

The INTERCESSOR

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

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Humans Have No Nature

by Norman Grubb

Perhaps the greatest stumbling block to fulfilling our divine purpose as Christians is our misunderstanding, inherited at the Fall, of our human make-up. Norman exposes this falsehood and unveils our true functioning and relationship to Christ—the heart of what he calls the Total Truth.

We now come to what I think is the most important section of this Total Truth, because it has been missed in its completeness by nearly the whole of the Bible-believing body of Christ—a bold thing to say, but it seems to me to be the fact. It concerns what we call our human nature, and that is where our problems and entanglements lie. Even if new creatures in Christ with a new nature, we mistakenly think we have an old, scarred nature—we sometimes call it “the flesh”—which persists in being like an albatross around our neck, a constant rival distracting our attention and stumbling us in our walk. It is precisely that which made Paul cry out, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Wretched, yet redeemed!

It seems as if we acquired an old nature through the Fall, and now have a new nature in Christ, and the two remain deadly rivals, dog eating dog—a struggle from which we are never free in this life—the old man new man syndrome—

and the best we can hope for is a means of the new counteracting the old; and yet with a sense that the old always remains in us, though we are Christ’s—remains as a deadly element which Jeremiah calls “the heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.”

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By “nature” we’re not now meaning our natural faculties and capacities of body and soul. Our nature, in that sense, means the type of person we are, which is expressed through our soul and body. We may say someone has a kind nature or a harsh nature, a sensitive nature or an

unfeeling nature, and so on. But the “old nature” or “new nature” is not the faculties and appetites of a person, but rather the expression of the true personality of the person.

The evangelical church seems divided between two convictions concerning these natures. Each persuasion is antagonistic to the other. One, by far the largest, maintains that we have two natures when redeemed; and we must live with that fact, battling away against the old nature as in Romans 7, and affirming that there is a deliverance in Romans 8

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which we must daily apply to relieve us from the pressures of 7!

The other section of the body of believers is strong, persistent, and stoutly convinced that theirs is the truth—though they are in the minority in the whole company of believers and often are considered dangerous or suspect. They are given the general title of “holiness people.” They use such terms as “entire sanctification,” “perfect love,” “full salvation,” and are usually considered to be followers of the sanctification teaching that was reestablished in the church

The illustrations used of us in our humanity are vessels, branches, body members, slaves, wives, temples. In every case that means we are the agent by which the occupant operates. As vessels, we are said to be either “vessels of wrath” or “vessels of mercy,” but we must be either one or the other.

through John and Charles Wesley and John Fletcher. There are many precious people among them, with whom I have close links. Their conviction is that after the first stage of our new birth, which centers in justification, we must have a second radical experience of the fullness of salvation in Christ by the elimination of the old man and his total replacement by the new man “created in righteousness and true holiness” with “the heart purified by faith”—and that is the full application of our identification with Christ in His

death and resurrection by the Spirit.

Both say we have a human nature. One maintains that our old nature corrupted by the Fall is supplanted by a new nature in Christ, but that the old remains—so that our new way of living is by recognizing the two, the old being counteracted by the new. The other agrees that we all start with a human nature which has become corrupted through the Fall, but holds that the impartation of the new nature in Christ in its totality, by a second work of grace, totally replaces the old nature. The term “eradication” is sometimes used, though most “holiness teachers” regard that as an over-statement of their position, not sufficiently allowing for the continuance of “infirmities.”

But *I* am saying that the true revelation of the Bible is that we humans have *no nature*. We’re not created to have a nature, but to be containers of a “deity nature,” a divine nature, and we humans can only ever express the nature of the one within us. All the Bible symbols of our humanity are those of being containers and expressers of one who is not our-selves, but is a god. All that matters is, “Which god?”

The illustrations used of us in our humanity are vessels, branches, body members, slaves, wives, temples. In every case that means we are the agent by which the occupant operates. As vessels, we are said to be either “vessels of wrath” or “vessels of mercy,” but we must be either one or the other. The vessel of wrath, of course, is a container of the god by whom we experience *wrath*; and the vessel of mercy of Him by whom we receive *mercy* (Rom. 9:22-23). So it is not the type of vessel that is of importance, but the nature of the liquid that it contains. The branch illustration is even

more explicit, for a branch is but part of a vine, the two being in life-union. A branch is merely the living means by which a vine reproduces itself in its fruit. A branch has no distinct nature; it has the nature of its vine. The fruit is of the vine, not of the branch. And when Jesus said “I am the true vine and you are the branches,” He was obviously implying that there is also a false vine producing *its* fruit—one vine being He the true Life, and the other being the usurper (John 15).

We are called temples, and the temple was only the outer means by which the living God manifested His presence. Thus the Shekinah Glory shone through the tabernacle; and His glory is seen in us as His temples. In every case, a temple is only the dwelling place of a deity and reveals *his* presence, not its own. We are either a temple that contains an idol god, or one in which the living God dwells and walks. A temple has no nature but that of the god in it (1 Cor. 8:10 and 2 Cor. 6:16).

We are called married wives, and Paul distinctly says we all in the human race are married to the one husband or the other. According to Romans 7, the moment we recognize that in Christ’s death we are cut off from our old husband, Satan, then we are immediately united in a new marriage to Christ who is risen from the dead. No momentary gap between the marriages! And the point is that here he is speaking of marriage in what we might call a biological sense: the wife receives the seed of the husband and bears his children, whether “the motions of sins” or “fruit unto God.” The wife is presented as merely the fruit *bearer*, not the fruit *producer*.

Then Paul, in Romans 6:16-23, calls us slaves (as it is in the Greek) and says all of us all the time are either slaves to

sin or slaves to righteousness—slaves of Satan or slaves of Jesus. But slaves are merely the property of their owners, with no kind of a life of their own and doing only the work of their owner.

Finally, we are members of the body of Christ, and any body operates by the mind and will of the head, and nothing else. It has no body-led activity of its own.

So in each case the human is only the agent—as temple, manifesting the presence of the deity; as branch, expressing the nature and producing the fruit of the vine; as body member, set in action by the head; as slave, doing the will of the owner; as wife, bearing the children of the husband; and as vessel, only a container and nothing else.

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 Only Two Natures

Now after this Biblical revelation of what we humans are—containers and agents—we find the Bible distinctly says that we have no nature of our own but express the nature of the particular deity indwelling us. On the one hand, Paul says in Ephesians 2 that while we were in our unredeemed condition, dead in trespasses and sins, we “walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience and were by nature children of wrath”—not some nature of our own but of our satanic parent, his children in his wrath nature. Then on the other hand, regarding the redeemed, Peter tells us that by receiving “exceeding great and precious promises” we become “partakers of the divine nature.” Quite obviously then, it’s not some human nature, but God expressing His nature by us. Here are the two deity natures expressed in our humanity.

This could not be more explicit than it is in the Biblical account about the Garden of Eden. There we are told life and death were symbolized by the eating of the fruit of the trees. The Bible tells us that if Adam and Eve had eaten of the right tree they would have received eternal life. Yet we know that eternal life is not in a fruit but in a Person—in Him who said, “I am the life.” Therefore, if eating the right fruit means that into our first parents would have come the person who is eternal life, eating of the wrong fruit means that the false deity, the spirit of error, entered in and they became *his* dwelling place.

Now here is the point, the nitty gritty of the reality. All we redeemed humans recognize, when our eyes have been

opened by grace, that we were sinners, were under the power of Satan, did his works, were his children. But do we realize that we actually were *he*, in the sense that humans are always manifesting the deity who expresses himself by us? Did any of us know, while unsaved, that we were Satan walking about in our human forms, or that the redeemed are Christ walking about in their human forms? We should know it now, for we are plainly told this.

I remember the surprise when I first

All we redeemed humans recognize, when our eyes have been opened by grace, that we were sinners, were under the power of Satan, did his works, were his children. But do we realize that we actually were he, in the sense that humans are always manifesting the deity who expresses himself by us?

read in 1 John 4:4, “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” I knew that “He in me” was the Holy Spirit, but I suddenly woke up to the fact that there was equally “he in the world” in fallen humans, just as much as the Holy Spirit is in us when redeemed. And two verses later John is saying, “Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” That began to open my eyes, and I began to relate it to the symbol of the fruit of the garden.

Then I became alerted to Jesus’ words as He confronted those opposing Him, as recorded in John 8:38-44. “I

Norman Grubb

Christian missionary, teacher and author



Norman Grubb was a well-known evangelical Christian missionary to Africa, following in the footsteps of his father-in-law C.T. Studd. The son of an Irish clergyman, he became a decorated war hero for his service as a lieutenant of the Gloucester regiment in World War I. After the war, he attended Trinity College, Cambridge, and married Pauline Studd. During his time as a missionary in the Belgian Congo, he translated the New Testament into the African trade language, Bangala. Norman ultimately became the British and General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, serving in that capacity until 1965. He was instrumental in the formation of the Christian Literature Crusade and the beginnings of InterVarsity Fellowship.

Mr. Grubb is the author of *Rees Howells*, *Intercessor*, the acclaimed and inspiring biography of the Welsh coal miner who became the founder of the Bible College of Wales. Mr. Grubb authored more than twenty five books and pamphlets. He spoke at the Presidential Prayer Breakfast and taught at lay conferences such as Faith at Work.

The central concentration of Mr. Grubb’s later works is “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” and it was his drive to bring the reality of this truth to seekers after “the deep things of God” within the body of Christ.

Following many years of teaching, writing, and travel, Mr. Grubb died at age 98 on December 15, 1993, in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania.

speak what I have seen with My Father: and you do what you have seen with your father,” stated Jesus. As religious Jews they resented that, and indignantly responded, “We’re not born of fornication. We have one Father, God.” Jesus answered, “If God were your Father, you would love Me.” Then He broke the truth wide open and declared outright, “You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do.” When I read that, my eyes were opened to the second phrase as well as the first. The first says that we humans—all of us who have not yet become children of God by faith in Jesus Christ—have Satan, not God, as our father. But the second phrase especially struck me: “the lusts of your father you will do.” Not that we are doing our own lusts, but the lusts of our father. Then all we are doing as humans is not a product of some supposed *human* fallen nature, but actually *Satan himself* expressing his own lusting nature by us! All we are, therefore, is merely the outer expression of this spirit of error, this god of this world, living his own Satan-form of life by our humanity. That was revolutionary. I had always thought I was fulfilling my own natural desires; but not so, because we have no nature of our own. We have all been fulfilling the lusts of the god of self-centeredness, and what we think are just our sins are ours only in the sense that we are joined to Satan as branch to false vine, expressing his thoughts and deeds. So when the Bible says “All have sinned,” the real inner truth is that the sinner is Satan, and we in a secondary sense are participating in his sinning.

This is the major area in which sin—or Satan, as the Scripture has said—has deceived us; and deceit means making us think that we are what we are not. Satan

has played his greatest trick on us in making us think that life is “doing our own thing”—our own self-expression. Who of us in the wide world would ever suspect that we were not just “ourselves” in our self-activity but Satan operating in our form? Of course, Satan himself is the fundamentally deceived one, for he vainly imagines that he made himself independent when he rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven. He imagines himself to be Mr. Independent Self, though actually he is still eternally and to-

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tally dependent on his Creator, and doing His will—as we see so clearly in the history of Job.

It is this same false concept of independence with which Satan has infected the human race. We just naturally think we are independent and doing our own thing. Independence is the huge lie swallowed by fallen, blinded, deceived humanity, and the great delusion from which we have to be finally and fully delivered before we can be our true selves. That is what Paul so perfectly explores

and aims to deliver us from in Romans, chapters 6 to 8. That is the winning of the final battle over the delusion of the Fall. Our whole life has been built on the false assumption that we are just our own responsible selves, and when changes are needed they are needed in *us*. We can see it in our false self-righteousness, in our fallen days, when we imagined that *we ourselves* were living our own lives of good and evil (which we thought mainly good, with a few evil touches). Actually, all our “good” was evil, for it was a product of the spirit of independent self, the spirit of error. Self-effort *good* is no better than self-effort *evil*, being only Satan’s self-effort produced by us. It is one thing to regard ourselves as humans merely influenced by Satan; but quite another matter to realize that it is actually *he* just being himself and living his own quality of life by me and I merely his vessel, branch, slave, temple. I am Satan in my human form.

One reason why the natural man cannot easily accept this fact is that he regards Satan’s activity to be mainly the grosser evils like murder, theft, etc. But when our inner eyes are opened, we fully see that the spirit of error, the spirit of self-centeredness, can look highly respectable. We recognize that the self-loving self is usually disguised to make a nice appearance. So, for us who are enlightened, it is not hard to see that fallen humans are Satan—Mr. Self-centeredness himself—in his physical form. It is a profound eye-opener to realize that *all* forms of our apparent self-activity—even if good, helpful, and beneficial to other—are expressions of our self-loving self and thus, in actual fact, expressions of that Satanic spirit of self-centeredness in us. Good deeds are merely a product of the

“good” part of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Two other scriptures also brought this into focus for me. First was 2 Corinthians 4:4, which speaks of the lost as those “in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds”; so there he was within us, in our unbelieving condition. The second is 1 John 3:12, in which John exhorts us to love our brothers, and adds, “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.” When I read that I asked myself, why are the words “of that wicked one” inserted? Why not just say, “Don’t be like wicked Cain who slew his brother”? Because it was *not* “wicked Cain” who was the murderer, it was “that wicked one” who Jesus has said was “a murderer from the beginning,” and *he* murdered Abel by Cain’s hands. “The lusts of your father you will do.”

We Have Been Deceived About Ourselves

So we are seeing a tremendous revolutionary reality—that humans never had a nature by themselves. They were both created and later redeemed to express in simple spontaneity and naturalness Him who is God in us and who, Scripture says, “dwells in us and walks in us” (2 Cor. 6:16). Likewise after the Fall, when we had freely joined ourselves to Satan, we had no nature of our own either. So there never has been a “human” nature. Therefore there is no point in considering whether we believers have two natures or one! No, we humans have none, but tragically or gloriously, spontaneously manifest the nature of the deity in us.

Without me you can do nothing...

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

—John 15:5 (King James Version)

Editor’s Note

We’re excited to share some big news with you, our readers. Very soon, we will be changing the print format of *The Intercessor* to a smaller size with fewer pages. This decision reflects the increased focus we have had over the years on the digital delivery of our Christ-in-you message. The smaller version of the printed magazine will allow us to devote more resources toward the continued development of our

digital content. The smaller version will also reflect a change in focus from delivering long-form articles in print to engaging our readers with shorter pieces that point to our full library of online content—content that will be increasingly user-friendly as we continue to improve how we digitally organize and deliver what we boldly call the Total Truth—Christ in You the Hope of Glory.

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THE *Ultimate Reality*

by Norman Grubb

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, surrender 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.

The extreme, the absolute, the revelation of which so totally re-oriented 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 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.

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 colors. 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.

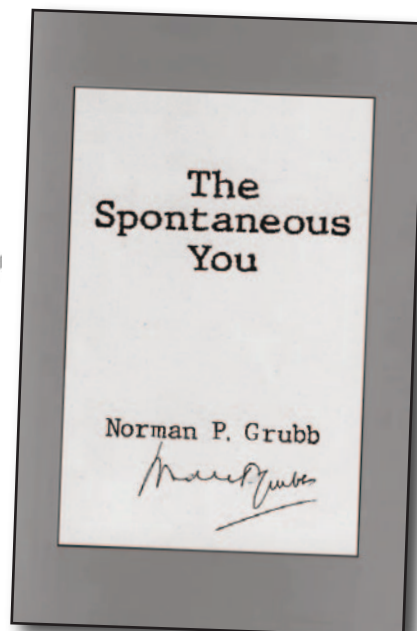
But is that not pantheism? How absurd—that God is a thing, or God is a color, or God is a sound? No, God is The Person. A person is not a thing, but things are forms of Him. "The whole earth is full of His glory": He "fills all things." How can we but worship—everywhere—not the thing, but Him in the 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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In *The Spontaneous You*, Norman explores man's fundamental questions: What is life? How do we live it? Why do we live it? and passes on the liberating answer to living free in the midst of frustrating circumstances. We can drive with confidence, as it were, the automobile of our daily living—and with zest and pleasure find the purpose in it, not for ourselves, but for others.

It is Norman's view that man's ultimate questions are not answered by external religious forms and the dogmas of a distant Deity. The answer is found within, not without—Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Faith Notes

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 not. 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.

-God Unlimited

Whatever the outer situation, in our inner selves we can always believe and praise that this is God's perfection for ourselves; and then our outer prison conditions are found to be open doors to share the same secret with the many others around us in their desperate sorrows.

-Who Am I?

By inner union, Christ is our real self. So what do we do? We tell the law it is no good its shouting at us, because we can't fulfill it, were never meant to; but we contain the One who can and does.

-Who Am I?

.....

It is easy, outwardly, to be strongly drawn by some desire of the heart and seem to be helpless against it. But in my spirit-center, where God is, I know my real desire is His will, and He keeps His firm hold on me.

-Yes, I Am

A human by his faith in action can only go as far as he has human resources to utilize—a carpenter must have his tools and his wood. But we, in God, participate in the eternal resources. It is not our paltry human thinking, human affirming, human action. It is we as being He—He thinking, speaking, acting by us.

-Once Caught, No Escape

The Total Remedy

by Norman Grubb

We already know clearly enough the only way we could be rescued. We have the false god in us. It came as a revelation to me when I saw what I knew well already of the redeemed—that the Holy Spirit lives in us; but then also I read in I John 4:4 that if the Holy Spirit is in the redeemed, there is also a spirit in the unredeemed. “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.” And then when two verses later, John plainly names them: “Hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” So the spirit of error, the Satanic person, is in us before we are Christ’s. That was new light to me, and a new orientation. Most of us think of ourselves as just our unredeemed selves until Christ comes in and takes over. We do not realize that we have working in us that “prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience” which Paul says is true of all of us (Ephesians 2:2). He has so concealed and disguised himself

in us as unbelievers, though it says that it is the god of this world in us who has blinded our minds, that we just think we are our independent selves. But the truth is that all humanity are vessels. We are containers, and it depends which God is in the vessel. In Romans it says we are either “vessels of wrath” or “vessels of mercy”: those who either contain the god through whom wrath is our portion, or those who contain the Saviour-God through whom mercy comes to us. This greatly simplifies salvation, for it is merely change of gods, not change of the vessels which contain Him. Or to use that other great illustration, we are either branches of the false vine or of the true. “I am the true vine,” said Jesus, therefore there must be a false one.

Who then can make this exchange? Who delivers humanity from its slavery to its false usurper and replaces him by the True

Owner? Obviously a slave can’t redeem a slave. There can be only one, and that the Owner and Creator Himself. He only has the right to represent the human race and do something which can include them all. That is why we safeguard the incarnation in our gospel. There is no point nor power in the death and resurrection of Jesus, unless He was God in the flesh, the author of the human race becoming a member of it to represent it. This is one of those “supernatural” events, of which we gave examples on our first pages, which are not explicable in terms of human thought but issue from the spirit, not the matter, dimension. So it is no good trying to explain or explain away what issues from the realm of what we call the impossible, but we are to learn what is really the only actual. Human thinking is what has bound us to realms of time and space; for the true realm we must have “the renewing of our minds,” the “new man which is renewed in

knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

The way in which this change of gods has become a fact has of course held our fascinated and almost microscopic attention and investigation through the centuries. And no wonder: "Upon Another's life, Another's death I stake my whole eternity." "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." "I was determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." We will put it in simplest terms to relate to what we have already said. Why Christ's death? We humans have got so physically minded that death to us always means the physical. But we who are believers know better. We know physical death is only the gateway to life after death. Where? Ah, that is the crux! The Bible makes plain that if we die a child of the devil, we continue on into the devil's destiny which is described in the terms of its supreme loss as "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power." Therefore death for Jesus did not just mean the physical dying. If as the One who never was made captive by the devil and thus not under death's dominion, He accepted death on our behalf, then He would go after physical death

where we would go, into what Paul called "the lower parts of the earth," the realm of "the spirits in prison." And that is where He did go. Maybe that is why there was such reality in the cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Supposing He didn't rise? He had to go this way by nothing but faith, as the rest of us.

...in His resurrection we are justified; in other words, not merely forgiven, which might still leave a memory behind of the things for which we needed the forgiveness; but justified, meaning that we are as spotless, sinless, as the Saviour Himself; and all the past in memories of fact or dread of destiny are out of sight and out of mind forever. That is the overcoming in the blood of the Lamb.

But He did rise. There was nothing that could hold Him, because, though our sin bearer, He was not Himself a sinner under the law of sin and death. Therefore, "quickened by the Spirit," He could be "raised from the dead by the glory of the Father." And what did He leave behind on our behalf? That is what is important to us. He left both the cause and effects of sin. The effects are our destiny in outer darkness, the consequence of the

curse of the law, the guilt, the condemnation, the weeping and gnashing of teeth, the worm that dies not and the fire not quenched. All disappeared from sight forever, because He took them on Himself on our behalf, and then left them behind on our behalf when He arose. Therefore Paul said that in His resurrection we are justified; in other words, not merely forgiven, which might still leave a memory behind of the things for which we needed the forgiveness; but justified, meaning that we are as spotless, sinless, as the Saviour Himself; and all the past in memories of fact or dread of destiny are out of sight and out of mind forever. That is the overcoming in the blood of the Lamb. Nothing can be held against us. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "It is God that justifieth." The shedding of the blood was the physical evidence of a life totally poured out to death, and therefore taking all with it that would come to us if we died.

But that alone, tremendous as it is, would not solve our problem or give humanity its release. The cause is our problem, the sin, not the sins. And we have seen sin to be the term used for the nature of the spirit of error who lived his sin-quality of life in his vessels and by

the law of an indwelling spirit, he expresses himself through the human spirit which he indwells. Sins are the products, but the producer is the problem. And what salvation would it be for a human race indwelt by the spirit of sin and thus compulsively expressing his self-loving nature, to be released from the consequences of a sinful life, but not from the compulsive cause? We should just go on living as before. Therefore the Bible presents us with Christ's death in a twofold form—in His blood and in His body, of which we are continually reminded in the memorial Supper. And that is why in Paul's 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 reference to the Supper he speaks of our communion in the blood and body of Christ. But then he says we are one with Him and His body, symbolized by the bread; but he does not say in the same sense that we are one with him in His blood. The reason is that a person's blood is his very self. When that is shed, his life is gone. But a person's body is more external, more we may say his clothing. His blood, therefore was uniquely Him going that way of death for us, and in that respect we were not dying on that cross with Him. Rather we come

to the foot of that cross and see the burdens of our sins rolled away into His tomb, as Bunyan so beautifully puts it. But we are His body. "We being many are one bread, one body"; and in that aspect of Him on the cross, we are there with Him, crucified with Him, buried with Him, risen with Him. And what's the import of that? Because the body is the con-

His body, representing us who were "buried with Him," lay in the tomb with no spirit in it—a human race delivered from that old false indwelling spirit of error. And when He rose, it was by the entry of another Spirit, His Holy Spirit. So when we are joined by faith to Him in His death and resurrection, we are no longer vessels containing the spirit of error, but vessels containing the Spirit of God!

tainer of the spirit, and we humans have become containers of that false spirit of error, whose nature is sin, therefore Paul says that Jesus did more on Calvary than "bear our sins in His own body on the tree"; he said, "God made Him to be sin for us." And that meant that in God's sight we were He, crucified with Him, and His body representing us had that spirit of sin in it. And then the glorious fact

that when a body dies, it is separated from the spirit in it; and so when He died, Paul said He "died to sin" (quite different from dying for our sins). His body, representing us who were "buried with Him," lay in the tomb with no spirit in it—a human race delivered from that old false indwelling spirit of error. And when He rose, it was by the entry of another Spirit, His Holy Spirit. So when we are joined by faith to Him in His death and resurrection, we are no longer vessels containing the spirit of error, but vessels containing the Spirit of God! That is a full salvation—from effects and cause, from products and producer. That is why only the incarnate, crucified and risen Christ can be the world's Saviour.

—excerpted from
Norman Grubb's book
Who Am I?

Romans Seven Puts Me Straight

by Norman Grubb

In this short chapter from Yes, I Am Norman lays bare the lie told to us—and all Christians—that we are able to keep the law on our own steam, a lie that has caused untold guilt and frustration. He details Paul’s personal discovery of this lie—that we are independent selves trying and failing to live a righteous life—in the pivotal chapter of Romans 7. What many Christians see as the normal Christian life he exposes as Satan’s attempt to hoodwink us into the false belief that we are independent selves that can and should keep the law. Rather than the truth that we are merely vessels expressing either Christ (the only law keeper) or Satan (the original law breaker).

Paul continues to open the truth of the value of the law to us by illustrating it from his own experience, in Romans 7:7-25. It centers around the subtlety of the Ten Commandments, and particularly the one commandment which penetrates through outer acts to inner motive: “Thou shalt not covet.” He explains how he was once quite unconscious of any tendency to covet—which he calls “being alive without the law.” But later, on some occasion, this tenth commandment hit him. After a first reaction of “Not me—I’m not covetous,” he was devastated to find in his heart every form of covetousness—“all manner of concupiscence,” he calls it—and this bowled him over. It flooded him like a tidal wave. And so, he states, “sin revived, and I died” to any idea of self-ability to keep God’s law. This experience was what God used to open his eyes to the fallacy of self-reliant selfhood and to lead him both into the experience and

glorious understanding of “union truth”: union with Satan replaced by union with Christ.

So Paul continues his teachings in Romans 7. Let us dig right in and examine in depth what the effects of the law are on us and learn about our final total deliverance from it—which occurs when we’ve reached the awakened and concerned stage, as Paul did over his temptation to covet.

So here *we* are, inwardly delighting in God’s law, and yet frustrated and defeated; challenged by the law, yet laughed at by sin, making it plain that it has us in its control.

First, we can clearly identify Paul’s “man” as ourselves in our new creation, because “delighting in the law of God after the inward man” (7:22) obviously implies it is someone who has the new-heart outlook of a redeemed son of God.

So here *we* are, inwardly delighting in God’s law, and yet frustrated and defeated; challenged by the law, yet laughed at by sin, making it plain that it has us in its control. Here we are, as Paul said, not doing what we should do, and often doing what we hate to do.

But now, through this frustrated condition, maybe sometimes lasting for years, we come to one clear recognition—facts force it upon us: our obvious inability to keep the law. We recognize also that the blame is not on us. We *want* to do the right thing but haven't the power: "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not" (7:18)—so at last we can trace the trouble down to the culprit. What a vital revelation! It is not *I*, it is *sin* that dwells in me, *masquerading as self-effort*.

At last, light has begun to break in on us. Twice over (see verses 17 and 20) Paul exclaims, "*That's it, that's it; it is not I, it is sin dwelling in me.*" It is not the redeemed Paul who is the culprit. It is indwelling sin. He sees it plainly to be not himself but something quite apart from himself. "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me." The culprit is self-relying self! The "sinner" is a separate power who claims to have him as his captive. "I am carnal, sold under sin" (7:14). The commandment came, Paul explains, and when he rose up to do it, sin played a deceitful trick on him: "I've got you. You can't do it. I'm your master and you're my slave, for your very self-reliance is my bondmark in you!"

At that time it would have appeared to Paul, and certainly to multitudes of us, that we are in a condition of permanent warfare. It looks as if we have two natures—my redeemed self that wants to do good, and indwelling sin which defies and defeats me—dog eating dog. And thousands of God's people think that's all it can be: a life of struggle, striving, and much failure...with self-condemnation.

And that, of course, is the big lie. But the vital point is that I can't see it as a lie until I first have finally, once for all, got out of my system this delusion that I myself can do good or evil. It is because of this delusion that I my-

self can do good or evil. It is because of this delusion that I either accept guilty failure or put on false self-righteousness. Paul, in that still mistaken idea about himself, had said (7:21), "When I would do good..."—but the catch is, a human *can't* do good. That can only be done by Christ in us. And when Paul goes on to say "...evil is present with me," he equally can't do evil, for that is Satan in us. But he didn't then know that. Satan alone is the doer of evil; God alone is the doer of good.

But now came the breakthrough of this whole revelation to him—that the human is never anything but the vessel, container, branch, etc., of the indwelling

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But now came the breakthrough of this whole revelation to him—that the human is never anything but the vessel, container, branch, etc., of the indwelling deity.

deity. Now he sees it! "The law has nothing to say to *me*. It is not *I* who am covetous; those sinful urges come from an altogether *different* source—not *I*, but indwelling sin."

The law has really been my friend...hanging over me and putting its pressure on me until at last I see my delusion about self-effort living. Until I see that *self-effort is Satan's principle* the power of indwelling sin has me in its control.

So here is the revelation of total importance—or shall we say, the negative side of the total positive revelation.

We can compare it to our prior experience in our unsaved days: I could not settle into the positive recognition of Christ as my substitute and sin-bearer until I first knew, in a total negative way, that I was a lost sinner, with my righteousness as filthy rags...and nothing I could do about it. Only then could I say, "Oh, I see! *He* took my place."

So now, in this central battle raging around my redeemed self, how can I live my life as a consistent Christian and meet the challenge of the law and its "you oughts"? I cannot see the positive revelation of Christ living His life in me, replacing the false indweller, until I have first seen the total negative revelation of it—that the command has nothing to do with my "human" me except as my being a vessel or container, but has all to

do with this false indweller who is still claiming to live in me and express himself through me. I learn that he grabbed me as I was trying to keep the commandments (an expression of self-effort) and "deceived me and slew me." I can now see why it says "deceived me"—because sin was making a whole, lying claim to indwell and control me, while all the time really Christ was in me...and I didn't know it. Until I did know it, and experience it, it meant nothing to me and left sin in deceitful control of me. That was how the law with its "you oughts" also kept its control over me and brought me under its condemnation...while I was under this lying illusion of self-responsibility and equally in the delusion that sin dwelt in me instead of it really being Christ living in me.

—Yes, I Am

CHRIST BECAME SIN...

The Bible says that Christ became sin—or in other words, He took the spirit of Satan/sin on Himself (2 Cor. 5:21) and was crucified (put to death), the purpose of which was to eternally separate Himself from the sin spirit. This sacrifice of His life made possible this freedom for all mankind. We were crucified with Him. And by His miraculous sacrificial death we, too, were freed from the Satan/sin spirit. However, this work does not take place in our life until we accept Christ and this work He did for us on the cross. At that moment, we are raised to newness of life by the Holy Spirit and from that moment on our life is the life of Christ in us.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him (Rom. 6:6-8).

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies

through His Spirit who dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).

Thus, in actual fact, we become new creatures, or what the Bible calls the "new man." When this exchange of spirits takes place in us, the old man who is made up of our human spirit joined to Satan no longer exists. In spite of what we are universally taught, there is no longer an old man waiting around to re-invent himself as us. Our new life is now the life of Christ who joins himself to us in an eternal union.

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4).

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

—Life: The What, The Who, The Why,
by Page Prewitt

What is an Intercessor?

By Normam Grubb

Let us examine intercession more closely. We would again say it for those within hearing distance: There is suffering as well as glory in this. We all come to the cross for salvation, then we take our place on the cross for our union, and we now can take up our individual cross for the world, if we are willing to. The first two are necessities, the third is voluntary. “Take it up, if you wish,” and this time for others.

The first form intercession takes is *commission*. The Spirit causes me to know that there is something He will do, and do it by me, specifically. It is not something I sought, but it sought me. I’m simply caught by it and cannot escape. I just find myself immersed in it and obsessed by it. So get this clear: It is not a matter of my running around and trying to *find* my commission. No, *it finds me. It is from the Holy Spirit.* Don’t try and find such a commission. That will be the old snare of self-effort. If not conscious of such a specific commission, then I can say to the Lord who is living His life by me, “If You give me such a commission, You’ll make me know it. If not, I just tell You I am ready.”

Such a commission is no passing thing. It is not a prayer I can take up and put down. It is not participating in various interests and activities. It is “*This one thing I do.*” It will be the main drive of my life until it is gained.

Then when conscious of the commission, I respond like Isaiah, “Here

am I; send me.” By that I mean my body is wholly available, which of course includes my soul with its emotions, and my concentrated thought processes. And somewhere along that line is coming travail and death. There will be a *price paid* equivalent to a death; but there again, we do not seek that out or make it up. He brings us into it and through it. We may not even rec-

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ognize the death process until we are well into it. It may mean literal sacrifice of all that goes with our body living: our time, our faculties, our possessions, our finances, our homes, and usually most costly and common of all, our reputation. Misunderstanding and even opposition may arise in our own family circle, among our friends, our social circle, our church fellowship, or right out to the public. As we go through or have gone through our intercession, we

shall well know where we have died.

One who brought to light the principle of intercession to the church in our generation was Rees Howells. He always spoke concerning intercession as “the firstfruits going to the altar,” which referred in type to the meal offering of Leviticus 2. There the first handful of the flour is burned on the altar, and the rest feeds the priests. By that he meant that there would be this “death” in which the self-life, the body-soul life, has had its human setbacks, sacrifice, maybe failure in the eyes of the world or church, and out of that death came the life to others. It is the 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 principle, but this time in specific rather than general form—for this is where Paul is speaking about bearing in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. He then writes, “So death worketh in us, but life in you.”

The intercession is completed, first by being gained on the level of faith, as the intercessor becomes settled in his inner consciousness that the Lord has done it; and second, by his own continued involvement in it, by whatever action accompanies it, while the Spirit brings the thing to pass. And it continues until the intercessor knows that his part in it is fulfilled. Commission. Cost. Completion.

—Yes, I Am

Bible Bedrock

***“When I am weak,
then I am strong”***

—2 Corinthians 12:10

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.

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 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. 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 Corinthians 12:10).

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 Deep Things of God

That Soul Spirit Understanding

By Norman Grubb

In this short and concise chapter from Yes, I Am, Norman delineates between soul and spirit: between “the surges of the waves (soul emotions) and the unmoved calm center (spirit).” Such an understanding frees us from false condemnation over our thoughts and feelings and gives us the “green light” to live fully as Christ in our forms.

A special key is given us for our daily stabilizing by the writer to the Hebrews. He declares that this life has *rest*, not strain as its basis (4:1–11). It is the rest God has had since He rested on the seventh day after completing the creation. It is also that of Israel entering into the land of Canaan. But he goes on to say that the true rest is what we have in Christ, our Joshua. That rest is by no means a folding of the hands, but a fully active life that is a thrill

to live because it has adequacy at its center, not inadequacy. Living life *without* what it takes to live it causes strain; living life *with* what it takes to live it produces rest. The resting life he describes this way: “He that is entered into His rest, he also hath

The key to entering into God’s rest and continuing in it is by a revelation nowhere else so clearly stated in the Bible. It is in knowing the difference between soul and spirit (4:12).

ceased from his own works, as God did from His” (4:10). Living by my own works was when *I* was the worker. The rest-life will have even more works, for *He* is the worker. But that type of working is resting. The key to entering into God’s rest and continuing in it is by a revelation nowhere else so clearly stated in the Bible. It is in knowing

the difference between soul and spirit (4:12).

The Key—Discerning Soul and Spirit

We already have seen that the human spirit is the basic self. Soul and body are the means by which we express

ourselves and live a fully active life. So as long as we confuse what we are in our inner spirit-self with the ways in which we express ourselves by our outer soul and body, we are in trouble.

The writer to the Hebrews likens the difference between soul and spirit to the joints and marrow in our

physical bodies. The marrow is what contains the inner life of the bones—a picture of spirit. The joints are the way by which that inner life goes into action in hands and feet, etc. analogous to soul. And he says we have spirit and soul so mixed up that it takes a revelation for us to see the difference. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” (4:12.)

In simple terms, in our spirits we love. By our soul emotions and body action we express our love. In the spirit we know. By the soul we express our knowledge by our reasoning faculty. (Peter shows the relationship between those two when he says we should be ready to give “a reason for the hope that is in us.”) So soul and body are the precious and only means by which we—our spirit, and God’s Spirit by us—can express ourselves.

The quality of Spirit—spirit union is stillness, for the universal is always still. “Be still and know that I am God.” God spoke to Elijah in a “still, small voice.” Spirit can be compared to the sea, which, with its mighty currents and streams, is a “still” source of

power; the soul is like the rampaging waves which dash about as the expression of that power. The power is in the sea, and not in the waves.

So our danger and problem—till we are awakened to it—is in mistaking the surges of the waves (soul emotions) for the unmoved and calm center (spirit). We get into trouble when we mistake the variable emotions of the soul for our still spirit-center. The waves are feelings such as anger, hurts, jealousies, fears, lusts; or alternatively, soul feelings of depression, deadness, uselessness, meaninglessness, coldness, emptiness, inability to believe—an endless list. The same is true of our soul in its reasoning activities: All kinds of disturbing or evil thoughts can pour into us, with all the doubts and questionings they bring, and influence our mental attitudes. Notice that this verse of scripture also compares soul and spirit to “the thoughts and intents of the heart”: intents, our spirit—fixed purpose; thoughts, our soul—varied opinions about the intents.

That is also why John in his First Epistle (3:19–21) makes a differentiation between our

hearts and God. He says, “if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” “Heart,” representing feelings, is soul—and we can get plenty of condemnation in our feelings. But God, who knows all and doesn’t condemn, speaks His assuring word into our spirits.

Even so, it is easy, outwardly,

John in his First Epistle (3:19–21) makes a differentiation between our hearts and God. He says, “if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” “Heart,” representing feelings, is soul—and we can get plenty of condemnation in our feelings. But God, who knows all and doesn’t condemn, speaks His assuring word into our spirits.

to be strongly drawn by some desire of the heart and seem to be helpless against it. But in my spirit-center, where God is, I know my real desire is His will, and He keeps His firm hold on me. A friend recently wrote regarding a strong desire for a certain thing: “. . .but in this I felt myself kept. This keeping made me angry at times, because I wanted to have my

own way and I knew I could not. I knew it could never be because that wasn’t what the *real me* wanted.” Outward and inward desire: the workings of soul and spirit.

Our Spirit Union

A person inquires of me, “What do I do when I say I am ‘Christ as me’ and yet there is someone I hate?” I laugh and reply, “You are kid-

spirit love is will—and we are fixed in that kind of love. So we may feel more like hell and yet be in heaven.

So we see ourselves in our spirit—center, where we and He are one in spirit, and all things are ours in Him. Soul and body are our wonderful means of endless spirit expression. And having grasped, by the revelation of the Word, the distinction between soul and spirit, I do not fear my soul and body. . . and still less do I foolishly wish I were without their disturbing reactions. No, I thankfully see myself as a whole person, *God’s whole person*. He has equipped me with these fascinating means for living out my full life as a whole self with Himself, in all my life’s activities. Because they are wholly His, I will put no limits on the liberated use of my soul and body. At the same time, I totally enjoy the fact that He has me safely in hand, even with the surges of the negatives temporarily flooding in. Spirit wins its battles over soul and body diversions, being “kept by the power of God”; and we, “having all sufficiency in all things, abound unto every good work.”

—Yes, I Am

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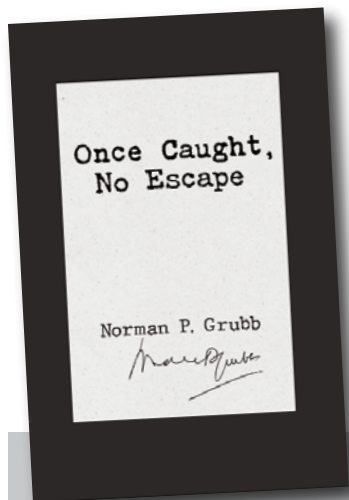
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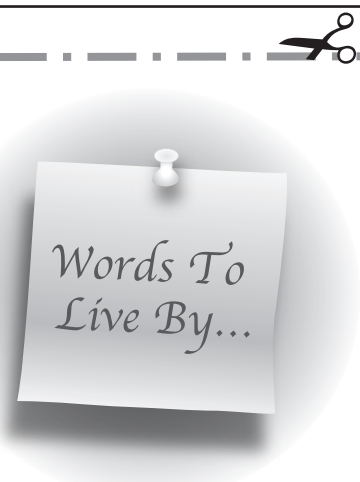
READ

A child is born...

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

— Isaiah 9:6
(King James Version)

“This means that my main function in life changes from activity to receptivity. Activity 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.”
—*The Spontaneous You*



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