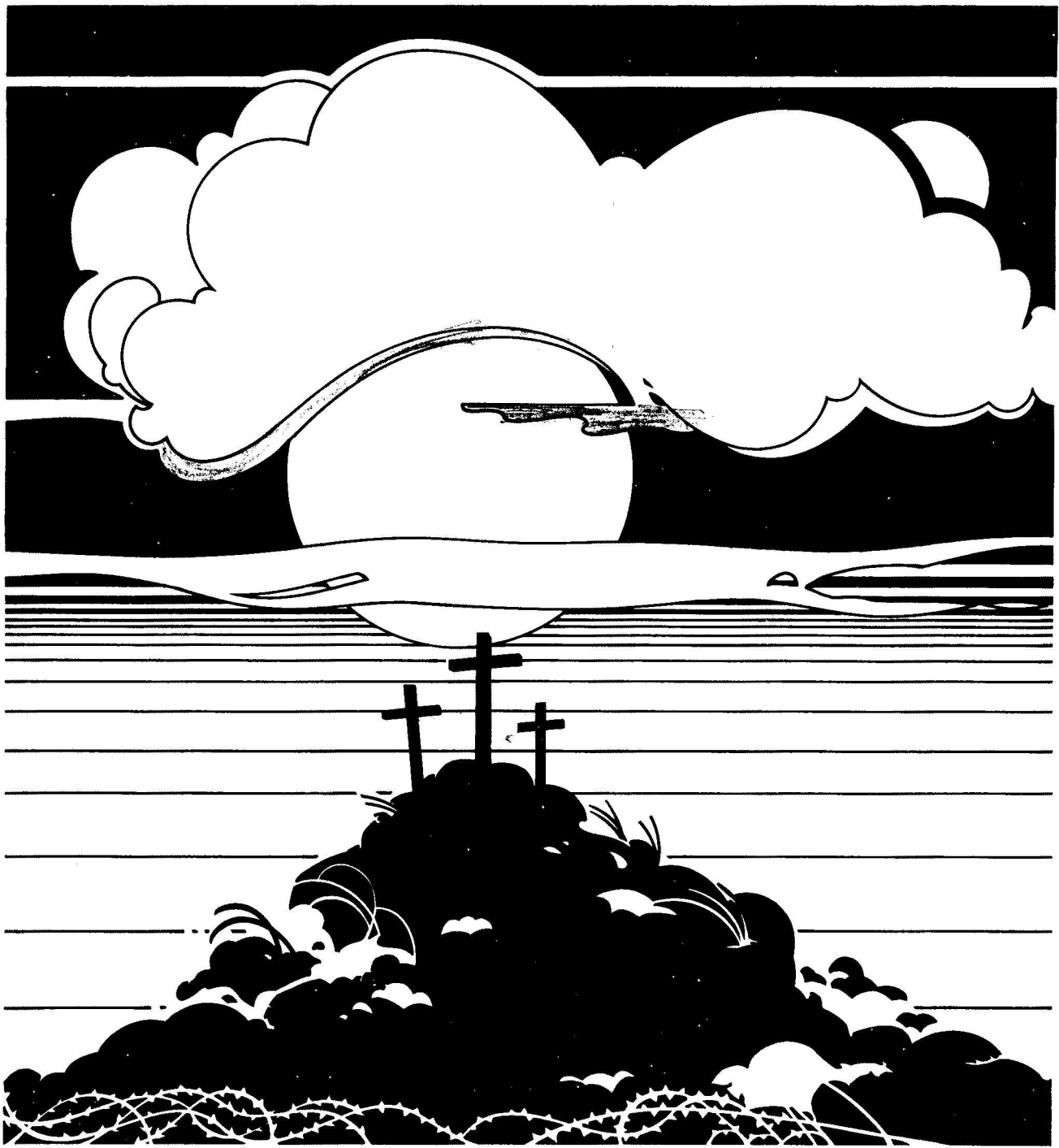


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The Hound of Heaven

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It still shocks me. It's like an employer sending out a memo to his employees saying that he will only pay those who do not work! Or an insurance company saying they will only process the claims of those who do not pay their premiums. It just doesn't seem right.

See whether it seems right to you. The problem text is found in the fourth chapter of Romans where Paul is proving the point he made in the previous chapter — saving righteousness comes by faith and not by works. But he seems to go overboard.

"To one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness" (4:5). Three things shock me about this text. First, it goes beyond simply saying that persons are not justified by works, it argues that persons must not work for their heavenly righteousness. It is the non-worker who is justified. Paul is not just saying that "works" won't justify, he's saying that "no works" is what is needed. He's not neutral on works, here he's against them.

The next remarkable thing is that the apostle describes God as one who justifies the ungodly. Surely this violates all our sense of what is right and proper. When God justifies a person he places them in a right relationship to himself, he declares that they have met their responsibilities and therefore stand perfectly before him. And yet God does this for persons who are ungodly!

The great New Testament expositor James Denney rightly saw this idea as the heart of Christianity: "The whole secret of New Testament Christianity, and of every revival of religion and reformation of the Church, is in that joyous and marvelous paradox, 'God that justifies the ungodly.'"

The third surprising fact is that God should count faith as righteousness. "To justify" is the verb from the noun "righteousness." In Greek the two words come from the one root; our translation into two different English words is confusing. To count faith as righteousness is the same as to be justified by faith. Paul declares that all that is needed to establish a perfect relationship with God is faith — faith alone, faith plus nothing.

Notice that it is not simply "not working" that saves, it is "not working" plus trusting (4:5). And it is clear from the rest of Paul's letter to the early Roman church that those who trust do in fact work. Not for justification, but because of it. Romans 8-16 is full of instructions for the kind of behaviors that Christians ought to perform. They seek to live out the righteousness that God has granted to them.

And if it was true for the Christians in Rome, it is true for us today! We too are set right with God by trust alone. This is the good news that Jesus brought. God doesn't work on a pay-back system; he justifies the ungodly, without works. In that news there is reason for great rejoicing (and trusting).

Calvin W. Edwards

The Hound of Heaven

Desmond Ford

3



"The ultimate purpose of conscience is not merely to function as a condition for health and sound personality, but as the hound of heaven pursuing us and depriving us of supposed strength until we are taken by him who is love."

The old-fashioned graduate student trembled slightly before the committee of examining professors. "Do you believe in absolutes?" came the ominous query. He paused, breathing sharply, and replied, "Absolutely not."

Moral Absolutes

The parable is for our day. The crucial question of modern thought is whether we are to interpret man in terms of the cosmos, or the cosmos in terms of man. If we do the former, man becomes a meaningless thing like all else; and one absolute alone remains to us, the absolute that there are no absolutes. Then away with traditional categories of good and evil, right and wrong. Confess that the guiding lines for conduct were but the invention of pragmatic communities, and that for us they have blurred. Let relativity be the touchstone for everything except itself!

From Darwin to Dewey modern man's creed has been forming, until its essence can now be summarized in a single statement, "I believe in Nature Almighty." But if nature alone is the ultimate reality, then man is merely a sophisticated animal, and "anything goes." It has become apparent that what ultimately "goes" is not merely morality, but the health of the body and mind. Personality goes, and then life.

Dr. Armand Nicholi, once senior psychiatrist at Harvard University, when addressing a group of church leaders, discussed what he called the "criteria of emotional maturity." Central to his presentation was

the affirmation that while it is difficult to get psychiatrists to agree on almost anything, most agreed that basic for any healthy personality is "a sound, consistent conscience with well-defined moral precepts." He continued by saying that the "new morality" has not succeeded in banishing guilt feelings, and that these were being everywhere evidenced by moods of despondency and the desire for self-punishment.

C.S. Lewis wrote in the same vein when he declared that

two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. (*Mere Christianity*, p. 7)

Lewis dismisses the rationalization that the idea of a universal law of decent behavior can be disqualified just because different civilizations have had contrasting moralities. Says he:

There have been differences between their moralities, but these have never amounted to anything like a total difference. If anyone will take the trouble to compare the moral teaching of, say, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks and Romans, what will really strike him will be how very like they are to each other and to our own. (*Ibid*, p.5)

Testimony of Our Experience

Let's leave the scholars for a time and think on our own experience. We do not need degrees in psychiatry or philosophy in order to say "Amen" to the statements of Nicholi and Lewis. They have merely distilled the essence of the daily experience of Mr. Everyman. Furthermore, we know intuitively that if we interpret man by the cosmos, meaning evaporates; but if, on the contrary, we judge the cosmos by man, we find that meaning exists and that it is woven from the strands of rationality, beauty, and morality. None of these are demonstrable, but all of them exist as the basic axioms of human existence.

We are all conscious, for example, of that little figure who sticks closer to us than any brother. At times he shakes his fist and stamps his feet, and at times he

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claps his hands and says "Bravo." Whenever we ignore him, he makes us smart for it. But if we follow his counsel, although our way may appear the harder at first, our heart rejoices.

To the first murderer the little man appeared as an omnipresent awful eye. In Victor Hugo's poem of Cain he represents the murderer fleeing from Eden. Many miles from his crime he lay down to sleep at the foot of a mountain. But as he gazed into the sky, he beheld an awful eye peering into his guilty soul. Rising in haste, he ran to the farthest point of land jutting out into the sea, but lol on the rim of the ocean, looking like a rising sun, appeared the haunting eye again.

Cain then put a tent over himself, but the thick skins could not keep out that vision. He built a roof of heavy timber, but the eye shone through. He built a tower of stone and hid in the lowest dungeon, but the glowing eye pierced the stones. Finally they constructed a tomb beneath the ground and buried the haunted man as though he were dead; but in the tomb he found another was there, the eye was still focused upon him.

**But if nature alone is the
ultimate reality, then man is merely
a sophisticated animal, and
"anything goes."**

The little man and the eye are but metaphors for conscience. Conscience — that hound of heaven, the rack of the Almighty, the nemesis within, the prophet of eternity, the fingerprint of the Creator, that critic whom the bravest fears — exists as universally as mankind. Conscience blesses as well as curses. Heeded, it is the condition for health — physical, mental, and spiritual.

The Ever-Present Conscience

Two thousand years ago the cock crowed for the big fisherman. A dart pierced him, and he fled into the darkness to weep as though with his tears he could flood away the past. From the maelstrom of remorse and self-reproach emerged a new man who could stand unmoved amid the tempests of persecution and pray calmly while being crucified inverted on a cross. The cock still crows. It crows for most of us several times a day. Our response determines destiny, for our cock crowing is the shrill call of conscience which cannot be intimidated or entirely silenced.

Only one man has ever lived in complete accord with his conscience. He spoke with authority on truth, for he himself was and is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. To a generation as corrupt as our own he gave the following warning: "Your eye is the lamp of your body, when your eye is sound, your whole body is full of light; but when it is not sound, your body is full of darkness. Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light" (Lk 11:34-36).

Christ here says the filling of our entire spiritual being with light depends on the spiritual eye of the conscience. It is the conscience which, according to its condition, admits or retards the entrance of saving

light. It can illuminate the whole personality, or, if ignored, it can leave man a decaying loathsomeness — a grave within, as the Pharisees to whom this warning came (Lk 11:44).

It is apparent from these words of Christ that it is possible for conscience to be diseased, and partly or wholly blind. As a sun dial tells the time only when the sun is shining upon it, so conscience is reliable only when reflecting the beams of him who is the Light of the World. Said a Hindu to a British administrator, "Our conscience tells us that it is right to burn our widows on the pyre of their husbands." "Yes," replied the officer, "and **our** conscience tells us to hang you if you do."

Conscience Illuminated from Heaven

Significant indeed is the fact that the Gospels record more cases of blindness healed than of any other malady. These were instances of men who had eyes but no sight, until they met the Great Physician. When Richard I of England was languishing in an unknown dungeon of Europe, his minstrel Blondel traveled throughout the land singing the favorite airs of the king before the dungeon bars of every castle he could find. One day his song without was responded to by the voice of his king within. Thus the way was paved for Richard's return from exile and restoration to his throne. Even so, the conscience of man dwells in darkness like a captive king in a dungeon, until the music of heaven wakes echoes hitherto unknown in the prison and inclines him to cry out for release. The entire world will go out into insanity and darkness if it rejects the music of God's revelation, which alone can bring restoration to conscience.

Let us note a typical case of Christ's healing of the blind. It shows the only way to moral enlightenment and health for ourselves today. "And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly" (Mk 8:22-25).

Seven times in these few verses the touch of Christ is referred to by direct statement or inference. Here then is the source of healing for conscience — contact with the living Christ. The son of thunder wished lightning to destroy a whole village. But later on he wrote the epistle of love (1 Jn 4). The point needs to be emphasized that the modern confusion over right and wrong is the result of rejecting him who alone can give light. To reject the Spirit of God is to invite continued darkness. The conscience is able to shine, is constructed to shine, but it is not alight until it has been lighted by the kiss of heaven.

Before God in the beginning said, "Let there be light," he said, "Let there be Spirit"; for we read that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen 1:2,3). Light will not make the waters of life glad unless the Spirit of Christ first moves upon them. Our age can never hope for the solution to its problems international, national, or personal, until like the blind man we submit to the light brought by Christ.

The sufferer of Mark 8 came as a beggar to Christ, and he was not turned away. It took humility to be led by One unseen where he knew not, and then to receive spittle at the site of his malady. Note that the man was separated from the multitude, led away into quietness, and told to look up. The Scriptures admonish us, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Ex 23:2). To stand with Christ often means to stand separate from the careless throng.

Our Conscience at Work

God brought cosmos from chaos in the beginning by the moving of his Spirit and the speaking of his word combined. Ten times we read in the Bible's first chapter, "And God said." And so today, it is still the Word of Christ that brings enlightenment and cleansing. We need to listen afresh to his Ten Words from Sinai, which lead the darkened soul to feel its need for the regenerating Spirit and which indicate the way in which we are to walk.

Let us ponder this connection between the blind and Christ. Conscience was never meant to be separated from him who formed it. This becomes apparent as we consider the divine purpose in conscience. All that the New Testament says about the moral law of God can be said of conscience, for the latter is but the mind's perception of the former, plus the feelings inevitably associated with such perception. Thus, when the New Testament says the law is our tutor to bring us to Christ (Gal 3:24), we are meant to understand that our mere perception of right and wrong cannot bring us health unless it brings us first to him who is Life Incarnate. What the Bible calls repentance is nothing more or less than the right response of an awakened conscience.

The conscience of man dwells in darkness like a captive king in a dungeon, until the music of heaven wakes echoes hitherto unknown in the prison and inclines him to cry out for release.

When the Spirit of God shines into a man's heart and illuminates him regarding the true nature of his duty, a battle begins which climaxes victoriously only when penitence and faith are experienced. First, man finds that his awakened conscience criticizes his outward actions of temper, passion, and selfishness. Next the inward sins of thought and carnal desire are condemned. Our sins of omission are also spotlighted as never before. And finally we confess that our real problem is not what we have done but what we **are**.

Henry Ward Beecher pictured the believer's experience aptly as follows:

When a man begins to labor to satisfy his conscience, his conscience becomes exacting faster than he can learn how to perform. His ideal, associated with his moral sense, augments more rapidly than his performance. So that the more he does, the less he is satisfied. Many a man will witness to me here that the most violent exertions that he ever put forth were toward reformations that brought him the least of comfort.

Here stands an old house that has been a hundred years without repair. The old master dies, and a new man comes in, and with him comes reformation and reparation. He sends for his architect and

master workman, that commence searching to ascertain what is required to be done. There is a shingle off, which must be put on. But when that is taken off, it is found that the very boards, to which the shingles are fastened, are rotten. And these must come out. And when these are taken out, it is found that the very beam under them is decayed. And this must come out. And by probing it is found that there is decay all through the building. And the result is, that when the house is gone through, the man has spent enough to have build a new one, and still it is an old one. Part leads to part, and disclosure to disclosure, and decay to decay; and it seems as though it was almost impossible ever to make it good.

That is but a faint emblem of the work of reformation in the human soul. When a man begins to probe his disposition, he finds it to be a very different thing from a house. A house is inert, and offers no resistance to his attempts to renew and renovate it, but the human disposition is an ever-fertile, ever-growing, ever-recreating center. And a man is conscious that the more he tries to regulate it, the harder it is to do it.

The modern confusion over right and wrong is the result of rejecting him who alone can give light. To reject the Spirit of God is to invite continued darkness.

Thus does conscience, as the hound of heaven and the rack of the Almighty, press us sorely as some inevitable nemesis. Deflated, emptied, poverty stricken spiritually, at last we confess to Heaven that we are absolutely unable to love God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves, and in absolute self-despair we look to him who has promised to create a new heart for the penitent. In such a manner do the law and conscience kill the old "I" of self-dependence and self-righteousness. John Bunyan quaintly expressed the Christian's ensuing relief from remorse when he described his own experience:

One day, as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, 'Thy righteousness is in heaven;' and methought withal, I saw, with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, is my righteousness; so that wherever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say to me, 'He wants my righteousness,' for that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame (feelings) of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame (feelings) that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself.

The Gospel as a Source of Health.

The gospel alone can educate and suffice conscience. But it is a gospel that must be received afresh every day. In the story of Mark 8 we note that a single touch was not enough to bring fullness of vision. Repeated contact with Christ is the soul's need, lest the world cast a returning film of sin over the newly cleansed eye of the soul. The chastenings of conscience recur daily in order that we might learn to live close to the cross. Although victory over revealed sins becomes the believer's privilege, Luther's words remain true that the Christian is "always a sinner, always a penitent, and always right with God." Christ, through conscience, ever breaks us in order to make us. And here is the ultimate purpose of conscience, not merely to function as a condition for health and sound personality, but as the hound of heaven pursuing us and depriving us of supposed strength until we are taken by him who is love. □

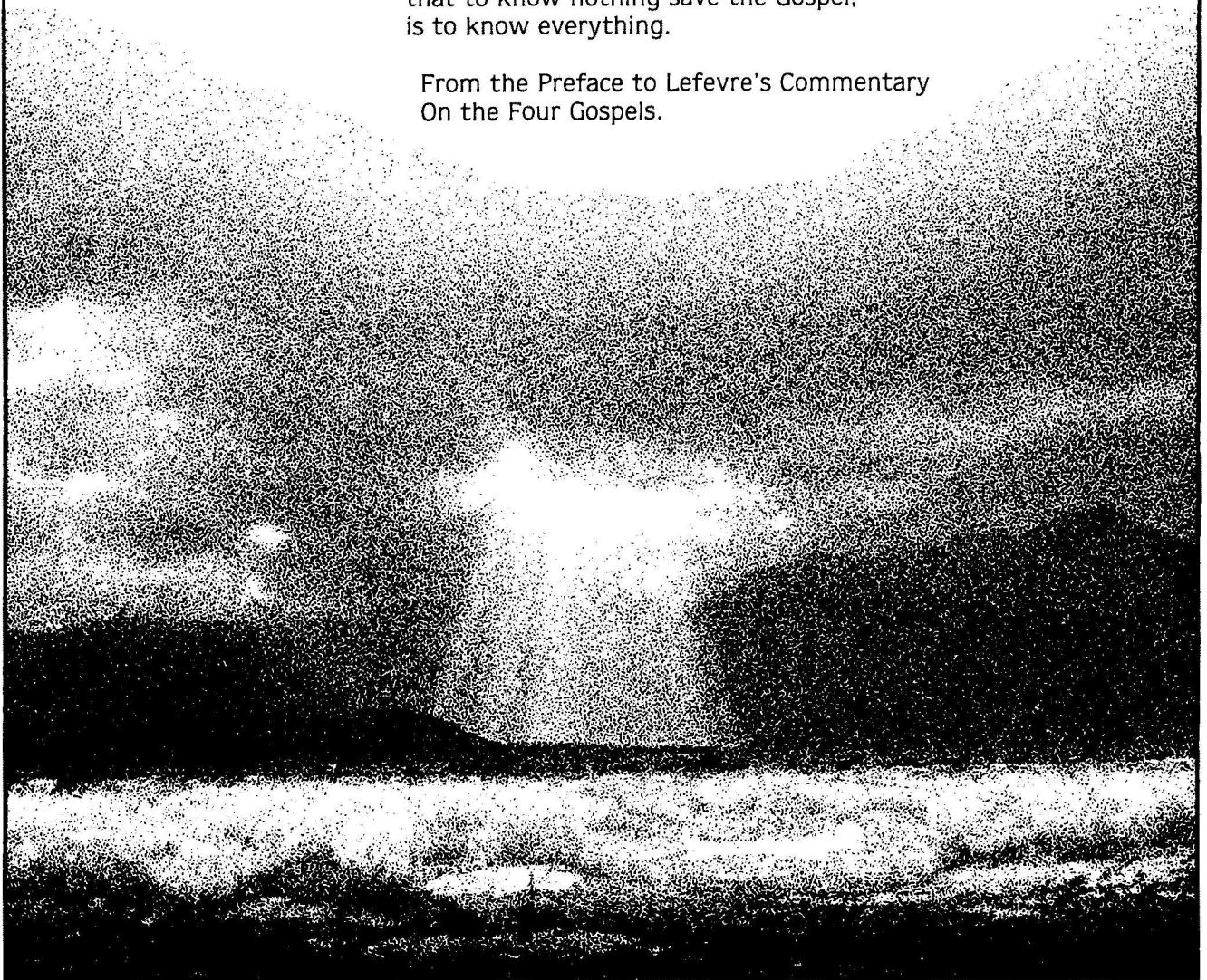
THE GOSPEL ALONE

Soon the time will come
when Christ will be preached purely —
without any admixture of human traditions —
which is not now true.

O Gospel —
spring of the water
that springs forth into eternal life —
when shall you reign in all your purity?
When shall Christ be all in all?
When will the only study
the only comfort,
the only desire of all
be to know the Gospel —
and to spread it everywhere?

Then will all be persuaded
as our ancestors were,
that to know nothing save the Gospel,
is to know everything.

From the Preface to Lefevre's Commentary
On the Four Gospels.





LOOKING FOR THE LAMB

Romans 3:26

Gillian Ford

This is Harry Teasoner of "Fifty Minutes." The first segment of our TV program tonight was to deal with little-known careers of famous characters in the Bible.

For instance, it is not well-known that Adam was a great athlete — he came first in the human race. Noah was a great financier — he floated his stock while the world was in liquidation. And Samson was one of the greatest actors ever known — he brought the house down.

Our interviewers, however, found that these men were very shy of their own accomplishments. Instead they seemed obsessed with the one purpose of seeking someone to save the world. We decided to join them and changed our topic.

We tried to interview Adam, but he ran for cover. Eve said he was too ashamed to come out, but later attempted to coax him out with some fruit. We caught him as he ran away from her. But all he wanted to do was to talk about his new fur coat and kept saying it covered his sins (Gn 3:21).

When we talked to Noah, he was surrounded by a few close family members,

and was patting a giraffe, two elephants, and a kangaroo. "When you get flooded out like this," he said confidentially, "and lose everything — home, possessions, country, world, and even the human race, you get the feeling that something's wrong."



Noah on camera with his friend, Gerald the Giraffe.

We asked what sort of a person would be needed to save the world, and did Noah think he was it? Like most of the people we spoke to, Noah had a fair idea what was needed, but looked blank and laughed when we asked was he the one.

Among the people we canvassed, the consensus of opinion was that two qualities were needed in a Savior. He must not only be good himself, but he must be able to forgive sins and make other people good. Romans 3:26, they said, puts it nicely — he must be both just and a justifier.

We found Abraham sitting under an oak tree (Gn 18:1). He asked whether we were angels as he'd just spoken to two others. We told him we weren't. He was happy to answer our questions. "Me — good, righteous, just?" he said. "Oh, no. If you had read about me, you would know that I lied more than once about my wife (Gn 12:10-13; 20:1-18), and I was rather disobedient about doing exactly what God told me (Gn 15:4; chs. 16, 21). But I did love and trust him and because of that he counted me as righteous" (Gn 15:6).

Joseph seemed pretty good until he told us that he had been spoiled as a child (Gn 37:3) and had been quite boastful to his family about some dreams he'd had (Gn 6:7-9). Yes, it was true that once he'd been a mini-Savior of the world (Gn 41:57) — at a time when there was a severe famine in Egypt — but it was no big deal. "You'll have to look elsewhere for a justifier," he said.

Moses was very busy since his move up to heaven, but he said he'd like to see us. He smiled. "Didn't you know I murdered an Egyptian (Ex 2:11-14)? And God wouldn't let me into the Promised Land down there because of my bad temper (Num 20:8). I nearly didn't get resurrected. Jesus and Satan stood over my grave and had a big argument about whether I could get into heaven. I got here, but only because of Jesus" (Jude 9).

David told us all about his troubles with too many wives, other men's wives, and naughty children. "I was a murderer too, you know." He shook his head. "After all I did, when I had died, God told the kings that came after me that there was none that served him like I did (1 Ki 14:8; 15:5). Isn't that amazing?" We agreed it was.

It was quite clear that Moses and David

could not be the justifier, but what about Job? Wasn't he the most patient man in the world?" How he roared with laughter. "You can't have read my book," he said. "It's all there — how I tried to prove how good I was (Job 27:4-6) by making God look bad (Job 40:8). He soon straightened me out."

Our interviewers couldn't get very close to Jeremiah, as he was surrounded by bottles and he cried the whole time. All he could sob was, "The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jer 17:9). When we asked later what the bottles were for, sources told us that all tears are put in God's bottle and recorded in his book (Ps 56:8).



Jeremiah bottling tears.

We found Isaiah much more positive. However he told us, "If you'd had to face the problems Jeremiah did, you'd cry too." When we asked him whether he was the justifier, he said, "No, I am a man of unclean lips" (Is 6:6). But his face lit up. "Have you heard, there's a baby coming, and he's God? (Is 9:6,7). He'll come from David's family and he will be just" (Is 11:1-4).

We almost thought we'd find the one to come when we met Daniel. If you've read his book, you'll know there is no sin recorded against him. "Ah, but my heart!" he said. "You just don't know how bad it is. How often I have wanted to punch Nebuchadnezzar in the nose. What a beast he was (Dan 4) — and those lions!!!" (Dan 6). But we knew it wasn't him because he also kept talking about the one who was to come.



In fact, we went right through the Old Testament and never found the justifier although they kept saying he was coming. But as soon as we got into the New Testament, the light began to flash. There were many witnesses — for instance the three wise men, Peter who was rather nervous at first, and John, who said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" But the wife of a Roman governor was especially helpful. Her name was Mrs. Pilate.

"Had a dream about him, I did. I told Mr. Pilate — have nothing to do with that just man. But would he listen to me? Now he's an ex-Pilate." So at last we had found him, and of course it was Jesus.

When we tried to approach Jesus, the angel Gabriel came out and was very friendly. He said, "Jesus is not one for publicity. He's out at the moment putting a splint on a bird who broke his wing falling out of a tree (Mt 6:26). I suggest you go and talk to Paul." So we did.

Paul told us we should have gone to him first. "I could have told you all you needed to know, and saved you a lot of work," he said. "My book of Romans will tell you that no one who's ever lived is good (Rom 3:11-18). But, you see, what God did was to send Jesus who was just and good down here to help us. You can't see God. He's a spirit — so by some sort of a divine conjuring trick, he came to earth as Jesus in the form of a man. But Jesus was still God. Don't try and work it out too hard because it's not the same as any relationship here on earth."

"Anyway," he continued, "let's not get off the track. Men were evil and were going to die, so what God did was to provide two things in Jesus for men, that they couldn't do or be themselves."

We asked Paul what were these two things that Jesus did that we couldn't. "One," he said, "was that he lived a perfect life. He was the spotless lamb of God, perfect inside and out. Two, he died a death that would make up for our sins. Jesus is therefore the only one who can be the just and the justifier (Rom 3:26 says "God" is, but it's the same thing really). But why don't you talk to this pet lamb? I use too many hard words and he can explain it simply."



The innocent lamb that escaped the knife.

The lamb came forward. "You see," she said, "I was the lamb who escaped the knife the very day, hour, and minute that Jesus

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died on the cross. You'll remember that the curtain in the temple was torn down the middle. The priest got such a shock that he stopped holding me and dropped the knife. I ran away. You people think that Jesus died for you, but he also died for me."

On further questioning we found out that literally millions of innocent spotless lambs had been slaughtered in the temple over the previous thousands of years. When people sinned, their sins were transferred to the animal and it died for the human being's sake.

"Oh, there wasn't any real value in lambs like us dying," said the pet lamb. "It was all a picture to show what Jesus would do one day. He would live as the perfect Lamb of God, and he would die to take our place as a sacrifice. So he was both just and the justifier. Don't you just love him? I do." She bleated and wandered off looking for grass to eat.



Our time is up folks. This is Harry Teasoner for "Fifty Minutes" saying that the best thing we found out was that the work of salvation was already done. All we have to do is believe it. In all my years of broadcasting, I've never heard such good news. We at "Fifty Minutes" decided to make a special award to Jesus but somebody showed us Revelation 5:11,12 and we realized it was probably too late!

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

BLIND

by
Lowell Tarling

*Jesus spat on the ground — I heard him,
And he dipped his fingers in.
He made a little cake of mud
And someone said he grinned.
A pharisee was disgusted.
Me? I was just surprised
When Jesus took that spit and mud
And wiped it on my eyes.*

*I washed my face in Siloam
And dark behind the veil
I saw shadows moving
So I closed my eyes again.
Then the mist fell dejected
Like unconvincing lies
And I clearly saw the people
Staring at my eyes.*

*"Is this man a beggar?"
"How come he can see?"
"What is this Jesus doing
Setting people free?"
Someone took me, someone shook me
"Where did Jesus go?"
Their eyes were blind with hatred
And I said, "I don't know."*

(Matthew 15:14, John 9:1-12)

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Editor: Gillian Ford

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The Crucifixion

F.W. Krummacher

The most solemn of all days in Israel, was, as we well know, the great day of atonement, the only day in the year on which the high priest entered into the most holy place in the temple. Before he approached that mysterious sanctuary, the law enjoined that he should divest himself of his costly garments, and clothe himself from head to foot in a plain white linen dress. He then took the vessel with the sacrificial blood in his hand, and, thrilling with sacred awe, drew back the vail, in order, humbly and devoutly, to approach the throne of grace, and sprinkle it with the atoning blood. He remained no longer in the sacred place than sufficed to perform his priestly office. He then came out again

F.W. Krummacher (1796-1868), a German Reformed pastor, was recognized the world over as one of the best biographers of Bible characters. This article has been adapted from his book **The Suffering Saviour** (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977 pp. 355-363).

to the people, and, in Jehovah's name, announced grace and forgiveness to every penitent soul.

We shall now see this symbolic and highly significant act realized in its full and actual accomplishment. The immaculate Jesus of whom the whole Old Testament priesthood, according to the divine intention, was only a typical shadow, conceals himself behind the thick vail of an increasing humiliation and agony; that bearing in his hands his own blood, he may mediate for us with God his Father. Removed from the sphere of reason's vision, and only cognizable by the exercise of faith, he realizes and accomplishes all that Moses included in the figurative service of the tabernacle. The precise manner in which this was accomplished, we shall never entirely fathom with our intellectual powers; but it is certain that he then finally procured our eternal redemption.

A Trip to Calvary

We are standing on the summit of Mount Calvary — Golgotha — horrifying name — the appellation of the most momentous and awful spot upon the whole earth. Behold a naked and barren eminence, enriched only by the blood of criminals, and covered with the bones of executed rebels, incendiaries, poisoners, and other offscourings of the human race. Only think, this place so full of horrors, becomes transformed into "the hill from whence cometh our help," and whose mysteries many kings and prophets have desired to see, and did not see them. Yes, upon this awful hill our roses shall blossom, and our springs of peace and salvation burst forth. The pillar of our refuge towers upon this height. The Bethany of our repose and eternal refreshment here displays itself to our view.

On that awful mount ends the earthly career of the Lord of Glory. Behold him, then, the only green, sound, and fruitful tree upon earth, and at the root of this tree the ax is laid. What a testimony against the world, and what an annihilating contradiction to every thing that bears the name of God and Divine Providence, if the latter did not find its solution in the mystery of the representative atonement!

There he stands, whose garment once was the light, and the stars of heaven the fringe of his robe, covered only with the crimson of his blood, and divested of all that adorned him, not only before men, but also, in his character as Surety, before God — reminding us of Adam in paradise, only that instead of hiding himself behind the trees at the voice of God, he cheerfully goes toward it; reminding us also of the Old Testament high priest, his mysterious type, who before he entered into the most holy place to make an atonement, exchanged his rich attire for a simple white robe.

After having unclothed the Lord, and left him, by divine direction, only his crown of thorns, they lay him down on the wood on which he is to bleed; and thus, without being aware of it bring about the moment predicted in Psalm xxii, where we hear the Messiah complaining, and saying, "Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed me about; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round." O what a dying bed for the King of kings! My friends, as often as we repose on the downy cushions of divine peace, or blissfully assemble in social brotherly circles, singing hymns of hope, let us not forget that the cause of the happiness we enjoy is

solely to be found in the fact that the Lord of Glory once extended himself on the fatal tree for us.

His holy arms forcibly stretched out upon the cross-beam; his feet laid upon each other and bound with cords. Thus Isaac once lay on the wood on Mount Moriah. But the voice that then called out to heaven, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad!" is silent on Calvary. The executioners seize the hammer and nails. The horrible nails from the forge of hell, yet foreseen in the sanctuary of eternity, are placed on the hands and feet of the righteous Jesus, and the heavy strokes of the hammer fall. How many a proud and haughty heart has been broken into salutary repentance by those strokes!

The Source of Salvation

See, the nails have penetrated through, and from both hands and feet gushes forth the blood of the Holy One. O these nails have rent the rock of salvation for us, that it may pour forth the water of life; have reft the heavenly bush of balm, that it may send forth its perfume. Yes, they have pierced the hand-writing that was against us, and have nailed it, as invalid, to the tree; and by wounding the Just One, have penetrated through the head of the old serpent, like Jael's nail through the head of Sisera. O let no one be deceived with respect to him who was thus nailed to the cross! Those pierced hands bless more powerfully than while they moved freely and unfettered. And believe me, there is no help or salvation, save in these hands; and these bleeding feet tread more powerfully than when no fetters restrained their steps.

The most dreadful deed is done, and the prophetic words of the Psalm, "They pierced my hands and my feet," have received their fulfillment. The foot of the cross is then brought near to the hole dug for it; powerful men seize the rope attached to the top of it, and begin to draw, and the cross, with its victim, elevates itself and rises to its height. Thus the earth rejects the Prince of Life from its surface, and, as it seems, heaven also refuses him. But we will let the curtain drop over these horrors. Thank God! in that scene of suffering the Sun of Grace rises over a sinful world, and the Lion of Judah only ascends into the region of the spirits that have the power of the air, in order, in a mysterious conflict, eternally to disarm them on our behalf.

Look what a spectacle now presents itself! The moment the cross is elevated to its height, a purple stream falls from the wounds of the crucified Jesus through the air, and bedews the place of torture, and the sinful crowd which surrounds it. This is his legacy to his Church. We render him thanks for such a bequest. This rosy dew works wonders. It falls upon spiritual deserts, and they blossom as the rose. We sprinkle it upon the door-posts of our hearts, and are secure against destroyers and avenging angels. Where this rain falls, the gardens of God spring up, lilies bloom, and what was black becomes white in the purifying stream, and what was polluted becomes pure as the light of the sun. Let us therefore embrace the cross, and sing with the poet:

"Here at thy cross, my dying God,
I lay my soul beneath thy love,
Beneath the droppings of thy blood,
Jesus, nor shall it e'er remove!"

Jesus, Our Sin Bearer

There stands the mysterious cross — a rock against which the very waves of the curse break, a lightning-conductor, by which the destroying fluid descends, which would otherwise have crushed the world. He who so mercifully engaged to direct this thunderbolt against himself, hangs yonder in profound darkness. Still he remains the Morning Star, announcing an eternal Sabbath to the world. Though rejected by heaven and earth, yet he forms, as such, the connecting link between them both, and the Mediator of their eternal and renewed amity. Ah see! his bleeding arms are extended wide; he stretches them out to every sinner. His hands point to the east and west; for he shall gather his children from the ends of

"I am crucified with Christ. They are not his sins, for which the curse is there endured, but mine; for he who thus expires on the cross, dies for me. Christ pays and suffers in my stead."

the earth. The top of the cross is directed toward the sky; far above the world will its effects extend. Its foot is fixed in the earth; the cross becomes a wondrous tree, from which we reap the fruit of an eternal reconciliation. O my readers, nothing more is requisite, than the Lord should grant us penitential tears, and then, by means of the Holy Spirit, show us the Saviour suffering on the cross. We then escape from all earthly care and sorrow, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. For our justification in his sight, nothing more is requisite than that, in the consciousness of our utter helplessness, we lay hold on the horns of that altar, which is sprinkled with the blood that "speaketh better things than that of Abel."

"I am crucified with Christ," exclaims the apostle, and by these words points out the entire fruit which the cross bears for all believers. His meaning is, "They are not his sins, for which the curse is there endured, but mine; for he who thus expires on the cross, dies for me. Christ pays and suffers in my stead." But that of which Paul boasts, is the property of us all, if by the living bond of faith and love, we are become one with the crucified Jesus. We are likewise exalted to fellowship with the cross of Christ in the sense also that our corrupt nature is condemned to death, and our old man, with his affections and lusts, is subjected to the bitter process of a lingering death, partly through the spirit of purity which dwells and rules within us, and partly by the trials and humiliations which God sends us, until the lance-wound of the death of the body makes an end of it. But it is while enduring these mortal agonies, that we first see the cross of Calvary unfold its full and peace-bestowing radiance. It arches itself, like a rainbow, over our darkness, and precedes us on our path of sorrow like a pillar of fire. O that its serene light might also shine upon our path through this vale of tears, and as the tree of liberty and of life, strike deep its roots in our souls! Apprehended by faith, may it shed its heavenly fruit into our lap, and warm and expand our hearts and minds beneath its shade. □

Guilt and Grace

Reviewed by Desmond Ford

Guilt and Grace, Dr. Paul Tournier, Harper and Row, New York, 1962, 217 pages.

Paul Tournier, Genevan physician since 1928 and more noted in recent decades for his work in Christian psychology, was described by William Barclay as "a man who is skilled in medicine and wise toward God." Hans Hofmann said of him, "Tournier is able to speak immediately to human experience and problems." Nowhere did Tournier do this better than in his **Guilt and Grace**, first printed in 1962 and a perennial favorite with mature Christians ever since.

"A guilty conscience is the seasoning of our daily life" says Tournier in his first chapter, and adds "all upbringing is a cultivation of the sense of guilt on an intensive scale." To understand his words it is necessary to keep in mind his distinction between true and false guilt. While the latter is an unnecessary burden created by violation of some custom or tradition not innately right or wrong, the former has to do with lasting moral absolutes.

Most of our guilt is false guilt, but more than enough true guilt remains to make us entirely dependent on the mercy and grace of our Maker. Tournier illustrates both forms with reference to the schoolboy: "The school, with its bad marks and the sinister prospect of the moment when he must show his report to his parents, fills his childish mind with feelings of guilt. This can become such an obsession as to lure him into cheating, the source of a more genuine guilt" (p. 11).

The writer thus warns us that what frequently weighs us down from our very childhood is a false guilt arising from a fear of social judgment and disapproval rather than the genuine guilt which springs from rebellion against the holiness of God. "God's thoughts and men's thoughts; judgments of God and judgments of men;

that is a clear formulation of the opposition between true guilt and false guilt" (p. 17).

The first half of **Guilt and Grace** underlines the universality of the guilt experience in both its false and true forms, but the second half offers the gospel remedy. Yet the grace Tournier exalts is not a cheap grace. Successive chapters are entitled "Everything Must Be Paid For" and "It Is God Who Has Paid." In the former chapter we read: "For twenty centuries the Church has been proclaiming salvation, and the grace and forgiveness of God, to a humanity oppressed with guilt. How then is it that even amongst the most fervent believers there are so few free, joyous, confident souls?"

"It seems to me that this arises, at least to a large extent, from a psychological attitude which I now want to stress, namely, the idea deeply engraved in the heart of all men, that everything must be paid for" (p. 174).

"I am not now thinking only of atheists, or of those many believers who are on the fringe of the Churches. We can see practising believers going regularly to confession, to Communion, to the Lord's Supper, without really believing that their guilt is wiped out. Perhaps, indeed, the very frequency of their acts of devotion, and of their pilgrimages, a certain feverishness and meticulous zeal, far from being an outward sign of their faith are indications that in spite of everything this doubt remains in their hearts" (p. 174).

After listing in the succeeding chapter examples of Bible characters who tried to wipe out their own guilt Tournier summarizes: "But the wonderful announcement of God's free grace, which effaces guilt, runs up against the intuition which every man has, that a price must be paid. The reply which comes is the supreme message of the Bible, its supreme revelation; it is God Himself who pays, God

Himself has paid the price once and for all, and the most costly that could be paid — His own death, in Jesus Christ, on the Cross. The obliteration of our guilt is free for us because God has paid the price" (p. 185).

Thus does this author remind us that salvation is not merely an idea but Christ himself, Christ in his sacrifice and intercession. "In his presence all the interminable debates which arouse within us the feelings of guilt, all moralistic hair-splitting and our defenses against the judgements of others, all these fall away" (p. 187).

In his chapter "Love with No Conditions" Tournier is at his best as he presents the divine love as "all-inclusive and unconditional." He points out that a mature Christian, despite his or her mistakes, has no need to fear the loss of God's love. Even repentance is not so much a condition for receiving heaven's acceptance as it is a route. And the same is true about the matter of our forgiving others.

This splendid volume sets forth beautifully God's free love and forgiveness and its manifestation in the atonement of the cross. As Tournier reminds us, it is the discovery of such love that has continually caused churches and individuals to be made anew. When it takes place "it gives rise to an outburst of infectious faith, mass conversions and irrepressible joy" (p. 193).

Tournier has an uncanny knack for seeing into the very souls of persons. We sense that he understands us as we read his words. We know he identifies with our problems, and hence we develop a warm respect for the author. His personal writing style invites us into his own intimate company.

You will be challenged by **Guilt and Grace**, and it is likely that some of your personal convictions will be changed by it — for the better. Read it, and see! □

10

Q. Everything seems a riddle to me, I seem to spend most of my time dueling with my doubts. What hurts is that I have friends who have never doubted the existence of God or their church's beliefs. They seem to have all the answers. Sometimes I think I would be happier if I were an atheist. Is there something wrong with me?

A. Do not be put down by your religious friends who have never doubted and seem to have all the answers. Thomas Merton was surely correct when he wrote that "no one is so wrong as the man who knows all the answers!" And while we would not agree with Voltaire's basic convictions about life, nevertheless, there is some truth in his statement that "It is only charlatans who are certain...Doubt is not a very agreeable state, but certainty is a ridiculous one!"

The fact that your religious friends have never experienced doubt may only indicate they have closed minds and really do not have a genuine Christian faith. Their attitude may rest on an uncritical, blind trust in some religious authority who has given them a set of "infallible" beliefs rather than the gift of faith. It is quite impossible for one to have faith and possess "all knowledge" at the same time. The venture of faith has become impossible for some Christians because they **know** so much about God, the past, the present and the future. It is said of Abraham the faithful, that when he was called, he obeyed...**not knowing** where he was going (Heb 11:8). Knowledge can puff one up so much that there is no room for faith. "I do believe; **help my** unbelief" is a testimony that has that ring of truth and sincerity (Mk 9:24).

You could not become an atheist, you could only become a **doubting** atheist and you certainly wouldn't be happier. Remember the story about the trapper who walked away from the camp to

escape the mosquitos only to be grabbed by the bears?

You are going to have to recognize and accept your creatureliness, your finitude, your inadequacies, incapacities and incompleteness. Do not try to be God.

Look squarely at the options open to you. They can be expressed in an either/or fashion. The choice is between meaning and absurdity. Either life has an ultimate meaning or it doesn't. How shall we decide? Is it "you pays your money and you takes your choice?"

One way is the pragmatic way. Try living your life in such a way that is consistent with the belief that life has no ultimate meaning. Remember there is no God and no immortality. At death you will disappear into an eternal night of blackness and nothingness. Life as Ernest Nagel has said will be "an episode between two oblivions." And as Joseph Wood Krutch has said "Living is only a physiological process with only a physiological meaning." It will mean that loving, hating, crying and longing are no more significant than sweating or spitting. This first option (agnosticism, atheism, etc.) may be tenable philosophically, but it is certainly untenable practically. I have never met an agnostic who is able to live up to his creed without hypocrisy. The more consistent nihilists spend their last moments on San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

I said there was a choice between absurdity or meaning. But is there really? Instead of allowing life's questions, contradictions, paradoxes, anxieties and cruelties paralyze you somewhere in limbo-land between faith and doubt why not allow them to evoke faith? God is not going to storm the citadel of your soul and drag faith away captive in chains. He is not going to tie us so tight in unquestionable proofs that we **have** to worship him. He wants us to choose him because we love

him — without bribery or coercion. Don't balk at the venturesomeness of faith. It's that element that makes the Christian life so exciting. It's the fizz in the Coke!

—Noel Mason

Q. Which Bible translation should I choose?

A. There is no one perfect translation and never will be. Today we have a choice between translations based on three different theories of translation.

First there are the **literal** translations which attempt to translate by keeping as close as possible to the exact words and phrases in the original languages. The King James Version (KJV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB) are examples of a literal translation.

Second, there are a number of **free** translations which attempt to translate the **ideas** from one language to another. A free translation is not concerned about using the exact words of the original. The Living Bible (LB) and J.B. Phillips' translation are good examples of **free** translations.

Third, the attempt to translate words, idioms, etc., of the original language into precise, **equivalents** of our language is known as the **dynamic equivalent** theory of translation. The Good News Bible (GNB), Jerusalem Bible (JB), New English Bible (NEB) and New International Version (NIV) are good examples of this type of translation. Our advice is to use the NIV along with one or more of the more literal translations like the Revised Standard Version (RSV) or NASB in serious Bible study. However, don't ignore the insights that can be gained from a free paraphrase. One only has to read Romans 3:20f in the LB to appreciate its value. □

—Noel Mason

New Address

We are happy that most of our readers have observed the change of address for the Australian Office. There are some that haven't, though. So here it is again:

PO Box 1603
Hornsby Northgate
NSW 2077

Cassettes

New readers may not be aware that **GNU** has a large range of Gospel cassettes. There are stocks of all the **GNU** messages that have been preached in Seminars over the last three years. Here is a sample of messages by Smuts van Rooyen.

Svr 81-2 "Grace" (Amazing Grace) "Faith" (Faith in What?)
Svr 81-3 "Righteousness" (How to get off Death Row) "Repentance" (Responsible Repentance)
Svr 81-4 "Life" (Life in abundance) "Birth" (How to be Born again)
Svr 81-5 "Growth" (How to stand till Jesus comes) "Forgiveness" (The glory of forgiveness)
Svr 81-6 "Judgement" (Now is the judgement of this world) "Security" (No condemnation now)
Svr 81-7 "Mission" (The Elijah Message) "Regret" (If only)

The above list constitutes a set of Smuts van Rooyen's messages entitled, "Basic Christianity Seminar".

All cassettes are \$4:00 each. Postage included.

Speaking Appointments

GNU Pastor Ron Allen will be preaching at these places on the dates listed below.

April 28 Seventh Day Baptist Church Hervey Bay. Queensland. 3PM.

May 19 Warrimoo Seventh Day Baptist Church Warrimoo. NSW. 11AM. (SDB Church meets in Uniting Church Warrimoo.)

American Seminars

Dr Desmond Ford, founder of Good News Unlimited will shortly start a series of meetings in Sacramento California. The five week series entitled "Above the shadows: A Gospel Serenade," will focus on the Christian response to personal problems in the modern world. The schedule of topics is:

APRIL 28 Will there be a Nuclear holocaust?

MAY 5 The Gathering of the Eagles-Tomorrow in bible prophecy.

MAY 12 Is there life before/after death?

MAY 19 How to survive personal tragedy.

MAY 26 The only religion Heaven approves.

These live presentations of Christian answers to contemporary problems will be used for the new daily radio broadcast by Desmond Ford. The same broadcasts will soon become available here in Australia.

Gifts

To our many readers who continue to support **GNU** we offer our sincere thanks. We believe God has given us something wonderful to share. Your recognition of the ongoing

needs for all aspects of **GNU** ministry is a great encouragement to us. We feel part of a large team. May God bless you all.

Again this month we say thankyou to an anonymous donor who generously contributed \$35:00.

Tape of the Month

This month's cassette.

Tape of the Month

This month's cassette features Dr Ford with a sermon entitled, "A Prison Song." On the other side is Smuts van Rooyen with, "The Song of Songs."

So many have been blessed by this tape ministry and each month more and more people are joining the tape of the month club.

If you would like the Tape of the Month to come automatically to your address for 12 months, simply send us your cheque for \$48:00. Otherwise a single TofM may be ordered from the **GNU** office for \$4:00.

Remember, anyone who donates \$25:00 in any one month to **GNU** will be awarded a complimentary T of the M.

Good News Unlimited presents

NEW EVERY MORNING

(a celebration of compassion)

With Pastor Ron Allen

Two Topics:

THRU MISERY TO MERCY

and

NOT WHAT YOU KNOW...BUT WHO YOU KNOW

Murwillumbah NSW. 7:30 PM May 25
3 PM May 26. Phone (066) 723940 for information re venue.

Bunya Mountains. Queensland.
Main Picnic area 10:30 AM June 16
Bring picnic lunch.

Can't Stop Telling

Sirs:

Keep up the good work you are doing. And may the dear Lord bless your work.

He has recently entered my life to utterly change me after 4 years of my patient (sometimes very impatient) waiting. There is now no turning back! Why does not everybody believe and love our dear Lord? It's so simple and easy to receive his never ending love and understanding. I can't stop telling everyone of his wonderful blessing.

I desperately need to work in some way to spread the word of our beloved Saviour, who saw fit to save yet another helpless sinner (patience again). But thy will be done!

I thank you for listening to one person of a new family of five. Through Jesus our lives have (and still are being) changed.

"Daughter, be of good comfort. Thy faith hath made thee whole." Matt 9:22

Wendy Adams
NSW Australia

New Listener

Sirs:

This morning I happened to turn the radio on and heard an Australian man sharing the gospel of Christ in a beautiful way. I have never heard this minister or of the Good News Unlimited ministries before. Could you please share with me as much information as possible?

I grew up in Northern California (Colusa) and still miss all that it has to offer. Maybe we could stop and meet you if we ever come up that way.

I'd really enjoy the free tape if you have enough.

Julie Tullef
Coalinga, California

Thank You for Everything

Sirs:

It is with so much gratitude that we receive all the valuable sermons on tape

and your magazine and printed material from month to month. We thank the Lord many, many times a day for freedom in Christ and a way that is not full of guilt. Thank you for everything!

Is there any way possible for us to receive the material you will be giving in the studies in Sacramento? It is sad for those of us who do not live where we can hear the weekly studies as you go through the books of the Bible.

We are terribly excited about the possibility of going into the circuit like Dobson and others are doing. We see such merit in this too.

We enjoy each of you and your ministry.

Melvin and Freda Binder
Colfax, Washington

Unmatched Depth

Sirs:

Recently we accidentally ran across your program on KKIM, Albuquerque, and are learning much about our precious Bible that we have never heard before. We feel a strong desire to read and reread your lessons. Please send to us copies of the four lessons on "The Holy of Holies in World History." I am interested in also getting tapes to go with the lessons but have never heard what they cost.

There is no Bible teaching on radio or television (that we've heard) with the depth of truth in these lessons!

We thank God for leading us to this teaching. Thank you.

Laura Jean Natean
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Open Minded

Sirs:

I want to thank you for continuing to send me your magazine which I enjoy receiving. It gives me encouragement. At work I share it with friends.

God has really led you in your cause

these past several years. I'm glad you have stood by your beliefs and trust in God. I know that through it all you have helped many students as myself to open up our minds and search for the truth.

Please accept this cheque and may 1984 be a year in which you will help in bringing more people to Christ and salvation.

Elizabeth Thompson
Lynwood, California

Not Extreme

Sirs:

First of all, I'd like to thank you for the precious articles in **Good News for Kids**. The beautiful illustration of the relationship of Boaz and Ruth compared to Christ's redeeming relationship with us as his bride was just lovely.

It's so important for our children (and we as adults!) to see the Old Testament stories as analogies that help us understand about Jesus. The whole Bible points to him as our Saviour, and the more parallels we understand as we read the Old Testament, the more meaningful these stories will be for all of us. Please keep them coming!

Also, the poem by Elizabeth Reynolds, "The Little Black Dog," moved me to tears. What a precious thought she expressed in that poem. If only we could be as loyal to Jesus as many of our own dogs are to us!

Good News Unlimited seems to portray the gospel in a loving and scriptural manner without many of the extreme views we noticed creeping into other publications. We are praying that our church will continue to grow in the gospel and that Jesus' command for love... **unconditional love**, and acceptance and unity will become more and more real in our lives each day.

We thank you for your dedication in sharing this good news with others.

Name Withheld
Australia

Good News Unlimited

P.O. Box 1603
Hornsby Northgate
N.S.W. 2077

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