—The Spontaneous You

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–1 John 4:16-17

(*New American Standard*)

Words to Live By...

God is wholly outgoing through all eternity. We have begun that life for eternity, for He lives in us. What a vista! And God specializes in giving Himself for those who are most unpleasant to Him, sinners and enemies; and now He specializes in doing it through us. That puts meaning and content into every possible situation a human can be in.

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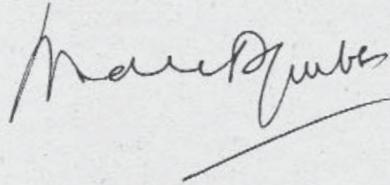
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