

# The INTERCESSOR

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

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## The Total Truth

by Norman Grubb

*In the following excerpt from Yes I Am, Norman explains how our God, the "One Person in the universe" is also a safe God in whom we can fully rely to bring about His perfect outcomes.*

To say something is total truth is the final word! Yet what else can I say if it is total to me? What follows has settled into me as Total Truth, as I have soaked in the Scriptures, always my final authority, these sixty years, and sought the interpretation by the Spirit and His inner witness. Other interpreters of the Word by the Spirit have been my helpers, both in print and in personal interchange; but always I have sought for and found the final confirmation for myself by the One of whom John writes: He who by His inner anointing "teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie."

I have to start with what in itself is the final word, and it is a staggering word to put in a few sentences; but all the rest of the superstructure which enables me to say "Yes, I am," can only be built on this foundation. The Bible says, "In the beginning God," and in the end, "God...all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28), as He will then be known by His universe—but is already known by us through inner seeing (1 Cor. 2:10-12). And, quite

simply, if He is finally to be known by His universe as the All in all, He who is unchangeable from everlasting to everlasting has *always* been "The All in all." And that means what it says. If God is the All in all, then all that exists is a unity of which He is the Center, and everything manifests Him, on one level or another.

"...He who is unchangeable from everlasting to everlasting has *always* been "The All in all." And that means what it says. If God is the All in all, then all that exists is a unity of which He is the Center, and everything manifests Him, on one level or another."

That was what first truly opened my eyes to the One whom I had always thought of as a far-off Person quite apart from His creation, producing a new seeing of Him, who is Spirit, as actually revealed in all created forms, even if they have been distorted from their original harmony. "The beyond in the midst." That was a vast stride for me, for it gave me the "single eye" which Jesus said will fill the body with light. I began to be a "see-through-er" to Him rather than a

"see-at-er," in all that is in His universe, whether man or matter, whether evil or good. And I began to find the poise, calmness, hope and faith there is in such single-seeing.

I see also how all the universe seeks oneness, each individual part with the local object of its desire: as shown by the positive proton and negative electron which, united, form the atom; by the human marriage union of male and female; even by the searchings of individuals after political, national, and international union. All these are shadows and symbols of a desire for oneness with Him—most seeking with ignorance of the One

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### Mailing Address

Home Office  
Zerubbabel, Inc.  
PO Box 1710  
Blowing Rock, NC 28605  
828-295-7982  
Fax 828-295-7900  
info@zerubbabel.org  
www.zerubbabel.org

### Magazine Staff Editing Staff

Brett Burrowes  
Sanda Cooper  
Pat Mace  
Scott Prewitt  
Gail Bedell  
Joanna Coatney

### Production

Sheryl Trethewey  
Joanna Coatney

### Art Editor

Steven Prewitt

### International Distributors

Great Britain and Western Europe  
Meryl Langley  
11 Jackson Close  
Northampton NN2 8XF  
England  
01604 711016  
011 44 1604 711016 (from USA)

with whom they seek union. But millions of us today are the privileged ones who have found that blessed oneness: Christ the Head and we the body. Jesus' prayer is being answered: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." And this right through to the final consummation we thrillingly await...the marriage supper of the Lamb, whose bride, ourselves by grace, "hath made herself ready."

We can know our oneness with Him, for as He is Spirit we also are

We live in a world where self-love is the basic motivation. It seems we are in an inextricable chaos from which we can find no way out—unless it were possible that all humans so love one another that we put the interests of others before ourselves, a condition which, we know, to the natural man is an unattainable ideal.

spirit. Jesus had said to the woman of Samaria, "God is Spirit"; and we too are spirits, for He is called "the Father of spirits." So spirit is self: He the "I am" Spirit, and we created spirits—like Father, like son. As spirit-self, I *know*; Paul said, "What man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" As spirit-self, I *love*; for God is love, and we too all show love, whether rightly or wrongly applied. And as spirit-self, I *will*; just as He "works all things after the counsel of His own will," so I have my freedom of will. This freedom was the

first evidence of Adam being a person, in the Garden of Eden. So to be a created person in the image of the Creator is to be spirit as He is Spirit—He infinite and I finite; and I as spirit have knowledge, love and will. I know, I love, I choose; and my soul and body are the external agents of my choosing spirit.

He who is Spirit is He who is love. By the Scriptures, which reveal Him as love in the giving of His Son that we might have life, we know that His love is total self-giving love. He is the eternal Person-for-others. The reason why He is solely other-loving love rather than self-loving love we will see later. But its unchangeable consequence is that this universe becomes to us a safe and perfectly controlled one when we know that He manifests Himself solely in His other-love activities. We know that other-love can only be harmonious love, in which all that has its source in Him who is love—whether animate or inanimate, on every level of existence from the sub-atomic upwards—can only operate in "temperature" (Jacob Boehme's term for normality or harmony) when each is "loving" the other; and to this the universe is coming.

But how full of contradiction to this is our present experience! We live in a world where self-love is the basic motivation. It seems we are in an inextricable chaos from which we can find no way out—unless it were possible that all humans so love one another that we put the interests of others before ourselves, a condition which, we know, to the natural man is an unattainable ideal. But—surprise of surprises—the ideal has its reality.

We who are born of the Spirit, joined to the Lord in one spirit, *are* loving one another! The eternal kingdom of love is already in evidence for those who have eyes to see it.

The world may point at Christians who don't appear to love one another, but the world-wide brotherhood of those who do love one another is a visible fact today, which can't be suppressed or obliterated; and we are part of it. One of the followers of Francis of Assisi said in those days to some who sought to water down his ways of perfect love: "There is an element in the gospel of Christ so disturbing that the world will forever reject it, but never forget it; and the Church will waver forever between patronage and persecution. Yours is the present, for the world will ridicule or crucify us; but I think the future is ours." And he was right. That "element" is alive in mil-

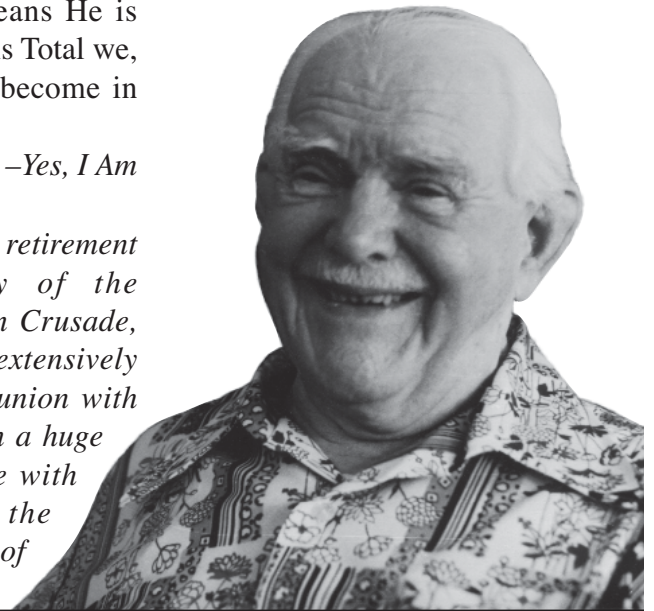
lions today, of whom we are a part; and we are going to see again in these pages the marvels of the way by which this has become our total reality.

So here we start with our Total: God Himself, in ultimate fact the only Person in the universe. God is Spirit (hence we know Spirit is Person), and God is love (and that means He is other-love). And part of this Total we, the redeemed, have now become in our union with Him.

—Yes, I Am

*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.*



***"If I make my bed in the depths, you are there"* —Psalm 139:8**

Life in the human must always be a tension, a constant propounding of problems with no adequate solution, a constant oscillation between the pleasurable and the painful. But when we raise our sights from the human to the divine, the whole picture changes. All started with God, all ends with God, and there is only One with whom He has to do: from eternity to eternity all is centered in Christ. Therefore whatever intervenes in history, whether pleasant or unpleasant, must be caught up into the stream of His purposes of grace in Christ. If the devil appears on the scene, then the devil must be His agent. If the fall of man adds to the chaos, then we learn that He had already foreseen that and the fallen first Adam was to be only a type in reverse (Romans 5:14) of the last redeeming Adam. This same Christ would Himself embrace the consequences of sin, atone for it, conquer it, and then produce out of the wreckage of fallen humanity a new race of sons to occupy the highest position in the universe, to share the throne of Him who is made "higher than the heavens," better than the angels, seated at the right hand of the majesty on high.

Evil, then, would be to Christ an agency for good; not that evil comes from God, or is anything but evil, but faith utilizes it for good, because faith understands that God reigns in the darkness as well as in the light (Psalm 139:12), and that God fulfills His own purpose through adverse circumstances which expose to man his inability and spur him on to the receiving faith which liberates God to work.

—The Deep Things of God

# Editor's Note

Drawing on five of Norman's books, this issue of *The Intercessor* is a collection of articles that illuminate the staggering, overarching concept that there is only One Person in the universe—and its implications for us as Christians.

The lead article, "The Total Truth," from Norman's last book *Yes, I Am*, is his most succinct teaching on this topic. "We start with our Total, God Himself, in ultimate fact the only Person in the universe....All that exists is that unity of which He is the Center and everything manifests Him, on one level or another." In greater detail, "Ultimate Reality" describes the paradigm shift Norman experienced when his searchings led him to apprehend the exclusiveness of God. Seeking through the scriptures to meet his need for more of God's love and power for service, Norman discovered these were not "things" God could give him but qualities of a Person, only One Person, God Himself. But that led to a new dilemma—if God and only God is the life, love, power—what about me?

Similarly, "Life's Supreme Secret" speaks to Christians who, as Norman did, seek God's highest, demonstrating from the Bible that eternal life is not an abstract thing but the qualities of a Person: "I am *the* Life," Jesus said. And His life can only be manifested in relationship with others. Tucked in this arti-

cle is also a strikingly clear description of God existing and functioning as the Trinity.

"God's Fixed Nature" addresses the underlying questions about the nature of God: If He is all and in all, what kind of God is He? How do we know? In other words, what kind of universe do we live in? Addressing the latter, "Modern Man and the Ultimate Question" combines recent scientific discoveries that point to spirit as the true reality and the revelation in scripture of God as the Universal Spirit who manifests Himself through His creation.

Also looking into the spirit-realm, "There is Another Dimension" takes those supernatural happenings in scripture that appear to contradict material laws to show how spirit, not matter, is what is real—and we, joined to the God who is Spirit "operate right in the midst of this matter world; and we discover ourselves to be spirit people."

Several articles touch on the answer to the "What about me?" implications of our deepened understanding of the nature and totality of God. "Not Two Powers—Only One" describes how the Spirit who indwells us as Christians flows out of us as we begin by simple faith to see with a single eye—"from seeing God personal to God universal" and from there to believing in "a total God—a God with no possibility of a hole in Him."

"God: All in All" is Norman's cogent analysis of finding his "total God,"—a brilliantly-written, exhilarating description of God's love-nature in action: God poured out for the complete liberation and fulfill-

ment of mankind in the person of Christ and our true Life and perfect fulfillment found in union in Christ.

"Imperfection Points to Perfection" further unveils the implications of knowing God as all-in-all as we view life in its fallen state as "a great finger pointing the way from the imperfect human to the perfect divine." Particularly insightful is Norman's detailed description of how God in Christ effected the reconciliation of all things to Himself—going the way of the Cross, which is also His way in His intercessors today. As a fitting conclusion, the second half of this article, "Need is the Evidence of Supply" brings us full circle to unfold the Grace of God by which he "must restore the rebel negatives to their predestined estate of submission to their positives." This article provides a strong rebuttal to those who condemn the chastisements and judgments of God on sin as cruel or harsh, or talk of the "permissive will of God" to explain away the consequences and judgments brought on us by our willful sin. Having foreseen the fall with its tragic consequences, God "has always intended, planned and provided total supply for every human need—and the supply has always been there."



“For I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is no one like Me,  
Declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times things which have not been done,  
Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,  
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’”

Isaiah 46:9-10  
(*New American Standard*)

## 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!

## The One Person

“I have to start with theology, for I have no understanding of man except in his relationship to God. I understand that God is the One Person in the universe. Besides Him there is no other. He is Power, Peace, Joy. Christ is the Way, Truth, Life. He is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification. His name is *I am*, not *I have*. Finally He is declared as ‘All in all’ (1 Cor. 15:28). So He can only manifest Himself in all these and a hundred other characteristics by being Himself expressed in an infinite variety of forms, not a Giver, but an Is-er.

God created man in His own image that He might have a visible means of expressing and manifesting Himself, The Invisible in visible form. Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world,’ and then He also said, ‘Ye are the light of the world’ (Matt. 5:14). On the material level, light is invisible electricity which can only manifest in visible form by a lamp. In doing so, the light so possesses the lamp that we don't say, ‘Turn on the lamp,’ but, ‘Turn on the light.’ Thus we humans express Him in a union relationship.”

—*Summit Living*

# Life's Supreme Secret

Many catchwords are used by God's people, both Scriptural and home-made, to express the highest aims of their goal in God: some speak of the fullness of the Spirit, or entire sanctification, or power for service, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, or full salvation, or victorious living. All these are useful, but we will start with the basic, simple, all-inclusive, word of Scripture, that was such a favourite with the Saviour: Eternal Life; or rather, just "Life," for, as we shall see, nothing but this is life. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," said the Saviour; and Moses put it in the plainest terms to Israel: "I call heaven and earth to witness this day that I have set before you life and death." Not a religion, not a philosophy, not a way of life called Christianity, but LIFE. And we are to discover that there is only one life; all else is death. It is absolute in definition and experience, "straight and narrow" as the Saviour said; there are no deviations, no alternatives; and it is foolproof in every conceivable situation or problem. Also, being life, it is entirely natural, not something strained, or rather hopelessly aimed at; but just lived, and lived exuberantly.

We begin by a fact of fundamental importance. Life is not a thing, an "it," at all. Life is a Person. In fact, we shall clear the ground from the start if we take careful warning against a chronic habit we all have, though to a point it is necessary and justifiable, but soon leads us deep into Bypath Meadow, the habit of looking at life in terms of abstractions, and usually arguing about them. We talk, for instance, of love or hate, faith or unbelief, sin or holiness, and so on, as if they were things in themselves, things we either need to attain or avoid; and then we have our various theories of how we can experience them or be rid of them. But love is not a thing; it is a person loving; faith is not a thing, but a person believing; life is not a thing, but a person living. There could be no such "things," if it were not that people loved and hated, were holy or sinful. For convenience sake, we abstract these various characteristics of a living person, isolate them as a research student would say, label them, and then so often get into the quicksands of a fruitless, despairing search for love, power, faith, holiness in our own lives. We are missing the vital mark. We are pursuing death, not life, that way.

It is quite plain that life is a Person, because God is

life. "I am the life," said God the Son. "We have seen and shew unto you eternal life which was with the Father," writes John. "Christ our life," writes Paul. "This is the true God, and eternal life," writes John again. Therefore, "that which was from the beginning" is a Living Person, Who is all—love, light, life, power, wisdom, holiness (wholeness). Is there love? God is love. Is there light? God is light. Is there wisdom? He is wisdom. Is there faith? He is the eternal believer in Himself, for "I AM" is His name.

We cannot stress this too strongly, for the key to true being is here. Life is never found by searching for or possessing things. Life is a Person, and is found only in living relationship with the Person. The truth and importance of this will come out more strongly as we proceed. Relationship, not possession, is life; and so, when John writes of declaring to us "that eternal life" which they had seen and handled, he says straightaway, it is found in "fellowship (relationship) with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

And that takes us one stage further. This eternal life, the living God, is not one person living by Himself. He is three in one. He is a fellowship. And these three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, live in a relationship hardly intelligible to the finite mind, yet which, thank God, we can experience, if we cannot define. They dwell *in* each other in indissoluble union; yet they are three separate Persons, with separate offices and activities, proceeding out from each other in the fulfilment of them, yet never apart from each other. Mystery, indeed, yet absolutely vital that we should grasp its significance, because this is eternal life, and we ourselves must know exactly this form of life, if we are to be alive in the true sense. The Father sends the Son away from Himself into the world, yet, John says, "The only begotten Son, which *is in* the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." The Spirit of the Father and the Son proceeds from Them into us, yet in such unbroken union that we can say the Father and the Son dwell in us. Union, yet distinctiveness, joined in one.

So here is the only life of the universe. Three Persons, dwelling in each other, proceeding out from each other, one God who is life, love, light, power, wisdom, purity, meekness, gentleness, goodness, faith.

—*The Liberating Secret*

# The Ultimate Reality

by Norman Grubb

Although I am a missionary secretary, the subterranean stream of my life-interest for thirty years has been flowing in the direction of what to me is total truth. Big words, and perhaps I should qualify them by a definition that “only the truth which edifies is truth for you.” After I had been a servant of Christ for twelve years on the foreign and home fields, I went through a strange phase of a kind of intellectual awakening. It seemed as though my heart had outpaced my head, and the time had now come when my understanding must catch up with my love. It was a painful phase at the beginning. I had to learn the dialectical truth that the way to clarity is through confusion. For a year I went through the strange experience of questioning whether there was a God at all (God forgive such presumption!), and found myself in the strange situation of knowing and loving One of whose existence I was uncertain! Though I decided that if He was the Big Illusion, I would be a little illusion along with Him! But what it did for me (which makes me sure that it was God who took me that way) was that it put passion into my faith. I *must* know. I *must* have sure grounds, even if those sure grounds were to be quite sure I could never be sure, but that I could and would believe!

That passionate pursuit has never left me, except that it has brought me in my old age to the calmer waters of an understanding which does appear to me to be the heart of the matter and the heart

of the Biblical revelation. For several years now I have been occupied in sharing what I have seen (God’s seeing in me, I trust), with many others in conferences, churches, house groups, etc., and it seems to ring the bell in many hearts; nor have I found reason to change the mainstream of the message, though different aspects come clearer all the time. I have put it in print three times, in *The Law of Faith*, *The Liberating Secret*, and

For a year I went through the strange experience of questioning whether there was a God at all (God forgive such presumption!), and found myself in the strange situation of knowing and loving One of whose existence I was uncertain! Though I decided that if He was the Big Illusion, I would be a little illusion along with Him!

*The Deep Things of God*; but I don’t know if every writer on the things of the Spirit has the same problem—no sooner have I completed one manuscript than I see this and this and this which could be put so much more clearly, or whole areas of insights which should be added. I feel like the automobile dealers who *must* produce a new model each year! I should add also that, though not a wide reader through lack of time, nor having the powers of concentration of a true student, I have delved and burrowed in var-

ious directions where I have met with authors, past and present (mainly past), who have struck me as germinal, writers “piercing even...to the joints and marrow,” and not merely proffering odd Biblical titbits. They might make a strange array if I mentioned their names!

## Paradigm Shift

It seems as if we have to put things in extremes, in absolute terms as the Bible often does, to get truth to register in our consciousness. And I find there is a basic “extreme” which had to dawn as a fixation in my own spirit. I find equally that with hundreds of my fellow believers whom I contact, few seem really to have “seen” it. Those who have not are hungry, not basically satisfied, negative and self-condemning in their outlook. Those who have know that they have “come home.” They have reached ultimate reality, and though they may wander from the road as we all do, they know where to return to, and how. I have to add too, though hesitatingly because ministers cannot all be teachers as well as evangelists and pastors, that in a great many evangelical churches the gospel of salvation is magnificently presented, seekers are led to Christ; but the totality of the gospel, the gospel in its ultimate category, is by no means so clearly presented, nor maybe even understood by teacher as well as taught. It is evidenced by exhortations to Christian living being mainly challenges to pray more, give more, witness more, surren-

der more. The emphasis is predominantly on the active dedication of the Christian to his Lord, and to a much less degree on the dynamic remoulding of the believer by His Lord.

### Only God

The extreme, the absolute, the revelation of which so totally re-orientated my own life, was the fact, so plainly and repeatedly stated in the Scriptures, that there is really only One Person in the universe, and that is God Himself. To say that sounds exaggerated, because we immediately counter it with the seemingly obvious alternative fact—that we also are persons. Yes, that is true in a purely secondary sense; but the trouble is such a totally distorted concept of the function of the human self has captured and blinded the world since the Fall that the only way to destroy the false and replace it by the true is by almost throwing out the human self on the rubbish heap, and only restoring it to its proper place when we have restored the right perspective.

The way I saw it was when it suddenly dawned on me that the Bible does not talk about God having a lot of separate gifts and graces with which He would endow me (though a surface reading of the Scriptures might appear to say He had); but it continually says that God Himself (Father, Son, or Spirit) *is*, not *has*, so and so. What you have is not you, but merely possessions you can share with others. What you are is you, and you cannot take parts of yourself and share them with others. The Bible says, God *is* love, God *is* light, Christ *is* our life, Christ *is* the power of God, Christ *is* the wisdom of God, Christ *is* our sanctification; the Bible speaks of God our hope, our

peace, our exceeding joy; (the peace of God, for instance, in its hidden meaning for those who have eyes to see it, is really God our peace; and the same is true of each attribute of God, which might read as if it was just some “thing” He shares with us, but in reality is He Himself as such within us): and the ultimate being “Christ *is* all and in all” for the believer, and “God all in all” in the universe.

It was the exclusiveness of God which confronted me. I had been looking for a lot of gifts and graces to

It was the exclusiveness of God which confronted me. I had been looking for a lot of gifts and graces to improve me as a servant of Christ. The answer I received was “Nothing doing. There are no such ‘things’ for you. These things are not things at all, they are all the characteristics of a Person, and only one Person in the universe. They never can be yours. They are not available to you, nor attainable by you.” That shook me...

improve me as a servant of Christ. The answer I received was “Nothing doing. There are no such ‘things’ for you. These things are not things at all, they are all the characteristics of a Person, and only one Person in the universe. They never can be yours. They are not available to you, nor attainable by you.” That shook me, and I needed a shaking—from this mistaken concept of the position and function of the human self.

I cannot be thankful enough that I was given to see this absoluteness, this exclusiveness of God. I say again, it may sound extreme, it may not even be all the truth (in the sense that we are also persons), but once and for all I had to get out of my system the idea that ultimate life is I alongside God, God alongside me. No. Life is just GOD. Not God first, but God only.

### God in Manifestation

What about things and people then? If God is the All, what are things and people? The nearest we can say, as the Bible says, is that they are the means of the manifestation of God. Everything is a form of God, a manifestation of God. The visible is made out of the Invisible, as Hebrews 11:3 says (Moffatt translation). “That’s a bit dangerous,” a preacher said to me recently. “You mean that God made everything.” No, I don’t, I mean more than that human analogy by which we say that an artist is here and his picture there, two separate entities, or a carpenter here and his table there, and so in that same sense we say that God is there and His creation here. This is a different relationship. We must bridge that gap of illusory separation. We must say that everything is God on a certain level of manifestation. It is God revealing Himself in the variety of His wonders. We see God in the beauty of colours. We hear God in the harmonies of music. Nowadays we know that all the infinitude of material objects have one invisible origin. What is that origin? The scientists say that probably man can never penetrate beyond the atom to its source. But the believer can. It is a Person. Paul said it two thousand years ago when he wrote, “By Him all



things consist (stand together).” Faith can know what human reason never can. “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God.” The Word is God. He is the Word. Open our eyes then, and wherever we see things, we see Him in one form or another.

But is that not pantheism? How absurd—that God is a thing, or God is a colour, or God is a sound? No, God is The Person. A person is not a thing, but things are forms of Him. “The whole

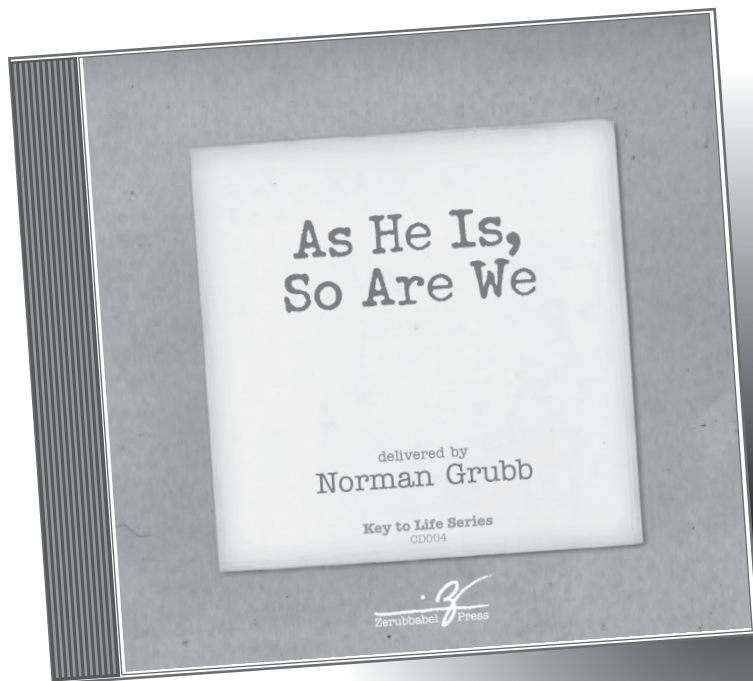
earth is full of His glory”: He “fills all things.” How can we but worship—everywhere—not the thing, but Him in the thing.

And people? Now we come nearer home. Paul was bold to say of all humanity, redeemed and unredeemed, that “in Him we live and move and have our being.” That is a strong statement. Not just that He made us and in some sense we have a derived but separate life He has given us. No indeed. All men are *in* Him. Their natural life,

their thinking and acting, are expressions of Him. It is impossible for any created being, of this world or any other, including the devil and his angels, to be out of God. All are “in Him” eternally, He is the hidden root of their lives, the hidden Self behind their selves. Separation from Him is an impossibility.

—*God Unlimited*

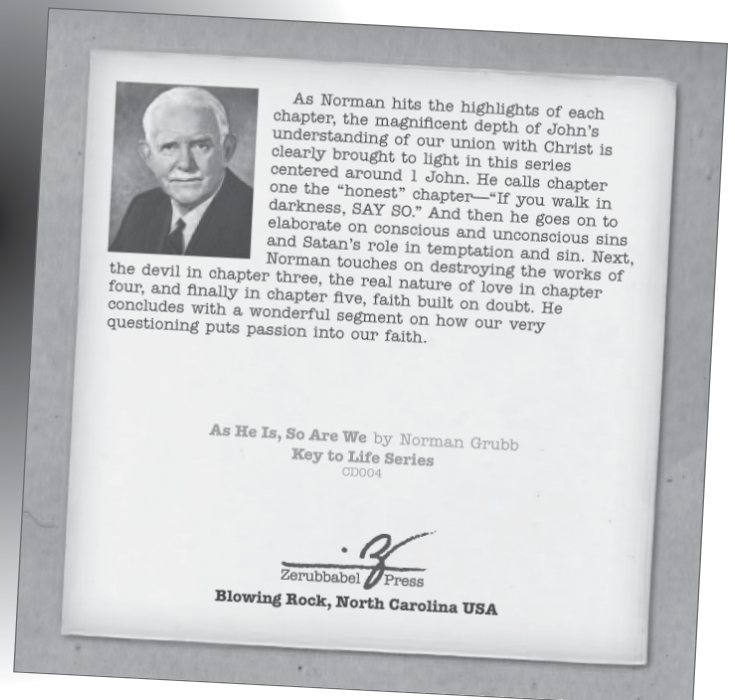
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# Modern Man and the Ultimate Question

by Norman Grubb

I am greatly interested in the inward direction of our thinking these days, which is causing so much religious ferment. It seems to be giving the skeptic cause to say, "Where is your God up there? We can do without these external religious forms and the dogmas of a distant Deity. We have our answers to our human enigmas: they are within, not without."

Of course, we know the "natural man" always has said and will say that kind of thing, whereas the man of the Spirit knows another dimension which includes the within and without. But taking him on his own ground, there is a direction in modern discoveries which does emphatically point inward, but which, so far from making irrelevant the "faith once delivered to the saints", brings it so sharply into focus that it alone is the final answer. We will start from there.

It is true that in area after area of human life, where in the past we had no complete explanation of the working of things, we now find the answer within. Most exciting of all has been the mystery of the composition of matter. Of what does it consist? The schoolboy now knows that (to use the language of the amateur) within matter is the molecule, within the molecule the atom, within the atom the nucleus, within the nucleus illimitable energy.

Then what about the body? Where is the key

to physical life? The answer again is within—in the cell, the genes, or whatever their correct names are, to the point that some claim that physical life will soon be reproduced in a test tube.

Then the mind? Are mental conditions due to outside influences? Now we probe within, the psychologists explore the subconscious, the unconscious, the doctors investigate the brain cells. Even in our social relationships, we no longer accept the imposition from without of "the divine right of kings," or "the rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate," as if some by birth, race, or colour are inferior people. We seek for the answer within and among us in the right of every man to an equal opportunity.

It is true that our answers are being found within—within—within: and that brings us directly to our final inner problem—ourselves as humans, the human personality, the individual self. And here we are stopped short. We meet the insoluble to which no one on a merely human level has found the answer. We all agree—all philosophies and religions have said the same thing through the centuries—that if we humans have not a nature that is naturally loving and to the point that we genuinely are as concerned for the welfare of our neighbor as for ourselves, then the life of the human race, with all its boasted developments, can never be more than a patched-

up affair and can be lived at best under some forms of external control. We have never known and do not know by what means this final inner citadel of man can be captured, and self-loving man become naturally self-giving man. We are beaten at the center.

If, therefore, there is some inmost fact about us humans which is missing, and which could put us on to the right track, what is it? Here is precisely where there always has been the answer, and an inward answer—but not in man. Here it is, and always has been—in the Bible. Paul put it in one word which he stated to be the hidden secret of the universe which always had been known to the initiated, but had only now come into public view. He called it “the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations but now is made manifest....” The trouble was that it has been so overlaid by external religious forms and symbols that what was really an internal truth—an inner relationship—had been given the image of an approach to an external and distant person—to God “up there” rather than God “in here.”

### **No Foundation, No Building**

Jesus made the ultimate statement when he told the woman of Samaria, a simple woman of her day and no profound philosopher, “God is Spirit.” We understand what a spirit is in Biblical terms, because we are human spirits, for the writer to the Hebrews called God “the Father of spirits.” The Bible definition of a spirit is the inner self—as Paul says, “What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?” The spirit is the I, whether of God or man, which can only say of itself, “I am.” It cannot be described, it can only be affirmed. We are—that is all we can say. But the important point is that this inner ego, which is I, is invisible, unreachable, meaningless, unless joined to me as part of me there is also means of expressing my “I.” Therefore, we humans

have, as spontaneous parts of ourselves, our souls (our emotions and reasons), and our bodies. They are not actually ourselves, they are our means of self-expression, yet they are so much parts of ourselves that we function as a spontaneous unity.

So with God. The Bible from the beginning reveals him as “The Universal Spirit,” The One Person in the universe (“beside me there is no other”), who is also invisible, unapproachable and meaningless except to Himself, unless He has His means of expression. The Bible shows that the universe is His means of expression. The second verse of the Bible says, “The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters,” and lo, the creation.

The Bible from the beginning reveals him as “The Universal Spirit,” The One Person in the universe (“beside me there is no other”), who is also invisible, unapproachable and meaningless except to Himself, unless He has His means of expression. The Bible shows that the universe is His means of expression.

That means that we must recognize Him as the world’s Creator in a different relationship from the way we regard, for instance, a carpenter and the chairs he makes. We humans make things, but are separate from the things we make. But we have to learn not to attribute the limitations of our three-dimensional thinking—length, breadth, height—to the dimensionless One with whom there is no such thing as space and time, as here and there. With Him, therefore, we are to see that He *is* the things He makes; they are the forms He takes, in the same ways as our bodies are we, and yet not we. He is to be seen in the atom, in the tree, in music, colour, everything; as Browning says, “God is seen God in

the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod." When I look at a person, I don't differentiate between him and his body, though I know that actually he is not his body. So with God.

The important thing is to begin to see Him, the Spirit, as the Within One, rather than the Without One (though He is that also). Open our eyes and everything is actually He manifesting Himself in one form or another. Not some things which He makes and should be regarded as apart from, like a carpenter. When we see this, we begin to see that there is only One Person in the universe.

We shall not get the world or the universe, or ourselves with our human problems into focus until we have settled in to the consciousness that

**Human beings, therefore, are not fulfilling their destiny unless they are in a relationship in which we living is really He living by us. Anything less is really sub-human.**

there is only One Person in the universe; and all things and people find their place and meaning as derivatives and manifestations of Him, whether negatively or positively. Exactly as the Scriptures say of Him: "In him we live and move and have our being," He "fills all things," "God all in all," and Paul, that the non-Christian is without excuse because the visible things manifest the Godhead of the Invisible One.

But Spirit is person. We are spirits, we are persons, and personality in its freedom, originality, endless potential, can obviously not express itself through things, for things are limited, persons unlimited. How then can this One Person in the universe, God the Spirit, the Within One, express Himself? Obviously, by persons; and so we come to the Bible revelation of the meaning of the creation

of persons. It is to be The Person through persons.

Human beings, therefore, are not fulfilling their destiny unless they are in a relationship in which we living is really He living by us. Anything less is really sub-human. But it must also be a relationship in which we are completely human persons, completely ourselves, not living by effort or compulsion, or law or dutiful obedience, but in a spontaneity in which we are we in all the full enjoyable expression of our humanity, and yet—so deep is the paradox—it is really He!

Turn to the Bible again, and we find it is exactly so. As far back as Joseph, a pagan monarch made the comment, "A man in whom the spirit of God is." Moses was told he was being given a successor "filled with the Spirit of God." David prayed in his great prayer of repentance, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me," and "Uphold me with thy free Spirit." Years after, when David's Psalms were quoted in Hebrews, it spoke of the Spirit, "saying in (not to) David." Ezekiel said, "I will put my Spirit within you."

Peter gathered all the great men of the Old Covenant together under one comment, "The prophets inquired what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify..."; and Jesus, the Son, again spoke the final authoritative word. He had often spoken of His relationship to the Father, and that He was going to the Father. So the disciples very sensibly asked Him, "Show us the Father," obviously thinking in our dimensional terms that some vision would be given them of a Person outside them. But His answer clinched it, when He said that the relationship of deity to humanity is the The Person within a person, not without; for they would have no vision given them of an external person. If they saw Him, they saw the Father, and not because He was the Father, but because "the words I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."



Then He went straight on to say that it was good He was leaving them, because if they understood that far, they now localized God as within Him; whereas God who is the Spirit was coming to universalize Himself within millions of humans, starting with themselves. He had previously called God Spirit and now He was saying that the Holy Spirit would be in them—the same Person.

And that was what happened at Pentecost. There they exchanged their faulty concept of an external God for the inner fixed consciousness, which cannot be described in our third-dimensional language, but can only be experienced, of the God who is Spirit, fused with their spirit, Ego with ego, as one and yet two. The means by which a human has a “personal Pentecost” may vary; that is not the important point. The end is invariable—a consciousness, a fixed unchangeable relationship in experience of God and me as one person.

The apostolic letters, which we call the Epistles, wholly bear that out. Paul’s constant theme was Christ in us, expressed specifically as a part of his message in the statement already referred to—“the mystery hid from ages and generations, but now made manifest . . . Christ in you”; and his own marvelously balanced definition of humanity and deity in combined action—“Nevertheless I live, no, it is not I, it is Christ living in me; yet now it is I living, and living by the affirmation of that fact,” to paraphrase his great Galatians 2:20.

John takes it even farther, for Paul tells us how to get there, and John then tells us what we are when we do get there. 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 lov-

ing 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.

We can now see that 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*

# God's Fixed Nature

by Norman Grubb

There is one and only one 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 nor *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.

That is why  
*the only sin is unbelief,*  
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a God are You to  
permit that?”

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.”

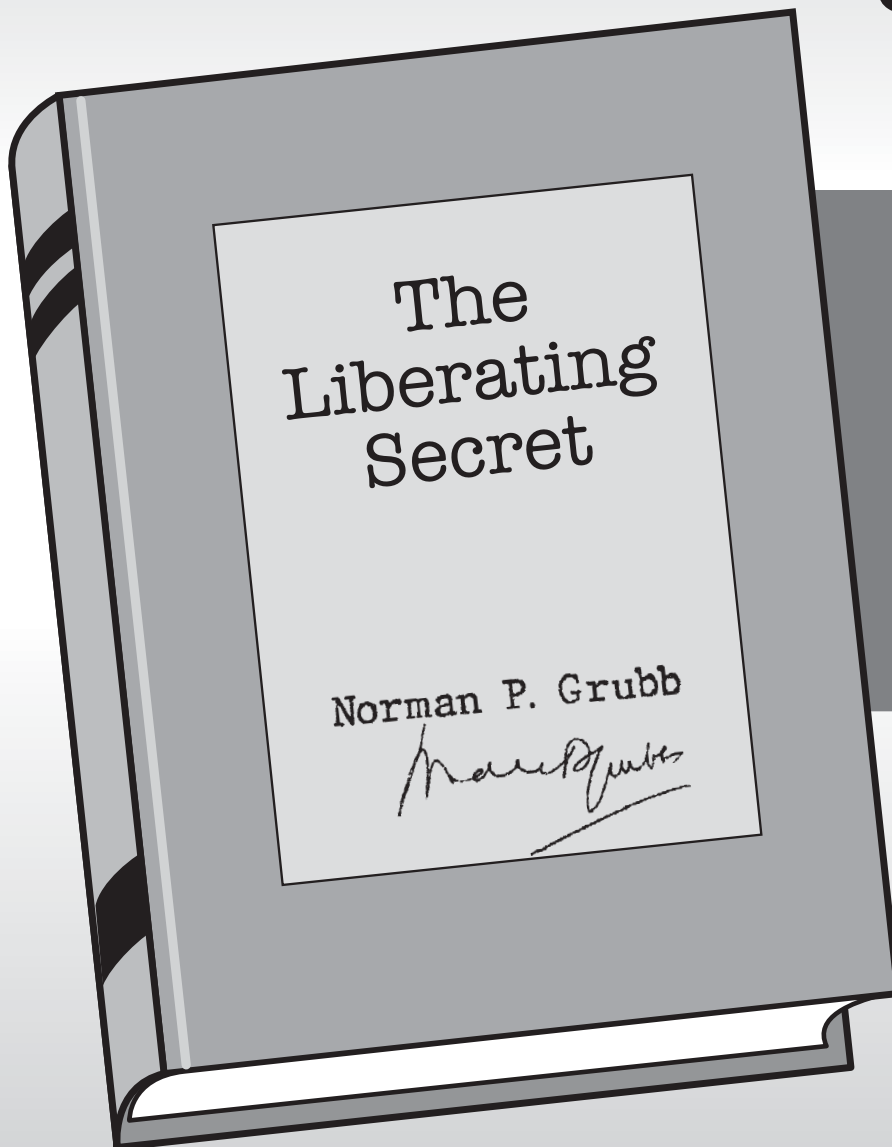
And so we see the corollary that, if this universe has its safe foundation in its Lover-Father, it must necessarily also be owned, managed and developed by safe sons—lover-sons. And this is why we are so carefully investigating how we are to be “real persons,” experiencing our fixedness as safe lover-sons, 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

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# There is Another Dimension

by Norman Grubb

So we start, and we shall start by taking a big leap. There is a spirit dimension, and there is a matter dimension. There is appearance, and there is reality. Paul puts it: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Commonplace and obvious? Yes, but revolutionary, because all our understanding of life is geared to the visible, and we are occupied by "the sweat of our brow" and the application of our minds in expanding and using the visible. Anything not within the compass of our reason we consider crazy. But what do we find in the Bible? A continuous record of happenings which we call supernatural, which cannot be fitted into our interpretations of normal cause and effect. Abraham and Sarah have a child when respectively a hundred, and ninety years old; Joseph accurately foretells through dreams; Moses brings plagues on Egypt, crosses the Red Sea on dry land, gets water from a rock and daily manna; Joshua crosses the Jordan, and brings down the walls of Jericho, and stops the sun for a day; Elijah stops and then brings the rain; Elisha makes an axe-head swim; Daniel spends a night among hungry lions; the three young men walk in the fiery furnace and come out without even the smell of smoke on them. Jesus was continually doing things beyond natural explanation, bringing calm in a storm, walking on water and thus counteracting gravity (and Peter doing the same), feeding five thousand with five loaves, healing all kinds of diseases, and raising the dead. Paul and the

apostles saw prison doors open, chains fall off, the dead raised up; and the writer to the Hebrews reminds the whole church in the famous "faith" chapter 11 that these things were really so.

Now immediately I mention these things, you will tend to think I am pointing to specific remarkable happenings and asking, "Why don't we see the same?" No, I am not. That is dangerous

If God is spirit, then that is all there can be, and all must be spirit. If in the beginning, as Genesis says, there is only God, all must be some form of Him; and we know this is so, because we are taken to the end time by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, when he tells us that after the last enemy is destroyed, the Son will render up the kingdom to the Father that "God may be all in all."

thinking, because it is centring our attention on dramatic incidents as if they are what matters; but the question I ask is, Do we not recognize that here are happenings which are products of another dimension, the spirit dimension, and altogether beyond the scope of human thinking and action? They belong to the absurd: or they belong to the real, and we are in the absurd who discount them and claim the only real to be our

laboured efforts! That is all I am now saying. Not that we ought to be seeing things like these, though we must say they could be if they are the products of faith; but that there is a dimension of spirit, where He who is spirit, and we who are "joined to Him one spirit," operate right in the midst of this matter world; and we discover ourselves to be spirit people, not matter people, with revolutionary effects on our whole way of seeing, thinking and acting; and that *this* is the truth, or we should rather say that He who is spirit is the truth. We shall explain as we proceed.

So the first great fact is that the whole universe is spirit. It doesn't look like that, and our first reaction is to question that. So let us start like this. We know what spirit is because the Bible tells us we humans are spirits. The writer to the Hebrews says we have flesh-fathers, but that God is father of our spirits, in other words our real selves (Hebrews 12:9). Paul defines our self, or our ego, as spirit when he says, "What man knows the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?" And that in me which says I know, is obviously I, and that I is spirit. If we die in Christ, it says we are "spirits of just men made perfect," our real selves having left its body shell behind. If we die out of Christ, we are "spirits in prison." Always spirit.

## Spirit is the Only Reality

Now I myself, being spirit, am meaningless in relation to others unless I have a means of expressing my spirit-



self; and that, in Bible terms, is my soul and body. My soul is my emotions and reason, emotions expressing my spirit-desires, and reason expounding my spirit-knowledge: and of course my body the means of outward contact. The simple evidence that we humans are spirit-selves, expressed through soul and body, is that if I meet a person, I don't say I met a body, but a person, because I caught on to the spirit-self expressed through the outer form.

Now this gives us a human jumping-off point to understanding Jesus' supreme word, when He said to the woman of Samaria, "God is spirit." There we have it. If God is spirit, then that is all there can be, and all must be spirit. If in the beginning, as Genesis says, there is only God, all must be some form of Him; and we know this is so, because we are taken to the end time by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, when he tells us that after the last enemy is destroyed, the Son will render up the kingdom to the Father that "God may be all in all." If He is all, then everything must be forms of Him; and "all in all" means He, The All, in all His forms of manifesting Himself.

We understand this from the fact of us humans being spirits. Just as we have a necessary form by which to manifest our spirit-selves, so He. The universe is He in manifestation. The universe is spirit slowed down to the point of visibility. Paul says that all men have an inner understanding of Him the Invisible "by the things that are made." The visible manifests Him the Invisible, so that "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

So we are saying one tremendous fact. There is only One Person in the universe. There is only God. The uni-

verse is God in manifested forms. We will develop that much more in a moment. But you see the importance. If all is He, we are to learn the secret that Jesus knew so well, of seeing through the appearances to Him the Reality. And we see the unity of the universe, the oneness of all, which is a present fact to the eye of faith, and is stated in its final form when Paul says that He is going to "gather together in one all things in Christ." That settles it. All is one, and that great day is coming when what now appears separated to the outward eye

As Jesus said, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." But the opposite of single is not evil, but double. Why then evil? Because to see double is to see evil. We only have the secret when we see as Jesus did, through all to one—to Him, the Father, including seeing through the devil.

will be visibly and eternally one in Him. Think of that, not Christ in the universe, but the universe in Christ, proving again that all is one spirit. Even the word universe means one, and Christ's final prayer is on oneness. All through history people have had flashes of this fact of unity and it has a great effect on our consciousness when we begin to see through to this oneness now.

### Seeing Through

In the light of this revelation that the universe is this One Living Person,

and everything and everybody is He in some manifested form, whether good or evil, whether positive or negative, this obviously raises some disturbing questions, when we include evil in the everything. This will become clear as we proceed. Suffice to say now that we shall never find the answers to life's problems until we see Him The Only One in all activity, not two powers but one. Not a dichotomy, but a unity. As Jesus said, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." But the opposite of single is not evil, but double. Why then evil? Because to see double is to see evil. We only have the secret when we see as Jesus did, through all to one—to Him, the Father, including seeing through the devil. Isaiah saw this more clearly than any other writer in the Bible in some chapters such as 45 and 46. "I am God, and there is none else...I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil."

Of course many times I am asked if I am a pantheist. I am not a theologian, and probably my questioners are not; but I had plenty of Greek in my English school days, and know that "pan" means everything in the neuter case, and "theist" of course a worshipper of God. But that is just what the idolatry of Romans 1 was, which lies at the roots of man's ruin—worshipping the creature rather than the Creator. That means calling the thing God. But what we are talking about is seeing through all things to the One of whom it is some form, just as I don't mistake a person's body for themselves; I see through the body to the person of whom it is the outer form. When therefore we humans have returned through Christ to know-

ing God as the Living One, our Father, then all life becomes worship, because our eyes are opened: we see through everything and every person to their being some wonderful form of Him in beauty, power, shape, texture, colour, in nature, in music, in the powers of sight, hearing and thought: though some may be outwardly distorted into ugliness.

But that raises another question of equal importance. If the whole universe is One Person, and what we produce is what we are, what kind of person is He? For the universe must be a representation of its author. Of course we know the answer, but how fundamentally important. John gives it. Jesus made that three-worded statement, “God is spirit.” John makes the three-worded statement, “God is love.” That is all that need be said. “Is,” not “has.” If He is love, then He is nothing but love; and Paul said love fulfills all laws of the universe.

### Outpoured Love

And what is love? In a word, love is for others. If I love, my interest and involvement is to meet the other person's need, no matter what happens to me in the course of it. And this is our God of the universe. He is love. He exists for His universe, not His universe for Him. If His universe is fulfilled, He is fulfilled. If it is happy and harmonious, He is happy. That is why He is safe as God. In all human history, because we are self-interested, not other-interested, all those who have power over others turn it to their own advantage. It is they for him, not he for them. That has been the curse of dictators, kings, rulers, tyrants, yes and capitalism—turning what they control to their own advantage. But God is love. It is not the universe for His convenience, but He for it. His pleasure is when we are pleased and satisfied. The final title

given Him in the Bible is “The Lamb,” in the book of Revelation. It comes no less than twenty-seven times. “The Lamb on the throne”: “The Lamb is the light thereof”: “The marriage supper of the Lamb”: “Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” Why Lamb? It seems curious to liken Almighty God to a helpless lamb; in worldly terms ridiculous. But what is the character of a lamb in the pasture? Helpless availability. You can do what you like with it. If it conveniences you to kill it, kill it. If to eat it, eat it. And this is the nature of God, only that He is deliberately, and not helplessly, available. He is love; if therefore to kill Him meets our need, kill Him. If to eat Him, eat Him. Which is precisely what He is in human history, the Lamb slain for us at Calvary. The Lamb eaten by us in His body and blood, as symbolized in the Lord's supper.

—*Who Am I?*

### ***“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good” — Genesis 50:20***

When the adventure of adversity is seen in its true perspective, it is found to be the doorway into God's most transcendent secret—that adversities and sufferings, which in their origin are the effects of sin and instruments of the devil, in the grasp of faith become *redemptive*. They are transfigured from the realm of merely something to be endured as an opposition of Satan to something to be used to conquer their author and redeem his victims. Faith in time of adversity makes the serpent swallow itself! Once again the supreme proof of this is that when Satan made his fiercest attack in history on the person of Christ, God used that attack, through the faith and endurance of the Sufferer, to bring about the world's salvation. *God uses evil to bring about good*—not causing it, but using it.

The consequence of a clear grasp of this fact, that Satan and all evil circumstances in our lives are God's most useful instruments for the fulfillment of His purposes, is obvious. All attacks of Satan are seen to be our blessings. We “count them all joy.” We “rejoice in tribulation.” We use them as special opportunities to see the manifestation of God's power, instead of merely enduring them with a struggle as “judgments” or “tests.”

—*Summit Living*

# Not Two Powers—Only One

by Norman Grubb

In what ways does the Spirit flow out of us as rivers? Have we any clear pointers? Yes, there are two. We shall see that He flows out of us as Spirit through spirit and Spirit through body, and we shall see how He does this.

Let us look into the most basic first: the way He flows out through our spirit. That way, of course, is the way of faith, for the Spirit way is the faith way. We shall be foolish if we think we already know plenty about that way. We have hardly begun! We shall soon find, as I have, that there is plenty more to learn and apply through the whole of life.

The faith way is the one and only way by which the Spirit has flowed into us, and it is the one and only way by which He flows out. As I near the end of my days on earth, I have no more fascinating and fruitful occupation than living the life of faith in action. I join not only with those men of Hebrews 11 in their exploits of faith, but also with great men of faith of my earlier years, such as George Müller and Hudson Taylor, from whom I have eagerly picked up invaluable lessons of faith. But crowning all, for me, have been my years of intimacy with that man of faith and intercession, Rees Howells.

It was not now the faith of my own relationship to God in new birth or union that was interesting me. It was faith applied, and applied effectively, to every incident of my daily life; and beyond that, to the lives and needs of all to whom I was and am sent, or who come to me. This required of me, first, a new expansion to my seeing of things. I had learned that

before I can believe, I must see what I am to believe. First, *see*—then *believe*—single sight, then simple faith. But I had *double* sight, and that was my confusion. I saw two powers, good and evil—with plenty of evil. How could I bring the evil within reach of effectively believing God is dealing with it?

So my first step of enlarged understanding was to discover the single eye—to step from seeing *God personal to God universal*. It cost me a year to get this finally and completely settled. Thank God, He put me through that painful period. It has altered all my many years—this seeing and knowing how to believe with no weak spots in any situation—and made me able to help others to do the same. As I say, the change didn't depend on the believing, but on the knowing what I could believe. There had to be an expansion of my inner understanding before there could be an expansion of believing.

I first had to have a shock—and this was God's way of shocking me: In the course of my reading, I ran across William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. As I read, it seemed to me that he was saying that Paul's conversion was just an inner self-adjustment, not an outward meeting with God on the road to Damascus. I may have misread him, but God meant me to read it like that, for my benefit: a negative to fit me for a total positive! Its effect on me—crazy though it may seem to you of more settled faith—was suddenly to make me wonder whether, after all, there is a human self-sufficiency with no need of God—and perhaps even no God! In other

words, I did not have an all-encompassing faith which answered all possible doubts and questionings. But I needed a God with no possibility of a hole in Him.

That sent me on a desperate search. I must have a "total God" or nothing. Indeed, I went so far as to say to God, if there was a God, that I'd had a twenty-year love affair with Him...He was all in all to me...so if He really was phony and non-existent, I would choose to be phony also, and in my love would cling to Him and be a phony along with Him. Love weathered the storm when the "faith boat" was being rocked. I went through a year's search with much agony of spirit—believing, yet not believing. I need not go into details, except to say that, helped somewhat by the great mystics in their pursuit of and finding union with God, I too finally had a great inner "recognition" that *He is all*. That is why I am so strong on that now His being "all" has meant for me, ever since, that whatsoever there is in the universe, of whatever kind—whether good or evil, negative or positive, including Satan and all his works—God is the source of all, for He is the True All, the Alpha and the Omega. (I am not saying at this moment how that can include evil as well as good, but will explain that shortly.) But it became burned in me like a brand that *I am one with Him in whom the universe is one*. It is like a permanent inner light in me, for He is light...and we are light. Some talk of a "cosmic consciousness," and this became that to me, and I am branded.

—Yes I Am

# Imperfection Points to Perfection

by Norman Grubb

Looking, from heaven downwards rather than earth upwards, and realizing that God has always been nothing but the God of perfection, working *all* things after the counsel of His own will, we can see the whole problem of our chaotic world from a totally different point of view. The fact that God foreknew Satan's and man's disobedience and the resulting chaos, and had prepared the perfect remedy for it before it ever happened, gives us our key. Judgment and punishment there had to be, but He only ever predestined One to feel the full weight of His wrath, His only begotten Son. For all mankind He had only one purpose, to restore them in His Son to their original predestined perfection, and with them the whole fallen creation.

All, therefore, that happens to man in his present fallen condition has its own definite purpose—not of judgment, but of restoration. Suffering and sorrow

is the will of God in this sense, that disobedience must have its due penalties and consequences, or there could be no ethical or rational basis to God's government; but the purpose, in grace, is not penal, but redemptive.

Imperfection in all forms is God's finger pointing to perfection. It makes a tremendous difference to our outlook and actions when we realize this, for we learn to recognize that weakness, shortages, failures, disappointments, all that is short of the ideal, which are in God's order for this age, are for one purpose only: as parables, as figures, as signposts, pointing to the hidden sufficiency: types pointing to prototypes. It is the dialectical relationship: if there are weaknesses, there is strength: if shortages, supply: if failures, success. Thus we read that Adam was "the figure of him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14)—the first Adam, the failure, pointed to the necessity in God's purpose of per-

fection, of a last Adam, the fulfilment, and to the certainty that that Perfect One was already there in the invisible, ready to be revealed in due time.

In this same way all the earthly appearances of things are types and shadows; for in God, the Perfect One, the Creator, who could create nothing but perfection, it is obvious that all which falls short of perfection in our world is not in its original state, but has fallen from it, from sufficiency to lack, from health to disease, from order to disorder, and has to be restored. The ceremonial worship of the tabernacle is an example of this shadow-substance relationship; the pattern was already there in the invisible, given to Moses on the Mount, from which he made the earthly copy; the writer to the Hebrews called it the shadow of which the Christ-to-come was the substance. Jesus on



...God permits needs in our lives that He may *now* supply them in Christ. That is the point. Needs, shortages, problems are summonses to *faith*. That is why they are God's will. They are His necessary way of compelling us flesh-bound humans to recognize our earthly limitations, to be dissatisfied with them, to seek the way to transcend them, and to become agents of redemptive faith.

.....

earth saw all things in this light.  
Every earthly object was to Him  
the figure of its heavenly reality.  
Bread—the living bread:  
water...the living water:  
birth...the new birth: light...the  
light of the world: life...everlasting  
life. Human events and activities  
were all symbols to Him of eternal  
events and realities, and He used  
them as parables: the sower, the  
husbandman, the prodigal, the  
pearl, the mustard seed, sheep,  
coins, fish....

### Summonses to Faith

What practical application has this for our daily lives? An important one. Every human situation of need with which we are faced is a voice from God saying to us: "That points to My fulness: that imperfection to My perfection: that need to My supply: that perplexity to My solution." The whole of life in its fallen state is a great finger-post pointing the way from the imperfect human to the perfect divine. But that would not be of much help if we were left with pointing signposts and an impassable gulf, only to be bridged in a future life.

No. Jesus incarnate, crucified, resurrected and ascended has altered that. Grace has already bridged the gulf: from heaven to earth and back from earth to heaven. The result is that God permits needs in our lives *that* He may *now* supply them in Christ. That is the point. Needs, shortages, problems are summonses to *faith*. That is why they are God's will. They are His necessary way of compelling us flesh-bound humans to recognize our earthly limitations, to be dissatisfied with them, to seek the way to transcend them, and to become agents of redemptive faith. There He stands just the other side of the barrier, beckoning to us and saying, "I am the answer, I am the supply. I have come to you in Christ. Receive Me in this situation." For need is a shadow. And what casts the shadow? The light. No light, no shadow. The light of God's fulness shines on this world. The oppositions of Satan, to which we add the sin of unbelief, have interposed themselves and cast the shadows of the lacks of this life. Christ has come to destroy that

intervening barrier. Then to those who believe Him, it is no longer a barrier but a bluff—a challenge to faith.

That may or may not mean that the actual material situation is changed. Very often it is. But it means that we look at all situations with God's eyes. We see that in reality they are *His* situations, into which He has deliberately put us that He might be glorified in them. Therefore before we call, He is already answering, because He Himself has instigated this actual situation with His answer all prepared. Our calling is His stirring of us to feel the need and recognize that here is a situation in which God is going to do something. Our action then is to call on Him, in other words, to take the attitude of faith. Faith means that we turn our attention from the need to the Supplier who is already supplying that need, and who allowed the need because He intends to supply it to His glory. Therefore Our calling on Him is our seeing Him and praising Him and confessing Him before men, and awaiting the manifestation of the supply.

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Our trials are *God's* trials, *given* us for a purpose, exactly suited to us. Our lacks are *God's* lacks, our perplexities are *God's* perplexities. Before the trials, God has already prepared the deliverance and sends us the trials that He may manifest Himself through them.

Paul's thorn in the flesh is a perfect illustration of this. Though a "messenger of Satan," *God* sent it, for it was "given" him for a deliberate purpose—to keep him from the subtle inroads of self-esteem, leading to self-reliance. The trial was deep and prolonged (probably increasing blindness). At first he thought that the One who had done physical miracles in other bodies through him would do the same in him. But no. After three separate appeals, we may suppose with intervals between each, *God's* word came clear to him. He was to prove the power of *God* in his weakness, not *from* it; not by deliverance from it, but by constant ability to transcend it. The Supplier had met his need—this time as abounding spiritual supply overflowing an ever-present physical need. A seeking faith became a praising faith, and reaching out over all the unending trials and sufferings of his pioneer life, he gathered them up in one embrace of praise and thanks for all of them (2 Cor. 12:10), and especially for the blessedness of that basic lesson for all time: "when I am weak, then am I strong."

And, far more important, when his own lesson had been well-learned, his testimony has transmitted the secret, even more clearly than Job himself, to millions of succeeding generations. Our trials are *God's* trials, *given* us for a purpose, exactly suited to us. Our lacks are *God's* lacks, our perplexities are *God's* perplexities. Before the trials, God has already prepared the deliverance and sends us the trials that He may manifest Himself through them. The trial is to stimulate faith, and faith is seeing Him who is invisible. As we do this, in praise and expectation, He gives the answer. It may or may not be the kind of deliverance we anticipate. But it *will* be what we can recognize and receive with joy as *His* answer, and to which we can testify. The need will have been wholly met by *His* supply in *His* way, and, as a pebble thrown into a pond, the widening circles of the testimony will do their redemptive work far beyond our knowledge.

### **Understanding the Negative**

We give negatives positive names, as does the Bible, because they are real entities; but at the

same time, as we have already said, by doing so we tend to obscure their real condition as negatives. Basically, evil is merely not-good: bitter is not-sweet: hate is not-love: man is not-God; and so on. And when we see all negatives in their true character, we see this vital fact—that they are merely the reverse side of their positives. They are not meant to be anything apart from their positives. They have no rightful existence except as minor to major, female to male, no to yes, each by union with its positive giving distinctive birth and form and character to some manifestation of its positive, as do the minor to the major keys in music. Therefore, insofar as they have been infected and inflamed by a contrary spirit and thus removed out of their proper place in the eternal economy of *God*, He who is the Positive, the All in all, must necessarily find means to restore them. This He has done in what the Bible calls "the reconciliation of all things" (Col. 1:20; Rom. 8:19-21). He will not finally permit any portion of His creation to remain "out of temperature": He "will gather together in one all things

in Christ.”

It is not, of course, material things which are to blame or which have gone wrong, except insofar as they share in “the corruption which is in the world through lust.” Things are but the servant of spirit; it is the negative spirit, free, intelligent, deliberate, which has done the damage.

### God’s Restoration

We have already seen how God has effected this reconciliation through His Son, but we need to note not only the fact, but also the way in which He did it, for it is the only principle by which this contrary spirit can be dealt with throughout human history. First, in the natural He accepted vicariously all that comes to human beings in this distorted world, all the trials, privations, weaknesses that flesh is heir to, and all the persecutions right up to the final stroke the negative spirit of evil could deal him—the death on the cross. He was “crucified through weakness.” In the natural he did not resist evil. He went further than that: He positively accepted evil as the predetermined *will* of the Father. He swallowed it in its most virulent forms. But what broke His body and agonized His soul, could not touch His spirit. There neither Satan nor the threats and deeds of cruel men, nor evil in any form, could get any footing. “The prince of this world cometh,

but hath nothing in Me.” In that inner sanctuary dwelt only the living God fulfilling His own reconciling purposes through the yieldedness, faith and obedience of the One who would walk the saving way. He was “put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” That vicarious process by which, as the representative human, He first embraced all that the negative spirit has loaded upon humanity even unto death, but then was raised again by the Positive Spirit as the One whom death could not hold, meant death to that negative spirit in all who join themselves to Him by receptive faith. Through death, He destroyed (or literally, annulled) him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

### The Way of the Cross

Released from the negative spirit, all negative conditions fall back into their rightful place for those in whom Christ lives: the bitter brings out the flavour of the sweet, light shines out of darkness, mortality is swallowed up by life, evil is overcome by good. That is to say, what comes to us in the natural as trial, sorrow, suffering, privation, persecution, and we feel as such in our bodies and souls and know the sharpness of them, in our spirits we see to be, not objectionable invasions of something

contrary and frustrating, but the way in which we “bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” He again is dying in us (His human body) in all kinds of situations, and He is rising victorious in us. His life is manifest to all in our mortal flesh (in our visible enjoyment of the unenjoyable): the integrating victory of the Spirit is seen in us as we “take pleasure” in things which are the opposite to natural pleasure—“infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses” (2 Cor. 12:10); evil is servant to good, hate the seedplot of love.

And inner integration in unpleasant situations has far wider repercussions than the personal. It is the continuation of Christ’s vicarious sufferings and saving resurrection (Col. 1: 24). Christ still dies and rises again for the world through His spiritual Body, as He did in His earthly one. That does not mean that Christ’s unique redemptive work for the world was not completed or could in any least degree be effected through any body except His own, conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, the Jesus of history who was crucified at an exact location, buried in a known tomb, and viewed in His resurrection body by many witnesses. But it does mean that the application of His triumph worldwide through the succeeding centuries, in the gathering out of a people to His

All the great intercessors of the Bible were living sacrifices for the people for whom they interceded; they lived and died vicariously. Not that there is merit or power in the outpoured life of a human intercessor, but it is the Interceding Spirit in him which takes him this death way.

Name, in the building of them up in their most holy faith, is always and only by this one death and resurrection process, the *way* of the Cross, though not that one unique *work* of the Cross. It is constantly the Christ who lives in the believer walking in us the way of vicarious death and resurrection in every one of millions of situations and spheres of service, right along the line from the mother with her family, to the worker in his job, to the missionary on his field. The point so hard to learn and relearn in our Christian immaturity is God's way of the cross: confronted with the necessity of a world that must die to sin and rise to righteousness, the One who need not so die and rise went that way first Himself; and by that vicarious act released death and resurrection power through Himself for a world. "Death worketh in us, but life in you."

This is the way of the intercessor. Jesus "poured out His soul unto death," and so, it says, "made intercession for the transgressors" (Is. 53:12). Because of that act of death-intercession, God poured His resurrection life both into the

Saviour's dead body and through Him into all who receive Him. The fruit of His intercession was the life-giving Spirit sent into the world, saving to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. And every life of fruitful service has this at its roots: the corn of wheat must die, if the world is to feed on its fruit. We say, "That person must change; that situation must alter." God says, "You change first, the other will follow." As one has said, "I don't like you" what's the matter with *me*?" The first death in a human situation in which I am involved is in me, in my natural reactions of resentment, condemnation, unbelief. Only when I am consciously "through" to resurrection ground, experienced in my heart by peace and praise and love, can divine life through me touch the situation. As this is true in every daily detail of life, in every domestic, business or church trial, so is it true in the mainstream of our life's ministry. All the great intercessors of the Bible were living sacrifices for the people for whom they interceded; they lived and died vicariously. Not that there is merit or power in the outpoured life of a human inter-

cessor, but it is the Interceding Spirit in him which takes him this death way; He does that to involve him so completely and importunately in the pursuit of his intercession that the Spirit can speak and that will be followed, as surely as harvest follows seedtime, by the intercession gained—the wonderful works of God. The patriarchs, Moses, Joshua, David, the disciples, Paul, and countless others through history, were all intercessors who gained their intercessions, serving their own generation in the will of God.

### **Need is the Evidence of Supply**

God makes the evil handmaid to the good, and conditions us for His grace. But he does it, not only by confronting us with the plain facts of the needs and corruption, the miseries and confusion of our fallen estate: He does it also by the chastisements and judgments which "must begin with the house of God."

Examples of these are obvious throughout the Scriptures. Against apostate Israel He sends an agent of the devil, yet calls him "Nebuchadnezzar, My servant."



Israel is beguiled into the negative kingdom, “the power of darkness,” and worships idols (not-gods) and does evil (not-good) works; she must receive the just recompense of her false (not-true) way of life in misery (not-happiness), slavery (not-freedom), and corruption (not-purity), and learn her hard lesson. At other times the prophets speak of God sending on them His hornets, His army of destroyers (the locusts, caterpillars, etc.), His drought, the Assyrians, rod of His anger. But the prophets always also make clear that God sends them for redemptive, not punitive reasons. By these means Israel will learn, or some of them anyhow, to discern between the false and the true, and the devil’s agents will be God’s agents in directing the wanderer home with the prodigal’s cry: “How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger.” Often we try to escape the issue by regarding chastisement and judgment as a “permissive will” of God, as if God was passively allowing the devil to have some of his way, or as if the consequences of disobedience were the outworking of an impersonal law. But the Bible never speaks of it like that. It speaks directly of God saying and doing things which the natural mind roundly condemns as impossible harshness and cruelty in a God who is love, and even the spiritual mind, which has not understanding on this point, will seek to

excuse or sidestep. No. It is God, the God of mercy, who hardens the heart of the persistent sinner, who dulls the ear and blinds the eye of the disobedient. The same God who says yes to righteousness must say no to sin. It is God’s inevitable dealings with nature in reverse. It is God’s grace at work in reverse.

But it is God’s grace. That is the important point. God, being positive love, positive life, positive goodness, can work in no other way than according to His own nature, in determined and unceasing works of grace. He must restore rebel negatives to their predestined estate of submission to their positives: He must overcome evil by good, clothe the corruptible with incorruption, and swallow up mortality in life. This He did, in His “determinate counsel and foreknowledge,” by the One who died to that negative spirit in His death for all who receive Him; replaced it by His own positive Spirit in His resurrection; and in His ascension awaits the day when the last negative (death: not-life) will be put under His feet.

This means, then, that all the consequences of our wrong ways, which are His deliberate judgments on us, are determined acts of pure grace. They are to open our eyes, teach us our lesson of the goodness of God leading us to repentance, and then to give us the glorious revelation of a life which has already swallowed up

death, a goodness which has overcome evil, a sweetness which has dissolved bitterness—in our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, judgments are pointers to grace, signposts: and not to a grace which has to be sought somewhere or manufactured; but which was there long before the judgments, and the judgments are only the necessary way of getting the grace through to us, conditioning us to accept it.

Long before there was a condition of need God had completed His work of perfect creation. The fall and its consequences have been an apparently tragic interlude, but that was foreseen and provided for in “the Lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world.” Therefore; as we have already said, God has always had His fulness in readiness to replace our emptiness, His perfection our imperfections, His light our darkness, His life our death. He has always intended, planned and provided total supply for every human need, and the supply has always been there. It is not that our need initiates the demand for its supply and must somehow call the attention of the Father to it and persuade Him to supply. No indeed. HE initiated the need so that we might find all our supply already there in His and our Christ! The need is the proof that the supply is there, and is merely

God's means of conditioning us to be agents of faith. It is God who confronts us with every kind of problem, inability, difficulty, that, in our weakness, He may flash the spark of faith into our hearts, His faith, that His supply for exactly that situation was there long before. "Eat, o friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, o beloved."

That is the meaning of parable, and all life is a parable, if we understand it; for a parable is an earthly representation of a heavenly fact. But what fact? It is the story of some human need picturing a spiritual need—the man who fell among thieves, the lost sheep, the prodigal son. But is that all? No, the story always points on to the supply of that need, the provision of grace, of the kingdom of heaven. Parables underline human need as pointers to the One who from eternity has been Supplier of all need. Parables, therefore, are signposts, not to the need which is obvious, but to the One who has brought the need to our attention because He intends to supply it. In this sense, the whole of our human existence is one continuous parable. It is one vast imperfection pointing to the invisible perfection already ours in Christ; one vast confusion pointing to the eternal order in Him. It stirs in all who have eyes to see the longing for that final perfection at His coming, but at the same time it is God's summons to us to receive by faith in the here and now the

supplies of so many needs.

To repeat once more. Can we catch a glimpse of this truth and its effects on our whole outlook? All evil, sin, and their consequences are negatives which have got out of place and made their unlawful appearance in God's universe. The Bible gives them positive names because they are positive facts—the kingdom or power of darkness. But their basic reality is not positive; they are the negatives of their true positives which they have blatantly tried to dethrone and called themselves the positives: thus the creature is in reality the not-Creator, rebellion not-obedience, unbelief not-faith, pain not-pleasure, and so on. God, the eternal positive, the eternal yes, is in process of restoring all to their proper place, the negatives in rightful submission to and union with their positives, their interaction being the basis of the manifestation of the glory of God.

To bring about His eternal purpose, God gives us to taste and know the bitter fruits of our false negatives by His judgments on all that is the not-good, not-sweet, not-loving, not-selfgiving, not-humble, in our lives, and in the life of the church and the world; but He gives this not for judgment, but to shut us up to His grace, to the salvation and consequent restoration planned in Christ before the false kingdom of negation was in existence. It was fulfilled by Him when He gathered the great negation of

humanity, its not-rightness, into Himself on the cross and took it into His death, and when He arose to be the first-born of the new creation, where the positive and negative are joined in eternal fruitfulness by the union of Christ and the redeemed sinner. This fulfillment is in process of realization by the Spirit working in the world of men, and joining the negatives to their one Positive. Wherever, therefore, the Spirit confronts us with the tragedy and destitution of the not-righteous (the sinners), having first confronted us with our own need, He does it with the express purpose of saying to us with as loud a voice as possible: "I am come to redeem these falsely opposing negatives and rejoin them to their Positive: the not-righteous (the sinner) to be clothed with righteousness: the not-full (the empty) to be filled. I point out the false negatives to you, just so that you should immediately combine with your outlook which sees the negative, the not-full, not-happy, not-righteous, not-true side of things, the positive outlook of faith which sees ME present to fulfil all need; and the fact that I have shown you the need is my assurance to you that I have come with the supply already in My hands. See Me, believe Me, co-operate with Me, and I will work this work of salvation through the faith I put into you, and your labours of love that go with it."

—*The Deep Things of God*

# God: All in All

by Norman Grubb

God was from the beginning of time revealed as Spirit, confirmed by Jesus who said outright, “God is Spirit,” and Spirit is the Person within, as our human spirits are within our bodies.

So He as the author of the universe is the inner life of it. He “fills heaven and earth,” therefore, is within them. He is to be finally revealed as what He really is—All in all, which leaves nothing but Himself. “The beyond in the midst,” the Transcendent in the Immanent. And as the One Person in the universe, He can only manifest Himself as a Person by persons. So Jesus lived His human life, as the archetypal man, by the Father dwelling in Him (John 14:10), which was the startling surprise to His disciples who, in their separated human outlook, expected an external revelation, when they asked Him to show them the Father. And He went on to say that this was why He had come as redeemer, so that God the Spirit who was in Him would be God the Spirit in an inner unity with all who receive Him. And that was Pentecost; not the outward manifestations which were but a means; but the end—an inner fixed consciousness of their union with Him—He in them—they in Him.

So here, as these writers point out, is the final answer to the human problem. If all resources for all things on all levels are found within, what final resources are there for the most

inward of all—the human self? What solution for the insurmountable self-centredness of the human spirit which is the cause of all the human chaos? And here is the answer. Christ within. The Holy Spirit within. God dwelling in us: then in that realized union through free choice, in Christ’s cross and resurrection, the human spirit of self-centredness is united to the divine Spirit of self-giving. “Dead to

If all resources for all things on all levels are found within, what final resources are there for the most inward of all—the human self? What solution for the insurmountable self-centredness of the human spirit which is the cause of all the human chaos? And here is the answer. Christ within.

sin and alive unto God,” man becomes a human expression of God who is love: a perfectly normal man in his perfectly normal environment with his normal human reactions and human weaknesses, yet God’s strength so made perfect in weakness that it is not we living, but He by us; just as a branch is a normal expression of the life of the tree of which it is a member.

It is John who puts into one short

phrase the character of this One Person in the Universe—God is love; and love means existing to meet the need of others, with total indifference to what happens to yourself. Love belongs to need, just as Jesus who was Love in the flesh, likened Himself to bread, which ceases to live its own life in a cornfield and finds its true end in being the means by which others live. All forms of creation demonstrate this to be so, and that they are involuntary manifestations of Him whose forms they are, because everything finds its true end in being something for others: the tree becomes a table for me, the metals in the earth become my conveniences for living. But God as the Person can only be a person through persons, so that in this living union in Christ, as He is limitless love, so we are love in endless variety of expression, for “as He is, so are we in this world.”

But to be a person with limitless potential means conscious freedom. To be a person is to be conscious of endless variety and to be capable of making choices from among the variety. Freedom is not being anything, but is freedom to make choices. All life is making choices, but the significance is that choices make destiny. I become what I choose. The law of choice, which is the same as saying the law of faith, is that what I take takes me. I take food. What I eat takes me! I choose a profession. I choose to become a carpenter, for instance. I

apply myself and carpentry takes me over. Carpentry becomes my second nature, and I express my freedom in practising my carpentry. This is even said of Almighty God. How can the Scriptures say He is Almighty and then say there is something He cannot do? Because they do say so. Paul says, “God that cannot lie.” It is because God is the First Self, and a conscious self makes choices, and there is one fundamental choice a self makes. Should he be a self-lover or a self-giver? A liar is a self-lover, and God “cannot” be that. He is fixed by His choice. He can only be love—the Other-lover, the Self-giver.

But we humans have been caught up in the opposite choice. Through the Fall, we became enslaved to the one who had become by choice the opposite to our God of love, Satan, the devil, once called Lucifer, who became fixed by his choice as the god (the originator) of self-centredness. According to the Bible, he, as the spirit of error, entered humanity (Eph. 2:2; 1 John 4:4 and 6), and took us captive, so that it is natural to us to be self-seekers and self-lovers. And how can we be rescued?

We have become stolen property, manifesting the character of the wrong god, and already reaping some of its poisoned fruits leading on to an eternal destiny of “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.”

But love belongs to need, and God is love, and we are in need. Indeed, the character of love is that need has a claim on love. That is why Paul calls himself a debtor to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:14), because need is always the creditor which can

claim payment from love the debtor. And that is why we are told to love our enemies, because if I deliberately hurt you as your enemy, I hurt you outwardly, but I am hurt inwardly by my wicked intent. It is not the one hurt who is in need but the hurter: and love belongs to need. So God is hurt by our rejections of Him, not because we hurt Him but because we are hurting and damning ourselves. So, being love, He gives Himself to meet our need in the person of His Son, “God

When Christ died, this was the human race on that cross, for He was our representative. So in that identification He was in God’s sight “made sin.” Sin is character of the sin-spirit which produces the sins, and the human race has this spirit within it. Then in His death, it is said “He died unto sin,” for death separates body from spirit, and this separated all who believe from that false god.

in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself and not imputing their trespasses unto them.” What happens to Him is not the point. Love is unconditional, and if God must die at the hands of His enemies to save His enemies, then He will die.

So Jesus lays down His life on the cross, none taking it from Him except by His own choice, and God raises Him from the dead. The whole of Scripture interprets this for us as the judicial removal of the inevitable separation

of the human race from God for eternity, which is the consequence of us being law-breakers (sinners), guilty, cursed, condemned. This was completed by Him Himself voluntarily taking the place of separation from God on the cross in our place, “bearing our sins in His own body on the tree”; His out-poured blood was the evidence of the completed sacrifice. There would be no efficacy in the death of one man for another. That is why the root of our faith, John says, lies in the fact of the incarnation, “God manifest in the flesh”; so that this was God in human form, the source and upholder of the human race, being “the propitiation for our sins” in His death. The resurrection was the evidence that the atonement was so complete that all consciousness of sin and separation had disappeared for ever, and we who believe are “justified” (Rom. 4:25), legally pronounced as like the risen Christ Himself with “no stain on our character.” Forgiveness would not be enough, because though forgiven we remember what we did. Justification means we are as if the thing never happened.

Yet the blood of Christ shed for our sins would not be enough, if Christ crucified and risen was not the means of a total human revolution, the change of gods in the centre of our personality—from occupation by the spirit of error to occupation by the Spirit of truth (1 John 4:6). To have the consequences of a permanent condition of being law-breakers, a life in hell, removed by “the precious blood of Christ,” would not be enough if we humans remained possessed and continually motivated by this spirit of error. Only if there is a change of inner



indwelling God, and thus change of motivation, can there be this full deliverance. And this Paul revealed to us as having been revealed to him, particularly in his Romans and Galatians letters. When Christ died, this was the human race on that cross, for He was our representative. So in that identification He was in God's sight "made sin." Sin is the character of the sin-spirit which produces the sins, and the human race has this spirit within it. Then in His death, it is said "He died unto sin," for death separates body from spirit, and this separated all who believe from that false god. His burial (still representing all of us "buried with Him") indicated that there was a dead body in the tomb with no spirit. The resurrection (still we risen with Him) was the entry and union of the Spirit of God with the dead body which represented the human race. And here was the change of gods, by

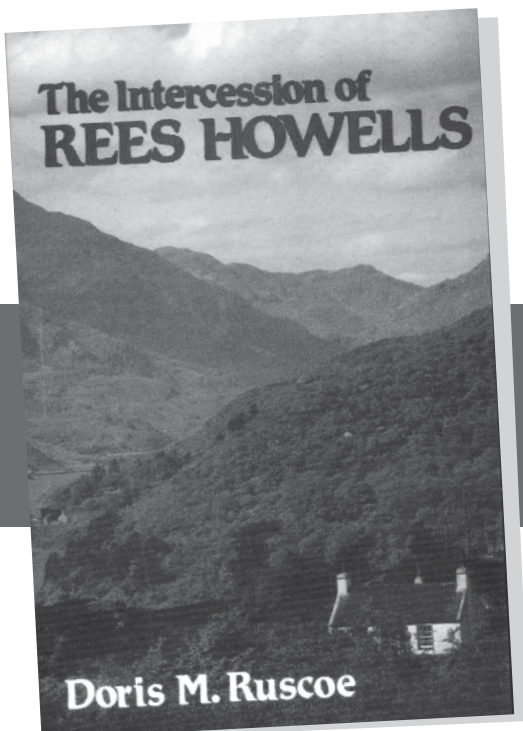
the grace of God, completed for all of us who exercise our free capacity of choice in receiving, recognizing and affirming our union with Him.

Now our choice changes, when through repentance (change of mind) we are ready to discard our old faith in our self-life, recognize our wrongdoings, and transfer our choice of faith to salvation through Christ. What we take, takes us. We take Jesus, He takes us; and the consequence is God's love shed abroad in our hearts. We begin, compulsively, not of duty but by a new dynamic, the tremendous revolution of a human being, the new birth, in which for the first time in our human history we begin to love somebody else more than ourselves. We start by loving Him who died for us. But when we love Him, we also begin to love people, for He is identified with people. But it is not our love. By no means so,

because human love can only be self-love. It is God's own love shed abroad in our hearts by His Spirit (Rom. 5:5). We have begun to *be*, not to *have* the eternal love. We have come home, the prodigal to the Father. Only it is an inner spiritual home-coming of which the parable is an outer symbol. Our home-coming is a union of spirit with Spirit. We have become branches of the Vine, one entity, one person as Head and body make a person; and as a branch is the spontaneous expression of the tree-life, we are the tree in one of its local forms.

This is what the creation of man in the image of God meant—that we should be little Christs, Jesus in human form. This is why God was manifest in the flesh in Jesus—that the meaning of manhood might be completely seen in Him and then become possible through His atoning work.

—*Once Caught, No Escape*



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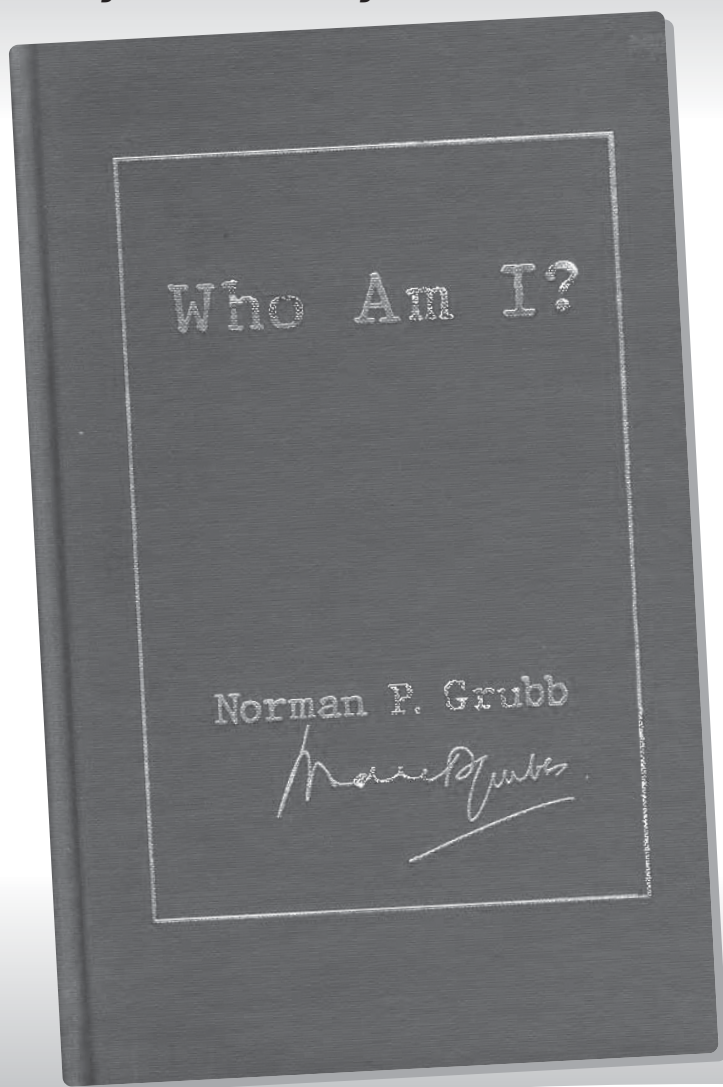
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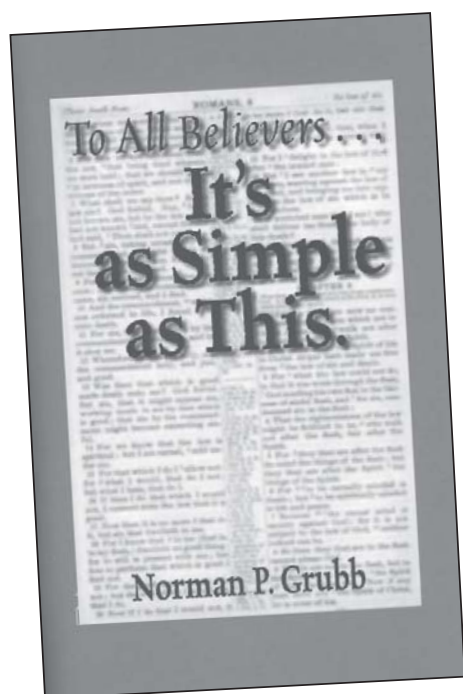
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***“This is what the Lord says: Do not be afraid of what you have heard”*** —Isaiah 37:6

Christ said, “Say unto this mountain.” Say not *pray*. The word is most significant. The thought is not that prayer should be omitted—for the Word counseled us to pray. *Prayer* is the attitude of one who has not and needs. *Saying* the word of faith is the attitude of one who has and dispenses what he has. Such is the “throne life” as we commonly speak of it. A throne is occupied by a king. A king is a possessor and dispenser of gifts.

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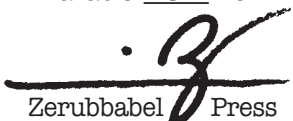
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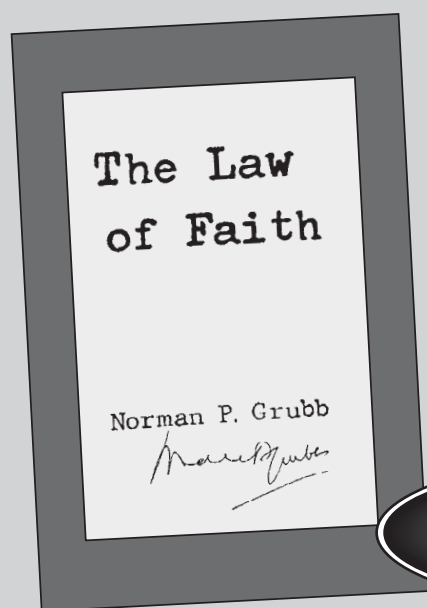
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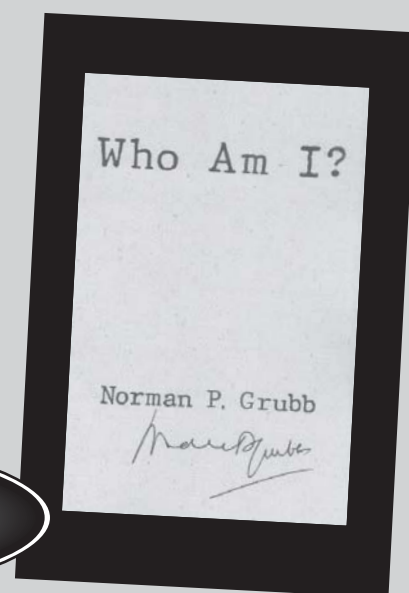
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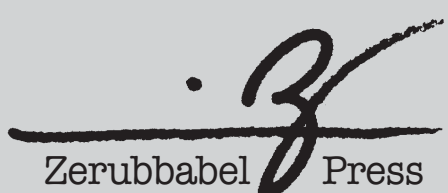
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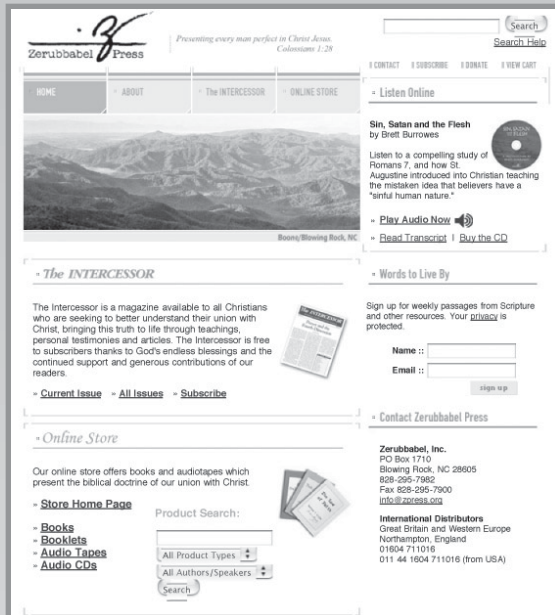
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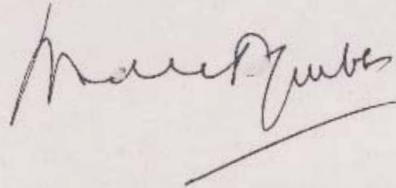
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