

# The Liberating Secret Newsletter

April 2009

Volume 52

**The Whole Gospel, to the Whole man, to the Whole World.**  
(All of Christ, in and manifesting as all of redeemed humanity)

Listen to Sylvia and Scott on Billy Graham's radio program:  
["The Hour of Decision"](#)

**Christ, Our Life Ministries presents:**

**God Unlimited Enrichment  
Week-End  
May 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2009**



...Come join us for the 8th Annual Conference....

**“ARISE AND SHINE”**

**(Isa. 60:1-4)**

There is a definite move of our Father in the earth today. **“Arise and Shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen on thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side”** (Isaiah 60:1-4).

So many are caught in the distress, the uncertainty, the suffering of just trying to live...What is happening to the human race? You may ask, “What is happening in “my world”? Who cares? What am I doing here anyway? Is there any ‘real peace’ to be had?”

**Come hear life changing teachings** the Apostle Paul described so extensively in all of his writings. Let the Spirit reveal to you what God revealed so powerfully to Paul. Let’s learn how to turn... defeat into victory and self-condemnation into self-acceptance...God’s way. We will begin on Thursday evening at 7:00 PM and continue all thou Friday and Saturday, ending noon on Sunday.

**We invite you** to a weekend that includes a rich blend of teaching and wide open sharing, —a weekend that ranges from talks that cover the Scriptural basis for:

**God’s eternal purposes for His Created forms...; Where did the Glory go?...; What is Man?...; What really happened in the Garden?...; How evil fits into God’s plan...; The Radical Discovery of the Lie of ‘Independent Self’ (get over your (false) self)...; But at the same time “Give your true humanity a break”...; How we operate as Spirit beings calling into being that which doesn’t exist...; Discovering the fullness of our Throne rights...; What does it mean to be a “King and Priest”...; and much more!!**

As the Lord leads, an exciting schedule of presenters will take shape. You will be blessed by your favorite teachers, such as **Steve Pettit; Ray Hughes; Sylvia Pearce; Brian Coatney; Ron Block** to name a few. However, maybe YOU feel the urge to share, yourself. The Spirit may have put that irresistible leading into lots of you to get up and give a word of fresh insights and testimony. Get ready however, for the unexpected to take place during the “open mike” times of sharing after each teaching time.

Additionally, Friday and Saturday afternoons will feature workshop titles to choose from—each propelled by discussion and facilitated by volunteers. We anticipate that many of you will have great ideas on workshop themes, so send us your ideas.

The law of opposites guarantees plenty of good back and forth interaction; after all, the negative has its healthy place in moving to the positive.... **So expect a process more than just an end product.**

Some of our Louisville friends will be able to host some of you, but most of you will find accommodations at one of these motels that are nearby, ...in fact they are all located in the same business complex. For the **best rates** please e-mail or call: **Norma Mouser** at [norma@traveloptions.net](mailto:norma@traveloptions.net) or call her at **502-420-0904; or at 1-800-223-7100.** Here are some of the local motels to choose from: Best Western (502) 267-8100; Comfort Suites (502) 266-6509; Sleep Inn (502)266-6776 or the more affordable Microtel (502) 266-6590. However going through Norma would probably be the best and most economical way. **RSVP to:**

[sylviap@theliberatingsecret.org](mailto:sylviap@theliberatingsecret.org), or call 502-245-4581; 502-417-2110

Our own Jenny Fienning and her crew will prepare lunches for us during the weekend so we can fellowship at the house.. Check the roster to see if you are "part of the crew" for Friday, Saturday, or Sunday lunch. Coffee, tea, water, and lemonade will be available all day... You will be responsible for your own breakfast and dinner.

Ron Block, Ray Hughes, and Julie Lee will bless us with his outstanding musical talent and the Lord may lead a number of you to bring your own instruments, songs, and inspiration. Let us know if you want to be involved with the music!!

The conference will take place in a tent on the beautiful brick patio behind our home. We 'trust' for balmy May breezes and the refreshing sunshine.... BUT...whatever the weather, we guarantee a weekend of enrichment as we all worship, sing, study and share together in our union with Christ.

We will be streaming this year, so friends from other countries will join us by internet.

We can't wait to see you,  
All our love,

Scott and Sylvia Pearce

**PLEASE... R.S.V.P. before April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008.**

Call 502-245-4581 or 502-417-2110 or

Email: [sylviap@theliberatingsecret.org](mailto:sylviap@theliberatingsecret.org)



## The Perfect Consciousness is not a Sin Consciousness

by Brian Coatney

Many Christians live with a sin consciousness. This means more than conviction of a particular sin; it means the nagging, guilt-ridden sense of never being clean and right with God. "Surely I have done something that I shouldn't have or not done something that I should have."

Therefore, one with a sin consciousness constantly prays, "Father forgive me of my many sins." I'm sure that they are there, so I never have the sense that I have done enough or been enough. The deception here comes from looking at the self as if God looks at what I do, meaning my works. I work for God's approval instead of living by faith. Of course, I don't dare think that my works take me to heaven; that would add something to the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. However, living the "Christian life" must be my duty—to love and serve Christ and try to be like Him. No wonder this practitioner always feels unworthy, shameful, and far from peace of mind.

This sin consciousness also produces low self-image, constant guilt, and the nagging sense of

not being whole. This slaps God in the face either intentionally or unintentionally and hangs on to the Old Covenant idea of offering continual sacrifices for sin. Hebrews 9:1-2, however, argues that the Old Covenant sacrificial system could never take away the "consciousness of sins" (9:2 NASB) as proved by the fact that the offerings continued every year as a reminder of sins.

In other words, a perfect sacrifice would be one that took away the "consciousness of sin" so that no other offering would ever be needed. Jesus Christ was that perfect offering, and so He took away the "consciousness of sins." We don't need to keep offering Him again and again. A believer with a sin consciousness, therefore, hangs on to a deception, either knowingly or unknowingly. If I as a Christian still have a sin consciousness, does God need to do more? To borrow a phrase from Romans, "God forbid." Hebrews 10 warns that thinking God needs to do more is to trample underfoot the blood of Jesus. This is what the writer means by, "Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin" (10:18). All we need to do is to "draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (10:22). There's nothing more for God to do, and nothing for us to do either except believe. Yet Hebrews 10 stood as one of the most terrifying chapters in the Bible until I saw this complete work of God. God looks at what *He* has done, not what I have done. So if I look to myself and to what I do, then I will never think that I have done enough, and I will always have the sick feeling of guilt and falling short. In general, this means living under the dark cloud of constant condemnation where the devil keeps accusing me, and I keep accepting the condemnation as if I am a bad, unworthy self. When the focus is on ourselves, we accept the devil's interpretation of our temptations, thoughts, and feelings: we think we have an old nature and we then falsely identify with it as the real self, whereas God says that our real self is a totally new creation, which is our human spirit joined to Christ's Spirit in an incredible union of oneness. By losing ourselves in His divinity, we find our right humanity and start ignoring the devil's interpretation of our temptations and soul-body negatives. This new self, the new man, is therefore not a reformed or amended version of the old man. The old man, Paul tells us in Romans 6 and Ephesians 2, was the vessel indwelt by the spirit of error. Nothing a person does can change, improve, or reform the old self; it must die, and die it did in Christ's crucifixion. In Christ's resurrection, we rose as a new creation. We still look the same physically, for our body parts look the same. In another sense, however, we do not look the same. The Spirit transforms us into beings of light, and that light quickens and transforms even these mortal bodies. The new man is the spirit of the man (or woman) joined to Christ. The new man is Christ joined to the spirit of the human. No condemnation exists here, even when tempted, or when our thoughts and feelings falsely suggest that we're not new.

My old mentor, Norman Grubb, often said, "Condemnation is from beneath; light and liberty are from above." If we take condemnation, we falsely think that God is wrathful toward us, full of malice. This is a lie perpetrated by the devil. The sin consciousness in a Christian can only remain, however, when one really still takes Satan's consciousness as if it is a right and holy thing to go around saying, "I'm unworthy, I'm no good, I'm wretched." Hebrews 10 tells us, though, that God did a perfect and complete job; we do not have to live with a sin consciousness.

This does not mean that a Christian cannot commit a sin. It does mean that conviction of sin, if a sin occurs, comes from the Holy Spirit. Conviction is clear and specific, and it does not bring condemnation. Consider also, that letting go of the deception of a sin consciousness means that

sin will be less likely because our focus will be on what God has perfectly done in us and what He does by the Spirit, instead of what we should do for Him.

Instead of trying to keep ourselves, we will say, "God, I'd be into that sin immediately if You weren't keeping me, and thank-you that You are keeping me." Knowing this does not mean that I have a sin consciousness; it means that I live in the awareness that I cannot keep myself, and that God is keeping me.

Romans 6 tells us that we are dead to sin, meaning that sin no longer owns and indwells us. Romans 7 tells us that we are dead to law, for the power of sin is in the law. In our crucifixion with Christ, we died to sin and the law, since Christ became who we were and died to them, taking us into His body when He died. He took us into His burial, and then He recreated us by taking us into His resurrection. All of this good news gets appropriated by faith, for all experience comes from faith. Faith means that something is available and reliable, and thankfully life without the nagging sin consciousness is available: Hebrews 9 and 10 explain that. Next, one desires to live in the cleansed consciousness. Desire is not enough, however, without taking; for faith also means taking something. Having taken a thing, it takes us over, and we live in it. Don't touch that: the Taker does His part of the taking; that's His business. So, you do not have to live in constant, vague guilt, always saying, "I should have done more of this," or "I should have done less of that." This means that nothing you do will ever be enough, so you will always pray that vague prayer, "Father forgive us of our many sins." A consciousness like this actually produces many sins.

Rejecting a consciousness like this produces a whole new consciousness of who Christ is in us as new creations. Even if we do sin (I say *if* because we're not doomed to keep sinning), we don't take condemnation but accept His cleansing, get up, and move on boldly. We may have great grief over hurts we cause, but the torment and devilish bondage will not hang on to us. Those who live without a sin consciousness live freely, see Hebrews 9 & 10, and aren't always second guessing their decisions. They hear the voice of God, they know the serenity of the Holy Spirit, and they know that God is guiding them and giving them a clean heart and mind. They live in the very mind of God Himself, and that of His Son, and Holy Spirit.

They do not go around chronically saying, "If only I did this," or "If I did more of that," etc. Instead of living in the sludge-pile of what they think self should do, they live in the glorious joy of what *God* has done in them and is doing by faith.

They know that perfection is not a thing that we achieve; perfection is a Person, the Person of God. They do not try to be perfect; they live in the Perfect One and He in them.



## A Few Thoughts on Samson

Brian L. Coatney

If we look for insights about Samson, we easily find a plethora of commentary on how he broke his vows by eating honey from a lion carcass and insisted on unsuitable women unwisely to his own destruction. I'm here to incite you concerning the awe of the messiah and the wisdom that flows from him when Samson, the devastated warrior, experiences the new birth and commences a life of faith and intercession, so that a blind man's inner eyes of faith bring down a fortress of enemy warlords and inscribe Samson's name among faith's immortals in Hebrews 11.

But first, think of the miraculous annunciation to Manoah's wife about the upcoming birth of a son to her hitherto barren womb, and let's name some of the other great barren women that God used to populate his miraculous household: Sarah, Rebekkah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth—not a bad cast of godly women! This shows that even the godliest woman cannot conceive and give birth to the promised seed; the human womb, fallen and dead, cannot procreate the new, supernatural race—the new creation. No, for that, a divine womb must operate to bring about the new birth that makes us into new creations.

Manoah and his wife get the opportunity to experience this. From the Judges account, we see that the angel of the Lord comes with miracles and promises, but Manoah, governed by fear, thinks that he and Ms. Manoah are doomed to die since they have seen the Lord. Ms. Manoah, livelier in faith, tells him that God wouldn't have bothered with the annunciation and miracles if He intended to kill them. She picks up immediately that the story is about deliverance, not extinction; and so her faith flies into operation since she already knows what she can't do, and now she is ready to enjoy what God is doing.

Samson's supernatural birth included the Nazarite vow, which meant no grapes, no corpses, and no haircuts. Grapes were a basic source of sugar, and therefore pleasure. To forgo them indicated suffering; for example, Jesus told his disciples at the Last Supper that he wouldn't drink of the grape with them again until the new kingdom, turning their eyes and ours to eternal life.

Next, the concept of not touching a corpse leads us to consider a new dimension of life where we never touch death again: the sting of death gets removed, and as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15, the death gets its sting from sin, and sin from law.<sup>1</sup> In order to move into a dimension of no more corpses, God must give us a solution not based on law keeping as a means of attaining holiness.

Last, the injunction against haircuts brings us to consider Paul's statement that a woman's glory is her long hair. Odd as it may seem, the Nazarite vow about hair looks back to the time before the schism of the sexes in Paradise, and forward to the reuniting of the sexes in favorable union through Christ's atonement and the wisdom of the Cross that truly makes male and female one body as first created.

So all three Nazarite injunctions take a view of life that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>2</sup> These vows envision a life not procreated by a natural womb or sustained by the natural efforts of man. Only in the dimension of the Spirit can we enter into the life pointed to in the Samson story.

Let's be real then about Samson: God knew that Samson couldn't and wouldn't keep those vows; God knew that He created us as vessels, temples, and branches of Himself and not as self operating selves that can do what is right. Once again, we enjoy the wisdom of the New Testament to interpret with, and so Paul tells us that no one is ever made righteous by law keeping. To the contrary, only faith justifies us—faith in Christ.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, even though Samson enjoyed a supernatural birth, he could never live higher than his faith apprehension of that birth.

As long as he considered himself a product of flesh, he would continue to break his vows and remain in the seduction of the world's wisdom.

Samson is the story of us all if we have ears to hear it: we start out as law breakers who try to become righteousness though keeping vows and laws, only to find that we lack the ability, and fall plunge ever deeper into ruin. With Samson, he experienced anointing regularly to do astonishing feats, but he still had flesh mixed up with Spirit a lot of the time, and eventually his life collapsed in a web of intrigue where he depended on his own wisdom instead of the wisdom from above. Instead of moving increasingly into Spirit, he meddled and toyed with the wisdom of the world, against which we're always overmatched.

This means that we need to recognize our God meant powerlessness, for understanding powerlessness provides the key to our strength: God's strength is made perfect in our weakness.<sup>4</sup> At creation God made Adam weak, and God intended Adam to glory in that weakness. Weakness doesn't imply sin but rather our state of eternal dependency. In every human life holiness comes from God Himself in us, expressing Himself in our human forms.

Samson had to learn this painfully, as we all do if we desire to learn it. Down he went, and we can say, "Samson should have done this," or "Samson shouldn't have done that," but such analysis only keeps our focus on Samson and not the one who birthed Samson supernaturally as a figure of the new birth in Christ.

What—Christ in the book of Judges? You bet, for we see a vineyard, a dead lion, and the honey that Samson scraped out of the lion's carcass. Before Samson discovered Christ, he reveled in the natural world that God made subject to him by the power of the Spirit through the Nazarite calling. Samson didn't see himself as a new creation being, living totally in the stream of the Spirit, but as Samson the natural man, endowed with supernatural gifting. This difference proves critical.

For one thing, the natural view leaves a person mired up with a view of the self as still the same but needing boosts of power added to our moral resolve and performance. This is not a new creation but the old creation supposedly improved and empowered. In contrast, the supernatural view reveals to us our death, followed by resurrection as a completely new creature. Old things are passed away!<sup>5</sup> This comes about once again by three things we've already seen in Samson's encounters: a vineyard, a dead body, and honey. This time, however, they are the heavenly realities and not natural phenomena.

First, the vineyard is the true vineyard, meaning the blood of Christ—a vineyard never off limits, even to a Nazarite. Second, the lion carcass is not now an earthly lion but the heavenly lion of Judah, Christ Himself, whose death made us dead to sin.<sup>6</sup> Instead of an anointed Samson killing a lion on earth, a heavenly lion is killed to do away with our body of sin. Last, the sweet honey of wisdom comes to us out of the wisdom of the Cross, a wisdom that the natural mind cannot understand.

So we see the blood of Christ, the body of Christ, and the mind of Christ. When Samson hit bottom, he was ready for these and saw that life is not about the natural man or the carnal man—but about the spiritual man, born from a heavenly womb and feeding on the blood, body, and mind of Christ. The blood of Christ becomes his forgiveness and the blood of the new creation man, the body of Christ becomes the body that he is now joined to, and the honey is the sweetness of God's heavenly wisdom in the Cross that operates in us by faith.

Samson's constant dabbling and flirting with things on a mere physical and psychological level had been Satan's deception, keeping him from seeing his birthright as announced by the angel of the Lord, much as with the carnal Christian who doesn't know life in the Spirit yet but mostly still the ways of the flesh. Samson, though, let his failures press him into moving from

life in the flesh into life in the Spirit.

Once there, the heavenly man, despised and broken looking on a natural level, turned into the intercessor who surprised the enemy with a wisdom not of this world, for Samson's body indeed also became a laid down life, the sacrifice of a body taken over by Christ and the wisdom of the Cross.

Welcome indeed to the heavenly man.



## Who was Melchizedek?

Sylvia Pearce

Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." Little did Abraham know that through his simple faith, God was going to birth into being a great nation of Spirit sons. With the promised seed yet in his loins, God showed Abraham a personified foretaste of what this mighty nation would be like. Abraham had just returned from a victorious battle over a confederacy of Kings who had conquered Lot and his family. This battle had taken place in the valley of Shavah, or King's dale. Then suddenly a mysterious and strange King-Priest, named "Melchizedek," appears out of nowhere offering Abraham bread and wine. Melchizedek then blessed Abram and said "Blessed be Abram of the Most High God possessor of heaven and earth."

Abraham immediately recognized Melchizedek's greatness and majesty for he humbly bows to his superior presence. Just the meaning of his name "King of righteousness, and King of peace" probably overwhelmed Abraham with a magnitude which demanded his silence. They stood together with little to say, but the very moment was pregnant with symbol and meaning which only time alone with God, could explain.

Who was this Gentile King-Priest who had "no earthly lineage, or beginning of days, nor end of life?" And why was God showing Abraham this marriage of roles personified in this Gentile King, Melchizedek?" There had never been a King-Priest role united into **one** man and **one** office before this time. The Kingship role had its beginnings with King Saul, and God certainly appointed the office of the High Priest to Aaron, but never united into one role. Yet wasn't this great King just "like (Christ) the Son of God," who is the "King of Judah," "the Lamb of God" and our "Great High Priest?"

Here Melchizedek stood, the very picture of a new order of Spirit Sons, yet centuries out of his season. His type had moved backwards from the future to show Abraham what was yet to come. He was very strange to Abraham, for he was representing a future Savior\Christ and a great family of Spirit people that would come into being right out of Abraham's unborn promised seed. In silence they simply communed together with bread and wine. Did Abraham know that they were eating the very symbol that represented the Savior's pour out blood, and broken body, the very means that would birth this great nation unto being? Probably not.

God had taken a quantum leap and bent time back around so that Abraham could get a foretaste of what was yet to come in the future. This figure represented a evaluation of mankind's consciousness raised in Christ. If we dare look with Abraham into the future using

the foreknowledge of God, we will gaze at this slow, but painful process which would raise man's consciousness to the King-Priest, Melchizedek level.

Let us look first at the promised seed yet in Abraham's loins, and then right on through to the Jewish nation providing a vehicle for God to be born in human flesh. But even more than that to the Jews, who pioneered mankind way to God through animal sacrifices offered in a outer temple, and through the outer presence of God in the Holy of Holies, and through temporary forgiveness. These fleshly ways were crude and could never permanently take away sin, nor raise man's divided consciousness. Yet the flesh way must come first, for Spirit truth get its reality by replacing its fleshly counterpart.

Next, we see in Abraham's future, the promised Savior, who would by the Cross set mankind free from sin (which is Satanic), and birth into being a nation of Spirit sons just like 'The Son' himself. Our oneness with Christ raises our consciousness from flesh to Spirit, "for the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, dwells in us and quickens our mortal flesh." And finally as Spirit sons, we then gladly lay down our lives as living sacrifices for others, thus completing the pattern.

These liberated sons, like Melchizedek, are the Kings and Priest of the "Most High God."

A great and mighty nation, a priestly order after the power of an "endless life" which is an eternal order. This new order replaces carnal commandments orchestrated by temporal priest. For these earthy ministries could never permanently take away sin or perfect the recipient of the ordinances. But now through the resurrection of the Lamb of God and our great High Priest, Jesus has the eternal authority to represent us in His Priestly role as our intercessor and raise us up with Him to His own level of power and authority. Therefore reproducing Himself in and as us, and anointing us Kings and Priest. "Ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, and holy nation a peculiar people;" (I Peter 2:9).

So Abraham, our Father, bows and gives tithes to one who represents the Savior as well as the great unborn nation of King-Priest yet in his loins. For "the less (Abraham) is blessed of the better (Melchizedek)" Hebrews 7:7.

If you see a seed, you are really looking at the hope of new life which eventually births into tree form, which then reproduces itself and eventually develops into a great forest. That is what Abraham was looking at in Melchizedek, and he bowed his knee with all creation with what he saw. The magnificence of God's love which would birth a great nation out of Abraham's simple faith, and then "count it to him for righteousness."



## **Adventure in Adversity**

"We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus" 2 Cor. 4:10

For what reason does God come to us in adverse circumstances or in contradictory people? The Answer is that it is not for our personal benefit, for our testing or further sanctification or something. We are so used to relating everything to ourselves in the spiritual life as much as in the material that we tend to interpret everything in that light—what is God doing or saying to ME through this? Not at all. God, who is pure outgoing love, has other ends in view. We are now His body, and a person has a body not for feeding or clothing or coddling but for using. So

Christ in His body. He lives over again in us in all sorts of circumstances to reach others by us. Now that turns adverse situations into adventure. They are not for the dreary purpose of some more self-improvement (an impossibility anyhow!), they are the out flowing of the rivers to others. It is pitiful to hear so often even elderly saints still regarding their trials, physical or material, as some further lessons for which they are to learn, instead of the freshness of the outlook: Here is God, even in my old age, opening further doors for sharing Him with others. Taken from God Unlimited by NPG

## Afterglow from Pawley's

My precious humanity restored, "Christ in me, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27) freely expressed itself. For nought had I been set free from the wretched bondage of performance, expectation, and guilt, but me plus the King of Glory no longer cozened my mortal being. I had ignorantly eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil entirely long enough. Oh that impudent, malicious fiend, who with guile and eloquence did deceive skillfully! His profane fruit was rotten to the core. In the unseen and eternal, my "life is hidden with Christ in God," (Colossians 3:3). The purest, most righteous, sacrificial tree in the garden remained a fixed reality before the foundations of the world. Taking "root downward and bearing fruit upward" (Isaiah 37:31), Sin ceased to immure me. Truly "Christ is all in all," (Colossians 3:11). The extraordinary I AM living, moving, and having his being expressed in, through, and assuredly as me! Pure ecstasy inhabited my body, soul, and spirit.

Later in our journey, Grandfather revealed how that was a symbol (a starfish broke one of its arms while I was holding it) of casting strongholds out of our lives and hearts which the great counterfeiter had convinced us we could not live without.

Moseying back to Grandfather's final earthly dwelling, the Prince of Peace began to unveil my similarities to the two perfect starfish I carried home. I had desired my life to reflect flawlessly the life of Christ. In my striving, I had lost sight of His true fulfillment in my cherished humanity. There existed an unwillingness in my heart to permit failure or imperfections. Need I be reminded the helpless vessel merely received and contained the expression of another having no true power source of its own for the production of good or evil? Yes, I did. Believing dissolved into knowing. Father was revealing. I received. He began restoring.

In the pasture of the King, freely bloom two trees. One offers sacrificial unified life; the other cloaks itself in the good works of death. If the sheep of the pasture cannot produce their own righteousness, then conversely they cannot produce their own iniquity. Will you be so entwined by the false independence of goodness you fail to express the true liberty you possess? The only good and just King tarries for your reply.

Jennifer Cormack

Find out where Resurrection Life really resides!

The Stethoscope

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# Letters

## Letter to a Buddhist

Ron Block

I would agree with the skandhas themselves as you've stated them. Form, Sense, Perception, Volition/Will, Consciousness. Also that they "come and go; endure and change and disappear." Feelings, thoughts (inner events of what I would call the Soul), or outer events (circumstances like financial crises, kids fighting) come and go like the wind. We can have outer tornadoes or inner ones, whirling winds scattering our possessions around the countryside or inner tornadoes flinging our emotions out of control. States of consciousness do change all the time. And getting free of all those tornadoes, inner and outer, is a good thing. No, not a good thing - a thing absolutely necessary. The Skandhas are all relative - they relate to events, and so through events they shake and quiver and are attracted or repelled.

But I did not see in your post the answer to my second question - once we seen the Self's true emptiness, and have let go the idea of self, and have in fact seen the Self as illusory, who is the "we" (or "I") speaking at that point?

I would also agree that all attachments lead to suffering. But there is one attachment that frees us; there is one attachment that, if Perception, Will, Consciousness hold to it, leads to detachment from every other thing that holds or binds us.

In Biblical thought we were originally created as a cup, something designed to be filled. A slave, created to take orders; a wife, taken to bear the seed and name of her husband; a branch, grafted into a tree trunk to bear the fruit of the Roots.

All those things infer an attachment - one single, life-directing attachment. That's why in Christ there is paradox; we become truly free when we are most His slave; we are most useful when we stop trying to be useful and simply be filled; we are most fruitful when we stop trying to produce fruit on our own, but instead stay attached to the Trunk in the One who said, "Abide in Me, and you will bear much fruit."

It is this one state of consciousness which is fulfilling, and, through continual faith-ing, can be rendered more and more permanent in the life of a Christ-indwelt person. A cup that is empty is not fulfilling its purpose.

If we look at the life of Jesus Christ we see that He had one attachment, and only one: God His Father. He continually said things like, "The Father and I are one." "I can do nothing of my self" - there's the abnegation of self that we're looking for; He also said, "The Father in Me does the works," meaning that He was not here, living as a human, with Himself as His own source. There's the detachment and power over our lives we're looking for.

His life was no one of escaping suffering; in fact, He embraced suffering, and spoke of His trumped-up trial, torture, crucifixion, and death as "My Father's cup." "Shall I not drink it?"

The Christ-indwelt person is called to detachment from the World, from mere sense, from emotion, in the sense that those things (in a mature believer) are not to direct his actions; he is to get his direction from inside. The Tabernacle and later the Temple had three parts (essentially); outer court, and a building which was split into two parts - the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. It was in the Holy of Holies that the Ark of the Covenant dwelt, with the unbroken tablets of the Law. That is where, once a year, the high priest made atonement for sin; that was where Moses, in the Tabernacle, spoke face to face with God.

And that is where the Christian speaks with God. We go past Body (outer court), past Soul (Holy Place), into the Holy of Holies (our spirit, which in the Christ-indwelt person is joined with Christ). That one Attachment, as we go deeper and deeper into Him, frees us from all other weights and chains that bind us.

Christians often talk of being saved from things. But what are we saved to? What is the point of becoming free from attachment?

Freedom from all other attachments is not in order to be freed from suffering, although it does begin to free us from all the self-inflicted suffering that comes from putting our idols before Jesus Christ (financial security, health, success, or even personal enlightenment). In Christ we are freed from those attachments progressively, but the purpose of being freed through the one Attachment is so that we can get on with being what we were created to be - cups carrying the Wine of God's love - the Bible says, "God is love." This Love in Christ is the very thing that makes us willing to embrace suffering for others.

Of course not all Christians are willing to embrace suffering, and there are reasons for that, but that's beyond the scope of the present discussion. The Christ-indwelt people in this present world who continually put Him first, trust His life in them, and through that, love God and love their neighbor no matter what suffering it brings personally - these are truly living the Christian life (have you ever seen *The End of the Spear*? If not, rent it when you can - it's an excellent example of what we're talking about).

It is crucial to start with the "here and now." And we all start in different places, raised in different households, with different sets of inner conflicts, different besetting sins.

The Christian precepts are well known: You shall have no other gods before Me, don't make idols, don't take My Name in vain (not just swearing, but misrepresenting), rest on the Sabbath, honor father and mother, don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, don't covet what your neighbor has. Jesus took these precepts and made them harder; if we hate someone in our heart we're guilty of murder; if we lust in our heart we've committed adultery. He showed that these are heart-issues, not just outer rules we keep, and as such He pointed us to the fact that we need something more than just ourselves to rise above ourselves. We can't pull ourselves up by our bootstraps to become everything we were created to be. But that is precisely what every other world religion promotes, a climbing of the mountain of

holiness, or of detachment, or whatever the perceived "good" is - and much of modern Christianity has fallen prey to that idea.

But in Christ we get an infusion of power. He sets us on top of the Mountain. The triune God Himself comes to live inside us, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit. The Christian, though many of us don't recognize or realize it, has a nuclear power plant inside his inner Holy of Holies. But in order to access that Power, that Person, we must cultivate a relationship with Him - we must begin to trust Him more and more. The Apostle Paul came to the place where he realized his "cup-ness"; he echoed Jesus' words, "Of my own self I can do nothing," and "The Father in Me does the works." Paul put it this way, "When I am weak, then I am strong," and "I can do all things through Christ, who gives me strength." Paul could say confidently, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." There is a process of getting free. But the reason we can be free from attachments is that in Christ we have already been freed; all that remains is for the Christian to appropriate that gift of freedom. So Paul says, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live, then, as children of light." In other words, you had a dark identity, but now you have a light identity in Christ. Be that." Bang. On top of the mountain. Now live like it.

In closing, there is much truth in what you so intelligently and clearly set forth; there is much I agree with. My main ground of disagreement is the Source by which we get free, and the reason for freedom, and who is the "I" that is free. If you'd like to continue our discussion (I certainly would like to), I look forward to another post from you.

Sincerely,  
**Ron Block**



## **"I am the Light of the World" John 8:12 by Brian Coatney**

My friend Louie Lewis now goes with me to the Sunday night discipleship group at the Christian County Jail. So now, what one shovel doesn't do, the other one does; and the guys in the group are diggers too. It sounds like work, but when you dig the Holy Spirit, it's mutual, and all kinds of inspiration turn up on a regular basis.

Last night studying John chapter 8, a round of discussion started up on Jesus saying, "I am the light of the world." A creative picture came to mind from Eden when God would walk in the garden with Adam and Eve. Before their fall and even after their fall, they would not have thought it strange for God to appear to them in human form and say something like, "I am the light of the world." The idea of God's intimate appearance to them was normal.

Right after the fall, fig leaves and all, they felt fear but would not have thought it unusual for God to appear to them in a form of light. I think that Exodus, and later the transfiguration, show us that a pillar of cloud or fire as a manifestation constituted life before the fall and will constitute it

after the full restoration of the lost glory we live in hope of through Christ in us.

In the meantime, a veil covers that glory, and we know it inside us, and will know it when the sons of God are fully manifested after this groaning and travailing time Romans chapter 8 tells us about.

In Eden, though, no such veil existed, and the first veil turned out to be fig leaves, probably plucked from the forbidden tree. Yet, Adam and Eve knew well the sound of God approaching them, and all that they doubted about after the fall was their ability to step into the light, not that the light approached them.

It could be that the light had approached them often in a human form. We see much precedent for this as a favored form of appearance in Genesis 18 where the three men, one of them God, appear to Abraham to announce that ninety year old Sarah will have the promised child the following year. Not only does God converse with Abraham, He accepts the invitation for a deliciously prepared meal.

Later in Genesis, we see Jacob wrestling with a man, and Jacob declares that he has wrestled with God, "I have seen God face to face" (32:30 NASB). Also, Joshua receives a visitation in the form of the supreme military commander, "captain of the host of the Lord" (5:14). Therefore, we can relax with the idea of God making pre-incarnate appearances, which in Eden likely were routine and part of glory-life in the garden.

All of this sets up a new insight on Jesus' words, "I am the light of the world." Before our study last night, I had reveled in these words as mystical and elevated in tone, which they are, but there is something I had not caught—the link to the garden and God's intimacy with Adam and Eve. Before the fall, no separation kept them from the most intimate union, details of which the text doesn't tell us but suggests. We've been so saturated in separated thinking that we have to make a lot of faith leaps before we get used to oneness as God's plan for us all along.

Separation, however, interrupted this, and sin entered the world through the fall. The deception of independent self and the foolish notion that we can do good or evil on our own penetrated to the core of Adam and Eve, thus us, and promptly hid itself as the lie (the spirit of error in us) that God would do some serious digging to uncover.

His means to do this turns out to be the law, though He gave the promise first, as Paul vehemently tells us in Galatians where he reviews the promises to Abraham, and we can then remember on our own the promises of a messiah to Adam and Eve. Since we don't respond well to promises at first in our fallen condition, God gives us commandments to try and keep, though He knows we cannot keep them and that He never created us able to keep them in the first place since we're vessels to contain Him as the one who wills and does in us.

The law took on covenant form under Moses, though oddly, Moses did not live by law but by face to face fellowship with the Light. Always, we see Moses interacting directly with God, with not much separation, though there is a vision of God not allowed him at that time. In the main, however, God and Moses shared incredible one-on-one fellowship in intimate fashion. Moses did not live in the fear that the people had of Sinai—the quaking of the mountain and its terrible

thunder and threat of death to any who approached. Instead, Moses had already begun to know that same mountain as Mount Zion and one of intimate glory with God, even though receiving a covenant of law for the people.

Another account in Exodus shows that God's heart is truly for this intimacy with us all when the law has done its job as school master to bring us to Christ. In Exodus 24, Moses goes with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders "and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire." God did not strike them down; to the contrary, "they ate and drank" (24:9-11).

This still leaves the task of answering what this has to do with "I am the light of the world." Reading John's gospel, we learn soon of the hatred and intent to murder Jesus for saying things like this. Since Eden and God's appearance to Adam and Eve, often likely as a man, a lot of law and separation had ensconced itself in our hearts from the terrible lie of independent self that the law intended to break, not reinforce.

God intended the law that sin might run rampant so that we would see it, as Paul tells us in Romans 5: 20-21. Constant exposure to law wears us down, and the wise cry, "Uncle!" Where that doesn't happen, resistance remains against Jesus as the light of the world in a very important way that He meant it. If we isolate Him as the light of the world and make Him lofty and unapproachable, we miss His intent, which is...INTIMACY. What was he saying in John 8:12? He was saying, "I have come to you again like in the garden. The separation of the law is over."

So rather than His "I am the light of the world" being only mystical and glorious, His words invite us to fellowship with Him, which is exactly what His disciples and friends did. They attached themselves to Him and didn't let His many strange words and deeds cause them to shrink away from Him as He ministered; and though they failed Him after His arrest, it was not a renunciation of their Lord, but the preparation to enter into His promise of union with Him in a new way—that of vine and branch—as He told them about before He went to another Garden, Gethsemane, where He won back paradise for us.

The Son is a many-splendored thing. He always intended to be one spirit with us and one body while being at the same time His unique human form of the eternal Christ. All of these ramifications we'll spend the rest of eternity enjoying and learning about. In the meantime, we can see the incredible touch of intimacy in John 8:12 and its invitation to step even further into the light—that of taking Him INTO ourselves as one with Him like He told the disciples the plan was meant to be so that He then says to us, "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14).

Welcome to the light!

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# Quotes

Stop telling God how big your storm is, instead, tell the storm how big your God is.

"One half-hour before the flight, still a fool was Orville Wright." **Burt Rosenberg**

"He brings us to what it is by the default of what it ain't." **Burt Rosenberg**

"In God, the unknown is friendly." **Burt Rosenberg**

"Outspiration is inspiration on a mission." **Burt Rosenberg**

The expression of true everlasting life procures itself contented as the vessel or container of Christ alone. **Jennifer Cormack**

In the pasture of the King, freely bloom two trees. One offers sacrificial unified life; the other cloaks itself in the good works of death. If the sheep of the pasture cannot produce their own righteousness, then conversely they cannot produce their own iniquity. Will you be so entwined by the false independence of goodness you fail to express the true liberty you possess? The only good and just King tarries for your reply.

**Jennifer Cormack** Short Story Excerpt

**Religion is guilt with different holidays-** **Danny Pearce**

--"Every corner of the universe will speak audibly of Jesus Christ; so that we shall not be able to go into a place, or touch a life, without finding an expression of the Lord Jesus. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" -- this is heaven. You walk in the presence of the Lord Jesus. Think of the whole universe like that; a universal expression of His Son in fullness. That is the end God has in view, that Christ shall fill all things; that, looking into everything, it shall be found to be full of Christ. All is made for Him, and in the new creation all will speak of His presence and show forth some characteristic of Him. Oh! the joy, even now, when you touch a life and find immediately that life is full of the Lord Jesus, and the Lord Jesus is the fullness of that life; what a benediction it is!" -- **T. Austin-Sparks, The Measure of Christ (for full Article, see my "Articles by other Christian writers.")**

"If we cast aside the suggestions of Satan, the delusions of our own feelings of separation, the sense of weakness and ignorance: if we boldly possess our possessions in Christ, draw the

sword of the Spirit upon the deceiver, declare by God's word that we are one with Christ and with one another, one mystic organism, one divine life flowing in and through all: then we *are* strong by faith, for His strength is in us; we *are* wise, for His wisdom is ours; we have love, joy or any other needed grace of the Spirit, for we are permeated with Him; and all we need to do is to go forward in this faith, as having and possessing, and we shall find that what is true in the realm of the Spirit, through our faith becomes manifest in the realm of the senses, whether it be power, love, joy, knowledge, or any other needed resource. Christ the head thus becomes manifest in and through His members."—**Norman Grubb**

Faith is itself from the Other Side, and is as inexplicable and absurd as that in which it believes.  
**Norman Grubb**

Faith is doubt absorbed, doubt conquered. Unbelief is doubt accepted. **NG**

The more uncertainty there is, the more passion in your decision of faith, for there has been a bigger doubt to conquer. **NG**

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. **NG**

I transcend the doubts by replacing them by deliberate faith; actually their opposition is what gives sinews to my faith. **NG**

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 perishes. **NG**

"We shall have reached the Cape of good Hope when Christians cease to be sponges mopping up all they can get, and become water pots full to the brim, running over with good wine of self-sacrifice. As we are saved by our walk of faith unto faith, each step being a novel faith, so also we never have really appropriated the sacrifice of Jesus till we sacrifice ourselves." **C.T. Studd**

"Comfort and prosperity have never enriched the world as much as adversity has." **Billy Graham**

"The Religious Spirit is always fighting something"...Steve Pettit

The definition of "REST" is simply "CESSATION OF WAR"....Faith wins by not fighting.

**On Christian Unity**--Christian unity is not something that can be organized; it comes naturally among those who share a common love for Christ. The false ecumenical/interfaith unity being promoted today by the World Council of Churches — an organization that is strongly influenced by Freemasonry — is nothing new. It has been used for centuries to try to further the cause of world government. As long as Christians do NOT unite with the peoples of other religions, there can be no world government. This unwillingness of Christians to compromise

their faith has been the chief obstacle for the conspirators. Scott Bailey

## Poem of the Month

Sin Conscious Not  
By Brian Coatney

Sin consciousness is to me no more  
than a woman I once knew in church,  
who dressed like a respectable woman,  
but secretly lived as a whore.

She could never make up her mind,  
whether really right or wrong,  
and so her motives to herself in most things  
were impossible to reasonably find.

She would think, "I should have done more,"  
or conversely, "Nothing at all,"  
or "just a little," "but really, how much?"  
Over everything she would continually pore.

She nagged herself to death and others too;  
but many liked it, for they as well  
loved self doubt and analysis, and so conversed  
this way, in condemnation of all they would do.

Finally one day, this old whore got free.  
She put her mind down and trusted that  
if she were headed wrongly, that the Spirit  
would ease her back to liberty.

She didn't say she couldn't sin,  
but she paid it little thought one way or other,  
gloriously drinking up the Spirit in her  
from the new world she now lives in.

BC/9-20-05

## Praise Report

Dear Friends who prayed over our fire crisis of last few days,

A few days ago I wrote to say Victoria was facing another huge threat from fires. I am now writing to thank you and tell you what happened.

We had an incredible result. Expecting the hot winds and high temperature on Tuesday morning, we woke to find no wind - AND IT WAS RAINING!!!! EVEN IN THE FIRE AREAS!!! The Lord had changed the weather!!!! The temperature was 10 degrees less over the day and the dangerous wind change Tuesday evening was all over without damage in a few minutes - and it rained some more. Since then we have had half an inch of rain, the first since Christmas. The weather people explained that this rain had originated in Queensland where there are floods and had travelled anticlockwise across the top of Australia, down the west coast and across the south coast to Melbourne - isn't that amazing. (The Lord controls the weather as per Job 37:11-13)

Today, the fire chiefs declared the emergency over and all the overseas and interstate helpers are going home - with our thanks.

All that had seemed impossible when I wrote the day before.....BUT GOD!!!!!!.....

Thanks for all your prayer over the last 3 weeks. I believe God heard and acted. There is no other reason why the changes happened.

The Red Cross has collected over \$200 million dollars and a fund headed by John Landy, former Olympian is distributing the money. Even people without insurance on their homes are going to be helped. The whole thing has turned the Australian community on its head! Oh that the Lord might do the same in our community of faith.

Building work on houses has already begun and temporary shelters in cabins and caravans is bringing some normality to the 7000 people affected by the fires.

Please distribute to your friends who participated in the early prayers

Many thanks and God bless

Ken Walker

Webmaster of Global Good News and Fullness of Life in Christ websites

## Prayer Request

This is from Paul E. Billheimer's book, "Destined, to Overcome." **"Prayer is where the**

**action is.** John Wesley said, "God does nothing but in answer to prayer," and E. M. Bounds tells us "God shapes the world by prayer."

A **great illustration** is the account of the Israelites battle against the Amalekites. Satan, God's enemy had stirred up the heathen nation of Amalek to fight the Israelites trying to keep them from entering the promise land. As the battle was beginning, Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us out men, and go out, and fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand." Joshua and his men began the battle. "And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" When Moses grew tired and could no longer hold up his arms, Aaron and Hur stood up on either side and supported him until the battle was won by God's people and Amalek was defeated.

These 3 men, Moses, Aaron and Hur were united in holding up the rod (symbolizes the Cross) of God, and also symbolic of His power and prayer. When the intercessors engaged in believing prayer, Satan's forces were bound and paralyzed. Then God's children were victorious. To the casual observer the battle was won in the valley where the troops were engaged but to the spiritually discerning the battle was won on the mountaintop. Prayer is truly where the action is. Paraphrased by Margaret Lester

## This Month's Article:

### Jesus and Judas

(Taken from "Come Holy Spirit")

#### Carl Barth

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said, What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him unto them.—

Matthew 26:14-16

**"Man is something that must be overcome."** In these words of Frederick Nietzsche one could gather up the whole truth about our existence which Jesus uttered and which he, while he lived a man among men, brought to light. Certainly Jesus did not come solely to proclaim this truth. He did not come to announce the ruin of mankind. He came to reveal God and to save men. But even so, only He can reveal God who has thrown down and conquered man. For our humanity itself is the wall of partition which separates us from God, the layer of fog which must first be penetrated before God's light can clearly shine again. To be saved? Man can be saved only by God through man's complete ruin. That is why the Cross stands in the center of the life of Jesus. At the cross is where God was revealed and where we were saved, for there man and all that is human was conquered, sacrificed, given unto death. The new, the saved man, the man who stands beyond the Cross, the man of the resurrection is different, wholly and

absolutely different, and more than the "old man" merely improved. There is no bridge of progress or evolution from the old into the really new life. The Cross, death, stand between the two. The old human must disappear in the face of the divine new. Between the two stands the truth that "man is something that must be overcome."

"Man is something that must be overcome." Man! Not only the bad, the godless, the unbelieving, the immoral man, but man in every form, man as such, man as he is, irrespective of his evils, or of his noble, helpful, good characteristics and high aspirations righteous and unrighteous, godless and pious man. There is a place within us which is situated beyond all these differences, beyond good and evil, beyond piety and impiety. In this place, at the deepest, the most hidden, the most inward part in us, an ultimate bastille, so to speak, an unconquerable citadel, a mighty fortress lifts its walls. That is the throne of the original human in us. In this fortress we are ourselves, without any good or evil additions here we are alone with ourselves. Behind this wall, in this fortress, dwells our "I." Thence it goes forth, to it retreats. There it hides itself, there it sighs and suffers, there it defies and triumphs. This wall must be shaken, this fortified city must be overcome, must be stormed and broken down. Before that, man is not conquered. Many battles are fought out in our lives, but the final, the decisive crisis is not in these conflicts, even though they may wage fiercely. That final conflict results only when the fight for the inner citadel takes place. All other are preliminary skirmishes in the van, not the skirmish before the real inner position.

For field fighting is the method by which we ordinarily fight evil. All of us have a lot of evil about us. Sometimes it rises up in awful power. I think of physical suffering or the greed for money. It takes possession of the length and breadth of our lives and breaks forth either unbridled, or in mere bad conduct, in our thought, speech and behavior. We protect ourselves against evil. We battle against. Perhaps we succeed in controlling it or suppressing it until the dam breaks and it emerges anew! And so the battle wages without success, back and forth. For, is it not true that the evil in us will not permit itself to be overthrown, annihilated or decisively defeated? It always rises up again, it always returns. For evil would long ago have been defeated and destroyed, it would have been easy to be through it is, if, yes, if, it did not always have a strong place to flee to in that fortress, if it did not receive its power of opposition from the "I" of man behind that wall so deep within us. That is why it never is completely driven from the field. What would money be, or sensuality, alcohol, or the sword of might, if MAN would no longer allow himself with them, if he would not secretly consent to them? For it is only out of this alliance with man, only out of this demoniacal yes of man that these powers so such their life-blood and their life-sap. If this inner retreat should collapse, then evil would be powerless. Therefore "Man is something that must be overcome," if evil is to be overcome.

And it is no different with the good for which all of us wish to fight. We all have so much good about us, so many selfless motives, so much loveliness, childlikeness, joyousness. But why do men generally feel so little of it? Why does it not penetrate through? Why does it not radiate victoriously from us? Why is not the good king of the world? For this reason--because it possesses only the fore field. It does not possess the central, inner place. There, in the inner place something else, the defiant, crafty "I" of man reigns, which has not yet fully surrendered itself, which still remains for itself, which still wants to be something by itself, not fully good nor fully bad. As long as this "I" sits in this fortress, all this busy chasing and running after the good is futile. ***This fortress must be stormed, this human place must finally surrender, must allow***

*itself to be over come.* Before that happens, the good will never be king on earth.

Here is the key to the enigmatical and disturbing fact that in spite of all the sincerity and zeal expressed by Christian believers there does not issue from our Christendom, our faith, our religion, the decisive power there ought. Or are we not aware of the evident weakness and impotence of our faith and of church-life? We repeatedly assure ourselves that we have God, we stand in the power of his Spirit, we boast about our salvation. But--"these Christians must show to me that they are redeemed before I will believe in their Redeemer," shouts Frederick Nietzsche, who spoke that remarkable profound word about the conquest of man. And there are others who side with him, even convinced Christian disciples such as the great Dan, Kierkegaard, and utter similar statements. And we must admit their truth. We, too, feel it is true that a certain ultimate, mighty, secret line of defense in, and is as yet unbroken. It is not even broken within that realm we call Christianity. All our churches and chapels with exception are situated outside the zone of this inner fortress, even outside this last bastilles, behind which the "I" of man has his last and strongest position, they are still in the fore field. And that is the reason why practically all that is thought, spoken or heard about God and his redemption with the churches and chapels, earnest and zealous as it may seem, is always so remarkable impotent.

That is why our Christianity is not taken seriously. The world knows well enough that our Christianity as a whole does not take hold of this central place of man in earnest. It knows that even the lives of convinced Christians without exception do not root up and conquer the "I" of man. It knows that we Christians, while we contribute much, yes, the most, yes, we give and offer even the last thing we have, yet that last thing we will not give--ourselves--not *all* of us. For that reason the world does not fear us very much at present. One condition we persist in laying down, perhaps unwittingly, even to God, even in our praying the pious living--and this condition is ourselves, we, the human, our "I." We will not let ourselves be conquered. On the contrary, we assert ourselves! We defend ourselves. We appear to be strong. Whatever we think, do and say, should be attended to only one misfortune could happen to us in our estimation, and that would be that we, the human, the man, should weaken, become afraid or fall. With tooth and nail we defend ourselves against such a pass. That is the central thought which rules us. We fear and avoid the evil, not because it is evil but because it might endanger us; and should we allow ourselves to be enmeshed in it too deeply, through its fettering power, it might make our human life precarious. Likewise, we consent to the good, not because it is good but because it assists us in the establishment and the fortification of the "I." "A good conscience is a peaceful pillow." Yes, and more, we seek God, not for His sake, but for our own sakes; we seek Him, because we are strengthened by Him, comforted, and hope to be saved. We seek Him, so that we might use Him for a mighty retreat for ourselves.

That is our religion. That is our morality, our ethics. Practically all our disciplines of thought make this their premise. Into the heathen-worldly and churchly-Christian philosophies of life are interchangeable and similar. The mode of expression may not be the same but the goal, the purpose is the same; man, the human, who will not allow himself to be conquered; man who seeks himself and desires to assert himself. Here is the point at which all differences, whether of classes or religions, much stand back in favor of the one, common reflection and tendency. And in that pace stands Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord. He is different from all others only in that he is conscious of standing at this point; he knows what he is doing and

he is holding this place and defending it against the one, the only One who does not stand in this place, but who, on the contrary, seeks to take possession of it. He stands over against this One, this only One, who does not want to be the sort of man who asserts himself, but rather, that sort of man who surrenders himself, that man who dies, that man who sacrifices himself, the wounded, the suffering, the one despised by all, the broken, humbled, crucified Man.

For that is Jesus. That is the decisive thing about Him. He desires this, and this alone-- to stride against and to collapse this inner will and citadel of man. He was not concerned about the things in the fore field, whether good or bad. He began where we leave off. He opened and fought His way through, beyond those things which we think important, beyond our minor battles and play-struggles to the battle against the innermost and the ultimate.

It has often struck us how little weight Jesus put upon the differences in men, whether they were moral or immoral, pious or worldly. Undoubtedly he saw these differences better than we, but He looked beyond them as though He saw the enemy with whom He had basically to deal, the enemy who stood behind these other little enemies with which we often engage. He saw the good and the virtuous in good people and He did not lightly regard it. But at the same time He saw that behind all these goodly virtues there arose this absolutely unbroken line of defense which continually hinders and good from gaining a complete victory. And He, indeed, saw the darkness and the unrighteousness of the ungodly and worldly and He certainly did not call them good. But at the same time He saw, behind all their evils and ungodliness, the last strong hold which make it indeed possible for their evil and ungodliness to continue to maintain itself. And above all, he saw that this last inner stronghold is most unbroken in the pious and believing people whose piety serves to establish more firmly the *defiant, crafty "I"* of man. Continually Jesus realized that this inner position must be stormed. God must be captain of this strong bulwark of man. Everything else is futile. And so Jesus never took any part in the attempts to make the world better, or in the attempts to make good triumph over evil, or to bring about the destruction of evil which is often undertaken without touching this last ultimate premise, without overcoming men, without making God first of all absolute and only king.

Jesus made short shrift of all the ideals and religious and patriotic endeavors of His time. He quickly passes by the whole fore field of life. But He had one point to which He hurried and that was the last wall beyond which it is impossible to go without attacking man himself. This is what Jesus attempted to do. He possessed the profound insight that man must be overcome. A sacrifice must be made; no, not just a sacrifice, but the sacrifice, the sacrifice of man. And he made it Himself. He forfeited everything, everything wherein He was humanly great, good, virtuous, everything which men could have understood and admired and imitated without needing to acknowledge or make this last sacrifice, which was of the utmost importance to Him. He allowed Himself to be humiliated; He gave Himself wholly to the end that once for all there might be a place in this world of humanity where God might come into His complete glory.

It was not an easy path. In this way it was shown just how strong the inner position is. He had to experience what it meant for one of his own, who could have understood what it was all about, to betray Him to death. How resistant man is especially when he realizes that his last strong bastille must be crashed in--a bastille which is so cruel, cold, calculating, crafty, defiant cynical. It might be well for us not to turn away too quickly from Judas, with a feeling of abhorrence. He is nearer to us than we imagine. He did nothing else that to hold this last, inner

position of man against God in a critical moment and with obstinacy. He profoundly perceived that with Jesus and himself it was either He or "I," and he decided for the "I." But in the night when Jesus sat with his own, not one of the disciples was entirely certain whether he might not decide for this he or "I." This should give us food for thought. We call ourselves Christians, but we do not seem to understand clearly what sort of a decision that demands. It is not at all certain that we would remain Christians, if the time should come when we hear the call before our own wall and door: "Man, you must surrender yourself, you *must allow yourself to be overcome!*" For as there can be no absolute certainty that we would not in such an instance defend ourselves to the utmost with every means and strategy.

Another thing. To conquer man and all that is human means that even the last gable in the attic must be surrendered in which man sought protection and hiding. It means the renunciation of those arms and weapons with which we ordinarily, in human fashion, have cut our way through the world by fair means or foul. It means that we hand over as spoils all these mortal and religious advantages to which we continually love to appeal in support of ourselves. It means that we shall no longer prop ourselves, defend ourselves; no longer shall we assert ourselves upon such a respectable, indulgent, or refined basis. It means that we shall no longer prop ourselves, defend ourselves; no longer shall we assert ourselves upon such a respectable, indulgent, or refined basis. It means that we shall not make any demands upon God nor in the favorite modern fashion, attempt to prove the righteousness of God by those emergencies in the course of the world that seem to favor us and bring us joy. It means to realize that the righteousness of God means that no man is righteous before Him, that no human can expect any special patronage or special consideration from Him. And this is the case precisely because men always weaken the good and strengthen the evil, especially when they seek to establish the good and to fight against the evil.

Therefore; the man who has allowed himself to be overcome is one who makes no demands, has no surety, no rampart upon which he can depend, no wall behind which he can defend himself; he is driven out of every human position, without any human support, into an exposed spot in the midst of the profound circumstances and enigmas of life; he is hounded about, disturbed, stormed, shaken, humbled, the opposite of an assured man who has an answer for every question. Indeed, this is the man who has allowed himself to be overcome. The nearest similarity and picture of such a man is the suffering and be number Job, the publican in the temple, the prodigal son, the thief on the cross. This besieged, abased, and shaken man is the one well pleasing unto God. For he is the man who no longer asserts himself, the man who sees himself in the wrong in the face of God, himself and life, and he stands before his judge like a debtor awaiting his judgment. If the word of pardon follows his waiting, it appears to him as a deed of inconceivable liberality and mercy towards him. When a man stands thus before God, then he is again giving God the glory. The "I" is overcome. Then all is yielded in the impenetrable will of God. There is where Jesus stood. He was this one, humbled, defeated, sacrificed man. For he desired nothing but that the "I" of man should be overcome and that all things should be placed in God's hands.

To this place Judas would not accompany Jesus. For, did it not mean that he would lose all ground beneath his feet and plunge into a chasm? Man defends himself against this plight as he would against an unheard of demand which contradicts reason. Jesus may tread that way, but I shall not. Rather shall I set myself upon the side of darkness which will master

this defenseless man, than that I shall allow myself to be unarmed. I shall not let myself be crowded out into the fore field, where He is, where I must surrender myself and where I shall face nothing but death. I shall not engage in combat with that mysterious God who demands my surrender. I should rather turn to the company of betrayers of the old faith, to the Pharisees and Scribes. There, at least, I can grasp hold of something as tangible and secure as thirty pieces of silver. That is Judas. That is man as he stands immediately in front of the place where the human must and will be humbled--the human who imagines he can defend himself with the defiance and the vigor of one who fights for his life. To feel the hand which waves powerfully over us and all our positions, and yet not to let it have its way, not at any price! That is Judas, that is man, the man as such, the human who must be overcome, the human for whose sake Jesus endured death.

The betrayal by Judas proved to be a terrible illusion. Judas wanted to defend the secure foundation under his feet, but he did not see that where this very foundation is completely given up, *there only man really stands upon firm foundation*. He saw that Jesus really brings about the destruction of man, but he did not perceive that this destruction becomes man's salvation. He heard the demand to resign all and to surrender life, but he heard it with the fearful ears of the "old man" who will not and cannot understand that "whosoever loses his life saves it." He had high hopes, great resolves, but down deep he was a coward like all betrayers. He lacked the great resolve, that final high hope which is necessary if man would throw himself into the hands of God only. He saw the Cross only, only the blood which must needs be shed; he saw the No only, only the suffering, the great enemy death. He did not see the resurrection, the victory; he did not see the Yes, the life, the reconciliation, the kingdom, the power, the glory of God which illuminate us at just that place where all our little lights are extinguished. It was quickly, terrible, and clearly indicated in Judas, how precarious is the strength of man's foundation when he softens the reality of the Cross, when he would rather reckon with the so-called realities of life than to plunge into the night and reckon with God alone.

Judas' attempts did not escape the mighty shake-up of his own fall which he had hoped to avoid. He had to become a witness to the fact that Jesus is right, when He holds that a man is something which must be overcome. God is much too real, too great, that a man can hope to hide from Him and swell in his own security. God is much too real, too great, that a man can hope to hide from Him and swell in his own security. God surrounds him upon all sides. He drives us into a corner so that He may force us to meet Him. Jesus has made every position of man quite easy to storm by means of his death and resurrection, so that it is impossible to hold it by deliberate defense.

**All things pass, God alone stands with vacillation. His thoughts, word and will have eternal foundation.**

There comes a time, sooner or later, when this truth shall be evident. Sometime an hour of terrible upheaval and ruin will come to us. This no one can escape. Against it no betrayal can avail. The only question is whether we shall, like Judas, defend ourselves against it to the utmost, only to have to encounter it finally with despair. Or, perhaps, the Cross has given us a presumption that this terrible, this impossible way, this way into very death with all of us must travel, is perhaps a way, yes, the way, which leads beyond death; a presumption that precisely there where everything about us comes to an end, there, on the other side, all things really

begin; a presumption that if we but endure to the end, even out of the end, the judgment, the ruin, there might break forth the victory, the redemption. The question is whether we see some of the imperceptible light of the resurrection in which the Cross (as Rembrandt has painted it) stands. Oh, that we might see it, so that in the midst of our fears we would not fear, that we might dare to "Yes,"--even against ourselves, to God. For that is the reason why Jesus endured death.

Note by Sylvia Pearce

This "I" in mankind that must be overcome is not our precious human "I", it is a false independent-I correctly understood as Satan disguising himself as us. Satan walls us up in self defense, and binding us up tight in ourselves so that he can keep this final false self to manifest himself through. We, out of ignorance hold tight to the only self we know. It is up to God to break down this citadel and fortress and set us free. Jesus did it at the cross, and he will manifest it once more in the truly broken places of our lives.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 15:56

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 15:50 and John 3:5

<sup>3</sup> Gal. 3:11-12

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. 12: 9-10

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 6