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*INTEGRITY*, a journal published bimonthly by an independent nonprofit corporation, is intended to be a ministry of reconciliation which utilizes the varied talents of a large community of believers. These believers, united in faith, but divergent in opinions, seek to accurately reveal God to both the church and the world so that all may become one as He is one. Accordingly, it should not be assumed that the views expressed by individual authors necessarily represent the opinions of either the editors or the Board as a whole.

I would like to receive *Integrity*. I have been receiving *Restoration Review* for several years and want a replacement to their positive input. I trust your journal will be just that.

I am not a stranger to several people on your editorial board. I attended Great Lakes Bible College in Lansing, Michigan and there met "Doc" Doty, of course. Curt and Carole Lloyd have shared many meals and laughs with us. You are blessed to have such fine compatriots in ministry. May the Lord give you wisdom and strength in your labor.

Ralph Bieganeck  
Green Bay, WI

Now that *Restoration Review* is coming to a close I was extremely grateful to receive the complimentary copy of *Integrity*. I am one of Leroy Garrett's readers that "doesn't always agree, but he makes me think" and that is what I want to do. I could think of a lot of other denominations I could become a part of which would allow me [more freedom] to think, but

changing to one of them is not the answer. I love my brothers and sisters in Christ where I am and want to make a difference there.

Sandra Largen  
Montgomery, AL

I received my copy of the Sept./Oct. issue. I'm pleased to see anything reprinted from Carl Ketcherside's pen; anything written by Hoy Ledbetter. But I'm less pleased by "Dry Bread and Cold Potatoes." Sister Higgs does well to advocate willingness to experiment and change, but many changes I'm seeing in our churches nowadays are not for the good.

Musical childishness, which is what Laquita may seem to be advocating, could be more appropriately compared to empty calories than to the exotic foods not usually on our menus which she extols. Do I misunderstand the changes she advocates?

Ray Downen  
Joplin, MO

March/April 1993  
Vol. 24, No. 2

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## Are You Listening, God?

Does prayer really make a difference? Probably no religious act is more routinely practiced by Christians than prayer. Yet few of us feel that we practice it enough. As God's children, there is nothing we can do which is more important than to pray: in worship of God, for God's will for ourselves and others, for our daily needs and the needs of others, for forgiveness for ourselves and for a forgiving heart toward others, and for God's strength for our daily struggles.

But do we do it? Do we do it with the right heart? Do we believe God is listening? Do we believe he will answer? Are we listening?

When reading the letters of Paul, it doesn't take long to realize that he believed that prayer was important. Paul, a person of action, still believed that prayer made a difference.

"Pray without ceasing...pray for us" (I Thess. 5:17,25).

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for you" (Phil. 1:3-4).

"I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers" (Eph. 1:16).

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father" (Eph. 3:14).

"For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you" (Col. 1:9).

This issue of *Integrity* is devoted to helping each of us make better use of the tool of prayer God has given us. God, working through the prayer life described by the writers in this issue, can change your life, your church, and your community.

(Continued on page 34)

## Prayer: An Intimate Relationship with God

RONALD DAVIS

Our humanness yearns for intimacy! From the early moments of conception, the zygote is dividing and relating to two cells, then four, then eight. The tiny embryo attaches to the uterine wall. The umbilical cord is the lifeline of intimacy, an assurance that sustenance is transferred, waste is eliminated, and life processes develop and are nurtured. A newborn cries to be suckled and caressed close to its mother's breast. Hugs and kisses are exchanged between child and parent. There is a need for tangible proof that the child/parent bond is secure as the child ventures into a new chapter of life. Friendships and marriage are the avenues through which humans seek intimacy at all levels of their being.

God is the author of intimacy, and he relates early in scripture his blueprint for successful intimacy: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness'...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:26-27). Then the Lord God said:

"It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him'...and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man' (Gen. 2:18, 22-23).

After the fall in the garden, man continues to seek after intimacy but not according to a divine blueprint. This insatiable desire for intimacy is the undoing of our mental health as

we work to fulfill the desire along the avenues of human pursuits. You name it and it is there to pursue, but we all know that the harnesses to which all human pursuits are tethered are *limitation* and *nonfulfillment*.

### Their Own Image

From the beginning, God's relationship with humans has been one of sought-after intimacy. In creating humans, the triune God poured out his heart and very being into the jewel of his creation, man and woman. It is a story of unrequited love. Nonetheless, God's plan of redemption unfolds throughout scripture as a plan to redeem through Emmanuel—God with us—a gift of the only begotten of the Father. To those who accepted his covenant of intimacy, he gladly shared his plans and dreams. The covenant was renewed many times through Abraham, Abraham's children, Moses, Joshua, David, and finally was fulfilled in the profound intimacy he had with his son, Jesus. Jesus knew the Father as the Father knew him. His prayer life was his relationship with his Father. His day-to-day work schedule issued forth from his intimate knowledge of and relationship with the Father.

One has only to browse through the Gospel of John to find a window through which to view this life-fulfilling intimacy:

I have food to eat of which you do not know...My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work.

My Father is working still, and I am working...Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the



Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that he himself is doing...I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me (John 4:31,34; 5:17, 19-20,30,31).

## Evidence of Intimacy

In the Acts of the Apostles, Peter and John portray a similar like-father, like-son resemblance when they, filled with the Holy Spirit, proclaim the risen Jesus to the rulers and elders of the people. How did the rulers and elders respond? "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they wondered; and they recognized that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Peter and John's intimacy with Jesus before and after the resurrection was recognizable even to the educated elite of that day.

The "vine and branches" symbolism in John 15 once again describes to those whom Jesus loved that life is intimacy with him. Anything else is death. He does not describe a neat, packaged "prayer life" with steps and exercises for each level. Life is prayer, that is, intimacy with him. Paul echoes that same truth when he says, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). Again in John 15, Jesus says he is the vine; we are the branches; and his Father is the vinedresser. It is a life or death issue when it comes to abiding, bearing fruit, and pruning. In other words sharing life, growing productively and experiencing loss are all part of the fulfilled life in Jesus. In John 15:11 Jesus concludes by saying, "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may

be in you, and that your joy may be full." That's what we all want, folks, JOY--and lots of it--which brings fulfillment.

## Prayer Between Friends

How does "abide in me and I in you" flesh out in the rubber-meets-the-road reality of the daily grind where intimacy, at times, seems such a struggle even at its best? How does one stem the tide of strife in a family, or deal with lust, greed, anger, job loss, financial crisis, health problems, and satanic attacks from all directions? The answer will be found in the depths of your being as "deep calls to deep."

As the deer longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me continually, "Where is your God?"...By day the Lord commands his steadfast love; and at night his song is with me; a prayer to the God of my life. (Psalms 42:1-3,8)

The ultimate decision of whether or not "to abide in him" is a relationship decision. Do I maintain a relationship with lust, anger, greed, jealousy, fear, health, finances, etc., or do I maintain the life-giving relationship of intimacy with the God of the Bible? Can the Christian really hear and see what the Father is saying and doing? Can the Christian be guided in the spirit to speak and act according to what God wants? Can the Christian know the thoughts of God? In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul reminds us:

For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one

comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit. The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned...But we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:10-14,16).

Prayer is the avenue for maintaining

a dynamic relationship with the one who is the beginning and the end of all relationships. The degree to which we cultivate this avenue is the degree to which we grow closer to the mind and heart of God. Prayer is the hope that there is more to life than mortality. With prayer comes the guarantee that life is worth the struggle to fill our spiritual vacuum with the God who promises a Kingdom that is near at hand and is, in fact, upon us.

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Ron Davis enjoys his current employment as an elementary school music instructor. Ron and his family reside in Owosso, Michigan.

## Thoughts from the Hospital

JERRY L. DANIEL

### Late Night

My thoughts in this hospital bed aren't always completely rational and coherent. They drift in and out, and sometimes weary and frustrate me by cutting deeper and deeper into the same grooves. I look around me in the dim light: my intravenous-fluid line has been attached so long it seems I was born with it, and it remains hanging onto me like some grotesque umbilical cord attached to the wrong part of my body. I must be very careful how I turn in bed, because it's quite possible to disconnect one of the lines--it's happened twice before--and that can precipitate a rather urgent problem.

My wife, Lois, is sleeping peacefully in her bed across the room. What a blessing! This wing of

the hospital is set up entirely for cancer patients, and provisions are made for spouses to remain with them at all times. This is my seventh admission since being diagnosed with cancer of the liver in June, and she has been beside me during every one. Even regarding physical care she is better than most of the nurses, and nothing on earth could replace the countless other things she does for me, including hours of Bible reading and the quiet singing of hymns which are a part of each evening together. We're also reading "secular" books together: have already completed several old favorites, and are now beginning a biography of Byron which neither of us has read before. In any case, her ability to stay with me in the hospital is an indescribable blessing.



Another blessing is that I am not, nor have I been, in a great deal of pain. Though I've had some pain, it has, thank God, so far been manageable. Nausea has been and remains the problem: there are times in which I am nauseated every waking hour. It isn't entirely from chemotherapy, either, because I had the nausea problem prior to the therapy.

Tonight my thoughts seem unusually chaotic ("Is that lump smaller, or is it larger?"), but insofar as they are coherent at all, they revolve around prayer. Why do my prayers seem so remote, such exercises in rote discipline? It isn't just that God himself seems sometimes so distant: I rather expected that. I know that such is often the experience of the greatest of saints. Some of the psalmists bewail the distance of God when they need him to be nearest (e.g. Ps.10,13,88); and no Bible reader is unaware of the experience of Job.

So, while it is true that God sometimes feels very distant, even unreal to me, that isn't exactly what is on my mind tonight. The thing which bothers me is in myself. My prayers seem passionless, dry, more the doing of a duty than anything else. I've had this problem off-and-on throughout life, but I would have thought that if I were ever hospitalized with a life-threatening disease, such a problem would instantly evaporate. After all, if inoperable cancer won't motivate one to pray fervently, earnestly, and feelingly, what on earth ever could? Paul speaks of "agonizing in prayer" (Rom.15:30), and some of the psalmists (e.g. Ps.6) speak of praying in such a way that "every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with weeping."

Not me! It would be a relief to pray that way, but I can't. Something

is frozen inside me, and the frost-line seems so deep that no real emotion can escape.

Not that I fail to pray. I pray over and over for healing; I pray for the removal of the nausea, for strength to undergo the chemotherapy, for the financial side of the matter, and for a multitude of other details. But my prayers feel so mechanical, more as though I'm touching all the bases than holding conversation with a loving Father.

Perhaps I'm empty; perhaps I feel this way because there isn't anything inside. I cannot, however, bring myself to believe this. I can't believe that my relationship with God is this shallow; there must be some other explanation. I remember the promise in Romans 8 which assures us that the Spirit will aid us in our prayers "with sighs too deep for words." Perhaps the Spirit is speaking to the Father for me when I'm not fully aware of it. I hope so, as I seem to be doing a poor job of praying on my own behalf. But in any case I refuse to believe that my spiritual life is as destitute as it feels this moment.

### Next Day

Needles, needles, needles! Why is it that every nurse who enters my room either has some injection to give me or wants to draw blood? Don't they know that the human skin gets weary of being punctured? And it isn't getting any easier as more veins collapse and become useless for the drawing of blood. And why is it that most medicines have unpleasant side-effects? They're now giving me medicines to counter the effect of other medicines—a very unpleasant package altogether.

Not that it's all bad. There's a great deal of good will and good wit, banter, laughter and sheer fun. There's the impishness of my 5'3"

Bulgarian doctor who compensates for his diminutive size with a monstrous ego, but also with a truly innovative approach to cancer research (probably in the top dozen creative researchers in this country). There's the male nurse who works only on weekends, and who is so playfully light-hearted as to appear unprofessional, but who is one of the most competent nurses I've ever had. There's the teasing about various things, including how good I look in a hospital gown. And there's a great deal of genuine care. One of the staff physicians, a Korean woman, literally jumped up and down clapping her hands when one of my CAT Scans turned out good. I'm not accustomed to that sort of response from a doctor.

Another great blessing is that the congregation I preach for is standing behind me financially. What on earth would I do without them?

The view out my window is of a massive brick wall, another portion of the hospital. I cannot tell whether it is sunny or cloudy, so my wife keeps me plied with occasional weather reports. I've been in the hospital almost a month (this time), and what I would give for a 5-minute stroll down the sidewalk, just for a chance to taste outside air! The nausea would preclude that, however, even if it were possible on other grounds.

### Night Again

The nausea is much better tonight, and for that I'm thankful. But I have a high fever and, for some reason, find it hard to lie still. Why does this room feel smaller and smaller? Why do the side rails on this hospital bed make me think of the bars on jail windows? Why do my attempts to pray still feel "barred"? Why do I feel cold inside though I have fever outside?

My youngest daughter just called

and that, as always, had a strong effect on me. My eldest daughter had called a couple of hours ago. The two girls are so different in personality, yet each of them has an almost mystical effect on me.

It is beginning to get late, and I know that both Lois and I need to sleep. Sometimes finding a comfortable sleeping position is one of my hardest tasks, especially when, like tonight, I'm feeling somewhat frenzied and find it difficult to lie still.

Lois picks up a hymnbook, thumbs through it for a moment or two, then softly begins to sing. She will probably sing 10-12 hymns at least, and the more the better as far as I'm concerned. I can't sing along, but I can relish the music she provides. I have become (first dimly, then vividly) aware that this is my favorite part of each day in the hospital.

I miss the first song or two—thinking more of how I enjoy her voice than of what the songs are saying. Now, however, I become aware that she is singing "How Firm a Foundation," and I feel my spirit quicken in spite of the physical discomfort I'm feeling. I lie with my eyes lightly closed drinking in every sound.

Then I realize something with what amounts to a shock. Up from depths within me come feelings—real feelings. She has just begun the middle stanzas of the great hymn (those drawn from the 43rd chapter of Isaiah):

When thro' the deep waters I  
cause thee to go,  
The rivers of sorrow shall not  
overflow;  
Somewhere down inside myself I am  
singing with her. No, not singing;  
PRAYING!

For I will be with thee thy troubles  
to bless,  
And sanctify to thee thy deepest  
distress.



I dare not equate prayer with feelings, but this is prayer! This is coming from my heart and center. It transcends feelings; it is something palpable moving through my being.

When thro' fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,

My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;

The flame shall not hurt thee: I only design

Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Tears flow freely, but they are not tears of self-pity; they are tears welling up from some region of myself far below the cold and frost. Or perhaps they are the visible sign of the melting of the ice. I open my eyes to peek at Lois as she sings: her voice sweet as a nut, her face wrapped in a peace and showing an intensity that can only come from faith which approaches an absolute.

The experience takes much longer to tell than it did to occur, but, brief as it is, I know it is of immense importance to me. I feel one with the Hebrew prophet who originally, under the Spirit, penned the great words; one with every Christian who has sung them through the years; one

## Spiritual Truths for My "Sacred Journey": The Quiet Stream Underneath

CURTIS D. McCLANE

The last ten years has witnessed an explosion of resources recommending the admirability and advisability of the contemplative lifestyle. My own "sacred journey" has been drastically altered because of exposure to this literature. The

with my wife who is singing them now; best of all, one with my Father in Heaven and with my Lord Jesus.

I consider this a revelation—a revelation about myself. I can feel the fear and perplexity subside as I realize that prayer can't be more fervent than this. I've never doubted the presence of God; only my ability to talk to him. Now I'm talking to him. There *is* something inside me and it isn't frozen. It's warm and free and in touch with the God of heaven.

This is too strong to be purely subject. Surely the Holy Spirit is involved. I think again of "sighs too deep for words."

Aided by the great music I sincerely and eagerly pray back to my Father his incredible promises to me—promises that I'll never be alone in any of this suffering, and that all these fiery trials will in the long run have only a refining benefit. Something inside me has changed: I will never again doubt my ability to pray. The song lasts only a few moments; the insight will last forever.

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Jerry L. Daniel serves as minister and elder to the Echo Lake Church of Christ in Westfield, New Jersey.

desert fathers, the mystics, the contemplatives: all have something significant to contribute to the contemporary struggle in living a Christian life. For the past six years I have been listening to the voices of the past and imbibing the Spirit of

God through the classics of Christian devotion. This spiritual quenching made it possible for me to withstand the blast of the desert storm caused by my own father's suicide in January of 1992. Out of this experience I traveled an inner journey in which it became clear to me that seven spiritual truths or realities have guided me to where I am. It is for this reason I am writing: I want to share these with you, for I believe my inner, sacred journey may resonate with yours, and these spiritual truths or realities will speak to your experience also.

### My Christian Guides

I owe a great debt to Frederick Buechner for his sharing of his own "sacred journey." The shock and brutality of his own father's suicide initiated his own inner journey from which he returned a changed individual. The brutality of life paves the road upon which the converted heart must travel. And the trip is no joy ride. For we cannot pre-determine our own route, neither can we anticipate the unknown lurking around the next bend. We are often rudely delayed in our travels, never being given the chance to grant life permission for its unwelcomed obstructions.

I mentioned at the outset that my own sacred journey has been drastically altered because of devotional literature. I may also affirm that my sacred journey has had an impact on my understanding of and appreciation for this material. There are four types of spiritual truths: revelational, experiential, relational, and directional. I used to be familiar with only the first and last one. I did not know that truth could be experienced and related between myself and others. But God and the Holy Spirit have humbled me in many

ways. This humbling process has challenged my presuppositions regarding the nature and reality of truth. Truth is not just words written on a page. Truth is the raw reality of life out of which a trusting faith is forged.

In 1986 God exposed me to a devotional guide entitled *Disciplines for the Inner Life*. This resource by Bob and Michael Benson provided a specific model for me to interact with reality in a sacred and devotional way. I was confronted on page two with the following excerpt that forever restructured my perspective of the spiritual life:

The recognition that one's life is meant to be lived from the inside out is a milepost on our spiritual journey. In a society which lays such great stress on outward appearances, labels, and symbols of success, it will take an earnest concentration on our part to free ourselves from this highly touted living on the circumference.

"Living life from the inside out"—if you, too, have come to this milepost, then the following seven experiential realities may have something to say to you: the quiet stream underneath, autobiographical journaling, active waiting, practicing the presence of God, the sacrament of the present moment, and centering down. In this article we will focus on the first one: the quiet stream underneath. Subsequent installments will treat the remaining ones individually.

From June 2nd until December 25th of 1974 Henri J. M. Nouwen spent time in a Trappist monastery in the Genesee valley outside of Rochester, New York. During these seven months he wrote down his thoughts in a journal which were to find their final form in *The Genesee Diary*. The self-critical honesty and vulnerable inquiries regarding his own shortcomings and spiritual



struggles really spoke to me. This work had such a tremendous hold on my spirit that I am now reading it the second time. On page fourteen I was assaulted with these two questions: "Is there a quiet stream underneath the fluctuating affirmations and rejections of my little world? Is there a still point where my life is anchored and from which I can reach out with hope and courage and confidence?"

For Nouwen the "quiet stream underneath" is perceived as a salvific metaphor in which the paradoxical realities of a restless, searching heart are juxtaposed with stillness and solitude. His own seven month monastic experiment provided him with a unique opportunity to examine the source of his restless searching in an atmosphere of godly silence. In exploring this concept of the "quiet stream underneath" I want to offer two more strands of experience which will comprise the total matrix of this spiritual reality: the knowledge of God and the power of God.

### A Healing Stream

To begin with, the "quiet stream underneath" is a tranquil, healing process of the Divine presence in my restless, searching soul. Such an unstable heart is caused by deep inner questions which force their way to the surface of my consciousness. And they are much deeper than trite questions such as: "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?"

Instead, these deep inner questions are like volcanic eruptions, which, without warning, belch forth their lava and hot ashes all over an unsuspecting ego. They may find themselves verbalized in the following ways: "Who cares if I even live?" "What difference will my life make in society?" "Why do I feel so insignificant in the presence of certain

people?" "Why do I have to suffer this chronic pain?" "What will it be like to grow old, and why am I so afraid of dying?"

Questions like these are responsible for a restless, searching, unstable heart. At times in my life their burden becomes too great, their presence too haunting, their resolution dubious. When this occurs I retreat to responsibility. I try to drown out the unnerving voices with the noise and clatter of busyness. Bills need to be paid. The car needs worked on. The new computer program needs to be installed and tested. Countless other convenient responsibilities take their turn demanding my attention so that I will be deterred from fully embracing my agitated existence.

### A Calm Intimacy

In the Apocalypse, the apostle John utilizes a banquet metaphor from the Near Eastern culture to express Divine-human intimacy. "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). This is an invitation to partake of the tranquil, healing process of the Divine presence. To experience the "quiet stream underneath" I have to open the door of my heart and allow Jesus to come in. While we feast at the table together, I can share my fears and misgivings with him. He turns a restless heart into a resting heart. The raging sea of emotions becomes a quiet stream of tranquility.

This experience of Divine intimacy sheds light on my own sense of value. I am not what I produce. I am not who my friends are. I am not what I accomplish. I am not what I own. I am not what I wear. I am not how I look. But I am of value because I am! To wade in the "quiet

stream underneath" is more than getting my feet wet in the psycho-therapeutic methodologies of self-actualization. It is plunging into the blood of Jesus which immerses me in a new awareness of "Christ-actualization." Now do not misunderstand me on this point—I am thankful for responsible psychoanalysis and psychotherapies. But they are not an end in themselves. Techniques for going inward often leave out the divine aspect. To experience the "quiet stream underneath" is to allow God to complete the Divine initiative for intimacy that goes beyond human intimacy.

### Stream of Solitude

Additionally, the "quiet stream underneath" is the occasion of solitude I carve out of a noisy culture to be with God. And this has not been an easy commitment for me to keep. Presently, I am rising early in the morning to start the day with meditation. It is quiet in the house. Solitude, strangely enough, has a deafening roar to it. Silence can be intimidating. But it is only in solitude that I can hear myself. For when I carve out blocks of solitude to be alone and shielded from the noise pollution of daily survival, it is then that my spiritual eardrum picks up the sound waves of the Divine "still, small voice." God speaks to me in the quietude of my soul. God's voice and my voice blend in a duet that sings the songs of my soul.

Jaroslav Pelikan, a theologian and Sterling Professor of History at Yale University, wrote an essay in the spring of 1989 entitled "Solitude." He pointed out that in the history of Christian experience individuals who carried out the public service of God, first had to learn the lesson of solitude. When it comes to making

ethical, political, or theological choices, we are best prepared to do so in the context of solitude rather than following the trend of the moment. Pelikan asserts that a critical function of solitude is to "introduce us to our ancestors." In a mystical and dynamic way, it is during my times of solitude that I hear the voices of Christians from the past. In these times their legacy anchors my faith and sacred journey in the character of God. This is part of the "quiet stream underneath."

Three Christian writers have recently impacted my understanding of solitude and silence. Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, and Henri Nouwen all point out that solitude actually frees our souls so that we can be engaged in society as free persons. This freedom comes from a new perspective that emerges when we take time just to be and not to do. "In solitude we find the psychic distance, the perspective from which we can see, in the light of eternity, the created things that trap, worry, and oppress us" (Dallas Willard, *the Spirit of the Disciplines*, page 161).

In my own life I have those golden moments of solitude which have been forever frozen in my memory. They have been individually placed beneath the plastic covers of ecstatic joy on each page of my album of solitude. As I imagine flipping through the pages of that album, the scenes come alive again:

In the Rockies, standing on the cliff of Lands End in God's Flower Garden with a panoramic view of mountain peaks fifty miles away.

Standing on the beach not far from Pepperdine University awed by the vastness of the ocean.

Swinging quietly on my front porch last September evening with



crystal blue skies overhead, low humidity, and temperature in the 70's.

This past spring when Nancy and I chased butterflies and dragonflies in Grand River Park.

In each of these precious moments I encountered something of the mystery of God and the exuberance of life in the midst of solitude. In my own life I can say without a doubt that my spiritual growth has always been proportionate to the time I spend in solitude. And that solitude prepares me to be engaged in society.

### Be Still and Know...

In addition to the healing process of the Divine presence and the golden moments of solitude, knowing God is another vital aspect of the "quiet stream underneath." Psalm 46:10 provides a critical bridge between our solitude and our relationship with God. The psalmist apparently records the actual voice of Yahweh in this hymn:

Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!

The superscription for this hymn identifies it as a "Psalm of the sons of Korah." Apparently in the Levitical tradition of the tabernacle and the temple this song was composed to express dependence on Yahweh in times of trouble.

Verse ten is a passionate plea for Israel to be still and know that God is real. "Know" (*yada*) in the Hebrew language carried much wider semantic nuances than it often does in English. Frequently "know" was used in terms of personal, intimate

relationship. The best example of this is found in Genesis 4:1, "Now Adam knew (*yada*) Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord.'" In this verse *yada* is referring to an intimate sexual relationship between a man and a woman. It is this connotation of relational intimacy that the psalmist hears from Yahweh and records in 46:10.

"Be still, and know that I am God." The disciples of Jesus once heard him say, "Peace, be still." The waves and the wind on that treacherous sea of Galilee ceased. Their mouths dropped in astonishment. In reality Jesus was saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." After rebuking the wind and demanding the sea to be still, Jesus turned to the disciples and asked these penetrating questions: "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" (Mark 4:40) Faith stills fear. Faith experiences God.

Like the disciples on that embarrassing evening on the Sea of Galilee, we often find ourselves in panic asking God, "Do you not care that we are perishing?" Our own boat is being beaten and swamped with the waves of temptation, uncertainty and depression. Circumstances come to be more than I can bear. They begin to fill my boat and I sense that my life is beginning to sink.

"Be still, and know that I am God." In this Marcan episode we find Jesus in the stern of the ship, asleep on a pillow. Jesus knew God. His intimate relationship with God enabled him to lay his head down on a pillow. I can envision the disciples, with flasks and jars in their hands, bailing water out in this desperate situation. In my sacred journey I will be confronted with the raging sea. If I am in tune with the "quiet stream underneath," then I will have my head on a pillow instead of my hands

gripping a jar and bailing out water.

When my father committed suicide last January, my little boat was swamped. And all I could do was lay my head on my pillow and plead with Jesus, "Make the wind and the waves cease." Through this I really came to know Jesus. My mouth dropped in astonishment as I saw God working in the lives of my brothers, sisters and mother. I came to know Jesus in an intimate and powerful way that I never knew possible.

### The Power Underneath

The last dimension of the "quiet stream underneath" I want to mention is the power of God. Our deep inner calm rests in God's power. I cannot live so as to control everything in my life. Resurrection power and Holy Spirit power are mine to claim as I walk daily with God and Jesus.

Recall once again the Galilean sea episode. Those seasoned fishermen recognized that things were out of control. They were privileged to witness the power of Jesus Christ over the elements. Their response was one of awe and reverence and wonder. "Who is this man?!"

In my sacred journey I have to come to the place where I recognize that things are out of control before I will relinquish control and power to Jesus. This past winter I approached an intersection in my van and attempted to stop when the traffic light turned yellow. No such luck! The road was covered with ice and snow. It is a totally helpless feeling to be out of control.

When my life gets out of control it is a sure sign that I have been trying to live on my own power. After awhile that power is drained. It is like turning on the headlights of my car and leaving them on without the engine running. In a short time the energy is drained out.

Power (*dynamis*) in the New Testament is a fascinating phenomenon. It is connected with the gospel. It is connected with prayer. It is connected with faith. It is connected with the resurrection of Jesus. It is connected with the Holy Spirit. In fact, there are very few fundamental concepts and dimensions of our Christian faith and relationship to God and others that are not tainted with and immersed in power.

The "quiet stream underneath" has as its power the center of my soul that has made space for God's power. That center has dethroned self and exalted Jesus Christ as Lord. This is counter to the sources of power identified for us by our culture. The contemporary centers of power lie in the accumulation of wealth, the acquisition of position, the flash of fame, the prowess of athleticism, and the crowning of physical beauty. The soul that makes space for God recognizes these for what they are: modern demons that need exorcised by the power of Jesus Christ.

You may remember the story that Jesus told of the demon that left a man. When he returned he found his former dwelling place swept clean but nothing in its place. He left and came back with seven more demons more powerful and destructive than himself. We cannot challenge the demons of culture we find in our own souls, root them out, and put nothing in their place. The "quiet stream underneath" is the result of allowing God's power to replace my personal demons. I know what it is that keeps me from God's power, and only Divine power can release me from it.

The "quiet stream underneath": this spiritual truth has given me hope in my sacred journey. It is the tranquil, healing process of the Divine presence in my restless, searching soul. It is the occasion of solitude



that enables me to hear God speak. It is the intimate relationship that God initiated in which I can be still and experience God. It is the power of God I feel and see in my own life.

The "quiet stream underneath" is the source of refreshment that slacks my thirst in the desert. When all around my soul gives way, and the sun parches my lips, and the heat melts my resolve, I then find this oasis of my soul. This spiritual water comes from God. I am satisfied when I drink of it. I can then lie down beside the still waters, feel the cool, gentle breeze and know that my world is in the hands of a Sovereign God.

I hope that this concept has challenged your thinking in your own spiritual journey. I want to close by asking again the two questions that penetrate the shell of my own

shallowness and fear and lack of faith, and help me to reexamine where I am:

"Is there a quiet stream underneath the fluctuating affirmations and rejections of my little world?"

"Is there a still point where my life is anchored and from which I can reach out with hope and courage and confidence?"

---

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### Editorial (Continued from page 22)

It is with prayerful hearts that we offer you one of the most important issues of *Integrity* ever published.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your

spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, *and he will do this* (1 Thess. 5:23-24).

J. Bruce Kilmer  
Co-editor

*He who walks in integrity walks securely. Proverbs 10:9*

## And the Light Shines in the Darkness

Only nocturnally  
I see unceiled immensity  
When earth-born shadows have revealed  
The far star's ray.

(Against a darkened sky, a cross-born hope shown bright.)

Ever diurnally  
The near light's bright intensity  
Conceals behind its blue-domed shield  
The star-marked Way.

(O Lord, must present vision veil unbounded sight?)

I'm not a night-eyed cat;  
I, fright-eyed, in life's shadows search for Light  
Beyond my day.  
I'm not a big-eared bat;  
Whose sonar, echoing at night  
Maps out my Way.

(The shadows in an empty tomb at dawn revealed Thy Might!)

But, when in care-dulled ears,  
My time-bound squeaks bounce back doubt-blurred,  
Life sensors, tuned by tears,  
Receive and see the grace-lit, timeless Word.

-GEORGE EWING

---

George Ewing is an English professor at  
Abilene Christian University.



# Carrying Another's Pain To God

DIANE G. H. KILMER

The advantages of television news coverage in connecting distant parts of the world to each other is extremely valuable for Christians, but I tend to avoid the evening news' instant assault on my emotions. I prefer to hear about the events secondhand through newspapers and magazines, than observe scenes in my living room that cause me to sob at the drop of a 60-second news clip. That's why it was unusual one evening in 1978 that I got caught off guard, involved in nursing my baby in the living room when Bruce flipped on the TV. We just caught the end of a news report describing a random attack on a Jewish family by Palestinian terrorists somewhere on the other side of the world. The next Newsweek gave more details.

Palestinian terrorists broke into an apartment, dragged out a father and 2 children, shot and killed them outside the building, and then left. When the violence was over, neighbors rushed into the apartment to find the mother hiding in a closet, holding her baby. It was quickly discovered that, in an effort to protect the baby, the terrified mother had smothered her child. Her entire family was dead.

I cried off and on for months over this tragedy. I identified with this mother in every way an outsider could—with my emotions, my imagination, my prayers. I grieved with her. My mind replayed her shock when she discovered that her baby, too, was dead. I begged God to comfort her, heal her mind, be gentle with her, ease her in the way only he could.

There were messages I wanted to tell this woman: that she must forgive herself for smothering the

baby, that hate for the terrorists harbored forever in her heart would eat her alive, that only God could give her hope and comfort. But I would never see her in this life. I didn't even know her name. So I had to leave it all up to the Lord in my prayers.

Gradually, my thoughts and prayers for the mother became less intense, less often. One day after nearly two years of "identifying" with this woman, she again came to my mind. I started to pray for her when, instead, I felt an overwhelming sense that I didn't need to any more. It seemed like God was somehow impressing upon me the idea that, just as my own imagined pictures of this incident had begun to fade, the woman's pain was also fading. She was healing and finding peace. I believed that God had taken care of her and I felt a strong sense that "all was going well." I thanked him and left the episode behind.

You'll just have to believe me when I tell you that in all that time I still never watched the TV evening news. That's why it had to be more than coincidental that about six months later, the spring or summer of 1981, I got "caught" again in the living room, nursing a new baby, when the evening news came on. To my amazement broadcasters were doing a follow-up story on the mother—were actually interviewing her—and I had never seen her face before! There she was sitting in her small living room in Israel, on a couch next to her new husband, and holding her new nine-month-old baby!! She talked only a little about how she felt about her past, but talked more about the hope and purpose she had for the future, for herself, for her new family

and for Israel.

I wept (of course) for her happiness. I knew for certain that seeing this interview, this update, was a gift from the Father—a little treat he had arranged for me, a surprise gift he had used the television media to give me.

## What Happened Here?

My involvement in this story can be pretty easily interpreted as just another housebound young Christian mother with an obvious hormone imbalance who was a weeping victim of her own over-active imagination. But since God gave me my baby, my house, my hormones, and my imagination, was he possibly using this combination for something more?

A book my mom "happened" to loan to me during this episode offered another possible interpretation of my involvement in the Jewish woman's story: *Rees Howells, Intercessor*, by Norman Grubb. Here was a biography of a Welsh coal miner born in 1879 who submitted to some unusual disciplining by God. He was eventually considered a powerful prayer intercessor in Great Britain and Africa during the first half of the 20th century. Howells experienced numerous incidents of suffering and prayer on behalf of others. Although his experiences were far more intense and serious than my own personal incident, our prayers for the suffering held certain characteristics in common.

Rees Howells' biographer lists three characteristics that commonly appeared in Howells' intense prayer experiences: identification, agony, and authority ("authority" in this context meaning to have gained a level of understanding regarding God's response to the prayer request). One example out of many

describes how Rees Howells felt when he learned of a local village woman, sobbing her heart out because her husband was near death and about to leave her and their ten children.

The effect on Mr. Howells was immediate. The suffering of the woman came on him as if it were his own sister; he went out into a field and wept...It seemed as if the Lord made him enter into her feelings to the point where her sufferings became his own, and her need his responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

Rees Howells was often heard to explain that "once you weep, or the Holy Ghost in you, you are the very one to touch the Throne." He became an intercessor to God on her behalf. During prayer on her behalf, Howells became willing to take financial responsibility for the woman and her ten children, if the husband did not live. Eventually in prayer Howells heard a voice in his mind that said the man "is not to die; he is to live." Howells was convinced he had heard from the Lord because "the stillness that came into that room! It was the stillness that God makes when He is there."<sup>2</sup> The man lived.

The pattern is basically the same for all the examples I've heard and known. (1) Identification with the sufferer is always necessary for this kind of intercession. God individualizes the method for touching each pray-er's heart. (2) Agonizing over the sufferer progresses through varying stages for each situation. Some sort of risk or sacrifice is required of the intercessor, although the degree varies with each opportunity. (3) Conclusion of this intercessory work is denoted by a sense that God has heard and is responding. Sometimes the intercessor will know God's answer, sometimes she or he won't.



## Is This Biblical?

When I read the story of Rees Howells' life, I wondered if the type of intercessory prayer experiences he claimed God led him through could be found in the Bible. A quick perusal of both the Old and New Testaments revealed numerous people of God who identified enough with others to agonizingly take their case before the Lord—and they received answers.

Abraham, deeply concerned over the lives of his relatives, begged God's mercy on Sodom for the few righteous people who might live there. Moses, who murdered an Egyptian out of a sense of identification with his native people, was tempered by God in the desert. A more spiritually mature Moses, still identifying himself with his people, eventually offered himself to God as an atonement for the Israelites who had worshipped the golden calf. God responded to Moses' intercession with an alternate plan. When Daniel learned from Scriptures why Jerusalem had been desolated in his youth, he fasted and prayed to God, confessing sin on behalf of himself and Israel with great intensity, pleading for the return of God's "holy hill." God answered Daniel through his messenger Gabriel.

In the New Testament Jesus, of course, sets the ultimate example of identification with humanity. He, our Creator, agonized over our condition. Knowing the outcome of his own obedience to the cross, Jesus confidently tells his disciples: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Stephen prayerfully interceded on behalf of those who were stoning him to death. In Romans 9 Paul describes the extent he was willing to intercede for fellow Jews, if it would help save them: "I speak the truth in

Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel." Personal, prayerful intercession to God on behalf of others is quite biblical.

## Do We Need This?

Why would a human intercessor on earth be needed today when Jesus, the Perfect and Divine Intercessor, is constantly at the Throne on our behalf? I do not know the whole answer to this legitimate question, but I'll tell you what I have learned so far.

First, none of us can or ever could replace Jesus (who is God) or the work he did for all of us on earth or the work he is doing for us now in heaven. Yet he did teach us that being his disciple could mean dying to self for another in some way; and that believers would accomplish more and greater works on earth through him than he had time to do himself while here. I believe intercessory prayer comes under this prediction.

Second, since Jesus was made perfect through his sufferings, and since we are expected to share in his sufferings, I believe intercessory prayer is one of the ways to share how Jesus feels about the consequences of evil on this earth.

Third, since the Holy Spirit dwells within us, part of the work of the Holy Spirit is to know each one of us well, and to help us pray by interceding to God "with sighs too deep for words," when necessary. The Holy Spirit is also able to connect and sensitize individuals to each other's burdens and pray to God through willing humans, in order to intercede "for the saints according to the will of God"

(Romans 8:27).

Fourth, I have experienced my own moments of suffering when I needed to pray but was too overwhelmed to think or speak. Sometimes the Holy Spirit has remedied those moments of stymied prayer by calling on another to carry my pain for me to the throne of God. At one time or another most Christians play the role of either the sufferer or the intercessor in similar situations.

Another reason God uses Christians as intercessors today is to draw us into a closer kind of fellowship with him, as described in John 14:20: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." Giving ourselves over to opportunities for intercessory prayer expands our relationship with God from simply Giver and "receiver" to something deeper. We become less and less self-focussed and, instead, become more like the Giver. Through intercessory prayer we are drawn into fellowship with the Inner Circle and— together—we see the hurting person from the same viewpoint (the Lord's). Eventually, after the pain has been treated by the Great Healer, we get to rejoice together with God and the angels over the good brought out of the suffering.

The shelves of your local Bible bookstore bear evidence that many in the contemporary church have benefitted from this kind of "burden-bearing" intercession. Recorded incidents in Rees Howells' biography are remarkable and challenging. Richard J. Foster's new book on prayer includes a whole chapter which cites several occasions when intercessory prayer preceded emotional and spiritual healing in the lives of those for whom the prayers were offered. Andrew Murray articulately teaches this type of prayer in his book *The Ministry of*

*Intercessory Prayer*. Although I have spoken to only a handful of individuals within the Stone-Campbell movement who have participated in this kind of praying, I suspect the Lord works through many others who have quietly turned themselves over to this kind of prayer work. Over the last decade further opportunities have come my way (though less dramatic than the first) to intercede in this way. Intercessory prayer on behalf of those who are suffering appears to be an important dynamic in God's overall application of redemption.

## Hurting for Others

In his new book *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, Richard J. Foster devotes a whole chapter to this "burden-bearing" kind of intercessory prayer. He labels it the Prayer of Suffering, and his explanation offers insight into its usefulness:

But before you think I am leading you into some kind of strange religious masochism, let's back up a bit and see if we can get a clearer picture on all this. I am talking about a form of suffering, to be sure, but it is redemptive suffering. We are all acquainted with the unredemptive negative variety—suffering that is utterly cruel and completely meaningless. This we must fight against with all our might, for it is always opposed to life in the kingdom of God.

But there is a kind of suffering that has purpose and meaning. It is the kind that enriches the lives of others and brings healing to the world. On a purely human level we understand this instinctively with regard to our children. We are glad to deprive ourselves of many things so that they may have a better chance at life.

It is hard for us to grasp the idea



of redemptive suffering because our whole culture mitigates against any form of discomfort or inconvenience. It is the same reason we find it difficult to reconcile Jesus' words about bearing our cross with his promise of life abundant. But the entire life of Jesus shows us the compatibility of grace and suffering.

In redemptive suffering we stand with people in their sin and in their sorrow. There can be no sterile, arm's-length purity. Their suffering is messy business, and we must be prepared to step smack into the middle of the mess. We are "crucified" not just *for* others, but *with* others. We pray in suffering, and, as we do, we are changed. Together we stand under the cross.

Joy, not misery, is the compelling energy behind redemptive suffering. It is not that we love pain or are trying to find ways to be martyrs. God is using us for the greater good of all. This is why we today can resonate with Peter's words, "Rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed" (1 Pet.4:13).

I must add one small counsel...We need not continue shouldering the burdens of others, but rather we release them into the arms of the Father. Our task in reality is a small one: to hold the agony of others just long enough for them to let go of it for themselves. Then together we can give all things over to God.<sup>3</sup>

Foster claims that the work of intercessory prayer is used to gain God's ends of redemption and healing. No wonder our minister recently preached that "prayer is the tool that God uses to shape history!"

## Can We Say No?

It would be normal to hesitate before submitting to a kind of praying that risks emotional involvement and personal sacrifice. What if God asks more than we think we can give? Rees Howells taught that there is a law of intercession which insists that we can intercede for others only as far as we have been tested and proved willing to do a thing ourselves. For example, one day a dear Christian friend of mine did tell God "no." She believed that the Holy Spirit was urging her to pray for a marriage in her community that was about to dissolve. Having interceded in prayer on behalf of others before, this woman knew that her own shaky marriage would be examined as part of the "identification" process. In prayer she protested to God, insisting that she just wasn't willing to experience the pain. Immediately the urgent pressure to pray for the couple left her. The couple eventually divorced. Since then my friend and I have sometimes wondered "what if...?" She also wondered if the Spirit would ever ask her to intercede in prayer again. The Spirit did two years later. She again sensed the undeniable "urging from within" to pray intensely for another situation, and she willingly accepted the task.

## Why Make Distinctions?

Since Paul makes it clear that a basic duty of every Christian life is to "pray without ceasing," "in everything...present your requests to God," why bother defining categories within the practice of prayer? Actually, most Christians have already experienced the distinct difference in prayer between "tossing a quick one up to heaven" and tearfully praying for the health or safety of a loved one. By listening to

the stories of intercessors from Bible times to the present, we learn that prayer has many more dimensions than any one of us has experienced. This new spiritual knowledge could open our minds and hearts to new opportunities in which Christ is just waiting to include us. Perhaps we'll more easily recognize the urges of the Spirit and be more willing to take the risk of getting involved through suffering prayer.

Is the current church more likely to picture their preacher on his knees in agony over lost souls and hurting members, than to picture themselves doing the same thing? Perhaps most of us will not become a Daniel or a Paul or a Rees Howells, but we *could* open ourselves up to God for something more. He may only ask us to sacrifice a few hours' sleep or a few minutes of tears. Or, he may put into our mind one simple action that, when obediently carried out, makes all the difference in someone else's suffering.

I don't think we can really completely understand why allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us through the

## Readers' Response

We like the paper and are glad the writers do not have to see everything just alike before they are allowed to have their articles in the paper.

Home & Elva Matson  
Jefferson, Ore.

Please add us and a friend to your subscription list. We have been reading *Restoration Review* for the last few years. We enjoyed reading a

suffering intercession process makes a difference at the throne of God. I do know that while we Christians are on earth we are involved in a spiritual war that is also beyond our complete understanding. I do believe that spiritual battles can be won through intercessory prayer and that God will receive the glory. Someday we will *understand completely and see The Glory!*

## Endnotes

1. Norman Grubb, *Rees Howells: Intercessor*. (Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: Christian Literature Crusade, 1980), p.92.
2. Grubb, p.93.
3. Richard J. Foster, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. (Harper, San Francisco, 1992), pp.281, 219, 224.

Diane Kilmer grew up in the a capella Churches of Christ, and attended Michigan Christian Jr. College and Abilene Christian University. She has served on the *Integrity* Board for over ten years and is also occupied with her roles as business copywriter, home manager, and church teen drama sponsor.

diversity of writers and opinions that is no longer allowed in most church periodicals. Campbell allowed this kind of forum in the *Millennial Harbinger* and the Restoration churches grew in understanding and tolerance. When we resist hearing or reading anything but the same things we tend to get staler and our concepts narrower.

Bruce and Nina Foster  
Ulysses, KS



I would like to thank all of you who are instrumental in bringing to us in each issue the truth of the Word and the uplifting messages. All that I can say is, "Keep up the good work and keep sending us the Good Word." May God bless you all in your glorious efforts.

Jim Mills  
Lansing, MI

I have once again read the reprint of the article "Freedom for Men and Women" which is in the Sept./Oct. 1992 issue. I am appalled that once again you have decided to stoke the fires that are causing a great division within not only the churches of Christ but many churches throughout the world including the Roman Catholics and Episcopalians.

Why can't we take all scripture literally and forget tagging our "it really means" to it? I am a Christian woman who owes my first allegiance to God and Christ, second to my husband, who is the head of my household, and then to the service of others. I find many things to be busy doing without trying to "usurp" the authority of man and take over positions that scripturally and traditionally belong to him.

Women have not only been told what *not* to do, they have been given direct instructions as to what they *should* be doing...i.e. "teaching the younger women how to be keepers at home, etc." Perhaps if much of our time had been directed at instructing our younger women instead of worrying about whether or not it was okay for a woman to read or preach in worship, serve as elders, deacons, etc. our young women and men would be better prepared to serve and follow the Lord today.

We have problems within our own congregation regarding the role of women and each time an article like

this appears it rears its ugly head again. Let's let women be women and men be men and we can still all be "one in Christ Jesus."

Norma Zelnik  
Columbus, Ohio

Editor's (JBK) Note:

I keep writing about "women's role in the church" because I think that it is a vitally important issue that the church must face, if it is to be relevant today, and if it is to become the church that God intended. The "women's issue" is similar to the "Gentile" issue where Paul had to oppose Peter to his face for not eating with the Gentiles (Gal. 2:11). I believe this so strongly that I will have to continue to "stoke to fires," praying that someday we will recognize that "ugly head" for what it is: our own fears and prejudice.

Darrell Foltz recently sent us a copy of a booklet, *The Christian Woman May Pray in the Public Worship Assembly*, which he wrote more than 20 years ago. I think that some of you who believe that I go too far on what women can do in the church, but who also believe that the church does not go far enough, may find this booklet helpful. Here is a quote from it:

Since the "Women's Lib" movement appeared in our society, religious people have become afflicted with all sorts of phobias by the word "Authority." Since a woman is not to "usurp authority" or have dominion over a man, many things that have not one shred of "authority" have suddenly become battlegrounds of contention. We mistakenly use the word "authority" in the SAME way that it is used in the governments of men. When James and John wanted positions of authority, they were rebuked severely by Jesus.

"Not so shall it be among you," was the words of our Master. In the church we are not to have places of "authority" but only places of SERVICE (Matt. 20:26).

Since we have never learned that lesson, we elevate minute acts of service into a place of authority. For example, I have led songs since I was a young boy. No one ever told me that a song leader was a place of "authority." But since "Women's Lib" we are told that if a woman led a song she is usurping authority over a man. Somewhere along the line we have elevated the song leader into an OFFICE of the Song Leader. No longer is it a service rendered, but a "position held." It shouldn't be too long before a "Papal Bull" will be published in some of our papers commanding all men to sing soprano and all women to sing bass. We certainly don't want to let the ladies sin by usurping authority over us. Since soprano is the "leading part" this will have to be changed.

If a four year old boy leads a song, does he have "authority" over the congregation? But what about a four year old girl? Mrs. Tolbert Fanning led songs in the meetings where her

husband preached, as did other godly women in the early history of the Restoration Movement. Now such is denounced as sinful. They RIGHTLY thought in terms of "SERVICE." We WRONGLY think in terms of "AUTHORITY."

Does the newly baptized boy who passes the Communion tray have a place of "authority" or is it an act of service? What if a newly baptized girl should pass the tray? If the girl usurps authority by passing the tray, does the woman in the seat beside you usurp authority when she passes the Communion to the man next to her? We will soon resort to seating the women on one side of the building, and the men on the other side--as was done not too many years ago.

Can anyone explain how a woman can read a few verses of scripture in class and not usurp authority over a man, but if the same woman reads a paragraph to the same group of people a few minutes later, she is exercising dominion over the man?

You may obtain a copy of this booklet by writing and sending \$1.50 to Darrell Foltz, Box 182, Hoxie, KS 67740.

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