

The INTERCESSOR

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

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On to Intercession

By Norman Grubb

In this article, taken from Yes, I Am, Norman Grubb explores the far less recognized "third stage" through which we must enter by faith to become settled in who we are and to operate fully and effectively in our union in Christ.

Now when we come consciously into this third level, the Spirit all the more consumes us with the desire to bring others to the liberation which is now ours—not only in the new birth, but in the fullness of the Spirit-filled life, with Christ in us as us. Not one of us can be in this union life without this desire being—even if manifested in a hundred different ways—the only basic aim we have. We are bondslaves. The zeal of God's house eats us up. Our love of Christ, as Jesus said to Peter, takes the ceaseless form (as God brings folks to us or we go to them) of feeding His lambs and feeding His sheep. We become a fiddle with one string. Christ is our main topic of conversation. In place of sharing the scandals of life, we are thrilled to share what we see of Christ leading captivity captive. We are scandal-mongers of a different type!

But just as in our inner faith-activities—in the outflowing of the Spirit through our *spirit*—we move on from the normal faith-level of all God's redeemed people to the total use of faith

in the management of all life, so now in the Spirit's use of our *body*.

This body use we speak of by the Bible word "intercessor." Nothing can be tied down to a word, but "intercessor" does conveniently explain what the Bible tells us of the Spirit's action through our body. It is really the Spirit making full use of His body temples, precisely as He did of the human body temple of God's own Son, who "through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto God." We see that the final glory of being a person is the saving of others at the price of ourself. It is as with Jesus: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save" was how they mocked Him as He hung on that cross.

Our Highest Calling

So we are now reaching the final and highest point in God's world-purposes through His family of sons—those who respond to His call to be intercessors. This is Paul's "pressing toward the mark for the prize of the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus."

The body is the localized individual means by which the Spirit reaches out through us. By our human spirits He can reach out universally and can encompass everything—by faith unlimited. By our bodies He can do only

one specific thing, and a different one by each particular body. So this is His highest personalized activity for us, and the highest for each of us. It was said by Jesus, "A body hast Thou prepared Me"; and by this one special body-commitment the Son said to the Father, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In this world of body people it was only by His body that "we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus once for all." By that one offering "He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:5, 7, 14).

Therefore it is *only by our bodies* that God can fulfill His saving purpose

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Norman P. Grubb
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Mailing Address

Home Office
Zerubbabel, Inc.
PO Box 1710
Blowing Rock, NC 28605
828-295-7982
Fax 828-295-7900
info@zerubbabel.org
www.zerubbabel.org

Magazine Staff

Editing Staff

Sanda Cooper
Pat Mace
Gail Bedell
Joanna Coatney

Production

Sheryl Trethewey
Joanna Coatney

Art Editor

Steven Prewitt

International Distributors

Great Britain and Western Europe
Jon and Kim Langley
2 Adams Close
Stanwick, Wellingborough NN9 6TQ
England
01933 625246
011 44 1933 625246 (from USA)

in this body world. Let us have this plainly understood. Our service to Christ is only fulfilled by some body action of ours—by body dedication. Only by this means does redemption reach the multimillion bodies of our human brotherhood. There still is for us a body death and body involvement by which God’s saving purposes are fulfilled, as by His own Son’s body. This is intercession.

This is a far cry from the loose way in which we Christians continually talk of intercession in terms of intercessory prayer. Intercession is the whole mountain of which prayer is one peak. There

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are only one or two places in Scripture where the word intercession is linked just to prayer. So let us lift it out and put it in its full perspective, and see that we ourselves accept our highest privilege as intercessors, who are also saying “A body hast Thou prepared me.... Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God”; and each in his unique calling into intercession.

Intercession is revealed in the Bible as God looking for special men by whom He will give some special deliverance. In Isaiah 59:16, God wonders that there is no man, no intercessor, among Israel in its backslidden condition; and then the prophet leaps on from Israel’s failure to have the-man-for-that-moment to speak of the-Man-

for-the-whole-of-history: “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion... [for] My Spirit is upon thee” (59:20-21).

So we see the intercessor is the Spirit Himself through His chosen bodies. And the way of intercession is “death” in the soul and body of the human intercessor that others might live. Of Jesus it was said: “He hath poured out His soul unto death . . . and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12).

And that means a completed task. “It is finished”; and when finished, the intercession is gained and the fruit of it appears. It was said of the ascended Jesus, “Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). That was the completed intercession of the great High Priest.

So it is the calling still today of us as priest-intercessors to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His body’s sake. It is the law of harvest: “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” If a corn of wheat remains comfortably in its bin, it feeds no one. If it is sown into the ground, wrought upon by rain, snow, and frost, it disintegrates, but reappears as food for the world. That is the general body principle of intercession, just as we saw a general spirit principle of faith.

What is an Intercessor?

Now let us examine it more closely. We would again say it for those within hearing distance: There is suffering as well as glory in this. We all come to the

cross for salvation, then we take our place on the cross for our union, and we now can take up our individual cross for the world, if we are willing to. The first two are necessities, the third is voluntary. “Take it up, if you wish,” and this time for others.

Commission, Cost, Completion

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

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

Then when conscious of the commission, I respond like Isaiah, “Here am I; send me.” By that I mean my body is wholly available, which of course includes my soul with its emotions, and my concentrated thought-processes. And somewhere along that line is coming travail and death. There will be a *price paid* equivalent to a death; but there again, we do not seek

that out or make it up. He brings us into it and through it. We may not even recognize the death process until we are well into it. It may mean literal sacrifice of all that goes with our body living: our time, our faculties, our possessions, our finances, our homes, and usually most costly and common of all, our reputation. Misunderstanding and even opposition may arise in our own family circle, among our friends, our social circle, our church fellowship, or right out to the public. As we go through or have gone through our intercession, we

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shall well know where we have died.

One who brought to light the principle of intercession to the church in our generation was Rees Howells. He always spoke concerning intercession as “the first-fruits going to the altar,” which referred in type to the meal offering of Leviticus 2. There the first handful of the flour is burned on the altar, and the rest feeds the priests. By that he meant that there would be this “death” in which the self-life, the body-soul life, has had its human setbacks, sacrifice, maybe failure in the eyes of the world or church, and out of that

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this magazine is to further the great high calling of the Lord Jesus to carry His Gospel to the whole world. This calling is known in the Christian world as the Great Commission. Our interpretation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity, fully God, made manifest in the flesh. He was tempted in all points as we are, but totally without sin. He was crucified for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He gives the power to become the sons of God to all who receive Him.

Beyond this forgiveness of sins, *The Intercessor* is committed to proclaiming to every creature the mystery of the Gospel, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost means that Christ has joined Himself to us as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Thus we see that Christ has reproduced Himself in our flesh, and we Christians are really Christ living as us (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also a life in Christ of knowing we are dead to sin (Rom. 6). Furthermore, we are dead to the Law (Rom. 7), since the power of sin is through the Law. Christ is the only Lawkeeper (Rom. 8), and there is no independent human nature that can keep the Law, though we are continually tempted to believe so.

Belief in an independent human nature is Satan’s lie and the root of sin. Non-Christians are really Satan-indwelt, expressing his lusts (John 8:44), just as we have come to learn that Christians are Christ-indwelt, expressing His righteousness (2 Cor. 6:16). Humans have no moral nature of their own, meaning that we are simply expressions of the indwelling deity nature, either of Christ or Satan (the fallen created being who is the spirit of error). Sin in a Christian is a result of believing again Satan’s lie that there is a human nature which can do good or evil.

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is “intercession,” the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). *The Intercessor* is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

death came the life to others. It is the 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 principle, but this time in specific rather than general form—for this is where Paul is speaking about bearing in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. He then writes, “So death worketh in us, but life in you.” The intercession is completed, first by being gained on the level of faith, as the intercessor becomes settled in his inner consciousness that the Lord has done it; and second, by his own continued involvement in it, by whatever action accompanies it, while the Spirit brings the thing to pass. And it continues until the intercessor knows that his part in it is *fulfilled*.

Commission. Cost. Completion.

A Personal Example

Here are a few personal instances. When at Cambridge after World War I, I was unable to take part in my favorite games of “rugger” and field hockey because of a wounded leg. But I had one overwhelming urge—to get around to all the rooms of the men in my College, Trinity, and witness to them and ask them to join our then-small group of the Cambridge InterCollegiate Christian Union, commonly called C.I.C.C.U. I did this, though often it cost me a lot to do it, for they were mainly men who had held good ranks in the army and were pretty sophisticated, being older than the average undergraduates. Then, with only two terms left to complete my degree, the call of God came clear to me to leave the University and join C.T. Studd and his small band, who had been alone in the heart of Africa all the war years. I did not do this easily, because it was against the advice of my friends, and

according to Cambridge rules I could not return later and pick up where I dropped out. But I did do it, and it was “death” to me on that level.

But before I left, near the end of that term, the Spirit distinctly came on me to go and speak in no uncertain terms to all I knew personally who had not accepted Christ, or who at least showed no sign of spiritual life—men whom I never expected to see again in this life. I went and pulled no punches, and a number came out for Christ, about sixteen of them. This caused a stir like a touch of revival and the C.I.C.C.U. men asked me to come and tell them about it. As I did so, it came like a vision to me that every university and college in Britain and the world should have its evangelical and witnessing union, as we had. So I suggested to two of my friends that we take a hall in London and invite some from Oxford and London and other colleges, and hold an intervarsity conference. About sixty of us attended. Little did I then realize that this was the start of what has since grown to become the worldwide InterVarsity Fellowship, now in hundreds and probably thousands of colleges in all nations, developed under the dedicated leadership of Douglas Johnson and Oliver Barclay in Britain, Howard Guinness in Canada and Australia, and Stacey Woods in the U.S.A. and on through the world. There had been this definite “commission” that I *had* to give myself to witness in the university. There had also been an unexpected form of “death”—in not remaining to get my degree, though it entailed only a couple of terms. But the intercession was gained on this far larger scale, as the IVF has

become this world-wide student fellowship.

Again, after Pauline and I returned to England in 1931 to carry on the home end, God’s commission to our World-wide Evangelization Crusade was to go to any unevangelized area of the world. It was our custom then for those at the home end to take a slightly larger share of what monthly money there was before it was apportioned to the fields, as it cost more to live in England than in Africa. But when we had practically nothing to send to the thirty-five missionaries (we were nearly penniless that first month), the Lord clearly said to Pauline and me, “Why not personally live by the injunction to ‘take no thought for food and clothing...but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,’ and believe the promise that ‘all these things will be added unto you’?”

We saw the point and accepted it from God, though to us at that time it was a big thing—having no earthly source of supply, not even from the mission—and we also thought at that time we should never get anyone else to join us in the work of the home end on those same conditions! But how way off we were, for our WEC co-workers (maybe over a hundred of them at all our home bases round the world) all these years have taken no mission funds for personal needs, but have lived by the promises of God.

In those first days we did sometimes touch bottom. When we were about a dozen of us, we lived for a week in our London home with no household supplies. At mealtimes we joined in the fellowship room, intending to thank the Lord for the bread of life! But the retired lady’s maid of C.T. Studd’s mother lived

with us in our basement, where we also had our kitchen and dining room. Though she did not outwardly profess Christ she really loved our young men, whom she called “Hallelujah Boys”—and all we knew was that each day at mealtime the bell rang from downstairs. We trooped down to find bread, cheese and tea on the table. We always thanked the Lord that, having asked only for daily bread, we got cheese on top! We could only guess that Miss Mussett put it there. Also, for months we lived practically entirely on sacks of lentils sent us by a Christian farmer...but that was Daniel’s food, and we flourished on it. Sometimes, though, we felt like the children of Israel who cried to God for quails and then got them until they “came out of their nostrils”! But those were early days and it has rarely happened since.

It seemed to us more an adventure of faith than a death to ourselves; yet it was a spark which set us alight in our divine commission. The commission was on us to see that all those unevangelized areas of the world which were brought to our attention were entered and occupied, God sending the stream of recruits to enter them. What exploits of faith there were in the entry of some of them! But this is not the place for those stories. Year by year we did that, opening a new field every year, until we are now on forty fields. And we have already mentioned how the gospel has been going out to tens of thousands, and how living churches have been founded which are now continuing with their own witness in many lands of Africa...and in Indonesia, India, Thailand, Japan, South America, Europe, and elsewhere. Pauline and I had that specific commission; we knew we

had it, and that it must be fulfilled. God told us to take this way of personal *financial* death, which has become our home-base principle ever since. The intercession has been fulfilled—our part in it—by the establishment of these many fields in many countries. We meanwhile gained our individual intercession by it becoming easy for us, ever since, to trust the Lord for personal finances and to take our share in the stand of faith for the increasingly large finances needed by the Crusade throughout the world—with no appeals made to man.

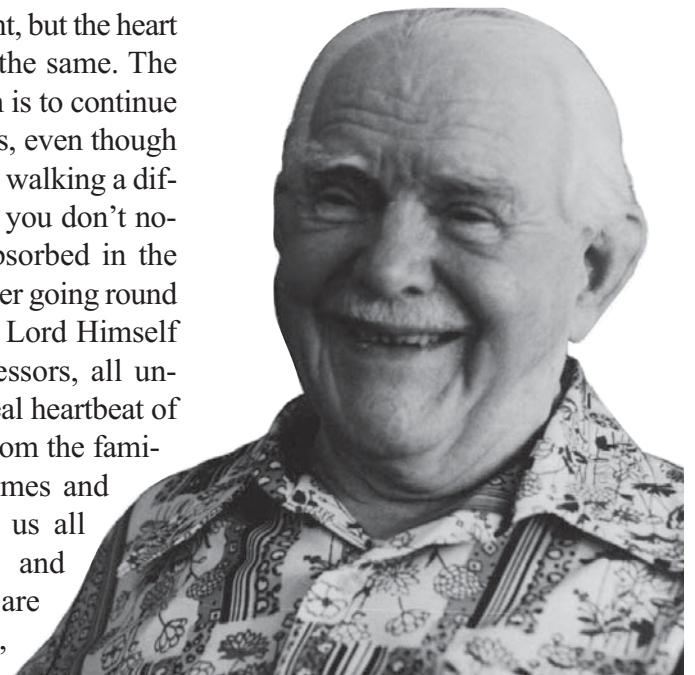
Intercession Today

I would say that, right up to today, God gives us the privilege of being intercessors. As my years in our direct WEC activities ceased, the Lord gave me the plain calling—another definite commission—to get around the U.S.A. with the message of union and replacement in Christ. I had to do it. I had to go round and repeat unendingly what God has made so real to me. There are always new facets of light, but the heart of the message is ever the same. The price of this intercession is to continue nonstop into my eighties, even though my old leg injury makes walking a difficulty—though in fact, you don’t notice the dying when absorbed in the harvesting. And now, after going round for about ten years, the Lord Himself has called in co-intercessors, all unknown to me. But the real heartbeat of our fellowship comes from the families who open their homes and sponsor gatherings for us all around the U.S.A. and Canada. Not that we are some exclusive group,

but are one in Christ with all who give the full message of the gospel—seeking to make our own contribution, as given us by God, to “the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ.” For Pauline and me an intercession has been gained, and the harvest is being widely reaped.

—Yes, I Am

For many years after his retirement as General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, Norman Grubb traveled extensively sharing the truth of our union with Christ. He also carried on a huge personal correspondence with individuals throughout the world. He was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubabel Book Ministry. Norman lived with his daughter, Priscilla, in Fort Washington, PA. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.



Editor's Note

To wrap up our three-part series on the heart of the Total Truth message, this issue of *The Intercessor* takes us to the pinnacle of God's ultimate and highest purpose for our lives. As related in our magazine's Statement of Purpose (p. 3):

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is "intercession," the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). The Intercessor is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

With Norman Grubb as our guide, this issue explores the highest level of functioning as intercessor-priests. "On to Intercession" and "The Summit" take us beyond our new birth to a single desire to bring others to the liberation which is now ours through our union with Christ in us as us. We move from the normal faith-level of all God's redeemed people to the total use of faith in the management of all life and on into intercession—the voluntary taking up of God's commission to lay down our life for another—at a cost—until the battle is won and the intercession is gained. Norman uses his own gained intercessions as examples: the birth of Intervarsity Fellowship, the worldwide expansion of C.T. Studd's mission, and his last commission to travel around the U.S. taking the Total Truth to all who will hear.

Similarly, "The Underlying Law of Fruitbearing Faith" provides a close-up of how the Spirit works in Christians, beginning with a change of our will, turning our self-pleasing into self-giving, and then working in us His "sterner characteristics of God's soldier—a passion to sacrifice, courage to witness, steadfastness in affliction, doing the soldier's deeds." The cross borne by Christ alone for our sins, becomes the cross shared with Christ for our sanctification, and ultimately, borne in turn by us for our neighbor's salvation.

In "Life in the New Dimension" and "Come Now... You" Norman examines the biblical concept of believers as "a royal priesthood." The Bible defines a priest as "taken from among men, ordained for men in things pertaining to God." As believers, we are all intercessor-priests, and as such, "an intercessor takes the place of those he intercedes for, and is responsible to bring them to God." Norman explains that this is different from prayer and faith in general—"On the praying level the thing may happen; on an interceding level, it *must*." It is the way of the cross—"not just the cross which delivered me, but which I can share for the world's deliverance (Phil 3:8-14)." We pay the price and the fruit must follow.

Several articles offer a practical understanding of how we live and conduct our warfare in daily life. "Prayer and the Fourth Dimension" is a deeper look into prayer. Unlike the praying we often see today, biblical prayer "may begin with supplication or importunity but must end up in faith." In prayer, we "call things that be not as though they were" by determining first what God's aim is, then affirm it and simply thank Him by a deliberate act of faith.

"How to Turn Evil into Good" lays out the functioning principle of the rela-

tionship between negative and positive: the negative is "rightfully related is as minor to major," but this relationship was thrown out of kilter through the fall so that in the time-space dimension, we see only the negatives. Through His atoning death, Jesus Christ put them back into proper balance, so that through faith we can see, as He did on Earth, that our need (negative) is proof of the existence of the supply (positive). Though invisible to us, we can by faith call the supply into being!

The key to operating in the spirit dimension is "Speaking the Word of Faith." This practical principle is found in the relationship between thought, word and deed. In our Spirit-union, Norman says, "we are so inwardly one that we act as He—we think his thoughts, speak His word of faith, and do His deeds obtaining the same assured results" moving spiritual mountains—in exactly the same way we as in our daily operation in the material realm.

As an example of intercession in action, Rees Howells' teaching on "Esther" provides a rare analysis of the commission, cost, and completion of intercession. This young Jewish queen chose to respond to God's call and lay down her life to save her entire race from annihilation. In the brief letter from C.T. Studd to his mother ("Pearl of Great Price"), C.T. pours out his love and commitment to Jesus Christ above every earthly love. And in a modern parallel, "Allison's Letter," Allison Prewitt pours out to her unbelieving grandmother the interwoven life of Jesus Christ in her life.

We trust this issue will help make real our highest calling: "To present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Prayer & the Fourth Dimension

by Norman Grubb

Prayer is the product of our union with Christ. He in us is the Pray-er. So that the first need in the prayer life is not to pray, but to relax! Quietly, naturally, recognizing the Real One within us, we sort out what warms or stirs our heart with a sense of definite need or challenge. Now we are ready to pray.

What form is our prayer to take? Supplication? Importunity? One fact seems to me to stand out from the lives of the men of the Bible. However they might start their praying, it must end up in faith. It must be the prayer of faith. Indeed they are all called men of faith, rather than prayer, in the Hebrews 11 survey, though it is true that their exploits of faith, when studied in detail, have a background of travail in prayer. And what is significant about their contacts with God? Invariably, as they meet with Him, He tells them that He has something already in hand which He is now going to manifest through them.

For Abraham there is God's fixed assurance that he would become a great nation. For Moses there is the sure word that God is going to bring the people out of Egypt and into Canaan, and that he can go before Pharaoh and through the trials in the wilderness in that certainty. For Joshua it is the same; the crossing of the Jordan, the capture of Jericho are declared to him as settled facts well before they took place. And so through all Biblical history. The Saviour Himself knew all about His death and resurrection long before they came to pass, and kept telling His incredulous disciples. What

then do all these evidences indicate? That in God's sight these future events were already in existence in His timeless dimension.

It takes us to what we were examining concerning our three dimensions, and the fourth, and to the reason for examining it. And if there is no time with God, and the Bible says there is not: if past-present-future are a permanent and present reality to Him: if the many statements of Scripture on election and predestination, the many prophecies, the many declarations of coming events as already in existence, cover the whole of human history, then it is plain proof, at least to me, that what is true of large events is equally true of small. We too with God may "call the things that be not as though they were," because they really are. How do we do this? Well, personally, as this one or that one, or this or that situation, is on my mind, and I can regard it as within the compass of the interests which are my concern, I straight-away take it for granted that this is a thing already in existence in the invisible. I affirm it as so, I thank the Lord; and as the need, still unsupplied in the visible, keeps returning to my mind, I keep affirming and praising, and stating the fact when it is the right occasion to do so. If my concern is for a fellow-believer, then I keep remembering that, if God has predestinated all believers to be conformed to the image of His Son, He will infallibly do what He says, and by faith I can keep seeing Him in that one, completing what He has begun.

On that same basis, as a missionary secretary, when God has gone out to a mission field in the bodies of some of His servants, I already see the church of Christ in existence among the nationals, where there is nothing visible as yet—and keep seeing it. The same, of course, when some do receive Christ and the young churches begin; I see by faith a complete Christ in them, leading them into the life where God going out through them in serving, saving love is the only reason for their existence. If it is unsaved people, then if they have been brought into my personal circle of concern, I take their salvation as an accomplished fact and that God is in process (it may be through me) of bringing them to Himself. The same with circumstances of need. The negative (not-have) condition is, in the timelessness of God, only the foreshadowing of its dialectical opposite, the positive (the supply). The two are linked, just as it was said that the fallen Adam was only a figure, or foreshadowing, of "Him that was to come"; and in God's eternal outlook, the positive (the last Adam, the Saviour) was in existence and foreordained long before the first Adam was created and fell. So God "saw" the barren Sarah as the mother of nations; and Jesus, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross.

So there it is. We are introduced by the eye of faith into another dimension, a world-to-come, where there is a dissolution in our consciousness, by the authority of the Word of God, of illusory

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LIFE IN THE NEW DIMENSION

By Norman Grubb

Priest is the Bible title for this ultimate category of life, and intercession the work of the priest. We understand, of course, that, in Bible terms, priesthood is not some specialized “sanctified” office, but the inescapable ordained condition of every redeemed person. Redemption is at the same moment ordination into the priesthood. All members of the body of Christ, without distinction or discrimination, are, according to Peter the spokesman of the apostolate, not only a “chosen generation,” but a “royal priesthood.” Since the old Israel failed to rise to its privileged commission of being a “kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6), the new Israel has received the appointment. God’s priests are very ordinary people, and very secular people, for they are you and I.

We need, then, to be clear about what the office of priesthood involves, and the work of intercessors, since we are these. We have already stated it in the general terms of Hebrews 5:1. The priest has been “taken from among men” (redeemed); “ordained for men” (commissioned): “in things pertaining to God” (to bring men to Christ and build them up in Him). Get that down to specifics in our daily lives, and we see it best if we understand what is meant by our being intercessors—the chief work of a priest.

In the Bible an intercessor is anyone, everyone, who sees a situation with God’s eyes and moves in on it. That is to say, the whole of our life, all our lives, are full of frustrating, yet challenging situations. God, it said, “wondered that there was no intercessor” and “looked for a man to stand in the gap and make up the hedge.” Millions of gaps, millions of hedges, some in every one of our lives. But the point is to have eyes to see them, and we are exactly positioned, everyone of us, appointed from before the foundation of the world, to be just where we are and what we are—to fill some gap, make up some hedge.

So every life is nothing but a mass of opportunities, and we have been put there to seize them and grasp them. Intercessors, therefore, are not some peculiar people, any more than priests are, but are you and I, in the most ordinary business, workshop, domestic situations; put there because there is something, it may be in our own households, in our church, district, city, country, world, which we are meant to have eyes to see as intercessors, and to stand in that gap.

How do we see, then? First, by having scales of self removed. Being humans, and meant to be humans, as we have said before, we always start by disliking uncomfortable situations, and being hurt by them, resenting them, or being bored by them, questioning why such things should be in our lives; or maybe nominally accepting them as what we miscall the cross, and putting up with them: or, if they disturb our routine and challenge us to sacrificial action, finding some reason to leave others to handle them. This is not wrong. It is right. It means that we are humanly involved and thus livingly related to a situation, and can, therefore, be a vital factor in it. No involvement, not within range of response. But while we remain hurt or resistant, we cannot see beyond our hurt selves. The way is blocked.

Look at Hannah, the mother of Samuel, hurt because God did not answer her prayer by giving her children, while the other wife Peninnah, though godless, had them. Taunted by Peninnah, which made the hurt worse, she had one refuge from her frustrated self: at least she was her husband’s favorite to whom he gave special gifts at the great event of the year, the visit to Shiloh. Year by year she lamented God’s unkindness to her and had what the record called “a fretting faith.” Better that, however, than no faith like Peninnah! Because when we are God’s, even

the frustrating years are really a build up of pressure for the moment of revelation.

But that moment has to start by a death to our self-outlook to make room for God's; and God knows how to take us to our grave (when we are His and can "take" it). One year, Hannah's hidey-hole for her self-comfort was gone! Her husband, Elkanah, turned on her. He was tired of her fretting, miserable praying and tears. "Hannah, why weepst thou? Why eatest thou not? Why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" A nice humble remark for any good husband to make! Her last refuge was gone. She was out in the cold by herself, or she would have been if, like Peninnah, in her moment of crisis she had had only herself. That is where a crisis becomes a desperation without God. But Hannah knew God, and the moment had come when He could speak a hidden word to her, and she could take it. Did she not realize how selfish all her praying had been? She wanted sons just to prove that God was with her, and maybe to have an answer for Peninnah. Why not change the thing round and want a son for God's purposes, not hers? She saw the point and struck a bargain of faith with Him. If He would give her a son, He should have him, even if she never saw him again.

We know the sequel: the birth of Samuel, one of the great men of history. Later she had four sons and four daughters of her own—perhaps more than she bargained for! But little had she known or seen till that crisis moment that this was putting a great purpose of God's grace through a travailing intercessor.

An excellent illustration of how the most ordinary of domestic situations is a platform for a great exploit of faith. We see the point. *Every* situation always starts with a resistant human self. It must do, because that provides the necessary foundation of an involved self. Now the first step forward in being God's intercessor is being taken. It is a step down, not up. It is a death experience. The hurt self has to be recognized for what it is, not wrong, but the first evidence that God is looking for His intercessor in a situation, and that we are that man, for we are involved in it.

But when frankly recognized, we accept our privilege as a privilege, not as an imposition on us, and we see glory in the cross. For this is what Paul called it in that great explanatory paragraph on intercession in 2 Cor. 4:7-13, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" and "we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake." This is not to be confused, as many do confuse it, with the once-for-all identification we have had with Christ crucified and risen, and we with Him, where it is said, we died, we were buried, we rose with Him. That is

past and never repeated. That was His cross and resurrection we participated in for our own redemption.

What we are now talking about is not the cross for our redemption, but for the redemption of others. This is adulthood, not adolescence. This kind of cross is constantly repeated in our daily lives whenever we are in situations which our human selves would be rid of; but instead of remaining in hurt self, we recognize them to be part of some redemptive purpose of God through us in others. So, Paul says, we accept them as something we have been "delivered unto," and our "dying" which is said to be the dying of the Lord Jesus in us is our heart acceptance of them, though that may not be lightly, or easily, any more than the Savior could accept His cross without a Gethsemane.

Here is a principle of constant "dyings," daily maybe, affecting every kind of normal situation in life, not by any means in what we might call our religious activity. Anything which hurts, disturbs our *status quo*, or challenges, be it what we may call small in our personal lives, or big in some public affair, is a place of dying when we change from self's resistance to acceptance as a step in God's saving plans.

Without such dyings, Moses could never have seen that he was not to be a possible, ephemeral Pharaoh, but a savior of God's chosen people: Gideon could never have changed from challenging God's apparent indifference to accepting the challenge to be himself the deliverer. Abraham could never have exchanged his laughter at the idea of a couple of their age having a son for a productive faith. David could never have resisted the chance of killing Saul to wait in patience for God's day of his coronation. So through every aspect of achieving or enduring faith in all history. Everyone had to start by a disturbed, resisting self which saw God in the tough situation and then died to his self-resistance.

Then comes the resurrection—which is the Spirit in us causing us to see things from His point of view. We can begin to be intercessors. We can see what God is after, and the first effect is a joy, release, sense of adventure, praise where there seems nothing to praise for; for we now see the redemptive purposes, something by us for others. Its immediate effect, as Paul says, is a quickening in our own selves: "the life of Jesus manifest in our mortal flesh": burdens, fears, the sense of a hurtful, not joyful cross, is gone, and others watching can see a release and ease which is not what the world experiences in its tough spots. Resurrection life is manifested in our mortal bodies, and that by itself is God coming through us to others.

How to Turn Evil into Good

by Norman Grubb

We give negatives positive names, as does the Bible, because they are real entities; but at the same time, by doing so we tend to obscure their real condition as negatives. Basically, evil is merely not-good: bitter is not-sweet: hate is not-love: man is not-God; and so on. And when we see all negatives in their true character, we see this vital fact—that they are merely the reverse side of their positives. They are not meant to be anything apart from their positives. They have no rightful existence except as minor to major, female to male, no to yes, each by union with its positive giving distinctive birth and form and character to some manifestation of its positive, as do the minor to the major keys in music. Therefore, insofar as they have been infected and inflamed by a contrary spirit and thus removed out of their proper place in the eternal economy of God, He who is the Positive, the All in all, must necessarily find means to restore them. This He has done in what the Bible calls “the reconciliation of all things” (Col. 1:20; Rom. 8:19-21). He will not finally permit any portion of His creation to remain “out of temperature”: He “will gather together in one all things in Christ.”

It is not, of course, material things which are to blame or which have gone wrong, except insofar as they share in “the corruption which is in the world through lust.”

Things are but the servant of spirit; it is the negative spirit, free, intelligent, deliberate, which has done the damage.

Principle of Reconciliation

We have already seen how God has effected this reconciliation through His Son, but we need to note not only the fact, but also the way in which He did it, for it is the only principle by which this contrary spirit can be dealt with throughout human history.

First, in the natural He accepted vicariously all that comes to human beings in this distorted world, all the trials, privations, weaknesses that flesh is heir to, and all the persecutions right up to the final stroke the negative spirit of evil could deal him—the death on the cross. He was “crucified through weakness.” In the natural he did not resist evil. He went further than that: He positively accepted evil as the predetermined *will* of the Father. He swallowed it in its most virulent forms. But what broke His body and agonized His soul, could not touch His spirit. There neither Satan nor the threats and deeds of cruel men, nor evil in any form, could get any footing. “The prince of this world cometh, but hath nothing in Me.” In that inner sanctuary dwelt only the living God fulfilling His own reconciling purposes through the yieldedness, faith and obedience of the One who would walk the saving way. He was “put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

That vicarious process by which, as the representative human, He first embraced all that the negative spirit has loaded upon humanity even unto death, but then was raised again by the Positive

Spirit as the One whom death could not hold, meant death to that negative spirit in all who join themselves to Him by receptive faith. Through death, He destroyed (or literally, annulled) him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Released from the negative spirit, all negative conditions fall back into their rightful place for those in whom Christ lives: the bitter brings out the flavour of the sweet, light shines out of darkness, mortality is swallowed up by life, evil is overcome by good. That is to say, what comes to us in the natural as trial, sorrow, suffering, privation, persecution, and we feel as such in our bodies and souls and know the sharpness of them, in our spirits we see to be, not objectionable invasions of something contrary and frustrating, but the way in which we “bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus.” He again is dying in us (His human body) in all kinds of situations, and He is rising victorious in us. His life is manifest to all in our mortal flesh (in our visible enjoyment of the unenjoyable): the integrating victory of the Spirit is seen in us as we “take pleasure” in things which are the opposite to natural pleasure—“infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses” (2 Cor. 12:10); evil is servant to good, hate the seedplot of love.

The Way of the Cross

And inner integration in unpleasant

situations has far wider repercussions than the personal. It is the continuation of Christ's vicarious sufferings and saving resurrection (Col. 1:24). Christ still dies and rises again for the world through His spiritual Body, as He did in His earthly one. That does not mean that Christ's unique redemptive work for the world was not completed or could in any least degree be effected through any body except His own, conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, the Jesus of history who was crucified at an exact location, buried in a known tomb, and viewed in His resurrection body by many witnesses.

But it does mean that the application of His triumph worldwide through the succeeding centuries, in the gathering out of a people to His Name, in the building of them up in their most holy faith, is always and only by this one death and resurrection process, the *way* of the Cross, though not that one unique *work* of the Cross. It is constantly the Christ who lives in the believer walking in us the way of vicarious death and resurrection in every one of millions of situations and spheres of service, right along the line from the mother with her family, to the worker in his job, to the missionary on his field.

The point so hard to learn and relearn in our Christian immaturity is God's way of the cross: confronted with the necessity of a world that must die to sin and rise to righteousness, the One who need not so die and rise went that way first Himself; and by that vicarious act released death and resurrection power through Himself for a world. "Death worketh in us, but life in you."

This is the way of the intercessor. Jesus "poured out His soul unto death,"

and so, it says, "made intercession for the transgressors" (Is. 53:12). Because of that act of death-intercession, God poured His resurrection life both into the Saviour's dead body and through Him into all who receive Him. The fruit of His intercession was the life-giving Spirit sent into the world, saving to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. And every life of fruitful service has this at its roots: the corn of wheat must die, if the world is to feed on its fruit. We say, "That person must change; that situation must alter." God says, "You change first, the other will follow." As one has said, "I don't like you: what's the matter with *me*?"

The first death in a human situation in which I am involved is in me, in my natural reactions of resentment, condemnation, unbelief. Only when I am consciously "through" to resurrection ground, experienced in my heart by peace and praise and love, can divine life through me touch the situation.

As this is true in every daily detail of life, in every domestic, business or church trial, so is it true in the mainstream of our life's ministry. All the great intercessors of the Bible were living sacrifices for the people for whom they interceded; they lived and died vicariously. Not that there is merit or power in the outpoured life of a human intercessor, but it is the Interceding Spirit in him which takes him this death way; He does that to involve him so completely and importunately in the pursuit of his intercession that the Spirit can speak by him the authoritative word of faith—God's "I will"; and that will be followed, as surely as harvest follows seedtime, by the intercession gained—the wonderful works of God. The patriarchs, Moses,

Joshua, David, the disciples, Paul, and countless others through history, were all intercessors who gained their intercessions, serving their own generation in the will of God.

God's Judgments are Redemptive

These are the ways by which God makes the evil handmaid to the good, and conditions us for His grace. But he does it, not only by confronting us with the plain facts of the needs and corruption, the miseries and confusion of our fallen estate: He does it also by the chastisements and judgments which "must begin with the house of God."

Examples of these are obvious throughout the Scriptures. Against apostate Israel He sends an agent of the devil, yet calls him "Nebuchadnezzar, *My* servant." Israel is beguiled into the negative kingdom, "the power of darkness," and worships idols (not-gods) and does evil (not-good) works; she must receive the just recompense of her false (not-true) way of life in misery (not-happiness), slavery (not-freedom), and corruption (not-purity), and learn her hard lesson.

At other times the prophets speak of God sending on them His hornets, His army of destroyers (the locusts, caterpillars, etc.), His drought, the Assyrians, rod of His anger. But the prophets always also make clear that God sends them for redemptive, not punitive reasons. By these means Israel will learn, or some of them anyhow, to discern between the false and the true, and the devil's agents will be God's agents in directing the wanderer home with the prodigal's cry: "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger?"

Often we try to escape the issue by

regarding chastisement and judgment as a “permissive will” of God, as if God was passively allowing the devil to have some of his way, or as if the consequences of disobedience were the outworking of an impersonal law. But the Bible never speaks of it like that. It speaks directly of God saying and doing things which the natural mind roundly condemns as impossible harshness and cruelty in a God who is love, and even the spiritual mind, which has not understanding on this point, will seek to excuse or sidestep. No. It is God, the God of mercy, who hardens the heart of the persistent sinner, who dulls the ear and blinds the eye of the disobedient. The same God who says yes to righteousness must say no to sin. It is God’s inevitable dealings with nature in reverse. It is God’s grace at work in reverse.

But it is God’s grace. That is the important point. God, being positive love, positive life, positive goodness, can work in no other way than according to His own nature, in determined and unceasing works of grace. He must restore rebel negatives to their predestined estate of submission to their positives: He must overcome evil by good, clothe the corruptible with incorruption, and swallow up mortality in life. This He did, in His “determinate counsel and foreknowledge,” by the One who died to that negative spirit in His death for all who receive Him; replaced it by His own positive Spirit in His resurrection; and in His ascension awaits the day when the last negative (death: not-life) will be put under His feet.

Forerunner of Grace

This means, then, that all the consequences of our wrong ways, which are

His deliberate judgments on us, are determined acts of pure grace. They are to open our eyes, teach us our lesson of the goodness of God leading us to repentance, and then to give us the glorious revelation of a life which has already swallowed up death, a goodness which has overcome evil, a sweetness which has dissolved bitterness—in our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, judgments are pointers to grace, signposts: and not to a grace which has to be sought somewhere

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or manufactured; but which was there long before the judgments, and the judgments are only the necessary way of getting the grace through to us, conditioning us to accept it.

Need—the Evidence of Supply

Long before there was a condition of need God had completed His work of perfect creation. The fall and its consequences have been an apparently tragic interlude, but that was foreseen and pro-

vided for in “the Lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world.” Therefore, as we have already said, God has always had His fulness in readiness to replace our emptiness, His perfection our imperfections, His light our darkness, His life our death. He has always intended, planned and provided total supply for every human need, and the supply has always been there. It is not that our need initiates the demand for its supply and must somehow call the attention of the Father to it and persuade Him to supply. No indeed. HE initiated the need so that we might find all our supply already there in His and our Christ! The need is the proof that the supply is there, and is merely God’s means of conditioning us to be agents of faith.

It is God who confronts us with every kind of problem, inability, difficulty, that, in our weakness, He may flash the spark of faith into our hearts, His faith, that His supply for exactly that situation was there long before. “Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.”

That is the meaning of parable, and all life is a parable, if we understand it; for a parable is an earthly representation of a heavenly fact. But what fact? It is the story of some human need picturing a spiritual need—the man who fell among thieves, the lost sheep, the prodigal son. But is that all? No, the story always points on to the supply of that need, the provision of grace, of the kingdom of heaven. Parables underline human need as pointers to the One who from eternity has been Supplier of all need. Parables, therefore, are signposts, not to the need which is obvious, but to the One who has brought the need to our

attention because He intends to supply it. In this sense, the whole of our human existence is one continuous parable. It is one vast imperfection pointing to the invisible perfection already ours in Christ; one vast confusion pointing to the eternal order in Him. It stirs in all who have eyes to see the longing for that final perfection at His coming, but at the same time it is God's summons to us to receive by faith in the here and now the supplies of so many needs.

To repeat once more. Can we catch a glimpse of this truth and its effects on our whole outlook? All evil, sin, and their consequences are negatives which have got out of place and made their unlawful appearance in God's universe. The Bible gives them positive names because they are positive facts—the kingdom or power of darkness. But their basic reality is not positive; they are the negatives of their true positives which they have blatantly tried to dethrone and called themselves the positives: thus the creature is in reality the not-Creator, rebellion not-obedience, unbelief not-faith, pain not-pleasure, and so on. God, the eternal positive, the eternal yes, is in process of restoring all to their proper place, the negatives in rightful submission to and union with their positives, their interaction being the basis of the manifestation of the glory of God.

Ultimate Restoration

To bring about His eternal purpose, God gives us to taste and know the bitter fruits of our false negatives by His judgments on all that is the not-good, not-sweet, not-loving, not-self giving, not-humble, in our lives, and in the life of the church and the world; but He gives this not for judgment, but to shut

us up to His grace, to the salvation and consequent restoration planned in Christ before the false kingdom of negation was in existence. It was fulfilled by Him when He gathered the great negation of humanity, its not-rightness, into Himself on the cross and took it into His death, and when He arose to be the first-born of the new creation, where the positive and negative are joined in eternal fruitfulness by the union of Christ and the redeemed sinner.

This fulfillment is in process of realization by the Spirit working in the world of men, and joining the negatives to their one Positive. Wherever, therefore, the Spirit confronts us with the tragedy and destitution of the not-righteous (the sinners), having first confronted us with our own need, He does it with the express purpose of saying to us with as loud a voice as possible: "I am come to redeem these falsely opposing negatives and rejoin them to their Positive: the not-righteous (the sinner) to be clothed with righteousness: the not-full (the empty) to be filled. I point out the false negatives to you, just so that you should immediately combine with your outlook which sees the negative, the not-full, not-happy, not-righteous, not-true side of things, the positive outlook of faith which sees ME present to fulfill all need; and the fact that I have shown you the need is my assurance to you that I have come with the supply already in My hands. See Me, believe Me, co-operate with Me, and I will work this work of salvation through the faith I put into you, and your labours of love that go with it."

—*The Deep Things of God*

The Pearl of Great Price

By C.T. Studd

To His Mother.

CONCERNING your wish that I return and seek a lucrative position in England, I fear that is quite impossible. Would you really have me turn my back on the Saviour and His will, and proclaim to the world that He has failed me and was so hard a Master that I had to leave His service or starve? Could you imagine Paul leaving His work to go and seek some lucrative employment in Jerusalem or Rome? Well, mother darling, I could not do such a thing. I could not so bring shame on you, myself or Scilla. Much less could I shame my blessed Jesus whom I love. I have but a few things to rejoice in. They are these: that God called me to China and Africa, and that I went in spite of utmost opposition of all my loved ones and advisers: that I joyfully acted as Christ told that rich young man to act, and gave away my fortune. (An unpardonable sin in the eyes of my family is that I gave Jesus too much.) At any rate, with all my many sins I am glad none can accuse me of having been stingy towards my Saviour. My only joy is that when God has given me a work to do I have not refused to do it in spite of hindrance, hostility and loss of the love of those who had loved me. And when the great day before God's Throne dawns, I'm sure you will rejoice that your fool of a son did not betray his Saviour's trust, but fought on, carrying his thorny cross to the bitter-sweet end. Father and you are largely responsible for what devotion and determination to go ahead for Christ is in my make-up, and whatever reward comes shall be yours and his, and the shame of failure and sin shall be mine. Were you to urge me to some deed of daring or sacrifice for God, I would attempt to do it, but I refuse to do what is not God's will. I am poor beyond all knowledge, yet the Lord thinks of me.

—*Fool & Fanatic*

THE UNDERLYING LAW OF

Fruitbearing Faith

By Norman Grubb

He changes our wills, melts down our opposition, sets them on a new bearing, to will the will of God and to love to will it, till it becomes a consuming passion with us, till we will literally die rather than disobey God.

The life in the Spirit is bound to have one hallmark—that the nature of God is reproduced in the personality handed over to Him; for such a handing-over implies total immersion in and possession by the Spirit of God, to be made like Himself, and He is God. God's nature has one essential characteristic. He is totally self-giving. He pours Himself out in an everlasting stream of blessing on all His creation. He is “the eternal will to all goodness.” He finds Himself in losing Himself.

Now, if that Spirit indwells me, He must of necessity turn me in a like direction. The Spirit that took the Saviour to Calvary for the world and “drove” Him to offer Himself without spot unto God, must drive me out of self-pleasing into self-giving, out of indulgence into sacrifice, out of security into service, out of care of myself into concern for others.

This “drive” incidentally, is the glory of the Gospel. It means that we do not tell the unwilling, the fearful, the self-pleasing, the soft, which we all are by nature, to be this or that for God; to deny themselves, to give up things, to endure hardship, which they cannot and don't want to do; but we bid them only to do one thing, acknowledging frankly all weakness and unwillingness—to commit themselves to the control of God's Spirit. That is all. They need not even necessarily be willing to do this. But let them just do it. For, if they do, a Person comes in. An Almighty Person. The Third Person of the Trinity. He is mightier than our wills. His nature is the nature of God. And if once we give Him

honest possession, He sets to work to *change* us. He changes our wills, melts down our opposition, sets them on a new bearing, to will the will of God and to love to will it, till it becomes a consuming passion with us, till we will literally die rather than disobey God.

He changes our outlook. Having ourselves at last found a bottom to life, a heart satisfaction, a light to the mind, a way for the feet, we find ourselves joining the ranks of those who have a contribution to make to the world, not merely a merchandise to make of it. We pass from the number of the getters to the givers, and it is by the inner redirection of the Spirit that this change takes place.

Aglow ourselves with the joy of the Lord, our own needs met in Jesus, it dawns on us somehow, as on the starving lepers who found the good things in the deserted camp of the Syrians: “We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.... Let us go and tell....”

Moreover, a sense of responsibility comes upon us. We have been in great danger and knew it not; we were slaves and had given up hope of liberation. Now freedom, food and clothing, and a welcome home is ours. And not only ours but the world's, if they but believed it. Some know it and mock. Thousands about us do not know, through a false idea of what the good news is. Millions have yet never had a chance to hear. We are debtors. We owe it to our next-door neighbour as well as to the most distant of our

brother men. By increasing stages a new passion inflames us. The glory of it dawns upon us.

That such as we can be, not merely inheritors of eternal life, but transmitters of it. These lips can bring heaven to a hell-bound soul. We are captured by a new commission. Surely indeed we are changed.

But to carry this out means a price to be paid. In a world that shows its true nature by baring its teeth if brought into too close quarters with God, it is never an easy thing to speak of Christ. It is abnormal, fanatical. Ice has to be broken, commonplaces by-passed, the circumference of vague religious comment pierced till the centre of personal challenge is reached. Time has to be used which normally is frittered away in gossip or hobby. Concentration is necessary when it is customary to relax. The Spirit has begun to lead out along the way to Calvary.

Burdens grow heavier. What can be done for the souls around in business or neighbourhood, in the town and in the district where our church is located? Time must be given for prayer, for concerted action with fellow Christians. Evenings become occupied, meetings attended.

Missionary visitors give yet a wider vision. There is a world in need. How can the Gospel be taken to every creature? Can I go myself, leave home and daydreams and loved ones, risk life and health and security? To the few, the call comes plain and the great step is taken into a life set apart for all time to be lived amongst strange people, to wrestle with ignorance, disease, superstition. To the many, not that actual call comes, but a sense of a necessary share in it; money must be given, loved ones painfully yet gladly offered, and the very simplest things of everyday life become touched by the marks of the Cross—the wardrobe, the meal table, the expenditure on pleasure and luxuries—that more may be given to the spread of the kingdom. The home itself becomes more threadbare, maybe, as parlour or drawing room, once kept like a new pin for special occasions, is constantly used for “squashes” and prayer meetings.

By this way or that, the self-giving nature of God takes up its abode in our nature and produces these radical changes. They become our very nature, derived from, as C.T. Studd once wrote, “The Holy Spirit of God, one of whose chief characteristics is a pluck, a bravery, a lust for sacrifice for God, and a joy in it which crucifies all human weaknesses and natural desires of the flesh.”

So let us get this clear. The evidence that the third Person of the Trinity is dwelling in me is certainly not just ecstasies and exalted feelings; it is not merely the gentler graces of love, joy, peace; it is also the sterner characteristics of God’s soldier, a passion to sacrifice for a world’s salvation, a courage to witness, a steadfastness in affliction, an actual doing of soldier’s deeds.

We think it essential to emphasize this, for in countries where Christianity is at least the nominally accepted faith, it is easy to miss it. It was the natural accompaniment of conversion in the early church. Only “through much tribulation,” they were plainly told, could they enter into the kingdom of God. The model converts of those days were born in the midst of “much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost.” The companies of believers who adhered to God’s Word in its purity through the centuries ever had the marks of the martyr upon them.

But we Christians in our more “fortunate” circumstances do not get conditions of suffering like this forced upon us, and equally we are obviously not called upon to look for trouble and seek martyrdom, but rather to thank God that our lines are fallen in more pleasant places. But this is the point. To us also the inescapable pressure of the Spirit comes, if we are really His to the limit, which will not allow us to live our lives on the comfortable level of such a word as “God has given us richly all things to enjoy”; but rather on those others which say: “All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient”; “Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself servant to all, that I might gain the more”; “I endure all things for the elect’s sake.” Enjoyments there will be, many and continual, for all

The evidence that the third Person of the Trinity is dwelling in me is certainly not just ecstasies and exalted feelings; it is not merely the gentler graces of love, joy, peace; it is also the sterner characteristics of God’s soldier, a passion to sacrifice for a world’s salvation, a courage to witness, a steadfastness in affliction, an actual doing of soldier’s deeds.

To us also the inescapable pressure of the Spirit comes, if we are really His to the limit, which will not allow us to live our lives on the comfortable level of such a word as “God has given us richly all things to enjoy”; but rather on those others which say: “All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient.”

life has joy and zest in it when it is mediated through Christ; but a conscious binding sense of dedication will be upon us, a voluntarily accepted yoke of holy servitude. We are prisoners of the Lord, bound in spirit, even as Paul deliberately renounced certain of life’s normal privileges that he might better preach the Gospel, a kind of voluntary extremism. So will we, in this way or that, according to the measure of our faith and light, gladly give up some of the lesser good to gain the greater. We shall be a people with a purpose, even as for temporal ends the athlete denies himself, the scientist devotes himself, the soldier risks himself.

In a special sense it appears that the Holy Spirit sets men apart, when they allow Him to, for special ends, and lays on them the burden that has to be borne, the price to be paid, the travail to be endured, and even the death to be died, to bring that special end about. It is what the Scripture calls God finding an intercessor. They are rare, for God in a past emergency wondered that there was no intercessor (Isa. 59:16). It is costly to be an intercessor, reaching far beyond the ordinary prayer-life of request and supplication, for there is expenditure of heart’s blood and agony of soul in it. “He poured out His soul unto death,” we read, “and was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many”; and so, it says, “He made intercession for the transgressors.”

The reward of the intercessor is as great as his travail. He fulfils the law of the harvest. He goes through the processes of death, accepts them voluntarily, has them laid on him by the travailing Spirit who groans within him with groanings which cannot be uttered; and by so doing the upspringing of the harvest, resurrection life for the world, is as sure as that spring and summer follow winter.

And here he is no longer in the school of faith, but the life of faith; for this death and resurrection process is not now for his own sanctification, but for a world’s need. God has at last found His servant on whom He can lay the kind of burdens the Saviour carried, not for himself and for his own growth in grace, but for others.

It is a share in the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings. It is the third and final meaning of the Cross in the individual life; the Cross first borne by Christ alone for our sins, then shared by us with Christ for our sanctification, and now borne in turn by us for our neighbour’s salvation. It is the outworking of the Cross referred to by Paul when he said, “So death worketh in us, but life in you.”

In this life of an intercessor there are positions that are gained by faith, and once gained need not be lost unless we foolishly let them go. The same truth can be seen in the elementary stages of faith: once a person is saved, for instance, he knows it, glories in it, and it is in no sense hard to abide in the certainty of salvation, if the ordinary precautions for daily abiding are observed. The position of saving faith has been gained. In sanctification the same. There is the travail, the complete surrender, the battle of faith, and then the full assurance of faith. Once again a new position of faith has been reached, and the believer can abide at ease in his “Beulah land,” in union and communion with his Lord, unless he deliberately forfeits his inheritance. And so in more advanced experiences, in the Christian harvest field, for which the gaining of these personal positions are but the preparation; for their real meaning has been to “teach our hands to war and our fingers to fight”; not to give us some static experience of imparted grace, but some dynamic knowledge of how to wield the weapons of faith by which God can now do through us for others what He previously did in us for ourselves. We have learned in the school of faith how to wage a good warfare on the battlefields of the Spirit, and now we can use our knowledge in the life of faith.

Christ the Intercessor, after His early years of personal training, went out to do His intercessory work at the command of the anointing Spirit, and gained His position of faith, the right to be Saviour, after three years of obedience unto death. Again and again He referred to the pressure on His spirit during those years; “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished.” To His

disciples, in His early ministry, He said: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." To His Father, just before Calvary: "I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." To the world, with His last breath: "It is finished." It was said twice over by the writer to the Hebrews that it was through His sufferings that He was perfected as pioneer of our salvation and author of eternal life to all who obey Him. And now we see Him still the Intercessor, not in the heat of battle, but enthroned in triumph. Then He was pouring out His soul unto death, but now dispensing the fruits of His victory: "able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." On the basis of that battle once fought, that life once poured out utterly for our transgressions, He can now lead captivity captive and give the constant gift of His Holy Spirit to men.

We also, in our lesser spheres, can gain positions of faith and do the full work of an intercessor. At the roots of every golden harvest field of souls reaped by the Spirit of God there lies a life or lives which have been intercessors, lives lived under a deep and enduring sense of urgency, clear direction and absolute dedication to the task. They have *had* to carry this specific burden in prayer night and day. They have had to go and live long years amongst that strange tribe. They have had to give and give and give again out of their sometimes dwindling resources. They have had to stick to their tract distributing, open-air meetings, sick visitation, or whatever it may be, large or small; for the intensity of the devotion, not the size of the commission, is what matters to God.

And then comes a time in such a single-hearted ministry when the break occurs, sometimes in the lifetime of the intercessors, sometimes after, and it seems as if heaven's windows are opened and God's storehouses unlocked, and the blessing just flows. It is the Pentecost after Calvary. Such a truth can be seen in the lives of the great intercessors. Abraham's whole life as stranger and pilgrim, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, was such an intercession, and God's covenant to

him has never failed through the centuries; Israel was always able to ask for God's intervention on the ground of His oath to Abraham. Moses paid the price for Israel's redemption, and Joshua enjoyed the success. David had the same covenant blessing for a successor on his throne. And, supremely, of course, the Saviour and the church He bought with His blood.

It is good to understand this spiritual law of the harvest. It helps us to fulfil our ministry strategically, intelligently. We see where we are going, not just faithfully but rather hopelessly witnessing a good confession in a difficult place, but understanding that if we pay the full price of our calling and realize that our labours and lonelinesses, our setbacks and disheartenments, our heart agonies and pleadings with God and man, are that price, that necessary dying process of the seed; then we shall go on and go through, and faith may flicker but will not fail. We are fulfilling certain unchangeable laws of the Spirit under the guidance and by the inspiration of the Spirit.

We believe that in many a work of God—in our own missionary society, for instance, through the price paid by our founder C.T. Studd; in the China Inland Mission, likewise, through Dr. Hudson Taylor; in the Salvation Army, through General Booth; in the Orphan Homes, through Dr. Barnardo and George Muller—we, the succeeding generations, enjoy the abundant fruits of the intercession made by these great men of God, an intercession in which we, of course, in measure are also partners; and there indeed also lies the danger of a second and third generation work; that so much comes easily to them which others have paid the price to obtain, and the battle spirit, the fire, the zeal, the sacrifice of the founders dies away.

We can never get beyond the Cross. There certainly is a sense in which even the Cross can be given a wrongful prominence. It is not meant to be in the foreground, but background, of the scene; not the superstructure, but foundation, of the building. To parade the Cross, whether in its outward form, as do the Roman Catholics with their crucifixes, or in its inward dynamic by

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If we turn our attention away from our reactions, resentments, proposed activities, with reference to a situation, and die to them, die till we are inwardly free from the motions of self, then God's voice can be heard, His way seen and His outlook accepted; and then we can receive, believe and act on it.

over-display of, or overemphasis on, the cost of discipleship, is to draw wrongful attention to it. It is life, not death, that is our message, a living and returning, not a crucified, Christ. C.T. Studd put it rightly when he wrote on a postcard, when leaving for the heart of Africa:

Take my life and let it be
A hidden Cross revealing Thee.

But, at the same time, just because the world lies in darkness and error, and because we Christians ourselves can so easily be turned out of the narrow way, there has to be constant attention called to our foundations, and constant emphasis laid upon the fact there is no other foundation to the kingdom of God than the Cross of Christ.

We know this very well as our entry into life. We have learned it as our way of deliverance from inner bondage. We see it now and finally as the law of harvest. We never get beyond the Cross, either in time or eternity, for we have learned that release of life and power on the spiritual level can only come about through death on the natural level. "Self-control," which is the Cross in action, "releases energy on a new level." This remains true in the tiniest as in the biggest things of life, and it takes us back to the essential message of this book, and, much more important, of The Book. Grasp it and one has grasped "the secret of the Lord." That "way" is, to repeat once more, that every battle of life concerning ourselves, our circumstances, or our neighbours, is first fought and won *within*. The battleground is ourselves, and the victory is Christ's Cross in its inner operation. If we turn our attention away from *our* reactions, resentments, proposed activities, with reference to a situation, and die to them, die till we are inwardly free from the motions of self, then God's voice can be heard, His way seen and His outlook accepted; and then we can receive, believe and act on it. Resurrection life has begun within ourselves, and will forthwith express itself through look and word and deed. What is won within is won without, what is lost within is lost without, and the secret is the Cross.

Paul wrote a triumphant letter on the secret of the Cross applied to daily life, in his second epistle to the Corinthians. It glows with glory. It rings with triumph. Yet almost every chapter has reference to the intensity of his sufferings, his endless trials, his "fightings without and fears within." Paul is seen in his human weakness in that letter, and he describes right through, from first chapter to last, how he learned by experience the great secret. Almost his first words were that he had the sentence of death in himself that he should not trust in himself but in God who raises the dead; in the middle he has a whole passage on bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body; and at the end he tells how he gloried in the revelation that when he was weak then was he strong; gloried to the point that in future he would actually take pleasure in anything which weakened or frustrated or brought to nothing his life on the natural level. It was a well-learned lesson, for he was able to say, in this same letter, that though he walked in the flesh (felt all the limitations of an ordinary man), yet he warred not after the flesh; the weapons of his warfare were not fleshly, but mighty through God. He had learned how to live by dying, how to fight by yielding; and he summed it all up by saying that he knew and desired to know no other way than his Master's, who "though He was crucified through weakness, yet liveth by the power of God"; adding that "we also are weak, sharing His weakness, but with Him we shall be full of life to deal with (this or that thing) through the power of God."

—*The Law of Faith*

The Summit

by Norman Grubb

Now the ascended Christ, the Great High Priest, is seen as the dynamic Saviour doing His saving work, as much as ever, through His body. Or perhaps it should be said that He was the Saviour once for all in His own body, but now He is the Intercessor in and through our bodies—to gather the spoils of His victory. We may speak of “the heavenlies” as some distant place, the Mount Zion where He and the Father are, with the church of the firstborn, the spirits of just men made perfect, the heavenly Jerusalem, and we locate it way off somewhere. But the Hebrews writer says, “Ye are come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God” (12:22); not, “Ye will come one day!” We are, therefore, already part of this wonderful heavenly company, and must regard “the heavenlies” as interpenetrating our world, and our Great High Priest occupied in fighting the battles of salvation in this lost world by us.

As our ascended Christ, according to Ephesians, we can always know that we have in us and in our circumstances a reigning Lord, reigning in just this situation; and we can see Him as such by faith, and rejoice. This is how the victors of faith of whom we read in Hebrews eleven walked in their victory, often not outwardly delivered at all, even to death and torture, often living in destitute conditions, though sometimes seeing the manifested fruits of their faith.

As our Great High Priest, according to Hebrews, He shares with us His priesthood. That puts deeply serious purpose into every condition and situation in life. It is not that just a few select people are Christ's royal priesthood (heading up in the horrible error in which some ministers of the gospel reserve for themselves the name of priest). Every member of Christ's body is a member of the royal priesthood. We are what Israel was meant to be, “A kingdom of priests.” You and I are part of this “holy priesthood.”

Then how does that work out in normal daily living? Like this. A priest is an intercessor. An intercessor is one who recognizes that he is set apart by God to stand in some gap against the enemy of souls (Ezek. 22:30). How and where? Just exactly where you are. Open your eyes so that God is looking through them at your situation, and you will surely see your commission; for all life is a commission for those who can see it.

Then accept the commission. That will be bearing about in your body the dying of the Lord Jesus, because it may well go against your human grain to accept it. You may have a real battle to do so. The way to fight and win is to recognize that it is He and none else who is living just there in you, and put you there, and brought to you the pressure and burdens which form your present environment. Accept it, even though you feel the opposite and continue to feel it. You are now consciously in the privileged position of being an intercessor, a royal priest.

But an intercessor does more than accept a situation. He accepts the fact that he is specifically God's agent in it, and that God has put him there because He is going to do something definite through him. So an intercessor is not a vague drifter, just passively yielding to some difficult situation. He is a person with a purpose, because the purposing Christ is within him. The next stage, then, is the challenging one. An intercessor, so far as he is given to do so, takes the place of those for whom he intercedes, even as Jesus took our place. Jesus went all the way we go right to death, and “through death destroyed him who has the power of death”; that is to say, He bore all we bear, but He bore it in faith, whereas we natural humans bear it in despair. Now we are to be as Jesus, Jesus in us, in our places of intercession. We are to bear people's unpleasantness, their sharp tongues, their taunting of us as hypocrites, their selfishness, their overreaching us. How can we do that? We shall feel it certainly; but as we put ourselves in their place, we think more of their inner miseries in such a condition than of the hurt they do us; that is what it means to turn the other cheek, and as God gives grace, we shall bear with them and keep loving them. There may be plenty of cost in this, and it may last—a lifetime? Think of a foreign missionary and the years of patience it takes with a prejudiced, unresponsive people. But the point is that it is a life with a purpose. We know what we are doing when we are intercessors. We have an objective in view, and we pay any price God gives us to pay to obtain it. “Who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross....”

With the direct commission, with the acceptance of it, and with the price being paid, there is the authority of faith. We have already talked of this. It means that, if God appointed us to this situation, and the situation to us, then God's purpose of grace will be fulfilled; indeed in the sight of Him who “callesth the things that be not as though they were” it has already been fulfilled, and was fulfilled before the situation arose—the supply before the need. We persist, then, in the affirmation and expectation of faith. “Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and *come again to you.*” So said Abraham to his servant when he left him at the foot of the mountain and took Isaac up to sacrifice him.

Priesthood and the intercession which is the ministry of the priest is the topmost pinnacle of God's ways with us. We have come full circle. God is love. Love is pure self-giving. By the sacrifice of Himself He has won back to Himself millions who had become His enemies. Living in them, He now loves through them. Love is pure self-giving. We now give ourselves that millions more may find Him. When they do come to Him, He lives in them as in us. Love is pure self-giving. They now love with the love of God. And so the eternal stream of God flows on.

—God Unlimited

Come Now...You

by Norman Grubb

There is one further and final place. Just as everything that happens to me is geared now for others, and I practise accepting that as a permanent fact; so there are special areas of my life when I fully recognize that I am for others, for some special others, and I accept that. This is what the Bible speaks of as the intercession of a royal priest—the highest position given us on earth. And every one of us is a priest and intercessor. We only have to discover that and learn its meaning.

A priest, the Bible says, in Hebrews 5:1 is an ordinary human, you and I, “taken from among men,” in other words, out of this world into Christ by the new birth. Then he is “ordained for men,” in other words, is conscious of some special commission relating to some special people. Then he is “ordained for men in things pertaining to God,” in other words, to be responsible for bringing them to Christ. So a priest is not some special type of person whom unfortunately we wrongly call “Reverend,” and who equally unfortunately presents himself as different from the rest of us by special clothing, vestments or what ever; (though the Holy Spirit does greatly use many who do have special religious garb and titles, because He uses all of us, though we all have some human quirks or other!). But we have to rescue the Biblical meaning of a priest from these connotations which the organized church

have wrongly given to the office. We are all priests, because we all have commissions for others. We are royal priests because we have our authority from the Ascended Christ, and so function authoritatively in His name.

But to be a priest is to be an intercessor. That is the height of his calling: and an intercessor takes the place of those he intercedes for, and is responsible to bring them to God. That is something different from the exercise of prayer and faith in general. It means that there are defined boundaries to this special commission. I am conscious that this person, this particular set of people, this class, this church fellowship, this mission field, this special group I am called to minister to, this has been set apart for me. Now that again I don’t seek out. It seeks me out. I mean that as my heart and eyes are open to where the Lord placed me, and I find myself caught up or involved with certain people or special interests, it will dawn on me that God has put me just there; obviously I am involved with them, and I can sense a direct word from the Lord, “That is for you. I have put you there, I have stirred your heart with special interest in them, now go to it. You are My intercessor for them.” So there are special commissions. I have clearly seen and accepted this in each stage of my life. Perhaps it has not occurred to you to look at yourself that way. You are a royal priest. You are an intercessor. For what particularly?

An intercessor is a person, God’s man, who stands in the gap, that is how the Bible puts it. Just you for that gap. Lots of general needs, lot of general interests, but this is particular—for you. And what does that mean for you? Plenty. It is your highest privilege on earth. This is now you for others in reality. An intercessor has no strings attached. As far as he is able, he takes the place of the one he intercedes for. It is said of the Saviour that He poured out His soul unto death, and so made intercession for the transgressors. Vicarious is the word. He took our place that we might take His place. He went to the limit to fulfill this, and so by the law of harvest, the fruit had to appear—for He Himself said, if a corn of wheat dies, it brings forth much fruit.

So for us it does not mean some passing prayer and faith interest in which we can passingly take a share. It means that this intercession is specifically mine to see through, and there is no giving up on it. I will pay the price, and the fruit must follow. There is no may about it, only a must. In my army days I had to be a witness in my regiment—to officers and soldiers alike. In my college days I had to win fellow-students to Christ, and I did, and that was when God gave us the start of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. In my calling to a place of responsibility as secretary in our Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, I had to see new fields entered with the

gospel; and when the Lord first gave me that “had to” we were just two of us and now about 1,200. These days I know I “have to” keep going around sharing the kind of things I am now writing about. Always a “have to,” with a no-limit price-tag attached. And it can also include my intercession for single souls who “have to” find Christ, and I’m not letting go on that.

Then it goes farther—into the physical and material. At this point we have no hold-backs. God is saying, I have come to do so and so, and I have come to do it through you. On a praying level the thing may happen; on an interceding level it must. If we just pray for this or that, it may happen. If we accept an intercession, it must. For this our lives are on the altar. “A body hast Thou prepared Me,” Jesus said: and “through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ we are sanctified.”

So intercession is not only the spoken word of faith, but the persistent giving of ourselves by whatever ways God indicates to see the fulfillment. It is Paul’s filling up “that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake.” “So death worketh in us, but life in you.” That is why I think one of the top-most sayings in the Bible is Isaiah’s prophecy about Christ: “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.” The Father’s greatest pleasure was when in His Son He had one upon whom He could put the full weight of bodily sacrifice for the whole world. It pleases the Lord if He can bruise us for those He has sent us to save, and we can take the bruises. There are no limits to that. I had the profound in-

fluence in my life of my own father-in-law, C.T. Studd, who had said to the Lord at the moment of his full consecration when England’s greatest cricketer, “If Jesus Christ, God’s Son, gave His life to save me, I can only be an honest Christian if I give my life for Him.” And God took him at his word. Called from all his earthly glory as a cricketer to inland China: while there, giving away every penny of his large inheritance, probably worth a quarter of a million in today’s values, for the spread of the gospel: living his last sixteen years in the heart of Africa in his bamboo home

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surrounded by the Africans he loved and came to win for Christ. When Pauline, my wife and his daughter, saw him for the last time while we sat by his simple African bed until 3:00 a.m., knowing we were not likely to see him on earth again, he said to her, “Pauline, I should like to give you something before you go,” then looking round the few boxes of necessities which were all he possessed, he said, “But I gave it all to Jesus long ago.” And another time he had said, “My only regret is that I had not more to sacrifice for Jesus.” And what a harvest! The thousands who have found Christ in the heart of Africa, and the hundreds of thousands who heard of

Him and many come to know Him in forty different countries, through those who later joined this Worldwide Crusade he founded.

We don’t follow or imitate a man, but we learn a great principle: God will privilege every one of us as intercessors to be poured out in some way in hours, in work, in witness, by money, by health, by sacrificial use of our homes, by sacrifice of loved ones, by our lives, and with no let-up in our readiness for any involvement while we have life and breath. Our glory is the cross, not only His cross, but that we may take up ours with Him, “the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world”; and not just the cross which delivered me, but which I can share for the world’s deliverance. What greater final word can there be than Paul’s:

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ...that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death...Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:8-14).

—Who Am I?

Allison's Letter

by Allison Prewitt

This is a letter I wrote to my grandmother several years ago. She was in advanced stages of cancer and we didn't expect her to live much longer. Although I lived fairly close to her while growing up and was around her a decent amount, we never had a relationship. She never showed interest in my life, and I was sure she didn't have a clue how bad things were in our house. So, I took the opportunity to give her my testimony before she left this earth. I knew she had been exposed to Christianity on some level—my grandfather had been a Methodist minister—but she was certainly not saved. As long as I could remember she had dabbled in and “experimented” with just about any religion (and occultism), and had a Buddhist priestess at her bedside in her final days. The original letter I wrote was specifi-

cally targeting her salvation and went into detail laying out the tenets of basic Christianity and the gospel message in my own words and experience. To better reach the target audience of this Intercessor magazine, I edited out a lot of the basic gospel message (which I assume you've heard) and swapped in the part of my testimony where I came to believe the Total Truth.

Although my grandmother died having never accepted Christ as her savior, I was told that my letter was left on her dining room table and was picked up and read by several other members of my extended family. God may have sown many seeds that way, and I had never even intended for anyone else to read it!



Dear Grandma,

I hope this letter finds you well. My mother has been keeping me posted on your condition and how you are doing, but I thought I would drop you this letter to have my own contact and share a little of myself with you.

A certain something prompted me to write you. While my mother was staying with you in November I gave a call up to your house to speak with her. You answered the phone, and though I asked how you were doing we didn't have much else to say and the conversation ended quickly. I got off the phone feeling sad that we have never had a relationship, and that I don't know much about you or you about me. I'd like to finally take this opportunity to tell you about myself and my life. Hopefully you will finish this letter feeling like you know me a little. And, I plan to lay out my beliefs to you—because my beliefs define who I am.

I have mostly good memories of my childhood, but where things started getting shaken up for me was in about the 6th grade. My theory is that my parents had their hands so full with Veronica, Kim, and Steven that I was pretty neglected. They all would fight all the time; my siblings were coming home drunk, and Steven would have violent outbursts (punching things and threatening to hurt my mother). I hated being home. I also became the invisible child in the household. At 11 yrs. old I could pretty much do whatever I wanted and no one paid attention or seemed to care one way or the other. So, I started into behavior that was mostly a cry for attention, and some that was an escape. At a very early age I was in over my head in relationships with boyfriends, and also became obsessed with my weight (behaviors I learned from my sisters). In 7th grade, things in my house became dramatically worse. I felt

depressed and desperate. I remember purposefully not eating for days, thinking that I would maybe end up in the hospital... then my parents would have to pay attention to me. I tried smoking cigarettes in the house (I didn't even smoke!) to hopefully get in trouble. I finally begged my parents to take me to a therapist, telling them I thought I was going crazy and needed help. They took me to a therapist (of course it didn't help). And so here I was at 12 years old, staying away from home, hanging out with boys I should not have been with, and failing in some of my classes at school. I was getting all my self-worth from feeling that boys liked me. I didn't really care about anyone or anything else.

Finally in 8th grade, God sent me a huge blessing in disguise. He had me get into that terrible car wreck! Though most would view this as a bad thing, it was one of the best things that ever happened to me. It was as if God literally stopped me (my family too) in my tracks and said "No, you are not going to continue down this road anymore." This was a huge turning point for me. I had been told the gospel when I was 6 yrs. old and "asked Jesus into my heart," but didn't really know what that meant at the time. But God really got my attention this time! At my church camp that year I acknowledged to God that I was a sinner (specifically, immoral and a liar). I told Him I was sorry, and that I needed Jesus to save me. I knew I was not measuring up to God's standard and that on my own I never would. This brought about a big change in me, and I knew there were hard decisions I needed to make back home if I were going to live differently. I chose to sever ties with several friends of mine who I had been making bad choices with. One of them in particular was very hurt and angry. I was quite unpopular for doing what I did, but I knew I had to move on from these friends if the changes in my life were going to work. I started high school with a new perspective and wanted to live better. I started dressing more respectably, did well in school and ran for VP of my class (and won!). Through my four years I remained very active in school, did well academically and made it through high school without participating in the partying and drinking crowd.

I wish I could say that everything was smooth sailing! And though a lot of things got better, I continued

throughout high school and into college to have inappropriate relationships with boyfriends. By inappropriate, I mean against how the Bible commands that we should remain pure. I lied to my parents about the choices I was making and made it a point to deceive everyone about it. I knew good and well that what I was doing was wrong and that God called it sin, but I wanted to do it anyway. By the end of high school I started feeling very convicted about myself and my choices. Some nights I could barely sleep and I would do anything I could to keep myself from thinking about the way I was living. It was awful. I was in a terrible relationship with someone who treated me in an abusive way and I was obsessed about my weight. Not only was I not there for Alicia (sister, 4 years younger) in our crazy house, but I was yet another sibling she couldn't depend on and who was a bad influence. My mother, realizing what dire straits she and I were in at home, moved us to Boone to get help from Christians who cared enough to hold us to God's standards. I had several people who were willing to hold a mirror up to me (over and over) to show me what I was really like—that the life I was living was disobedient to God and was trashy. Not only that, but they also taught me a lot of basic life skills that I didn't get at home (cooking, keeping house, dressing appropriately). And the spiritual message they taught was beyond basic Christianity.

Over and over again for the next several years I would tell myself that I would change. I can't tell you the number of times I said "OK, I'm never doing that again"... only to be right back there again and again. Then a wonderful thing happened—I finally proved to myself that I couldn't stop! I hated how dirty I felt and how trashy I had made myself (not to mention how my life was negatively affecting other people). Finally, what my Christian fellowship had been saying "clicked" in me. I had finally become sick of myself enough and desperate enough to want to apply what they were saying to my own life. It was like "OK, this is what they've been trying to tell me"! They had talked about how the Bible calls us "temples" of the Spirit of Christ, and Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me". Over and over the Bible references us as temples, ves-

sels, slaves, wives, body members, branches of a vine—all things that “contain” something or need something in order to operate or live. When you are born again, Jesus’ Spirit comes to dwell in you, and He is the one living out through your “vessel/temple.” He’s not just there on the outside somewhere “helping” you when you need it. They talked about there being “no independent self,” that we were containers either of the Spirit of Righteousness (Christ) or the Spirit of Wrath (Satan). That since the Fall in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought the spirit of sin into all mankind at birth. And that when you are “saved” Christ’s Spirit comes in to replace Satan’s. But that even when we are saved, we can give Satan temporary control of us simply by not believing that Christ is the one living through our “temples,” and believing instead that it is “just us” controlling our lives. All the sudden, this made perfect sense in the context of my life. Every time I had said to myself “I’m not going to do this anymore”...that was my kiss of death. That sealed my fate that I absolutely was going to do it again! There is no “I” that can stop sinning. Christ is the only sinless one! He’s the only one that ever has and can do it right. Thinking that “I can” automatically means that Satan in control, and of course he (the destroyer of the Brethren) is going to have me right back where I was. Finally believing this truth has been the answer that has made life work.

This life I have chosen to live has given me much more than I ever could have imagined. It has given me peace, sanity, clarity, and deliverance from a life of self-obsession. “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friend” (John 15:13). I hate to think about where I would be otherwise. I have been saved from hell on earth and hell on the other side. And I have been given so many friends that I share my life with! I live in a lovely apartment here in the beautiful mountains. My roommate and I take pride in decorating our place with lots of color, light, artwork, and greenery. We also have two cats, Henri (named after my favorite artist, Henri Matisse), and the little one, Chaz (whose full name is Charleston). They are great entertainment!

I have a degree in Computer Information Systems

from the business school at Appalachian State University. While in school, I was very involved in my Student Government Association and was elected to various positions in the Senate. Although I wasn’t successful, I ran for student body Vice-President, which was an amazing learning experience. Over the past few years I have tried my hand at several new hobbies including clogging, Kung Fu, and piano lessons (I like learning new things!). I also participated in a study abroad program where I studied the Holocaust and traveled to Germany, France and Austria (a very eye-opening experience). I’ve enjoyed broadening my horizons.

I am in a committed dating relationship with a wonderful man, Scott. He and I have great fun together, and have started taking ballroom dancing classes. We’ve become interested in Nascar racing and have gotten to attend a few races together. Even better, he obtained his pilot’s license in 2003 and bought himself a small Cessna airplane. It is a treat to fly around with him and is probably one of my all-time favorite things. He is someone who has played a big role in my life, and has been a mentor to me in a spiritual way. He is a determined man, intelligent, funny, interesting, and kind (can you tell that I really like him!). And above all, our relationship has Jesus Christ as its foundation—nothing sturdier than that! Though nothing is official at the moment, we are looking towards having a future together.*

This just about brings my letter to a close. I have more blessings than I could count and none of them deserved, all given by the grace of God. I am excited about the changes I have made and am so glad to have the chance to share them with you. Thanks for taking the time to read this. I want the best for you, and if you are up for it, I would love to hear back.

Love from your granddaughter,

Allison

* Scott and Allison are now married 4 years, and have two daughters, Cecelia (2 yrs.) and Wendy (2 mos.).

Speaking the Word of Faith

by Norman Grubb

We have seen that one stream of the rivers of living water flows out from us in our believing attitudes. We might call this the Power of Positive Believing. We have it clear that everyone, with no exception, is projecting his attitude. No man can live unto himself. Modern science informs us that every atomic particle has its field of attraction or repulsion; so also we humans have. The poet Francis Thompson wrote in “The Mistress of Vision”:

All things by immortal power,
Near or far, hiddenly,
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star....

Paul said the same with his “None of us liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself.”

We know well enough what our frowns and head-shakings and pessimism and general negative attitudes do. How wonderful it is, instead, to be constant inner-see-ers of God, in His perfect ways, *meaning* everything and everybody to be at this moment just what they are. Thus “with the lift of our soul,” without effort or put-on-ness, maybe saying nothing, but with the replacement of the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, not trying to impress or change a person, we cannot but be a light of hope, praise, and faith in dark places. We are not hiding the apparent hurts. But mercy is *rejoicing* against judgment in us, and there is no

hiding it. The Spirit is secretly touching the strings of response in hearts where there are only the bass notes sounding.

But spirit *attitude* is only the preliminary to spirit *action*. No person on earth functions without first inwardly reacting to things, and is always in a negative or positive attitude toward them. From this he moves on to the moment of decision as to what he will do about it. The general thought-level, which can move in any direction, is now replaced by a decisive, inner word-level. He says within himself, “I will do this,” “I will take that,” “I will go there.” Thus he speaks within himself his “word of faith.” From that inner process, by which general thought is replaced by specific word, he now moves on to outer deed—from *thought* to *word* to *deed*. From Father-level to Son-level to Spirit-level. By no other process has any single conscious action ever taken place in all human history. It is the universal human process of self-manifestation, whether it is the taking and eating of some food from a plate, or a decision of the United States Congress! It is also the process of creation in Genesis 1. The Father has His universal plan of the ages; the Son, called the Word, gives the plan its particular form with His “Let there be”; the Spirit moves upon the face of the waters and transforms the word into substance. Father, Son, Spirit—thought, word, deed.

The critical moment of any action, whether by the Three-in-One, or by man made in His likeness, is the *speaking of*

the decisive word: attitude (Father) moves into word (Son) and action (Spirit). That is why we say that a word puts a person in action.

In *any* mundane activity, this is the order. Thoughts are preparatory. Deeds are the products. *Speaking the decisive word* transmutes the thought into deed. The *word* is at the heart of the process. So a person in action is really his word in action.

Now move that up into the operations of the kingdom of God, the realm of the spirit dimension, of which all earthly forms are visible reproductions—spirit-essence slowed down to the point of visibility. Now we are the sons of God operating in the Spirit kingdom, though outwardly flesh members of a three-dimensional world. How then do we operate? *Precisely as we do in our three-dimensional world of space-time*. Not one iota of difference. We operate from the Father-level of our general understanding of situations and the purpose in them, on to the Son-level of the decisive moment of the spoken word of what is to come to pass, and on to the Spirit-level of the thing done. But how can we say that? Because we as sons of God are in union with the Father, Son, and Spirit by His grace and election; and that union means that we are so inwardly one that *we act as He*. We think His thoughts; we speak His word of faith; we do His deeds.

How do we think His thoughts on the Father-level? Because we have the mind of Christ, as the Scripture states.

We no longer look around outside us, or upward, to gather His thoughts. We understand that He is living out His perfect purposes by His body members... and therefore by me as one of them. Therefore, whatever situation I am at present in is precisely the expression of His present mind for me. All, then, that I have to do is to sort out in my mind what is the situation in which He is now living by me, and what is my relation to the people with whom He has linked me. This necessitates seeing each situation as His perfect purpose.

But now we go further. I have taken it for granted that He has a distinct purpose to fulfill by me, His son, in the situation. I must now, therefore, *particularize* the circumstances or the people concerned, and know what it is He purposes doing in them. What is that particular thing? I must get that “in the clear” to move on to the decisive word of faith. How do I get it clear? By boldly taking it for granted that He thinks His present thoughts by me. For He is “working in me to will and do of His good pleasure.” He is causing me to desire His desires. So I name that desire precisely, for “What things soever ye [not He] desire..., ye shall have” (Mark 11:24). I do not hesitate, except for whatever time it takes to formulate my desire. (And if I am part of a group, together seeking the mind of God, it may take a while to get to one mind.) So first comes *attitude*.

Then I move straight in to the Son-level of speaking the word of faith. I do precisely what Jesus (in Mark 11:20-26) told His disciples to do. He had earlier commanded the fig tree to bear no more fruit (vss. 12-14). The next morning, when they passed the withered tree,

Peter commented on it: “Master, look, the fig tree you cursed is withered away.” Jesus simply replied, “Now *you* have this same ‘faith of God’” (which is the literal rendering, rather than “faith in God”). And what does that mean? Obviously, *seeing as God sees the situation*, and thus believing with His believing. And how does God do this? Through my eyes and inner comprehension. So if something appears like a mountain of difficulty to me, that is how He is first causing me to see it.

Jesus then tells His disciples to say to any such mountain, “Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea,” and in doing so, to believe it is a completed fact. The result: “You will have whatever you have said.” It couldn’t be simpler. Don’t beg. Don’t beseech. Just *say* it! But there is the added proviso that we don’t doubt in our hearts—don’t allow mental soul-doubts, which we surely have, to disturb our fixed, inner word of faith: “Whosoever... shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith” (vs. 23).

But how can I say “Be removed” to a mountain? Because it is only a mountain to my human seeing. Read what God said to Zerubbabel in Zechariah 4:7: “Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel... a plain.” Thus to the eyes of faith a “mountain” is no obstacle, and as Jesus said, is removed and cast into the sea by the word of faith.

So, having the mind of Christ, as “sons in action” we discern that “next thing” God is moving us on to and bring it into being. *It is just that simple*. It is only the “graveclothes” of suspi-

cion of our old self-seeking selves which makes us hesitate about saying that the thing we desire is His mind. But He has said, “What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe...” (vs. 24). *You* desire. Then let’s be that simple. If He in us trusts our desires to be His desires, let us trust ourselves. We have discarded and rejected those doubtings and questionings of our motives by accepting our vital Galatians 2:20 relationship, so let us now practice holy boldness, just as John keeps saying in His union epistle: “We have confidence toward God.... This is the confidence that we have in Him.... We may have boldness [even] in the day of judgment.”

Then, being bold in defining exactly what are the things we are presently desiring in place of the mountain confronting us, and naming them, we speak the key word of the countdown—we press the button marked, “SAY.” We do that from our inner spirit-center, simply by our authority as sons of God. Jesus has plainly told us to act *as God* by “the faith of God”—by His inner believing imparted to us, by our inner union of mind and understanding. This means that in acting as He, all of His mighty resources are at *our* disposal. It is not now a matter of us being at *His* disposal, but of Him being at *our* disposal. He is operating in this present world-system by us. We say with Caleb, “Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it.” And in so doing, we laugh the laugh of faith.

Speaking this word of faith (having once settled what the desire is) could not be more simple. It is the “obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:26). That is all the

Intercessors of the Bible: Queen Esther

by Doris Ruscoe

Recently re-published by Zerubbabel Press, The Intercession of Rees Howells by Doris Ruscoe chronicles the life and teachings of that great man of God during his years at the Bible College of Wales (1930's & 40's). In this excerpt from that book, Rees Howells unveils the process by which God called Queen Esther to intercede for her people by laying down her life as the Spirit's agent through whom He would save the entire Jewish population from extinction during their captivity in Persia.

Stage 1: The Preparation

Esther was brought also into the king's house...Esther had not showed her people nor her kindred. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight...so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. Esther 2.8, 10, 17

How great this king, Artaxerxes, was! His kingdom stretched from India to Ethiopia. How could God reach a monarch as great as this? Who would have thought, after Vashti was removed, that Esther would be chosen above all the other maidens in that vast country, that a Jewess would occupy this, the highest position that any girl in the kingdom could have? How wonderful it was that God had put her in that place just at the right time! God is always ahead of the devil and he knew that the enemy through Haman planned to destroy the Jewish people. Who but the queen could have acted over

the head of the king's chief minister, and one who had the law on his side?

Stage 2: The Crisis

When Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone: for they had shown him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom. Esther 3.5, 6

If it had come to the mind of Mordecai that through not bowing down to Haman the lives of all his people would be at stake, I wonder if he would still have refused? This is not the only time that the devil has tried to destroy the Jewish people. He tried in Egypt at the time of the birth of Moses, when Pharaoh commanded that the Hebrew children should be thrown into the Nile. He tried to destroy the Saviour when Herod ordered the slaughter of the Jewish infants. He has tried again in our own century when Hitler attempted to destroy the Jews in the extermination camps.

The king gave them into Haman's hands and the order went forth that on a certain day all the Jews, in every province, were to be killed. Think of Mordecai crying through the streets of Shushan! The order could not be withdrawn: it was sealed with the king's seal, and the laws of the Medes and Persians could not be changed. Mordecai realised that Esther

was the only person who could intervene with the king. So he charged her, through Hatach, that 'she should go in unto the king to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.' But what a test for Esther! She had not been called into the king's presence for thirty days, and to enter without being called was to face certain death. But the challenge of Mordecai to her was, 'Think not that thou shalt escape more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.' Esther 3.13, 14

Stage 3: The Intercession

Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this. Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise: and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. Esther 4.14, 16

Think what it cost these people to go through. Before God will use you in intercession it will cost you. If anyone had known a way of escape would they not have paid any price for deliverance? The fasting is not the point—it was the burden to be carried. When you face death neither food nor anything else will appeal to you. Fear turns away the need for food. We do not enter into the experience of these people because we are not in a similar posi-

tion. Esther was not only facing death: she would have to disclose the fact that she herself was a Jewess. Can you see that volume of prayer going up for those three days from the Jews while their queen was facing death? They knew that unless she prevailed they would all die. This is what I mean by a real death. This young woman was giving her life for the nation. Could the throne refuse that cry? These people raised up a standard to be a channel for God.

Stage 4: The Victory

And the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, 'What wilt thou, Queen Esther, and what is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of my kingdom.' Esther 5.2, 3

How near the enemy came in this situation! Even Esther could not go through the first time. She had to stand against the king's chief minister. She failed the first day, and so would anyone. This shows what it cost to do it, but she went through the second time and threw her all into it. Haman discerned nothing of what God had prepared for him. What a show God made of the devil in Haman and what a deliverance for the Jews! Even so the king nearly had a civil war on his hands, and hundreds who opposed the Jews were killed. How great was the victory!

When we enter into our king's presence shall we be able to prevail as Esther prevailed? You will never enter into that presence with a shade of anything between you and God. Your victories will be as real as your deaths. If the enemy has any hold over you, you will not prevail. Unless your death is as real as Queen Esther's, you will not prevail to deliver others.

Prayer & the Fourth Dimension

continued from page 7

separation; and some scientific discoveries of our day can help rid us of our inhibiting materialistic outlook, and to glimpse both through the Scriptures and by scientific hypothesis our union with a timeless God; and that means the outworking, through the operations of His faith in us, of His purposes which in His sight are already in existence, and a faint foreshadowing of the ultimate glory in our oneness in a one Christ in whom the whole universe will be one in us.

So learn to *release* your burdens, not carry them. Prayer itself may often be unbelief, for instead of glorying in a God who has already done in the invisible what is not yet apparent in the visible, we are nagging at Him to do it! Many a time we are so burdened and occupied in hopelessly hoping for an answer to a prayer we have not really believed, that we have no freedom or largeness of heart to encompass the burdens of others or of a world. A wife can set her husband's salvation back by her "burden" for him, often expressed in unwise preaching at him! Whereas, if she releases him to God by the act of deliberate faith, and keeps repeating that act, she will be more occupied in hopefully loving him than in unbelievably tearing him down. A mother can be so obsessed with the need of her unsaved children, instead of releasing them to God in faith in the accomplished fact, that she has no heart or vision for the thousands of other unsaved mothers' sons. Prayer meetings also are dead affairs when they are merely asking sessions: there is adventure, hope, and life when they are believ-

ing sessions, and the faith is corporately, practically and deliberately affirmed.

—*God Unlimited*

Speaking the Word of Faith

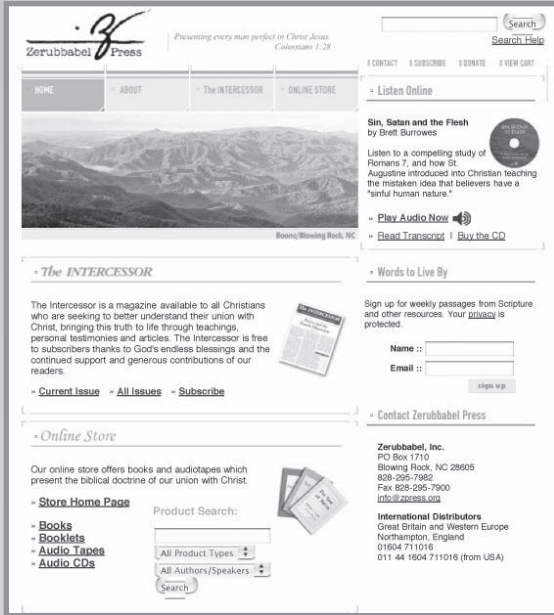
continued from page 26

"works" involved. It is a work of faith to this extent: all that the outer appearances can pour on us at such a "speaking" moment, they will pour. That is to say, we shall likely feel the full impact of the foolishness of faith. It looks absurd. It *is* absurd, because the agony of faith is that *nothing can ever be experienced until after we've committed ourselves to it, not before*. As we've seen, that is actually true in a minor way of even the least act of everyday faith, like sitting on a chair. *How much more* when it is these leaps into what is invisible and impossible and unattainable by human methods! So there is a travail of faith because of the assaults on us by every emotional reaction to the absurdity and impossibility of it. And equally, by every rational objection to what spirit-faith has always been—the irrational. So in that sense, we say speaking this word is *not simple*. Yet it is, because it is just *speaking the word!* And that is why something equivalent to "confessing it with our mouth" is a seal on it—a means by which, once we have said a thing, it's a settled matter—and the affirmation to ourself or to others helps to settle us into it. But that's all. These are our *supreme moments* when the rivers of the Spirit are flowing out of us on our spirit level. This is the faith that gives substance to things hoped for.

—*Yes, I Am*

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God worketh in you...

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

–Philippians 2:13

(King James Version)

Words to Live By...

The men of the Bible always understood their specific commission. So must we. Any of us in any kind of circumstances can draw aside with God and examine before Him the whys and wherefores of what is happening. It will not take long before we begin to see clearly: it is for this to happen to these folks in my home, or for this in my Sunday School class or church, or to some areas of need in my city, or right out on some distant mission field. But it is specific. It is God saying to me (or to a group of us in something together), “*You* have been put by Me to stand in that gap. See that you carry it out.”

–Norman Grubb

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The audio cassette tapes listed below were recorded live at various gatherings and many contain some background noise. The latest techniques in digital editing were employed to reduce background noise and produce CD's of these same teachings by Norman Grubb. In both cases, editing of the content has been kept to a minimum to preserve the valuable truths these recordings contain.

NORMAN GRUBB

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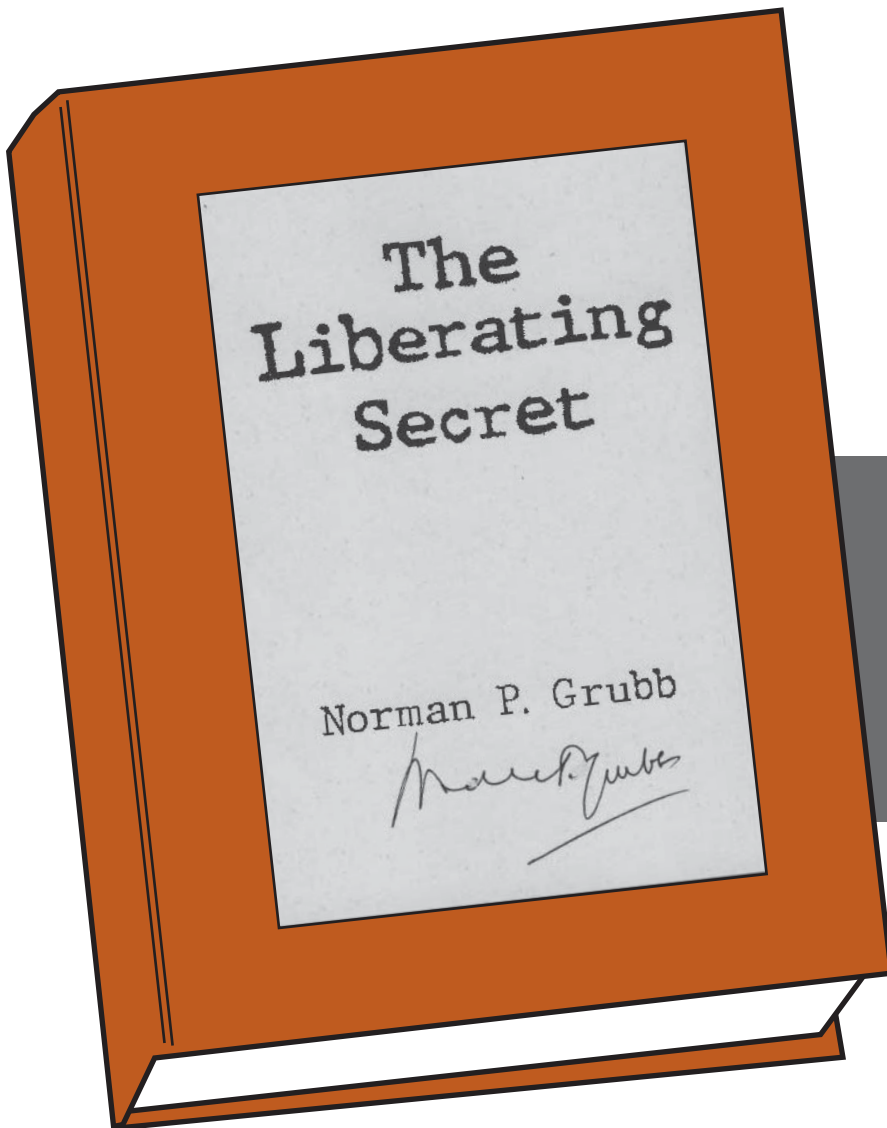
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