

The INTERCESSOR

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

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How Acquire Faith?

By Norman Grubb

Many Christians, having accepted and believed the truth of the Scriptures, hit a brick wall in their personal experience. Their continual heart cry is "How can I know the reality of Christ in my life?" In the following excerpt from God Unlimited, Norman answers this question, laying out how to make faith a reality in our daily lives.

Now comes the question of experiencing what we may admit to be the truth. How many times I meet this heart cry, "But how make this real to myself? I know it in theory, I believe it mentally, but...." We have to get right down to the fundamental human issue. How do we experience what is beyond experience? How do we know what is beyond knowledge? How do we believe the impossible, unbelievable, absurd? Let us make no mistake about it. Here is where the battle is joined. God's word proclaims an unbridgeable breach in human existence.

Man denies this. Man claims that every apparent breach can be bridged on a human level. That claim has been the occupation of philosophy from its beginnings with the Greeks, and the occupation of liberal theology, and the aim of ethics, and the objective of every religion except Christianity, and of a lot of Christianity also. The reason is plain. Admit the breach, and you destroy the autonomy of the self. But self-sufficiency, and a philosophy which will sustain it, is the be-

all and end-all of a self-orientated humanity. Therefore sin must be explained away as ignorance or instinct, man's innate goodness must be postulated, and man's way to God smoothed through a supposed faith in our innate rootage in Him, or in His supposed character of indiscriminating love; or in the acceptability of our repentances, contrition, religious observances and so forth.

Faith means something far more than repeating a creed. It means something that has penetrated us on the inside. It is not just truth in general. It is my truth.

Anything that preserves the integrity of the self and provides some mediation with the Eternal of which human reason and dignity can approve.

From the Other Side

But sin, creating an unbridgeable gulf between ourselves and God! What is that? Human reason can neither stomach nor explain that. And a movement over from the Other Side, of the Eternal into time, of the Invisible and Unknowable into a human body, of the Absolute into a relative existence, of the Creator among the

created! Such is the outside limit of absurdity! So we come right up against it. Is faith easy? Yes, when you have got accustomed to it—at least easier. No, when the first trembling steps are being taken. Faith means something far more than repeating a creed. It means something that has penetrated us on the inside. It is not just truth in general. It is *my* truth. Not just the gospel, but *my* gospel. In other words something has stirred within which has been dawning light to us, not of ourselves. It has come from the Other Side.

The Bible word is conviction—of the

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***The* INTERCESSOR**

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Spirit. Some word from God has reached us which we just *know* to be true. In my own case, it was when, as a lad of eighteen, my football ambitions were shattered by an accident, and in hospital just one thought crossed my mind. Is there nothing but selfishness in the world? For I am totally selfish: my father, my mother, my home, the world is for me! I could not then have said that was the Spirit of God. But I knew it was truth. I would not even have recognized it as a flash from the Other Side. But it was. It was the *preparatio evangelica* for me. It conditioned me to recognize myself, not just as one that thought and did things of which I was ashamed, but as a sinner be-

Action, therefore, on every level is conquered uncertainty. You make up your mind that there is every possible likelihood that a thing is what it appears to be and will react as you expect it to, and then you act—by faith.

fore the Ultimate, before God.

That again was revelation: the sudden recognition that God is holy, I unholy, and therefore eternally unfit to dwell with Him. And finally the flash of thought into my mind that Jesus Christ, God's Son, really did shed His blood for me, and therefore there was no wrath, but acceptance for me. Could I prove one of those things? Not one. Could I be sure that it was God who said them to me, introduced them into my thinking? No. Teaching had some-thing to do with it. I had been taught through the years the Bible and the gospel. But external teaching does not save. It may be fuel for the

lamp of the Spirit, that is all. How does God speak then, and how do we believe? I don't know, because it all comes from the Other Side.

That precisely is faith. The nearest we can say is that through the human faculties of mind and heart there come to all (I believe) hidden communications of the Spirit, disturbances of the status quo, of our rationalizations, our funk holes in which we try to hide our sinfulness from ourselves and from Him, our false pursuit of satisfaction in things of time and sense, our build-up of a human ethic, religion, philosophy or idealism which crumbles when matched with the actual realities of our self-centred lives, or our pretended and endeavoured forms of communion with God. As we respond to these pricks, which was the name given to the goadings of the Spirit in the apostle Paul, further revelations of inner truth come to us, revelations to us if to no one else, revelations which have their ultimate source and guarantee in the Scriptures: "if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them."

But the moment comes when we settle it, or rather God settles it in us. We can prove nothing. The wise of this world may be able to shoot holes in our logic or reasons. We readily grant that the One in whom we now have put our faith is unknowable to the world, invisible, and we can never say we know or see Him except by faith. Historic facts are available, but again we admit that history is unprovable. We have only the word of the historians or eyewitnesses. We have no ultimate grounds upon which to base our belief in the reliability and infallibility of the Bible; indeed plenty can be brought against it.

We further admit that certain facts concerning the life and death of Christ are altogether beyond human probabilities—

His deity, His incarnation, His physical resurrection, His ascension. Pile question mark upon question mark, we admit all. But faith has nothing to do with these. Faith is itself from the Other Side, and is as inexplicable and absurd as that in which it believes. Faith has nothing to say for itself beyond the bare statement that from certain inward convictions which are convictions to it, it stakes its all on God as truth in His revelation through the Bible and supremely the Christ of the Bible.

For myself I have stated the two main convictions which constrained me forty-seven years ago to gamble my life on God: first, what was the obvious, that I was a 100 per cent self-centred person; and second, that God was the wholly opposite, 100 per cent self-giving, so that He actually gave Himself in the Person of His Son to change me into His likeness. That final fact convinced me. I said I could follow to eternity a God who is forever the Servant of His own creation, even to the point of giving His own life for His enemies; and I could wish for nothing higher than that such a Person could and should live that same quality of life through self-ish me. And so say I today.

Doubt—The Lifeblood of Faith

Faith is built on doubt. Doubt is its lifeblood. Don't let us be mistaken about that. Faith is doubt absorbed, doubt conquered. Unbelief (unfaith) is doubt accepted. Unbelief is an act of will as much as faith. Doubt is not an act of will, but is the only attitude we humans can have towards anything external to us until we decide whether to accept it or reject it. The uncertainty, the doubt, is the very element which gives stimulus and passion to the decision. Faith then is built on doubt. As the philosopher Immanuel Kant says in

his *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Nothing which is intuited in space is a thing-in-itself. . . . What we call outward objects are nothing else but mere representations of our sensibility, whose real correlated thing-in-itself is not known by means of these representations, nor ever can be. . . . The things which we intuit are not in themselves the same as our representation of them in intuition. . . . What may be the nature of objects considered as things-in-themselves and without reference to the receptivity of our sensibility is quite unknown to us."

Every smallest action is conquered doubt. You eat food. How do you know it won't poison you? You sit on a chair. How do you know it won't collapse under you? You go to visit a certain home. How do you know it will be there when you get there? Action, therefore, on every level is conquered uncertainty. You make up your mind that there is every possible likelihood that a thing is what it appears to be and will react as you expect it to, and then you act—by faith. The more uncertainty there is, the more passion in your decision of faith, for there has been a bigger doubt to conquer. Should you or should you not marry that person? Should you move over there and accept that new job? Should you invest in that company?

But at least your eyes and ears and perhaps your friends are there to encourage you in your acts of faith. Such actions are usually accepted as normal or sensible. But when you move over to faith in God! There is these days in our so-called Christian countries even a respectable Christian faith. It is the done thing to be a church member. You were probably baptized into the church as an infant. It probably does not cost you more concern to be an adherent of the Christian faith than it

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!

does to choose your clothes, for it really is the same quality of faith in the visible, faith in your church's outward creed.

It Costs Everything

But this is not the saving inward faith of which we are speaking. This faith costs everything, because it means taking seriously what cannot be taken halfheartedly, the challenge of an invisible Person who comes to claim His ownership of you, and offers you no proof beyond what inner convictions He gives you through His word, and even that cannot be proved by outward proofs to be His word. You are called to be a fool of faith, you are called to believe what this time does not carry with it at least a measure of common sense and obvious likelihood, but "entereth into that within the veil whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." If a faith must have some inward passion and conviction in it which will motivate a man to make some crucial earthly decision, how much more conviction and passion must be in a faith which has no earthly sanctions, yet will re-orientate the whole of life.

Now then again we ask the question, What will make meaningful to me these tremendous truths of Christ living His life in me, and I united to Him in place of the old union? The answer, of course, is faith. But that doesn't seem to act. I do believe, and yet it seems to make little difference. Well, there is still no other answer. But it is possible that you are not really believing in God's impossible word. You think you are, but you are really believing in what you think about that word. I told you that it costs everything to believe. "Let us labour therefore...lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Faith crosses an unbridgeable gulf into the in-

visible, unknowable, impossible. It crosses just by believing it has crossed, because He says so, and He is the bridge. To everything on the human side of the gulf it looks as unbridgeable as ever, and that there is no other side! If therefore, without realizing it, you are basing your faith on a single personal reaction to your faith, then you are still on the human side of the gulf. You are really believing in yourself, not in Him who takes you to the Other Side.

A man said to me, "Please help me, I feel a barrier between myself and Christ." I investigated and found that he had faith in an indwelling Christ, and had no barrier of immediate uncleansed sin; so I said,

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"You are wasting your time asking for help from an illusion. There is no barrier except that you have transferred your faith back from Him to yourself-what you feel about your relationship to Him. Get back where you were—to faith without a shred of human assistance." Another said the same to me about power. How could he know the power of God? "Does Jesus Christ dwell in you?" I asked. "Yes," he said "by faith." "Then run away," I said (he was a young man). "What more power can you want or have than He in you? You are wanting to exchange faith for sight. Faith has no other evidence than itself (he that believeth hath the witness in himself). You have turned back to find some missing evidence by believing what

you feel in place of what He is." Yet a third asked, "How can I know He abides in me?" Rather brutally I answered, "I am not the least interested in whether you know or do not know. I am only interested in whether He is in you or not. What you know directs your faith on to what you know, not what He is."

On the human side of the gulf we humans want all our human proofs of feelings, evidences, results and so forth. On the other side of the gulf, and the bridge over the gulf, is the One who is forever unknowable and invisible to the human; and faith has staked all on Him, indeed the faith itself is really only He in us believing in Himself—there's nothing human left to it. If I hold a book in my hand and say, "This is a book," I am only directing your and my own attention to the fact of the book. That is faith in the fact that the book is a book. If I say to you, "I believe this is a book," I am diverting your and my attention from the fact of the book being a book to my views and beliefs about the book. I have transferred your potential faith from the book to myself and my opinions. That is what we are continually doing, and is the cause of much weakness and wavering in faith.

A Fixed Faith

I think that part of our spiritual education at the hands of God has necessarily to be dry times, times when He appears to have withdrawn His presence, times when the Bible ceases to speak to us, prayer is dull, our heart seems cold, fruit seems to be nil; and such times are most healthy for us till we have thoroughly learned this one lesson—the difference between faith which has gone onto the Other Side because it has merely been His own believing in Himself in us, and

we have nothing more to do with it than just to relax in the fact that He is believing in Himself in us; the difference between such a faith of God and *our* faith which is composed of how I feel about Him, how I know or don't know Him, how I see or don't see Him at work, and so on. When we have learned the difference, we walk as naturally and composedly in dark as in light, in dry as in fruitful times, because it is nothing to do with us; the faith, being God's faith, is impervious to the storms that blow in the visible world. To a large extent, the variations disappear between dry and fresh, dull and bright, hot and cold, fruitful and fruitless, shewing that they were largely psychological and illusory to a faith that is fixed.

So we come down to this. Certain facts are presented to us through the revelation of God's word. The birth of faith is the inward conviction that these are the truth for me. Therefore I receive and believe them, and in doing so transcend all natural doubts either about the truth of them or their efficacy in my own life. I transcend the doubts by replacing them by deliberate faith; actually their opposition is what gives sinews to my faith. The subtlest form of doubt will be psychological, the questioning in my own mind whether these things are really so, because I don't feel or see their effect on me, because they still appear unreal to me, and so on. But I learn by these very pressures that what has appeared at first to be my faith in these facts was in reality a faith imparted to me, God's faith, without which I should never have been able to perceive or receive these facts as facts; therefore I relax in the midst of such doubts and questionings, not trying to believe, but affirming that it has been taken out of my hands. God has done the be-

lieving in me; then leave Him to it, for the facts are that He Himself now lives His own life in me.

One Requirement

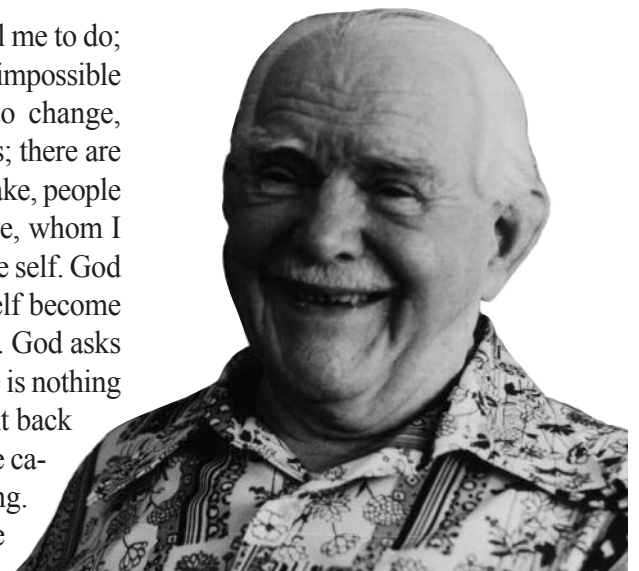
But supposing I say that I am not sure whether I am willing to face the implications of Christ living in me. There are things in my life I would not be willing

Being intelligent and free, there is only one requirement—that we honestly admit ourselves to be what we are—if unwilling, say so; then, having been honest as far as we know how, it is “over to Him,” we simply dare to affirm that He is what He is in us by grace, or becomes so at this moment, and dare to believe that He will change what needs changing. It is nothing to do with what we see or feel about it; faith is not in our reactions, but in Him and His word as facts.

for Him to take from me or tell me to do; there are things I would find it impossible to change, or do not want to change, habits, or attitudes or practices; there are confessions I might have to make, people I might have to forgive or love, whom I do not love. Self cannot change self. God is not asking that unwilling self become willing self, because it cannot. God asks nothing from us, because there is nothing we can give or do. We go right back to our foundations; humans are capable of receiving, not doing. Being intelligent and free, there

is only one requirement—that we just honestly admit ourselves to be what we are: if unwilling, say so; if fearful that things might be required of us which we couldn't do, say so; if we have habits we can't break, or relationships or attitudes we don't know how we could change or even want to, say so; then having been honest as far as we know how, it is “over to Him,” we simply dare to affirm that He is what He is in us by grace, or becomes so at this moment, and dare to believe that He will change what needs changing. It is nothing to do with what we see or feel about it; faith is not in our reactions, but in Him and His word as facts.

In doing that, in affirming a God-implemented faith in this tremendous fact of Christ's full redemptive work in us, replacing the spirit of self-love in us by His Spirit of self-giving, implicit in such a faith is the recognition that He is going to live another quality of life in us, and that therefore He will make any necessary changes in us, even though humanly we are not even willing. He will impart His willingness to us, which will not only overcome our unwillingness, but actually change us into willing His will with Him,



according to Paul's statement that "it is God which worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure"; and note that it is His good pleasure, and if He enjoys what He does in us, we shall enjoy it too.

I know no better account of the reality of the struggle of a self confronted with the offer of God to live in that life, wanting it yet not wanting it, facing its implications pragmatically point by point, than the chapter in the life of *Rees Howells, Intercessor* how he received the Holy Ghost; how ultimately he had to come to the crisis point, and cried out he was not willing, but the Voice came back to him, Are you willing to be made willing? And that ended the week-long conflict.

An Inner Witness

But again we ask, because it is often asked, Does the committal of faith mean that we have an inner witness to our believing? There are those indeed who urge people to "hold on," "wait," "pray through" until they do, and say that they cannot be truly sure that they have received what they have asked for, until they have that witness. It is not for us to decry any approach of a seeking soul to God, and certainly not an approach which has brought deliverance and the certainty of the Holy Spirit to thousands. God is so much bigger than our puny understanding, and meets us on the level of our heart's desire. Let each pursue and advocate the way God has made real to us.

There is a witness of the Spirit, the Bible is plain on that. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" was a key text in the early Methodist revivals, and is in the foreground of the teaching of most "Holiness" bodies, and the Pentecostals, and the Salvation Army. But I cannot say that

it is given the place of importance in the Scriptures. Everything [in the Scriptures] is the one word—faith. Implicit in faith is that it brings its own witness; but that is secondary, and remarked on incidentally. The obvious danger of regarding the witness as the necessary evidence of faith is that it brings us back once again to gauging faith by feelings. To make the witness the sign of faith is that same retrogression from simply seeing Him who is invisible by the nakedness of faith, which truly honours Him and His unchanging word, to needing some boost to faith, which is re-

There is a witness of the Spirit, the Bible is plain on that. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" . . . The Scriptures do not speak of the witness as a sign, but merely as the inevitable outcome of living faith. When we believe, we have the witness, because faith is its own witness.

ally believing in what we feel of Him, and not unconditionally in Him.

The Scriptures do not speak of the witness as a sign, but merely as the inevitable outcome of living faith. When we believe, we have the witness, because faith is its own witness. Therefore the witness is not experienced by seeking it, but by occupation in believing, and believing is just constantly recognizing Christ within—by faith. And if we do not "feel" a witness? Well, keep on believing, even if we die without a witness. It is the old, old snare. Where can I find joy?

Where peace? Where power? By seeking *them*, which really means seeking *my* feelings of joy, peace, power? No. By seeing *Him*—by faith. HE is the joy, peace, power, all. He *is* that whether we feel it or no. Keep occupied in affirming Him by faith, even though I feel as heavy as lead or as weak as water, or as disturbed as a windstorm. Keep believing Him *in* these conditions. Whether and when they change is His business.

If we have Him, we have all. We shall and do experience Him as all these; but I am almost afraid to say that, because we then turn back again and say, "Well, where are they? I don't feel them." And we are back again on the self-level. It is safer to say that I have only Him as my all. How He manifests Himself is entirely His business, and His way is perfect. If I never have a witness of Him (and I have known saints of God who have lived and died practically with no inner witness), we still have Him; and maybe I shall find one day that the *trial* of my faith (not my faith, but its trial—having to walk with God in the dark maybe) has been, as Peter said, more precious than gold that perisheth, and will be found peculiarly "unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." ■

—*God Unlimited*

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 was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubabel Book Ministry. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.

Editor's Note

The Bible says that every man is given a “measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). Many people are deluded into thinking that faith is some lofty spiritual thing that they lack and need to try to obtain. But, this verse contradicts that thinking—it says that we are already in possession of it. Norman Grubb expounds on this subject in the second chapter of his book, *The Law of Faith*, titled “Faith is a Natural Faculty.” He explains that faith is a faculty that we all possess and use on a daily basis, in such a natural way that we don’t even realize it. What the real matter comes down to is what or WHO you put your faith in. This issue of *The Intercessor* delves into the subject of faith on many levels. You may even refer to it as the “faith issue!”

To start things off is our lead article, “How Acquire Faith,” taken from Norman Grubb’s *God Unlimited*. He shares with us, as with so many others, the answer to the heart cry of “How can I know the reality of Christ in my life?” Norman speaks to those who know the truth in theory, but are yearning for it to “feel real.” It all comes down to faith, and Norman breaks it down for us.

Now, knowing the truth that “as He is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17),” how does it work out in practical life? It takes a revolution in our outlook—all explained in the article, “Applied to the Daily Life.”

Next, we have an audio review on a classic talk Page Prewitt gave, titled “Faith Creates a Reality.” In the review, Joanna Coatney describes how life-changing this message was for her when she first heard it as a teenager. Page uses

humor and easy to understand analogies to explain our human makeup of body, soul, and spirit. She shares how Satan tricks us into confusing soul with spirit and, ultimately, how the faith that we apply to ourselves creates our reality.

Going hand-in-hand with this is the article “The Real Problem: Satan’s Lie,” also taken from a talk of Page’s. She is incredibly clear and concise about the lie that Satan deceives us with: that we are an “independent” self-operating self. She succinctly explains this sin of unbelief and what to do about it. It is a life-changing message!

Then we move on to “Faith Lessons” (part 1 of 3), where Norman Grubb teaches on the “men who learned it,” biographies from the Bible. These men are all listed in Hebrews chapter 11, which is commonly called the “Faith Hall of Fame.” Starting us off with Abraham, our first “hero of faith,” we see how each of these men had to painfully discover “the lie of independent self that originated as a fruit of the Fall.” We have provided scripture from Hebrews 11 as a reference, as well as an illustrated highlight of the life of Abraham in this issue’s “Faith Illustrations.”

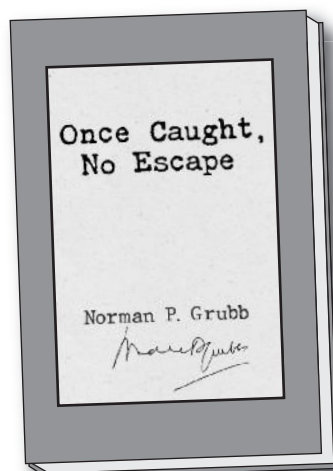
“Bible Bedrock” unveils the “technique of faith,” illustrated in the lives of the Patriarchs of Heb. 11 and still available to us today. Also make sure to complete this issue’s crossword puzzle for more scriptural insights into “Living by Faith.”

Next, we get “The Rest of the Story” as Norman addresses what is referred to as the “second despair,” or sometimes the “second crisis.” Now that we have accepted Christ as saviour, why are we failing as Christians? Our first crisis was when we realized that we *did* not keep God’s law; the second, that we *cannot* keep it! Find out why Norman thinks despair is an excellent sign.

Finally, you will benefit from this issue’s “Q&A,” which contrasts two drastically different forms of prayer—the prayer that asks for God to do something vs. the thanking type of prayer, that has faith and believes that God has already handled it.

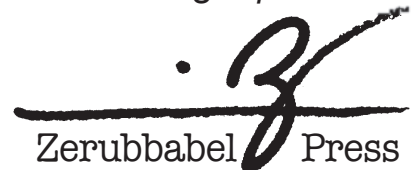
So...faith! We all have a measure given to us. How much is that? Answer: all we need!

Thank you for reading *The Intercessor*.



Norman Grubb's Once Caught, No Escape

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unedited from the original...
with larger print!*


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Applied to the Daily Life

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. – I John 4:17

by Norman Grubb

If, then, I am as He is, how does it work out in practical life? It means a revolution in my outlook. Normally, I interpret all happenings of life in terms of their effect on myself. My physical condition, my home affairs, my business affairs, my social life: How do they affect me? What difference does this situation, this crisis, this tragedy or problem, this success, make to me? If I am a Christian, I may seek a Christian interpretation—this is for the testing of my faith, for the maturing of my walk with God—but still it is in terms of its effect on me. But we have already said that the way things affect God is the opposite: not their effect on Him, but on us. Jesus living our lives. So now with us.

The new outlook is that this has happened to me as some way by which I am to meet the need of others. As Paul says in that Second Letter to the

Corinthians, in which he most fully shows what living other people's lives means: "All things are for your sakes." The fact is, and the change which has taken place in us is, that it is no longer a question of either my own life being for myself, or of God being for my convenience, or my salvation, or sustenance.

So I practice a changed outlook. My normal human reaction will always be: Why has this happened to me? But now I say: This is for others. I move over within from my outlook to God's. I may not in the least see how it is for others. It may be merely that my going through a tough experience with God fits me to share and show the way to others going through the same without God. Paul said he was comforted in all kinds of afflictions, so that he could share the secret of that same comfort with others in like afflictions.

The point is the habit of always relating all things that happen to me to the meeting of some needs in others. It is the difference between frustration and opportunity. If I just see things as happening to me and I don't know why, I am frustrated. I say, "If only things were different, if I hadn't had that difficult past or this physical disability or family problem, I could be of some use," then I am bogged down. But if I say, "God, you have sent this for some purpose, to minister somehow through me to some people in need," then it is opportunity. Life is then always an adventure of faith, never dull, never repetitious, always with some meaning round the corner. Let us get it in its total dimension—life's only meaning is God and others.

It helps us also to get it clear that everything that comes to us comes from God—what we call evil as well as the good. God, of course, is not the cause of evil, but deliberately directs everything for good ends. The Bible uses strong terms of "God sending" the unpleasant as well as the pleasant, and sending is a positive word, not just a passive permission (for many talk of the "permissive will" of God).

Peter in his first speech after Pentecost said that they had taken and crucified Jesus "through the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." No mistaking that. God determined that wicked men should do what they purposed to do and it would really fulfil His purpose—which was to save the people doing it! Such is God!

Joseph said that by his brethren selling him into slavery, God "sent me before you to preserve

life...you thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." Whatever happens, we say, "All right, God, You sent this. It may tear me apart to say so, but I say so." From there the next step is easier, "God, this has some purpose outside of me to meet the need of others. Just show me what."

God's Only Purpose

The important fact to recognize is that God has only one aim in His present dealings with our world—to get all of us who will respond to Him off the wrong road on to the right. It was said of Jesus "that the world through him might be saved." It is a matter of eternal seriousness, for it concerns eternal destiny. It has to be through man to man. A savior must be where the people are who need to be saved. To save a drowning man, you get in the water beside him. So God became man to be the Savior.

To bring the given salvation to all people, God still has men. They are the saved who then become saviors; not, of course, saviors in the sense of the one Savior Jesus Christ who completed our salvation, but in the sense in which the Spirit of God is still doing His saving work by Christ's spiritual body, which is we, as He did by His physical. In that sense we are co-saviors, co-redeemers. Indeed, Moses was bold and said he was going up Mount Sinai to "make an atonement" before God for the people, which he did. That means, then, that every situation we are in, God puts us in, and it has some saving purpose in it. ■

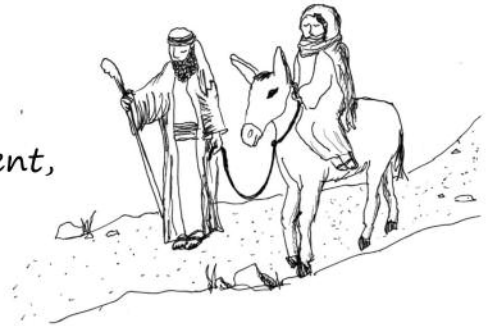
—*The Spontaneous You*

Faith Illustrations

FAITH IN ACTION: ABRAHAM

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (Hebrews 11:1-3)

"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.



By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered Him faithful who had made the promise.

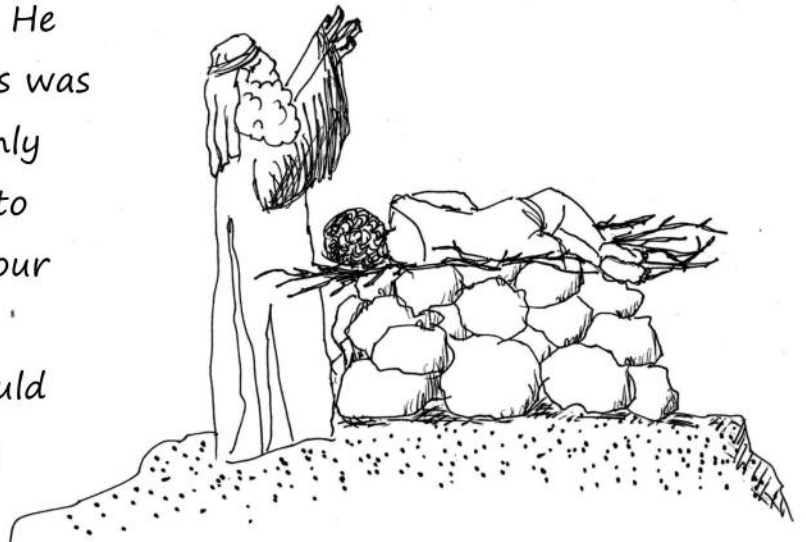


And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore." (Heb 11:8-12)



"By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.' Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death."

(Heb 11:17-19.)



"They were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own."

(Heb. 11:13-16.)



The Rest of the Story—Part 1

by Norman Grubb

"Having recognized our lost condition and found a Savior," writes Norman, "we now think that, as Christians, we can set to work and live on a new level...." In this article, the first of a 3-part series, Norman addresses the cause of our failure, as Christians, to meet God's standards of right living and unfolds the next step in our understanding of that "new level" available to us by faith.

What we call Christianity... is not belief in a doctrine, not membership in a church, not allegiance to a Bible or a Jesus of history, but a new love; for again we say, we live where we love, and this new love is for the first time in my human history the love of someone more than myself: and this is and means a new quality of life of which the potential and implications are way out of sight beyond space and time, just as an Amazon river starts by a trickle at its source, or a prairie fire begins with a spark.

Our Helplessness

However, this has not completed the exposure to us of our mistaken concepts of life, as though it is we living it. We are so used to this illusory outlook that, though we have now recognized and admitted that we did not live our lives on God's standards, and in our lost condition needed and found a Savior, we now think that, as Christians, we can set to work and live on a new level. We will seek to keep the commandments, to love God and others, to maintain communion with Him by prayer and Bible reading, to conquer the habits that defeat us, our

hates and fears and lusts and jealousies, to have God at the center of our domestic, business and social life, to attract others to our newfound faith.

Instead, what happens? We begin to find this new life wearisome. We have not what it takes to live it, neither sufficient love for God and our neighbor, nor sustained interest in prayer or the Bible, nor victory over our weaknesses.

We even lose the consciousness of God's presence. We cannot handle our

Before, our recognition was that we had not done what we should have done in keeping God's law. This time, as redeemed Christians, we come to the discovery that we cannot do what we should do. Before, we learned our guilt. This time, we learn our helplessness.

depressions, our failures, our relationship problems, the strains and stresses of modern life, the difficulties of even attempting to be honest and pure and not self-seeking in the jungle warfare of modern industrial, political, and even social and domestic life. To say that we approach a conformity to the absolute demands of loving God with all our heart and mind and our neighbor as ourselves, is ridiculous, and frankly we often do not want to. Maybe we had better give up.

Maybe life was easier and more enjoyable without trying to be a Christian in a serious sense. We seem nearer to a breakdown and the need of psychiatric help than to the peace and rest and adequacy we thought the Christian life had for us.

Good; all these are excellent signs. In our former unredeemed life, we had to be so disturbed that we came to a final crack-up and admitted our failure before God, a total failure. Despair is the best word, for despair means that we are finished and there is nothing more we can do about it. We have to come there, having given up completely, before we can have eyes to see that when we could not climb up to Him, He had climbed down to us; what we could not do for ourselves, He had done for us.

The Second Despair

Now, again we have to come to a second despair. Before, our recognition was that we had not done what we should have done in keeping God's law. This time, as redeemed Christians, we come to the discovery that we cannot do what we should do. Before, we learned our guilt. This time, we learn our helplessness. Before we did not, now we cannot.

The apostle Paul has a profound and subtle explanation of this stage in our experience. He has already shown how the law (God is love) should have been naturally operative in us, so that we are love; but owing to our fall into self-centredness, that same law then confronted

us with its demands which self-love cannot fulfill, and thus at last led us to honest admission of our lawlessness.

He goes on to show, mainly in his Romans and Galatians letters, that because we are still not yet free from an innate self-reliance, from the idea that somehow as new men in Christ we can do what we didn't do before, once again the law confronts us with its "You ought," "You must"; and in our illusory self-confidence we jump at the bait. "All right, we will," we say. "We'll do the best we can." And down we fall on our faces. We don't fulfill it, and usually we don't even want to fulfill it. We prefer to please ourselves.

Often the preachers from the pulpits are themselves to blame in their constant exhortations to us to get up and get doing what we can't, and don't honestly want to—for the simple reason that independent self, self-relying self, can only by its very nature be self-pleasing self. So we come to an impasse. The law, according to Paul, is now completing its job on us. It forces us to face, first our guilt, but now our helplessness.

The Bible is full of illustrations of sincere men, earnestly dedicated lives, who went through the period of their disillusionment, when they had to discover that they could not be or do what they wanted to do. Outstanding are the disciples of Jesus, who were completely sincere in saying they would die for Him, but they ran when the heat was on, Peter to the point of denying Him with curses; and that was just where they learned this second and final lesson—their inability.

I learned it, to give a word of personal experience, when I was as dedicated as I knew how to be. I had responded to the call of God to take

Christ to the Congo. That cost me nothing, because I could conceive of no higher honor than to introduce Africans to Him to whom I had had a personal introduction through an Englishman. When out there, my aim was single and concentration total on my calling. But I carried with me this illusory concept we are all born with—that I was a servant of Christ and wanted to be the best I could be; and yet I was terribly conscious that I was not what I should be.

Particularly, I had not the kind of love which would identify me with those to whom I had gone, or the faith that the things would happen I had come out to see, or the power to see them happen: and when I am dissatisfied with my standards of ministry, I take it out on my wife by irritability, and my fellow-workers by criticism which must not admit that they have what I have not.

So, though active without, tramping the villages to speak of Jesus, up in the early morning for a couple of hours with God and the Scriptures, within I was unhappy. I began to think that I had been happier before I gave my life to Christ than after. I was bound by self-consciousness, inner strain, disturbed relationships.

I was passing through what I since learned is a stage we all have to pass through when we are miserable Christians and, as I did, think we were happier in the old life than in the new! Sometimes it has been called "the dark night of the soul," "the wilderness experience," "the dry and thirsty land where no water is," with much more self-consciousness than God-consciousness, more self-concern than concern for the needs of those for whom I had come to Congo.

But, unknown to me, my real trouble lay in another direction. I had the illusory idea that I needed to become something better than I was: I must be a better representative of Jesus Christ, and so forth. I was looking for personal improvement and some further spiritual equipment which would set me on my feet. God and the Spirit were then to be my helpers.

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

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

The Paradigm Shift

How then do I have my needs supplied, if God has nothing to give me, but in each instance I find that He is (not has) the power, He is (not has) the life; until finally I read that “Christ is (not has) all, and in all”? That last phrase gave me my key. I saw that my mistake was the idea that He would give me things, and that I would thus become something. Now I saw that we humans do not exist to become something, but to contain Someone. This was a totally different concept and was the end of my great human illusion that I must be this or become that, centering my attention on what I am or ought to be, and equally depressing me with the recognition of my failing to be all this.

Now I saw that I am to cease to look for improvements in myself, or to center my attention around what I feel or don’t feel, whether I am this or have that, why I fail in this or am defeated by that—the whole outlook on life which fixes my attention on myself and my reactions or my adequacies or inadequacies.

The most illuminating illustration I found in the Bible was the several times we are called vessels, because a vessel, a cup, a vase, a can, is strictly limited to one function only. It only exists to be a container. It can be nothing else: and here was this simple though humbling illustration of my relation as a human to God. I only exist to contain Him. A vessel does not become the liquid it holds; they are separate, unmixable entities: so I as a human do not become the power or love or wisdom of God; I merely contain Him who is all these, and everything. How clearly I saw that: we humans are not created to become something, but to contain Someone—but that

someone is the living God, and, therefore, the All.

This transferred my attention from worrying about myself as the vessel not being this, or being that. Leave myself alone. I am just the container. In place of this, I had it clearly that I was containing a totally exclusive Person who gives

We humans do not exist to become something, but to contain Someone.

nothing, but is all; and I don’t contain Him in a relationship in which He imparts various gifts and graces to me, but I am just a means by which He can be Himself in a human container. This means that my main function in life changes from activity to receptivity. Ac-

A vessel does not become the liquid it holds; they are separate, unmixable entities: so I as a human do not become the power or love or wisdom of God; I merely contain Him who is all these, and everything.

tivity centers round how I can be this or do that, around my human self. Receptivity is occupied with receiving or recognizing what I contain—the only function of a vessel.

We Just Receive

I saw how all life is in this same relationship to God. Vegetation exists by

what it receives—sunlight and rain. What it receives it utilizes, but it must receive first, then activity is a by-product of receptivity. All science is application, not creation. Scientists discover what is, and then apply it. We humans have lost our way because we are blinded to the fact of being containers of God, and have substituted our self-activity. We have to return to the roots: and it is not even really receptivity, but recognition, for having already received Him, we form the continuous habit of recognizing that we do contain Him. Life at its base becomes a repetition of recognition. What more amazing realization can there be than that we humans contain God?

This is why Jesus stated that rest is the evidence of a life in gear. He said to us His followers, “Take my yoke upon you . . . and you will find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden light.” An obvious contradiction in terms. Life is activity—the yoke is pulling the plow: but how can a plow be easy to pull or a burden light to carry? The answer is the difference between activity from inadequacy which is strain, and activity from adequacy which is rest. If we are pulling the plow of our life’s problems, relying on our own resources, that is strain, for we haven’t got what it takes to meet them. If, in our pressures, we turn inwardly as containers to Him who is the all within, and boldly reckon on Him to handle things, then it is rest in the midst of the activities—the habit of recognition. ■

—*The Spontaneous You*

Bible Bedrock

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.”

Hebrews 11:1-2

It is obvious from an examination of the Bible record, both in the Old and the New Testament, that in the lives of the men of God there was invariably a background of fully-functioning faith—we might almost call it a technique of faith—to all their activities. We say fully-functioning faith, because the simpler word *faith* (together with the other words of Christian experience which have become commonplace, such as *love*) has been so watered down from its original content that to many it now conveys very little more than merely its first stage—the belief that God *can*, not necessarily that He *will*, and still less that He *does*. But fully-functioning faith includes all these.

We do not think that we can stress a more important subject to all active Christians than this fully-functioning faith. Our scriptural grounds for doing so are obvious. It is made as plain as daylight that the right and full use of faith is the mainspring of every spiritual achievement. Pre-eminently this is

so, of course, in the attaining of spiritual objectives, in the salvation of souls, in revival, in all concerns of the Church of Christ. But by no means exclusively so. Faith is shown to be the principle of effective action, or supply, of the solution of all problems—in every single thing, small or great, temporal and material, in the home or in the business, at work or at play—that affects a Christian's life. It is necessary to say this, because many people have got the idea that victories, deliverances, or the supply of need by faith, are privileges confined to those set apart for the Christian ministry, and not to be experienced in the ordinary home and the everyday life.

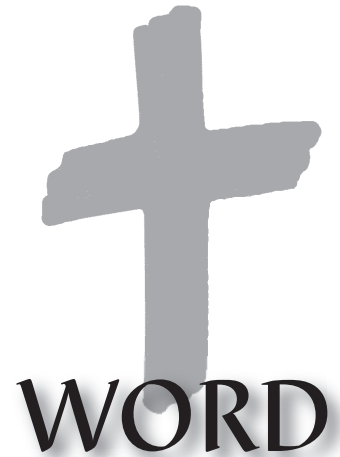
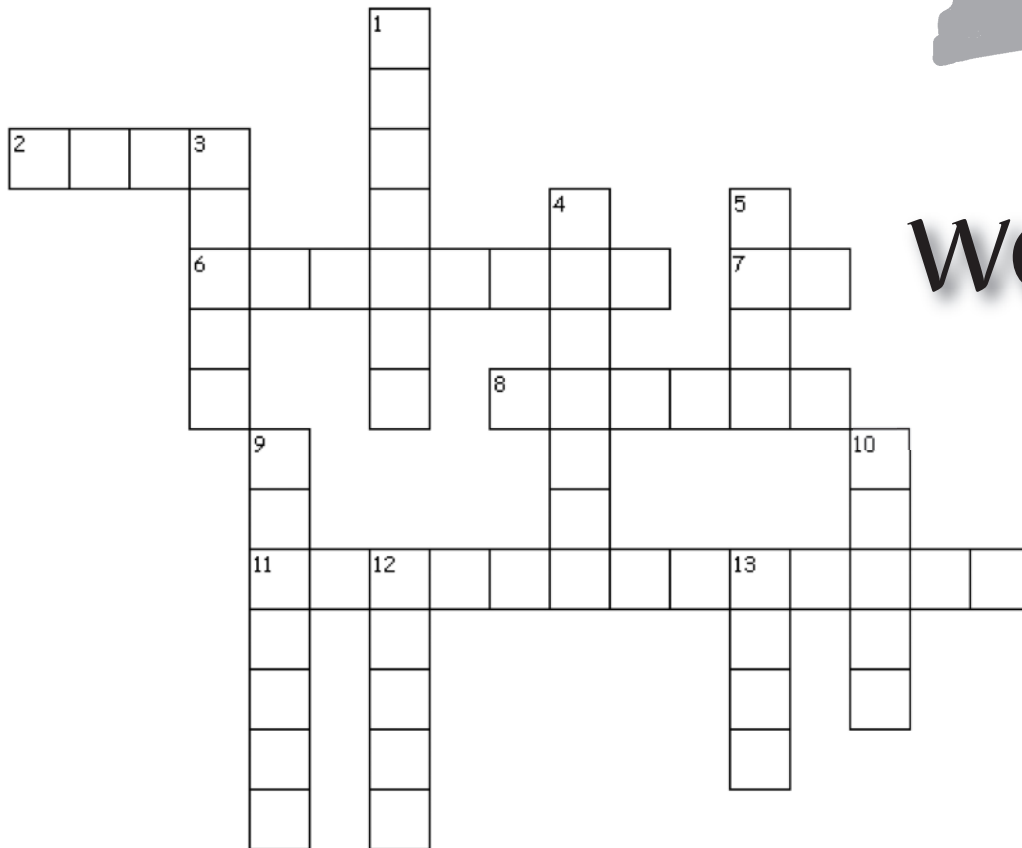
Watch the men of the Bible and it will be seen how central faith is in all their actions and attitudes. That unique chapter, Hebrews 11, the only approximation in the whole Bible to a biographical outline of Bible characters, clinches the matter for us.

—The Law of Faith

by Norman Grubb

LIVING BY FAITH

Hebrews 11:1 says that faith is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” We are blessed beyond measure to have the example of a life of faith in Norman Grubb, missionary to the Belgian Congo, whom we were privileged to know and now hold dear the treasures he has written for us in his many books, one being “The Law of Faith.” Norman “staked everything on God’s faithfulness” and learned that the secret of faith is transferring “oppressing heart burdens to the One who had given Himself to bear them.” Faith, he says, is “a route of the Spirit, a way of life to be steadily traversed.” For him, “Hebrews 11 especially became alive, and faith was seen to be the permanent element in which the men of God lived, men who themselves had first to pass through the school into the life of faith.” He knew to live a life of faith we all need “those special sorts of circumstances in which living faith through all history has thrived, those necessary conditions for its healthy growth – difficulties, frustrations, impossibilities, for ‘when I am weak, then I am strong.’” In this puzzle, we will search the scriptures for God’s word on faith.



ACROSS

2. In Matthew 8:8, Jesus speaks to the centurion's faith in His healing power, "But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the _____, and my servant will be healed."
6. In Mark 6:5-6, the people's lack of faith cut the life-line of Jesus's power, "And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And He wondered at their _____."
7. Galatians 2:20 is the supreme statement of faith for all believers, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith _____ the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
8. In Hebrews 11:24-26 we see Moses living a life of faith, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater _____ than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."
11. In 2 Peter 1:1, Peter states to all Christians that faith is a gift from God, "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the _____ of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

DOWN

1. Paul speaks of the faith of justification and salvation in Romans 10:8-9, "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9 that if you _____ with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."
3. In Matthew 14:28-31, Peter battled to live out his faith in Jesus's power, "Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you _____?"
4. Hebrews 11:6 states that, "without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must _____ that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."
5. Matthew 9:28-29 speaks to the fact that faith is appropriated to us in finite segments, "When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They *said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be _____ to you according to your faith."
9. In Matthew 4:10-11 Jesus showed that temptation is the perfect opportunity for faith as he was tempted by Satan after 40 days in the wilderness and yet did not step into unbelief, "Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL _____ THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him."
10. Jesus prayed for Simon Peter's faith in Luke 22:31-32, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like _____; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."
12. In Ephesians 2:8-9, we read, "For by _____ are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
13. In Genesis 22:9-10, we see Abraham's unfaltering faith in God's promise that his offspring would be as many as the stars, "Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to _____ his son."

The Real Problem: Satan's Lie

by Page Prewitt

If you have been seeing yourself as an “independent” person and acted from that belief, realize that you have gone for Satan’s lie about the believer. You have gone for Satan’s lie about yourself. God only sees union with Himself; Satan sees and sponsors this divided outlook. This is the sin of unbelief—unbelief about who God says you really are.

God has said that He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). He has also said that He is the vine and believers are the branches. He is their owner, and believers are His bond-slaves. He is the deity placed in the temple. We, the believers, are the temple to manifest and display Him. He is the husband, furnishing the seed to the productive wife. Believers are the wife, wedded to this One. He is the treasure, and we, the believers, are the vessels that contain Him.

The branch, the vessel, the temple, the wife—all are dependent. The

branch is dependent upon the vine, the vessel upon the contents, the temple upon the deity, and the wife upon the husband. The analogy of the owner and the slave shows that the master is the one who owns the slave, and as in Romans 6:17, the slave is never his own owner or his own operator.

So, if you are a believer, to even “see” yourself as an “alone-I” who has the ability to operate himself—even that seeing is sin. The Scripture says when we find sin present with us to confess it. So the remedy is just to confess it. Call it sin and confess it. By confession I don’t mean “sackcloth and ashes.” Confession is no more than agreeing with God. It’s as if God says, “Look what you have been doing. You have let the enemy get you confused and mixed up. See it. Confess it.” It’s as simple as that.

The worst sin you will ever find out you have committed is the sin of wrong believing about yourself. And in doing that, you have al-

lowed Satan to misuse you. That is what is wrong with every non-redeemed person, and with every born-again person who commits sins, minor or major—small ones that just “mess up” your life or blatant Biblical sins. Serious sins like theft, murder and adultery always stem from wrong seeing about ourselves as believers.

Wrong believing about yourself can cause conflict in a marriage, in the work place, with your children and in other situations. Satan, in your “independent self” believing, manages to get his hooks into your “members.” The Bible talks of believers in these terms: “sin in my members” (Rom 7:23). “Members” means your soul and body (your “flesh”) and not your spirit. Satan gets his hook in there and he is the confusion. He is the cause of the confusion. I’m not talking about the feeling of confusion, but the confusion that results from the conflicts caused by wrong believing. ■

—Alphabet Soup

Q&A

Question:

When I started to believe that I was Christ in my form, my view of prayer changed. I used to think that my job was to ask God, and God's job was to somehow do what I was asking for. If prayer isn't about my asking for God's help, what is its real purpose?

Answer:

When we dare to believe and operate from the truth of Galatians 2:20, prayer becomes an active adventure--no longer begging God for something as if He is unwilling or unable to change things, but seeing God already in the situation and saying so. Norman Grubb deals with this subject in depth in his chapter called "The Word of Faith" from *Who Am I?*. He points out the radical change that takes place as we grasp the implications of our spirit-union with Christ: We say, not ask or hope. We say unto this mountain (which is our present problem), "Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea." We speak our word of faith, "God you are doing so and so. Thank you." What a difference!

Later on in that chapter Norman sheds light on the idea of persistence in prayer. God is not looking for persistence in asking but the boldness of standing firm on our word of faith for what God is doing in the invisible to meet an obvious need: "Whatsoever ye desire, when ye pray, believe..."

Norman adds, "So what is needed by us is to take those plunges, simply on the basis of our desires in a situation, and say the word. That word releases the Spirit through us as sons, each handling our own local affairs, to bring in to substantial form the thing we have spoken for. Once we have said that word, that's it. It is no longer our affair. It was God all the way through but He operates through His sons exercising their prerogatives of free decision. Now God has taken on. It is not for us to make a mockery of our word of faith by repeating it, or still less by slipping back into asking. Now, we can thank many times that He has done something: we practice the habit of seeing the thing as done with the eye of faith. But that's all." ■

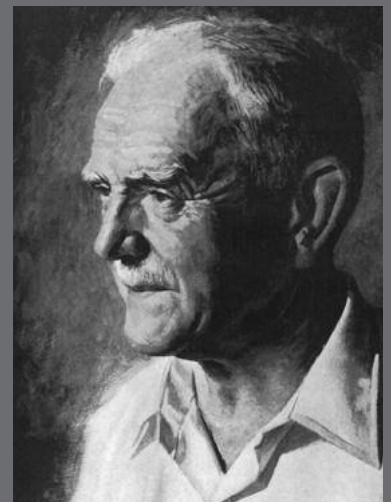
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Audio Review

by Joanna Coatney

REVIEW: *Faith Creates a Reality* by Page Prewitt

This audio series will soon be available as streaming audio to listen to for free at zerubbabel.org/online-audio/

The audio series, *Faith Creates a Reality*, was recorded in 1988 at a conference in England that I attended with my parents when I was ten years old. While I was taking part in the youth program, the adults (including my parents) were listening to Page Prewitt in a nearby room. Thankfully, what she shared with them was recorded, and I was thrilled to discover it for myself several years later.

I was about 18 when I first listened to this recording (I'm 39 now). I think my mother had the recording and I just picked it up one day. I listened to it on my head phones on my way to college and was instantly hooked! The spiritual truths and wonderfully practical applications Page shares have been, for me, truly life changing.

Describing our human makeup, Page explains that we consist of our body, soul, and spirit, and helps us to understand the verse "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (1 Cor. 6:17). Once we are born again, Page explains, our human spirit is joined to God's Spirit in a union that can be likened to an egg! I love this analogy! It is just one egg, but inside is the yolk and the white. No matter how hard you shake the egg you cannot scramble

the inside. The two remain separate—but it's still one egg! So it is with us in our spirit union with God.

This union is permanent, and Satan is out for good. "But," you might be asking, "If Christ lives in us and is joined to our spirit, then how do we still sin?" Good question. Page shares her own experience of facing this question, which was presented to her by her daughter (age 10!). It wasn't until several years later that clarity came on this point, but it did come—and she shares it with us in this series.

Satan's ultimate deceit is to get us to believe that we are "just us,"—self-operating beings, separate from God, who make our own choices and do our own thing. This is his lie that he has deceived all of humanity with since Adam and Eve. This was the lie Satan chose to believe about himself—that he could be like the most high and be his own god and do his own thing (Isa. 14:14). But how exactly does he deceive us? Page spends the remainder of the recording explaining how Satan uses our soul-body responses (the "flesh") from the outside—he never regains entry into our spirits after we are born again—to get us to sin. This is radical truth! Truth that Satan does not want people to know. Once people know this, the jig is up for him. He has nowhere to hide. But he has people so deceived that it really does require us to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2).

In discussing the makeup of the human spirit (desire, will and mind),

Page states, "The only choice that we as human beings are free on our own to make is either to believe or not believe. Another word for that is faith. As you receive the truth, as I faith into God in His truth, my decision becomes His choice through me. This is one of the most important things I learned. "I think I'll go here, I think I'll go there, I think I'll say this, I think I'll say that." But I'm not "just me"—It's either Christ or Satan doing all the saying, all the doing, all the talking. When I dare to put my faith in the fact that in everything I do or say it is "not I, but Christ" living out through me (Gal. 2:20) is what makes it God!

There is no way to communicate here in this review how wonderfully clear an explanation Page gives of how Satan uses our thoughts and emotions (soul) to trick us into thinking we are independent selves. I could listen to this section of the tape (and have!) over and over and never tire of it. Page uses personal examples, funny anecdotes, and audience participation to drill home life-changing truths in a way that has personally penetrated and convicted me to the core.

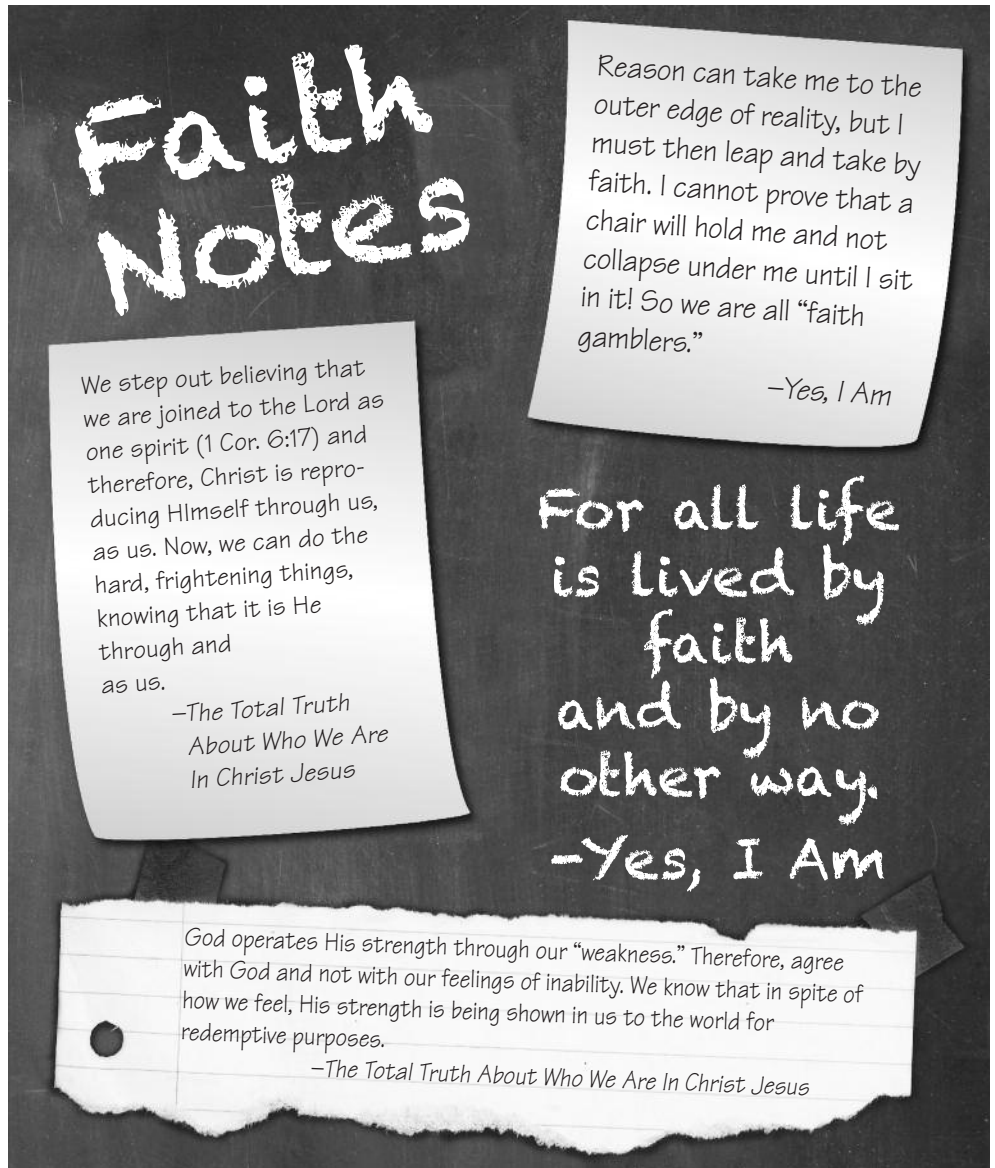
Page describes feelings as up and down—always changing—"temporal." (2 Cor. 4:18) Feelings are like mercury in a thermometer—they just register what is. But they do nothing to change the weather! Thoughts and feelings are neutral. So I don't ever have to feel guilty of them when they're "bad" and I don't have to be prideful about them when they're "good." They just are what they are. But it's the

choice I make about them from my spirit.

The truths Page shares on this recording are scriptural, radical, and if you apply them—LIFE CHANGING! After I spent years of living from feelings—trying to get rid of the bad ones and hang on to the good ones, using all manner of sinful, ungodly vices—I was totally liberated to hear and apply these truths in my own life. No matter what pleasant or unpleasant feelings come my way, I know they are just temporary and neutral and are going nowhere. They do nothing to affect or change who I am at my spirit center—Christ in my Joanna form. He is peace when I feel afraid, He is strong when I feel weak, He is love when I feel hate, He is ALL when I feel lacking.

Whatever the feeling/temptation might be—the answer is always the same. Satan is using whatever the situation/feeling/thought is to try and trick me in to thinking that I am “just me” and that I need to do something about the thought or feeling. If he succeeds in this, then I am allowing him to boss me from the outside, through my members, and Satan lives out what I believed about “just me” (really a lie): he lives out fear when I feel afraid, he lives out shy when I feel shy etc. BUT, if I acknowledge the thought/feeling and then recognize that I am merely a vessel containing Jesus Christ and that He is here to live out His attributes in the situation (peace, strength, love, power), then He will! Faith creates a reality!

So, I hope if you have never listened to this recording you will give it a try. And if you have listened to it before I hope this review will inspire you to listen to it again. I’m sure I will continue to listen to this one for many more years to come! ■



ANSWERS TO

LIVING BY FAITH PUZZLE

ACROSS

2. WORD
6. UNBELIEF
7. OF
8. RICHES
11. RIGHTEOUSNESS

DOWN

1. CONFESS
3. DOUBT
4. BELIEVE
5. DONE
9. WORSHIP
10. WHEAT
12. GRACE
13. SLAY

WORD

Faith Lessons

Part 1: Men who learned it

by Norman Grubb

In every biography of the Bible in which we are given much detail, we find that a fundamental law of life had to be learned, and usually slowly and painfully: the discovery of the lie of independent self that originated as a fruit of the Fall; the innate helplessness of the human spirit to operate itself; and the experience, glory and fullness of life in spirit union with the Creator. Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, the Saviour Himself as a man (learning obedience, though with never a failure), Peter, Paul—all bear the same witness. In most cases the moment of realized union can be recognized, and the transformation which followed, as well as the valleys of the humiliation which preceded it. A few examples will drive the truth further home for us.

Abraham

Abraham was given a three-fold revelation, as great as any given to man in history, that he was to have a land for an inheritance, a people as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and a blessing which would reach all the families of the earth. No wonder it said that the God of glory appeared unto Abraham! But watch the Lord's necessary dealings with him through about twenty-five years. It touched spirit, soul and body, and in no case could the Lord get His supernatural purposes into action through Abraham's faith until independent self had been exposed and dealt with.

First, it concerned the material things of life, the concerns of his body. Not long after he had arrived in the land of promise, he made a hasty flight through fear of famine, and went down to Egypt. There he so feared for his own skin that he lied to Pharaoh concerning Sarah, and gained much wealth through his deception. Independent self! This was no bodily living sacrifice through which God could make history—a man who could not even trust Him for his daily bread! So he was taught a thorough lesson.

First, he had deliberately to invite his greedy nephew to take advantage of him. The quarrel broke out between his herdmen and Lot's. He knew what was in Lot's heart, yet he gave him the choice of the country, and it didn't take Lot long to choose the best. Abraham was learning his lesson. From God he was to receive his earthly inheritance; let man do what he liked, he could not touch it; and it was then that God met him with the renewed promise of the whole land. Hands off fighting for human rights.

A while later news came of the disaster in a battle to the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, with Lot and his family among the captives. He who went down to Egypt to save his own life must now risk it for his thankless nephew, four hundred retainers against the armies of four kings! The risk was taken, the captives released, and Abraham was rich for life with the spoils which were his by right.

But a word from heaven reached him, one of those reviving words at a critical moment. Melchisedek came to meet them as they returned in triumph, that mysterious Kingpriest, and singled him out for a peculiar blessing; was he not the one whom the God who possesses heaven and earth had set apart for His special purposes? And was not this victory a proof of His good hand on him? Abraham's eyes were quickly off those defiled earthly spoils; his inheritance was a city with lasting foundations, whose builder and maker was God; and when offered all the goods by the king of Sodom, with what energy and ringing joy of faith he testified to the vow he had made: "I have lifted up mine hand to the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from thee a thread to a shoelatchet lest thou should say, I have made Abraham rich." [Genesis 14:22-23]

The lesson of the body and of earthly possessions had been fully learned. His human hands were off his own physical security or earthly gains; he was God's, and from

God would receive the promised inheritance. Was Abraham wise? Or was he a fool to refuse what self could have legitimately claimed, but which would have diverted his faith from taking hold of an inheritance invisible to the human eye? Five thousand years have passed, and the course of history has revolved around the fulfillments of those promises to Abraham, and will yet revolve around the final fulfillments in the restoration of the promised land. That is what happens when man takes his hands off, and God has His hands on a human body.

But Abraham had to learn lessons of soul as well as body. The control of that subtle independent ego in both had to be recognized and refused. With the land of promise assured to him through the covenant of the burning lamp, his concern now centred round the child of promise. His natural mind was hard at work: What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless? How could he have an heir with his wife barren, and both of them growing old? He did not yet discern between soul and spirit, between his mind and God's. If he had, he would equally have recognized the natural mind in Sarah's advice. His test now lay not in the bodily, but in the mental realm. The confusion over the birth of Ishmael, the division in the home, the silence of God over thirteen years taught him this second great lesson. He saw the difference between the schemings and strivings of self, and the voice of God.

Now at last he was prepared for the realized union. God appears to him and says, "I am El Shaddai; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." And as God is revealed to him as the Almighty One, so his own name is changed to "the father of a great multitude" [Gen. 17:5]. The mind that was formerly bounded by the limited range of its own thoughts can now receive and act on the supernatural thoughts of God. A child of promise is born by an act of faith, which gave him forever the position of the father of all them that believe.

This was the realized union in the days when the full light that shone from Calvary and Pentecost had not yet given fullness of understanding. The communion of Spirit with spirit is seen in its full and marvelous fruition in Abraham's life when it was given to him to prefigure the very cross and resurrection. He can receive the word, beyond all natural reasoning, that he is to sacrifice that son of promise, "...thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." In

doing that he would be sacrificing what God had given him, the very fruit of his faith, the reward of his life of obedience and renunciation. If there had been any independence left in Abraham, it would have appeared now—any secret pride of spiritual achievement, any claim to hold as his own even what he had received from the Spirit; if anyone lived in him but God alone, it would surely have been seen now. But no. He was found pure in spirit. God only was the portion of his lot. God must be obeyed. But He also must be believed.

He who now said he was to sacrifice his son, had formerly said that "in Isaac would his seed be called"; therefore, he argued that if he must sacrifice him, he must also be raised again from the dead. He did not waver. He traveled the three days to the appointed mount. He left the servants with the ass while he ascended with his son; but he was careful first to say to them, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you," for to his eye of faith the resurrection was an accomplished fact. He laid his son on the altar and raised his knife to make the awful sacrifice, and only at that last second did God intervene.

Perfect faith, as James called it, proceeding from a spirit in which the Spirit perfectly dwelt. None but the Spirit, who was to lead a great Son to Calvary and raise Him from the dead, could have given that earthly father such an insight into the heavenly mind and purpose, such a grace of obedience and such faith; and the Spirit could have given that to no man except to one in whom He could fully think His own thoughts, believe His own believings, and act His own acts. And it was to that man, at last come through to a nothingness of self and an allness of the Spirit that God could now swear by Himself that, besides giving him a land, and making him a great nation, He would bless the world through him.

In that great pioneer of faith, called "the father of the faithful," we see in clearest outline how deeply this ingrained self-life has to be exposed and uprooted; but equally how marvelously that One who takes the place of the independent ego can bring into being through a yielded spirit, soul and body, creative acts which change the course of history. ■

—*The Liberating Secret*

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by Norman Grubb
—After C.T. Studd

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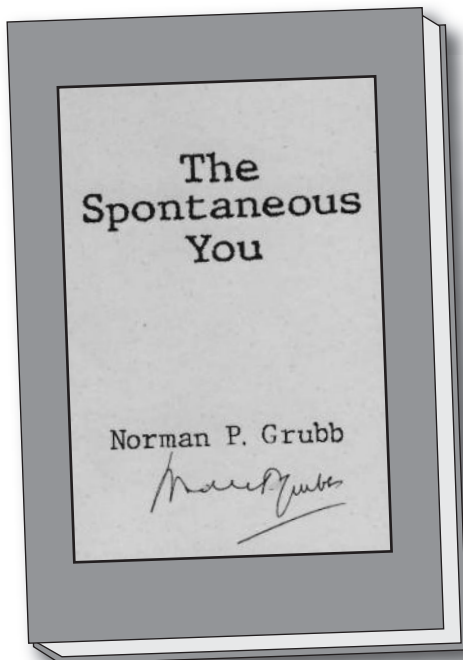
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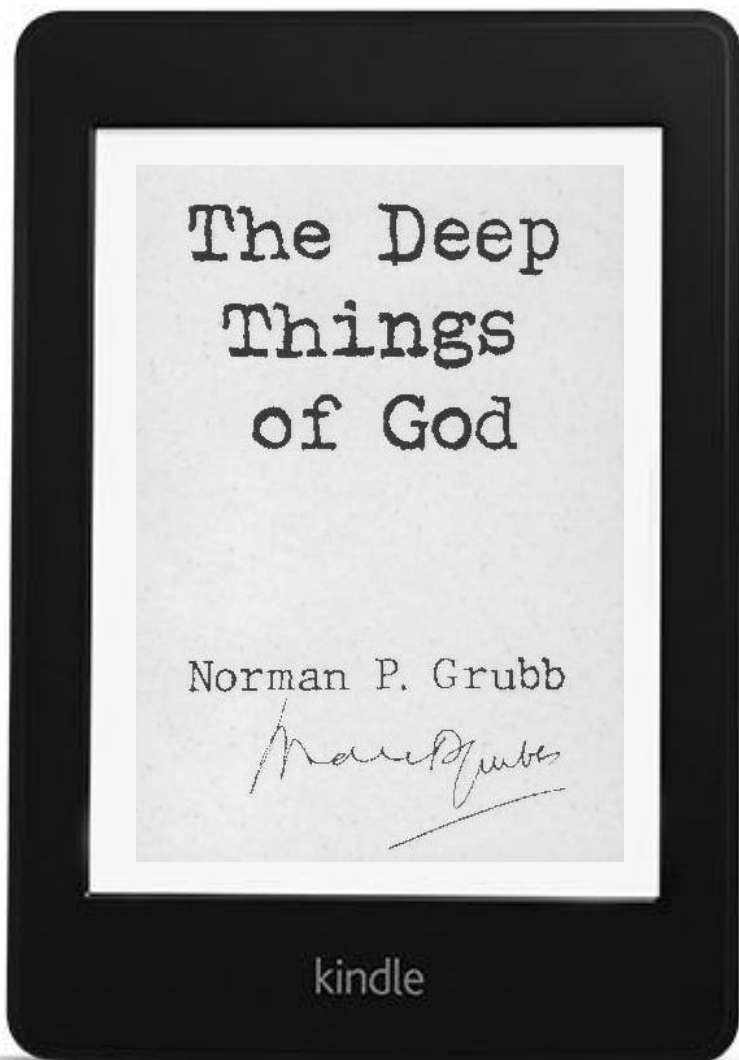
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