

# The Liberating Secret Newsletter

May, 2006

Volume 17

## Ministry News

### Coming Attraction:

Don't forget our annual God Unlimited weekin here in Louisville, Ky. That will happen May 18-21 2006. Just before Dan Stone passed into Glory, he said to many of us, that we all should get back to the fundamentals of union, I'm not sure we ever got off of them, but anyway it is in our hearts to lay down the fundamental teaching that were first taught us, by the Spirit through Norman Grubb.

Expect the Holy Spirit to move in marvelous ways giving us all more insights into our completed salvation and liberation in Christ. Brian Coatney, Bill Bower, Jim Fowler, Steve Pettit, Joe Dunlap and myself to say a few, will teach what to us is the meaning of life. Since there is only one power, and one almighty person in the whole universe. Then we are not separated independent law-bound beings...That is the lie o f the universe. Therefore, "noindependent-self" is the first key to our liberation in Christ--it is not the promise land, Christ as us is that, but it is the key to it. Then the second important key for walking steadily in the promised land is seeing with the single-eye of faith-- i.e. seeing "God only" behind all things. Then lastly, the third key is how Christ is "operating the Cross" by us, which produces transforming power able to liberate others by the laid down life of His intercessors. Our May conference will explore these three, life changing keys, and share as the Holy Spirit gives us unction. Circle May 18-21 on your calendar, you don't want to miss it.

Please RSVP us concerning our May conference, that is, if you have not already done so. 502-245-4581– 502-417-2110

"Spring Into the Spirit" was the theme of a woman's interfaith spiritual retreat, April 22. Margaret Lester and I taught on how we can turn defeat into victory and self-condemnation into self acceptance--God's way. Fran Giles, Jenny Fienning, and Sharon Roy teamed up with us to be used as servants of the Most High. It was wonderful, thank you Kathy Chefas, for your hospitality and hard work putting it all on. 30 different churches were invited to attend this retreat through a newspaper advertisement in the

Mountain Times. Not many came, yet the ones who did attend were illumined by the Spirit's insights and were greatly blessed. One woman said, "thank you for showing me what I already had in Christ, and didn't know it." Those are sweet words to hear.

Fran Giles, Jenny Fienning, Margaret Lester, Sharon Roy and I stayed at the Agnes house, which belongs to Jenny's sister Kathy Chefas. Kathy and John, her husband, live in the mountains in Ashe county, which is as far west and as far north as you can get in North Carolina. They raise Christmas trees on several hundred acres. Interesting, they pay state taxes in North Carolina, and Virginia— their farm is right on the border line. It is an amazing sight to see the thousands of Christmas trees lined up in even rolls over the hills of their farm. After the conference we were a little dishearten because there were not many attendees at the retreat. Although, we would have come if there had been only one person. Lack is the evidence of God's infinite supply. The Lord gave us the verses in John 4:34-35 which says, "Say not you, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? BEHOLD, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest." The word behold struck me, The Lord was saying to me "I promised, now believe me." And as we all looked up from our bibles, we saw fields of Christmas trees lined up like people. Someone said, "look, the trees represent the thousands that the Lord will give us to hear the Liberating Secret. Our hearts were comforted.

If any of you desire us women, Fran Giles, Jenny Fienning, Margaret Lester, and me to come and do a retreat, we are available. And if anyone desires Brian Coatney and myself to come to your church or home group, let us know. It is my life's delight to share liberation to the body of Christ whoever you are, or wherever you live.

## Praise and Prayer Reports

Pray for our coming conference in May. Pray that peace and harmony surround us as we prepare for this all important event. Pray for the workers--an all important job of serving the Lord and His people. Jesus said that we can ask what we want, and then praise Him as if we already have it, because we do. Pray that hearts will be prepared, and lives will be changed. We think this is a given, but praying makes you apart of it all even if you can't come.

# Poem of the Month

## The Great Surprise

I lived much of life with the fear,  
that to embrace the Cross,  
meant sadly that I would disappear.

Where would be me,  
the self that I knew, if like a cuckoo,  
I flew away no more to be?

If only God were there,  
what about uniqueness, you know, the special  
me; how is that fair?

To disappear, how humbling, think of the fear,  
think of actually dying,  
wondering if you really will reappear?

The resurrection' s a chance, a dare,  
a horrible death one never wants,  
it' s gasping for air,

as down, down, down you go,  
into nothing– quiet in the Cross,  
wondering if that' s the end of all you know.

Perhaps it' sbetter to partially die,  
only take some wounds, bandage them up,  
present that self as if from on high.

Even worldings know the farce of that,  
recognizing one not dead as still alive,  
a rabbit cleverly pulled from a hat.

No— only real death will do,  
where without doubt the mourner wears black,  
and burial is the follow through.

Then in the cold grave, if your faith held fast,  
all the way into nothing and death,  
you find yourself at last,

the newborn spirit, high— where the eagle flies,  
through heavenly regions, once impossible, aloft now,  
where despite all hell, one never dies!

Brian Coatney/4-21-06

## Words of Faith

Believe with us for the financial support for the new radio station in Memphis, Tn. That makes 7- five-day a week programs around the country. Any suggestions as to where we might put The Liberating Secret Radio Program next? Stand with us as we venture out in faith believing God, not man. Our motto is: Put the financial heat on God, and not on man.

“ Whatsoever you desire.”

Mark 11:22-24

“ Need produces desire; desire produces faith; faith quenches the pain of desire, and leaps and laughs at the impossible and shouts, “ IT SHALL BE DONE.” Sylvia Pearce

## Fran loves April' sNewsletter

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Wow! Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaat a newsletter! David our Love, you are our new " Sign Of Jonah" !!!!!!!!!!!!!. As I read this letter in It' s entirety, I was thinking," we live in the dieing and resurrection daily, not I, But Christ" So many times we feel locked up in circumstances, when we are locked up we are really able to see that the lock is to keep us in, and keep the enemy locked out while Jesus has His Way with us. He alone is our Key To Everything!!!!!! I Love You Beyond Measure!! Sylvia My Precious Love, how did I ever live before you came into my life? Scottie you are outshining the Sun with the love of Jesus.

Your Own Fran " Love" Giles

## This Months Article

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### The Idea of Limitation: Kierkegaard' s Either/Or and the Bible (a 2006 Easter Sermon)

By Brian Coatney

It' s Easter Sunday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006, and I as a Christian celebrate Christ' s resurrection from the dead. But did He rise bodily from the dead, or does it matter? Not all think that it matters for a Christian, if Jesus rose bodily from the tomb. Recently, I watched a television interview with a noted American fiction writer, and the writer pulled out the Sermon on the Mount, saying that it is the point, living by what it teaches: it doesn' t matter if Jesus is the Son of God or not; His teachings are the point. I also saw a television interview with a world famous Bible scholar who says, regarding the historicity of The Gospel of Judas, that it doesn' t matter if it conflicts with the traditional, canonical Gospels, for

Christianity is based on faith and hope, not historical facts.

Faith, however, cannot exist as just faith; faith requires an object, and one's faith can be no better than the object of one's faith. Bill Bright put this well when he said, "Putting faith in faith is like casting the anchor inside the ship." It's also true, however, that people regularly get disappointed by putting faith in something that fails their expectations: for example, students often have faith that they will pass a course, despite not attending, not doing homework, and not passing tests. Supposedly the good will of the instructor will not let a student fail, and if a student fails, the instructor did not do enough. So the student puts faith in the instructor without taking the instructor at his or her word about how to pass the course; making the instructor a construct of one's own wishes. Once this deception is granted, a person may call himself anything, a Christian, an airplane pilot, a cook, or anything—taking a title and sense of identity without recourse to the facts one must receive in order to merge practitioner and practice.

Here, however, to think about what a Christian is, we need to examine the Bible, seeing it in contrast with other ancient literature vying for canonicity. The traditional canon tells us who Jesus says that He is, records His miracles, and records His rising from the dead. The question is whether these Gospels give the correct, historical information about Jesus' words, deeds, and resurrection. Many have sought to make the traditional canon to be other than these and instead to be layers of stories built up by early Christians to strengthen the community of faith, implying Christianity is not dependent upon historical facts but only on hope and faith. But what are the hope and faith in? C.S. Lewis demolished the notion of a mythological Gospel when he made the point that if Jesus was not who He said He was, then He was a liar or a lunatic: one cannot make just a good man out of Him. Further, if He did not make these claims, but the community of faith added them later, then the community of faith deserves the same indictment as Jesus would have deserved for making such claims.

Suppose for a moment that Jesus is not who He claims to be or who the community of faith made Him to be. What is the faith and hope? How could it be other than faith in the works that a person does, works that commend themselves as a means of justification before God? In other words, we're back to religion, meaning the record of good and bad deeds a person does as the measure of acceptance into heaven. No wonder the Sermon on the Mount is so popular, as well as elevated to an ideal among other ethical sermons of various religions: all would share the same root—the appeal to mankind to love more and do better deeds. We might or might not applaud a prophet of any given religion, but that would not matter, because the point is the ideal or code and our practice of it or aspiration to—not the person who uttered it or his identity.

If our justification with God is based on our works, then we do not need a savior but only an ethical teacher, and the Sermon on the Mount is the pinnacle of teaching about the works that we should do. (Whether we can do them or not is another matter.) Few readers of the sermon would be delusional enough to claim perfect adherence to its teachings, and so justification with God gets reduced to a good enough test score, or at least the wishing to improve, or the occasional intent to improve. Either way, justification is a matter of what we do or do not do—and how well we perform or wish that we could perform.

Unfortunately, the Bible does not support this approach, for Paul reminds us, "For as many are of the works of the law are under the curse" (Gal. 3:10), noting the curse as any veering from total obedience. James argues the same thing: "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (2:10). Lest one think that Paul and James are exceptions to the biblical stream of thought, a reader easily sees from the sacrificial system of the tabernacle and temple the necessity of blood atonement for the forgiveness of sins. Even many pagan religions of old offered blood sacrifices to appease God, and some occult practitioners make blood sacrifices. So the idea of blood sacrifice to a deity has been part of the human consciousness for a long time, and why not, for Genesis records

that Cain's sacrifice of grain, which represented his own work, did not find favor with God, whereas, Abel's sacrifice of animals—offering their blood—did bring favor and did not represent Abel's attempting to win God's favor through human works.

The devil never rests, though. As vehemently as the Bible cries out against our works as the means to justification, we are like the little choo-choo who tried, thinking that we will find a way to do something that will cause God to say, "You meant well, and you did a some charity work now and then; come on into My Kingdom." This does not differ from the child who hears a parent's mandate but tests it unendingly, waiting for the bargain or concession that eventually comes. The Bible, however, presents an unyielding parent, God, who never bargains with a person, not even to keep that person out of hell. Until we see this about God, we keep thinking that His desire to keep us out of hell will override our failure to achieve perfection by our works, and thus the many systems that end up at universalism.

Let's stay on the works theme for now though. Suppose a person cannot be justified by works but also can be justified by works—in other words, suppose two contradictory things can both be true. Lest you think that absurd, we have all thought that way, as evidenced by the old cliché, "You can't have your cake and eat it too." We wake up to the tension of life when we realize that to choose one thing means not choosing another. But we don't like Yes or No: we like Yes and No. Though that's what we like, faith operates differently. People who insist, with the Bible, on Yes or No are not popular, and Soren Kierkegaard proved no exception. One point that stands out in Kierkegaard's is his loathing of Hegel's argument that two contradictory things can be true through a synthesis of the two—a "best of both worlds" approach. Hegel, therefore, found a way to purport a "both/and" view, which easily leads to taking the best of all viewpoints and looking for common elements.

Kierkegaard, a biblical man, knew that Hegel's view destroys Yes or No, and all limits really. Therefore, he wrote *Either/Or*, a title

guaranteed to offend the flesh. Kierkegaard considered insanity (he calls it rebellion and defiance in *Sickness unto Death*) the idea that something can be both/and. Think about the claims of Jesus, for example, according to a both/and viewpoint: "Jesus was the Son of God, but He was not the Son of God." How do we keep from losing our minds if we try to solve those contradictions in a both/and way? Well, we could say that Jesus was the Son of God, but there are other Sons of God too— even us, leading to the idea that we are all Sons of God. This obliterates the uniqueness of Christ. His deity is not even unique, for one could argue that we are all deity and don't know it yet: Jesus was ahead of His time.

The problem with this both/and view of Jesus as the Son of God is that the traditional biblical writers do assert uniqueness to Jesus as the Son of God. The Bible says that we are not and never can be exactly who Jesus Christ is, the only begotten Son of the Father. What the Bible does say is that God created us to contain Christ and express His being as us— meaning that God created us to be earthen vessels to contain Him as the treasure, God created us to be temples to contain His Spirit, and God created us to be branches on His vine. In each of these biblical examples, our identity is established as "not God" so that joined to God, we can live as expressions of Him. The only created being who actually tried to be God himself instead of a created expression of God, in union with God, turned into the devil, and the devil has propagated the same lie to mankind since Adam and Eve. To say that you are "not God" and "God" according to a both/and, means that you end up saying that you are God. To say that you are an expression of God because you are in union with God means that you are "not God," but God expresses Himself as you. This is either/or.

Let's look at another example of both/and: "Jesus rose from the dead, but He didn't rise from the dead." Everyone knows that as a historical assertion, both can't be true. So how can a so-called Christian get a synthesis, a both/and, out of this? The simple way is to say that it doesn't matter if Jesus rose bodily from the grave; believe that if you want— the point is that Jesus gives us hope

and faith. Isn't this lunacy? How can I find hope and faith by believing that Jesus did not rise from the grave as a historical fact?

Now we have come to the best of the both/and hypotheses: "You can know that you're not perfect but go to heaven anyway." Wait a minute, isn't that what Christians believe? Of course, for we know that we have sinned, we ourselves have not been perfect and cannot be perfect, but as Christians, we know that Jesus made the propitiation for our sins, meaning that His blood is the sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, God does not look at our works but Christ's blood and Christ's resurrection as our justification, the resurrection a necessary act, since to impart Christ's righteousness to us, Christ must still be alive, and if He died, He can only be alive by the resurrection. So it appears that we do not have to be perfect; we can be imperfect and go to heaven since Jesus Christ is our righteousness, which the Father gives to us as our righteousness.

Yet, though this looks contradictory, i.e. we must be perfect yet we cannot be perfect, notice the consistency: God does demand perfection: He just finds it, however, not in works that we do, but in works His Son does that we receive by faith as our works. You might argue though that a synthesis does emerge here, a both/and, for though God demands perfection of works, the works are not ours but Christ's, implying that we must be perfected by works and yet we cannot be perfected by works.

Is this a checkmate to either/or? Hardly. When the Bible speaks of justification, it is true that God looks only at who Christ is and His work on the Cross for us. So in one sense the works are not ours but Christ's and never can be ours, for Christ's identity as the Son of God, and Christ's sacrifice for us, are unique, and we cannot ever be God and perfect. Yet Jesus commanded us to be perfect. The only way is that He be the perfection in us, such that we find ourselves living out perfection, all the while the perfection is He alone, but at the same time His expressing His perfection by us as we receive it by faith.

Such perfection takes the emphasis completely away from what we do and puts it entirely upon what He does in us, based on Christ's atonement for us, and now Christ's life in us, since God resurrected Him from the dead and put His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, in us. Thus, by union with Him, our works are perfect, when they are His works in us; but they do not originate from us as our works, meaning that we do not generate them.

This puts all the emphasis on faith and not on works, for faith means that we receive His perfection as an actual life in us and not as a mental assent only. To believe in Christ, therefore, means that I not only think that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, but that He included me in His resurrection, and this is exactly what we find in Romans 6, where we read that we died in Christ, were buried in Christ, and rose in Christ. His resurrection means that He produces in us the Christian life by the same power that brought His dead body out of the tomb.

Still, one might argue, "Brian, this is a synthesis and an example of both/and, for it combines the demand that our works be perfect and yet the fact that our works are not perfect, arriving at perfect works that are ours even though we cannot do the works." But this is exactly why justification is either/or and not both/and. The works are not ours in origin or derivation: they are only God's works. They only become our works by faith as we receive them into ourselves and live out the life of God in our different looking human selves. The point is that we live either by His works or by our works, but we cannot live by both; for once we attempt to live by both our works and His works, we are living by our works, for we then sink to the lower of the two that we try to mix.

Detractors of "faith alone" often argue that people who profess faith alone live short on works. This is only true where faith is assumed to be mental assent only: mental assent does not produce change of life, or as the Bible puts it, transformation by the Spirit. Mental assent can operate from the human brain, but only the mind of Christ in a person transforms a person, and we can only live from the mind of Christ by our actual receptivity of

His mind in us, which takes place by faith. So once again, we are not living from both/and— meaning both faith and works— we live instead only by faith, meaning that we actually put down our resistance and receive with ease of faith His life in us, as a branch easily expresses the life of the vine but has no life of its own apart from the vine, for Jesus said that we can do nothing apart from Him.

So— one can only live the Christian life by faith alone. If works do not evidence that, deception is rife, because one must call the works of God what are not the works of God, and so we have the warning of all the key epistle writers of the New Testament against calling the life of Christ what is not the life of Christ. Paul names the works of the flesh; Peter says that the dog returns to its vomit when a person rejects the qualities he names as evidence of those who are partakers of the divine nature; James tells us that failure to bridle the tongue and lack of concern for widows and orphans indicate lack of faith; and John says that the devil is the one who practices unrighteousness. Nowhere do any of these writers assume that a Christian lives by works initiated or sustained by the human: they all assert that God must be the One who works in us, and they describe in easy terms how to recognize the true from the false, and they don't hesitate to call the false what it is. Here we are— either/or again. One cannot walk in the Spirit and produce the works of the flesh. How easy to understand— unless we call darkness light.

Many, though, concede that Christ alone must do the works in us. But Christ as a name to them may not mean Christ as the traditional canon describes who He said Himself to be. To them it may not mean the historicity of His resurrection from the dead, and it may not mean that Jesus Christ of the Bible is the only Christ who needs to live in us. In other words, other mystical systems may set forth living by a higher power in us. The Bible, however, says that we can only reach the roof of the intended house by one foundation under the house. So unless we get there by Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God, by His blood sacrifice for us and death as us (Galatians 2:20 and Romans 6), and by His historical resurrection from the dead, then

we're on the roof of the wrong house: Satan loves to live in people too, and he loves to call himself Christ, and John tells us in 1 John that many antichrists have gone out into the world.

Some, though, might even concede all of this but argue that all are saved even though they don't know it yet. After all, doesn't Paul say in 2 Corinthians 5, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled Himself to us by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (5:18)? Yes, Paul does say that, and God has reconciled Himself to us. But are all, therefore, reconciled to Him? How can it be that a person is reconciled to God without knowing it? Choice makes for consciousness, and a person becomes conscious by saying yes to one thing and no to another. Refusing one opposite and embracing the other causes tension, but it also fixes our consciousness— by choice (and faith is choice, i.e. the choice to receive)— in what we embrace. This is why Paul says in the same chapter, "be ye reconciled to God" (5:20), for how can we receive the reconciliation if we don't receive it?

Here we are again at either/or and not both/and— one cannot be reconciled to God without the actuality of being reconciled: one cannot possess what one doesn't take, for as Norman Grubb said all the time, "What you take, takes you." If one doesn't take, one doesn't get taken. The royal freedom of choice is crucial, for by either/or, one must choose God or reject God; and one can reject God: that is freedom. Not to have taken God means to have rejected Him; the Bible says that we start out in sin and must take Him. We can't be saved by faith but find it also true that we can be saved without choosing by faith to be saved. The end result of both/and— i.e. the notion that one can be saved by faith (and faith is conscious) but also be saved without knowing it, i.e. without a choice, makes God One who automatically operates people whether they want Him to or not. Where is love in that?

What applies for justification applies also to the living of the Christian life. Walking in the Spirit is conscious, even when spontaneous, for spontaneity comes from choice. A concert

musician plays spontaneously because the conscious has become the unconscious, not because unconscious ability sprouts on its own apart from consciousness; and consciousness comes from choice between opposites. Opposites present us with tension that we don't like; but in no other way can we know a thing except by refusing its opposite and embracing, therefore, a thing itself, but not in any way its opposite.

The truth of this gets to the root of why some find that the Christian life does not work even when they have said, "I am Christ in my form." They finally get discouraged by the works of the flesh and do one of three things. Such a person usually tries to call Christ what before would have seemed lunacy and demonic to call Christ. John, in his first letter, says that this is the lie of calling darkness light. Honest people give up and quit trying to live the Christian life. The unbelieving ones at least stop calling themselves

Christians. The believing ones that give up and quit, really do stop trying to do their own works and call them Christ, and they drop resistance to the Holy Spirit and give way (faith) to the fruit of the Spirit in them.

This is the either/or of things and why the Bible writers cried out loudly against a Christian life that isn't Christian; this is why reformers in the last 2000 years have cried out against a Christianity that isn't really Christian in its view of Christ, against a Christianity that doesn't hold to a historical resurrection of Christ, and against a Christianity that doesn't produce Christ in us. May the reformers never vanish from our world!

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