

Blessed Guilt

(A Universal Conversion Story)

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**“If we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and just,
and will forgive our sins
and cleanse us
from all unrighteousness.”**

1Jn.1:8-9

Preface

Here is the story of a man on the way of conversion. Though vaguely autobiographical, it is not intended to portray the particulars of any life but to address the journey all souls undergo in moving from the ways of the world – which lead to destruction – to the path of salvation wrought in Christ’s blood.

The key step on this journey (to which one must continually return) is life-giving repentance: one must recognize one’s own complicity in the crucifixion of Jesus, and turn to Him for forgiveness. The Son of God has come to save all men from sin, but we cannot find His cleansing blood upon our souls if we fail to see first His blood upon our hands. Only in this way does our guilt become blessed.

I pray His blood upon you, my brother, my sister...

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“His Blood be upon us...”

Mt. 27:25

I. THE MAN

1. The Man

There is a man walking on the face of the earth. Where he is walking or when he is walking is not important. That he is walking at all is not important; he may be sitting or kneeling or lying down or standing still – he may even be paralyzed, I suppose. What is important is that he is on the face of the earth. He may be a woman or a man, may be flying in an airplane (or a spaceship) or swimming in the sea... what matters is that he is human. Yes, he is a human being.

This man walking on the face of the earth is very much like you, very much like me. He is made in the image and likeness of God as are all human beings. He is a creature of great dignity, of great worth – a treasure of divine love called to union with Him who made him. (Imagine that.) The breath of God is in his nostrils.

But this man who is walking on the face of the earth finds himself lost, and a little confused as to who he is or where he has come from. Why is he here walking on the face of the earth? What is his purpose? Has he any reason for living?

It is a good question he asks himself, for it shows he is called to a higher realm – it shows he is a human being after all.

But that he has to ask the question shows something else: it shows he has somehow lost his way, somehow separated himself from this higher realm to which he is called, for which he was born. And so, as he walks on the face of the earth, he is not whole, he is not entirely himself... and he finds himself rather alone.

There are others walking on the face of the earth much like him, but he does not seem to know them; they seem somehow strange. They are indeed much like him.

And that is why this could be any man (or woman), for all find themselves a little lost and confused... and alone, looking to come to their senses again.

2. To His Senses

One day the man woke up and said to himself: "I must find my way home. There must be a way. Why should I be so empty and alone in this foreign place? It was not always so with me, was it?"

"There was a time when I was whole, when I was who I am.... Was it when I was a child? There is certainly still innocence in this world; there must certainly still be innocence in me. What I had once is not gone forever. There is yet a child inside."

And so the young man picked up his things and left that land of exile, setting out to return to his homeland, which was a far distance away. He had traveled many years to the place he found himself now... but the first stop on his journey home he could see ahead.

3. The First Stop

The first stop he made along the way was a simple house. A few people welcomed him and so he joined them as they prayed. When he knelt on the floor, the roof seemed to fly off the building – or at least an opening of light was made – and so he was encouraged that he was going the right way. And the wind and the rain that filled the night did nothing to dissuade him.

He could not stay at that house, however, for it was not the home he sought; and so he set out the next day to continue his journey. Though this experience strengthened him greatly, his resolve would not remain – soon enough he would find himself in very strange places again. For, as was said, he had gone a long way misled, and so had at least as long to travel back again to escape his sin.

4. Sin

What is it the man had to overcome? you may be asking yourself, though to some it is likely obvious. To what place had he traveled and what is the cause of his confusion? The answer may be expressed in a simple word: sin. It is a word that has become foreign to us today (and so how can we see our way from it?), but it is for this reason no less present or prevalent than it was yesterday.

Sin. What does it mean? What is it? It is a certain deformity of the soul, one which indeed makes us no longer whole – for it leaves a gaping hole in our heart. Why a gaping hole? Because love itself is taken from us, the love of God, the love that is God, as we turn our hearts away from His love. What we embrace instead makes that gaping hole.

And so you see how it can be very difficult to heal that hole, to repair that wound, especially if it has grown over time.... But the man did not give up his quest, though he continued to misstep.

5. Misstep

It is easy to be misguided in this world of sin, and some allow themselves to be easily misguided. Some know no better, so awash are they in the false images with no one to see them through... while others do not seem to care how far afield they go. Most find themselves somewhere between ignorance and malice, these two evils ever working together to lead the soul astray. But whatever causes our misstep, we must come to recognize it for what it is, or we will never overcome our sin.

The man soon found himself back among friends like those with whom he'd sinned before. He tried as he could to keep himself pure, but there was an unyielding movement in his heart toward what he had previously known. And finding ready excuse for his sin, pretending to commit it in a more reasonable fashion... in its midst he found himself again. There were certain things he had changed – though to these, too, he would return again – but, really, his sin was deeper now than it had been.

Ignorance played upon the man, blinding him to the seriousness of his sin, as with those around him he joined in what seemed appropriate for the time and circumstances. But it is outside time and circumstance the LORD calls us.

6. Outside Time

What does it mean to be outside time, to be beyond this world and all the things on the face of the earth? How can feet that walk here, walk there? Are they not meant for this ground alone?

Yes, our feet walk upon this earth, upon this grass, upon this dirt... but do you not know that our souls walk as well? And these must be transported beyond the limits of this flesh to the heavenly plane. It is there they walk most naturally, for they are immortal as the God who made them, who placed His image upon them.

And so, do not fear or scoff when I say to you that YHWH calls you outside time, for it is to more than a grave He calls you – death in Him brings one to eternal life.

And this is what the young man had in his heart now; of this he could not but think. There was a Word welling up inside his soul, calling him to what is beyond time (and words). And so the circumstances he would soon be able to overcome.

7. The Word

The Word of God is a wellspring rising from the depths of the spirit. The man could sense its light, could not deny its truth... and it convicted him. When he read a page of Scripture, when the priest held aloft the Blood of Christ, he felt the Spirit pour over him, he felt the sword pierce his darkened soul. And he could not speak, could not utter a word.

He could not argue against what was so evident, so obvious to him: the Son of God has walked this earth. With feet like our own He trod the grass; with a tongue like our own He spoke. And O how piercing is His Word!

One could call the rocks to fall upon oneself, I suppose, in an effort to hide from what is everywhere... but this foolishness would have no effect, could never be fruitful. There is nowhere to hide from the Word of God.

Though the man managed to avert his face from what he saw, from what was revealed to him; though he did somehow tend to forget, or at least fail to remember well what he knew... it stayed with him, and urged him forward.

8. Forward

And so a greater conversion approached. The arm of the LORD fell upon him with distinct and repeated force, for his good. His eyes were opened more clearly to the cavernous depths of his sin, and so a time came when he would not return again to his vomit, as does the dog in its ignorance and foolishness. Though ignorance did not completely disappear, it did dissipate considerably... and decidedly.

Now the home to which he came was like the one of his innocence. Though rooted still to this earth, it was enough to heal his wounds by tears shed over a course of time.

His consciousness was raised now, and of his newfound vision he began to write and speak, seeking to draw others to the blessings wrought within his soul. A time of purity and light was granted him, and he could breathe again.

9. Breathe

How wonderful is this light, how marvelous this Breath of God upon our spirits! What a blessing! In it is freedom from sin and attachment to sin that, indeed, we might breathe freely. O that all men might be so cleansed and come to this place the LORD draws them! (O LORD, have mercy on all souls!)

The man knew how truly blessed he was, from what terrors he had been saved and to what beauty he had now come. He asked for nothing else but the tears of repentance that brought him to this place of peace. And he desired never to leave.

For the LORD now shared with him even His NAME. Though he would not have been able to articulate such a gift at the time, in the silent reverence he had for God and all things good, he could hear his Creator speaking. Without words he seemed to understand all things. Here he approached the rich depths of God breathing in his soul, he saw that, yes, he was made in His image... and that His image was being restored.

Breathe upon us, O Breath of God, and make our souls anew.

10. Made New

We were deformed, but now we are reformed by the blood of Christ, which makes all things new, which makes all things shine with the glorious light of Heaven. Only a drop of that blood does it take to renew the whole world, to pour the mercy of God upon our souls.

And what mercy beat in the man's heart now! How he loved as he was loved. Knowing how deeply he had been forgiven by the love of God, he was unable to condemn any soul; he could only desire others' salvation, could only pray for their knowing the blood of Christ. How he wished all would be made new!

For him it was so. He could see the blessed unity of all people and things under the one God of Heaven and earth. All were his brothers and sisters and mothers; all breathed with the life of the Most High God. Everywhere he looked and everything he saw was beautiful to behold. Even the dirt on the streets and the fumes from the cars revealed to his heart the glory of a God who loves all and would hold all in His arms and make it new.

The man found himself on a train whose every stop reflected paradise.

11. The Train

There is a train of memory, a train of experience upon which we travel through this life hearing and seeing and knowing what is around us, and within us. We have bodies and our senses, which are a gift from God and which make us human, of the earth. But we move. We move through this life taking in the images, images both simple and complicated... images in which we can lose ourselves if we are not careful, if we do not remain pure in the sight of God.

We are the image of God, and the world reflects His image as well; but if the image of God in ourselves we deform, so will the world around us become troublesome – in it we might indeed lose our souls.

Some are overburdened by the grinding of the wheels or the repetition of the paths we travel... but those enlightened by the Spirit see all things new each day, though they may have seen them much the same for many days before.

Single-hearted let us be in seeking that which is beyond our human vision, that which is beyond the clacking beneath our feet as we travel through this life.

12. Single-Hearted

Single-hearted the man found himself now, devoting his days to service of the LORD, to the doing of His work. From his possessions he separated himself and for a time wore but a single set of clothes. What he needed not, he sold, and gave the money away. What was required for his work he kept, and no more.

And so, in great freedom he walked, a sense of the kingdom of Heaven with him at all times. His every breath was a prayer, for now he was in remembrance of YHWH and the grace that was upon him. He radiated a simple joy and would not be taken from it.

Blessed is the soul who sets his heart on God, and so, blessed was the man by the One who made him. As a child, indeed, he became, and surrounded himself with children and with their simple play. Refreshed was he by innocence and a certain love of what was good.

How long such blessing would last he could not say, but for the days and months and years at hand he was happy to be close to God. And he did not expect it to end.

13. Close to God

To be close to God is all any soul could want, all any soul should long for; for in this nearness to the divine LORD and Maker of all things, what could be lacking? And so, nothing was lacking for the man as he held Jesus close at heart.

Often he spoke with Him; really, at all times praying. The conversation came easy for the man, and his Savior readily answered. In those times Jesus seemed to go away, he knew He would be back again, and soon, for he realized He was always there – closer to the man than he was to himself.

The LORD never leaves us, always lives in the most intimate part of ourselves; nearer than our arms, closer than our heartbeat, with every breath He is with us... but are we with ourselves? Distraction is a facile thing for us humans, but God is never distracted from His love for us. If only we would ever love Him!

Now the man loved the LORD. Yes, now his heart was set upon Him. He held Jesus in his arms and would not let Him go.

14. Arms

We are given arms to reach out for what we need and desire. Some look upon the world around themselves and stretch out their arms to its gold, to its riches and pleasures, and become lost therein, as the man had done. Others see the futility of setting one's heart and work on these vain things, things that pass with the earth, and so reach their arms out to what matters, to what lasts... to the LORD and eternal life.

Each has his arms (even if he is limbless). Each is given means to achieve what he wills, and one may take what he is desirous of. But there are consequences. If one holds on to lifeless things, one becomes as lifeless as they; if one seeks the things of Heaven, these shall be his. But one cannot hold both God and the world's riches in one's arms – our desire is always for one or the other.

YHWH would have us reach out to Him, to call upon His NAME, to honor His evident and surpassing glory by genuine worship of His eternal presence... but our arms are our own, and they reach out for what we will.

15. Will

Do you not know that you are a reflection of the Being who made you? He it is Who Is – “I AM” is His NAME. And do you not know that He Who Is does What He Will Do? And so, if you are given life by Him, if you are made in His image, you will be like Him; namely, you are given a free will.

Though your will is not perfect as His (although it may become more nearly so if you give it to Him – in surrender to YHWH we find our freedom, for indeed it is He who is truly free), yet you have a will. And what will you do with it, my friend?

The man’s will was now in union with the will of God – it had, in effect, become one with His will. He did not care what became of him or what people thought of what he said or did; his only concern was to go as the LORD led him.

And in these initial days He led him well, or we should say the man listened well and readily went as led. He did not fear to step out in faith, nor did he hesitate to speak with any soul of the love of God and His Gospel. He gave himself over freely to the LORD’s work, and there he found his freedom.

16. Freedom

Truly, freedom is found only in God and not in the things of this earth. Whatever we do must be done for God and then we will be free. If done for any other reason, we will become slaves, slaves to that which is below ourselves. We are called to be as God and in anything less we will be as chained.

But once we are free, how wonderful that freedom is! Once we find ourselves in God, we become as He is – and what could be more marvelous than this? Would you serve the created things rather than the Creator of those things? Would you descend to the depths of emptiness rather than rise to fullness of life? No man with reason or sense would desire less than what is best, what is good and perfect, would he? So, if freedom is your goal, know that you will not find it except in union with the LORD. Freely give yourself to Him and you may fly unto Heaven.

As on wings of a dove the man now flew, soaring above all that held him to this earth. He had no sin upon his soul he was not ready to confess; Jesus had indeed set him free by His blood.

17. By His Blood

Just a drop of the Son's blood fell upon the man, but see what it wrought in his soul! It brought him from the depths of despair, from the hopeless mire of this world's sinful desires and blind corruption, to a renewed vision blessed by a holy innocence. It had indeed cleansed him and made him a new creation. And he would not have left it for all the world.

As he knelt with Jesus' sacrificial blood pouring upon him (in this single drop), as forgiveness bled into the center of his spirit... as he realized fully the abyss of his sin, that indeed it was he who had pierced the side of this innocent Lamb, who had pressed a thorn into His brow by the pride he held so dearly that it seemed from it he could never be separated – as newness of life was upon him now and he tasted the love of the LORD and His infinite mercy, so the man vowed never to return to the vomit he had spit up but to dwell ever childlike in God's presence. He found it was not so easy, however. He found a long road yet lay ahead.

II. THE ROAD

1. The Road

The road is long. This is what the man soon realized. We do not come immediately to Heaven; we do not at once receive our eternal reward. The road is long.

The road is long and we must persevere. Sometimes it can seem unending, sometimes unbearable. But bearing our cross with Christ, all becomes possible, and even light, as even in dark times we find a certain joy.

There are indeed difficult hours on the road to God – the way is not broad and easy but narrow and trying. One might wonder why it need be so, why we cannot come in a moment to YHWH and His eternal glory... but one should ask oneself if he is truly ready for such a blessing. And if one says 'yes', he could not be more unprepared.

The LORD is patient with us, with our wayward hearts. He knows how lost we are and unable to receive His graces – He knows of the sin that still clings to our souls, though we can't see it.

And so even the darkness we choose He uses to purify our spirits, to make them ready, that we might not die when we gaze on His glorious face.

2. The Darkness

In the world there is always darkness; as long as we are here, we cannot escape it. But we can overcome it – by the blood of Christ we can always stand strong.

And the darkness the LORD allows can indeed serve to purify us; it can be turned to a benefit for our souls. For we must see that we are always imperfect and in need of salvation, in need of the blood of Jesus, if we are to grow in His grace and mercy.

But sometimes we are weak or distracted, or even blind, and the darkness defeats us. Sometimes we fail to stand strong in the light. Sometimes by ignorance, sometimes by foolishness, sometimes we give in to our selfish desires.

The man struggled along the road to remain with the LORD. The world attacked and he would waver in his defense. But at these times when God left him alone to struggle in the night, he retreated to his hidden room and took refuge in Jesus' promise to return. And often he would emerge stronger than before.

3. The Room

There is a room to which the LORD calls us, that there we might find comfort and renewal in His presence. And this room is prayer, prayer in the heart of one's soul. This room is prayer within.

Deep within us the Spirit rests and remains. Deep within us is YHWH's holy presence. There we should sit, there we should rest ourselves and listen to His voice. He is with us and speaks to us, but we must become familiar with Him in this room.

The devil would break into this room and distract us from seeking the LORD and His graces upon our soul. The devil indeed began to attack the man with greater frequency, and greater intensity. And gradually grace receded. Though it did not die, how weak it would at times become.

And soon the man found himself in sin again, wondering how he had come to such a place, how he could have so lost his way.... Outside the room the devil had coaxed him, little by little over time. And when would he return again?

4. Return

Return to sin and repetition thereof becomes such a part of the human condition. Original sin is washed away in Baptism, but still its mark remains in an inclination toward that which would harm us. We do in a sense still remain blind, and will be so until we gaze on the face of God.

And so, how easily excuses come; how readily we fall into the ways of the world, thinking even good of them. Our eyes do not see the way we are walking and our hearts allow themselves to be fooled... and so we return to paths we thought we'd left behind. And again, and again.

It should not be so. As soon as we find ourselves slipping away, we should call out to the LORD and seek healing in His Church. But who is the mature soul who can remember ever his sinful nature and so avoid its evil grip? Who is he that relies entirely on God for all he needs and wants and possesses? And so, is it any wonder we sin again? Though the sin become less serious and though we commit it with less conviction, still we can indeed find ourselves in a place of the devil's making, even after our conversion.

5. Conversion

O how long conversion can sometimes take! How it comes in stages to most souls. Some may all at once change themselves from evil to good, as has Paul... but how lacking in such absolute conviction most of us find ourselves.

And so it was with the man. He had changed, certainly, and that change would be permanent. It had come to him bit by bit over several years in dramatic moments that pushed him further forward, and now there was a fullness to it. But further forward he certainly needed to go... and yet backward at times he fell.

When will our conversion be complete? Sometimes we think we are there when we are in fact furthest from it; and other times we seem so far away even as we draw near. It is in the LORD's hands. And into the LORD's hands we must commit our lives.

There were still times ahead when the man would take a step closer to his goal, when his conversion would deepen and the graces within him grow; for he still had sin to be rooted out, and he prayed his eyes would be opened to see this was so.

6. Eyes Open

So often our eyes are closed. And the man's had been closed for some time. He had entered a house into which he should never have stepped, and now was making his home there. Fooled by glimmers of truth and his own sensual pleasure, he gave himself over to a sinful state, and now it seemed as if he were trapped.

As the walls closed in he saw no way out; try as he might his efforts bore no fruit, but only made the situation worse. For we cannot make that which is wrong right, nor can we change another's heart. Our eyes must open to the truth, and this we must embrace as we step out in faith.

Finally the moment came when the man was blessed to find the light of the Holy Spirit fall upon his darkened mind... and his eyes did open. And conviction was wrought in his soul that in the place he was he could not stay. And so, deliberately and without wavering, he made his way to freedom; and his escape filled him with joy and a closeness to the LORD. To that place he would not return again.

7. Again

Again and again we fall, but again and again we must rise up, seek forgiveness, and continue on the road to God. We are never completely free of sin in this life – though it shall be so in Heaven – and so, always we must confront ourselves and admit our weakness and our failure to live as we are called. It is doing this we grow.

Here we see the blessed guilt at work. Recognizing our sin and our guilt therein, we turn to Jesus, and He comes quickly to cleanse us in His blood. If we do not acknowledge our sin, if we are not repentant, He cannot come to us – He would have no purpose. For by saying we are sinless, we are saying we have no need of Him. He has come precisely to save us from our sins, and so if we have no need of forgiveness, what need have we of Him?

We must know that we never lose our need for Him; as long as we walk upon this earth, we have need for His blood, great need of His redemption. And it is always there for us, as a gift that may be opened anytime to increase our holiness and bring us closer to union with God... which is our goal in life.

8. Goal

Union with the LORD, entering into His glory... this desire was upon the heart of the man – it was his goal. But how little he seemed to know of the way to get there; how poorly he seemed to understand the teaching of Christ and His blessed life. For had he not found himself in serious sin again? Was he not still blind to so many things? Had he not even questioned the ministers the LORD ordained for his guidance and protection? He could no longer trust himself to find his goal. Could he not get lost once more?

But this place the man found himself now, this distrust of himself he began to feel, was an important step on his journey – he would never reach his destination without it. For truly, by ourselves we will ever be lost; by ourselves we cannot make our way to God. It is in Him we must trust: only by His grace do we come into His presence.

And so, if your goal is the LORD, know that the means to get there is not your will or your thoughts, but your giving these to Him whom you seek.

9. Seek

Do you seek Him? Do you seek truth, do you seek love? Do you seek a heart purified of all lies and corruption and standing in clear light? Do you mourn the injustice and suffering imposed by sin on the weak and the innocent? Do you wish to console the widows and the orphans and all the poor souls who hunger in the sand? If you seek true love, then set aside your selfishness, your thirst for pleasure and wealth and prestige, and give yourself to God. Only in Him will you find what you seek, for He Himself is truth and love.

So often we seek what we think is love in the wrong places with the wrong people doing the wrong things. And so we find not truth but deception, deceived by those who are themselves deceived. O how easily we are deceived! But however much the man found himself led astray to fruitless toil, to vain pursuits, he kept searching. For his heart was set on finding the truth; the only refuge he knew in this world was love. And he realized in his heart that God is love, and apart from Him the rest is nothing.

10. Nothing

What a mass of nothing this world indeed is! And man through this world's lens is but the quintessence of dust. The world is empty and all the things in it but vanity... except they be blessed by the Spirit of God and remain in His goodness. But all that is not of the LORD is nothing.

This is what sin is and what sin does, this nothingness. This is what sin makes of God's good Creation. And this nothingness ever calls to us – it ever knocked on the door of the man's heart seeking entrance. This nothingness can be so pervasive that one does not know it from good, so blind we can indeed become.

The knock on the door the man managed to repel – he would not open to it of his own free will. But still. Still it was there, though he felt it not. Ever it sought to enter his house.... He would call it what it is when he recognized its ugly face, but of it he was not free.

The nothingness must be overcome, must be filled by the everythingness of the LORD, by His holy presence. There cannot be left space for the devil to move, or he will find entry.

11. Entry

How is it the devil finds entry if we do not will it so? He cannot take up residence within us without our approval; if we do not allow him, he cannot come in.... But he has minions that work below the radar, beneath our recognition; and so sometimes we fall, or at least stumble, on the obstacles they throw across our path.

But if we cast him and his works from us, they must leave. If we call on the NAME of the LORD, He is always faithful – He ever saves us from harm. But forgetfulness is a terrible enemy as well. For though the LORD rescued the man dozens of times, though every time he prayed to God he found His protection... yet when the next trial or temptation came, he would seem to forget what had gone before, and hesitate to call out once more.

Whence this doubt of what we know well? Why do we not remember that YHWH is all-powerful and all-faithful and all-loving? Why must it be proven to us repeatedly that He answers our sincere prayers? Is there something in us still desirous of the devil's entry, or is our mind just fooled by the distractions he employs?

12. Distractions

Distractions. Could there be more distractions than infect the world today? In the world the man inhabited, he found himself utterly surrounded by such distractions. Everywhere he turned was some motion or sign to capture his eye and call him to enter there. Though the distractions themselves are not evil, when one gives oneself over to them, failing of restraint or perspective, they do become a source of sin – and their bonds are not easily broken.

Distractions and addictions and other misplacements of the man's desire, of his love, had their way when he forgot the LORD His God. Though they called him to such forgetfulness, they could have been conquered, with but a word. But he found himself distracted. How we can fall off the rails when our hearts are not set on God!

The life of man is never a void, and it never stands still. Every empty space will be filled by something, and we are always going somewhere in this world. Is our motion toward Heaven, are we filling our hearts and minds with the things of God, or are we bound to this earthly plane?

13. Bound

There are chains as real as metal ones that bind us and keep us from looking on the face of God. Sin keeps us far from Him, and our mortal bodies themselves attach us to this earth and hinder perfect union with the LORD – such is reserved for the blessed in Heaven.

But these bonds can be loosened and we can be given glimpses of what is to come. Though our longing will only be completely fulfilled in the kingdom to come, here indeed YHWH allows His holy ones to see His back, as it were, to look briefly upon that which will be theirs forever one day.

Just as we can loosen, and even cut, the bonds of sin – these we may be made free of even here – so by the grace of God we can begin to know His presence in our midst, apart from the weight of the mortal flesh. And this the man was blessed to sense within his grasp.

In his prayer and in his silence, in the song he sang for the LORD, he would hear His transcendent voice speaking, and find himself bathed in its light. Freedom from the bonds of sin he'd found, and now God lifted him up to look upon His kingdom... and so, what marvelous awe was often with him.

14. Awe

Our LORD is awesome; His wonders are beyond expression. The human tongue cannot speak of His transcendent glory – but an intimation of it we receive.

The NAME of the LORD is beyond words, beyond human understanding. But His NAME He gives us through His prophet Moses. And in His Son that NAME is fulfilled.

The NAME of the LORD the man began to know; a certain understanding of its significance was given to him when he asked of it as a child. In his innocence its pronunciation was put upon his lips by the Spirit of God.

What can one say of the pronunciation of the LORD's NAME: "YHWH"? How can it be described? How can one put silence into words? Man cannot, but God does so.

He spoke His transcendent NAME to Moses to be remembered through all generations, and though in time it was forgotten, should not its coming in the flesh bring us to remembrance today? Should not all Christians be filled with the awesome wonder that is the NAME of the LORD? Can they call themselves Christ's disciples if they do not know God's NAME?

15. God's NAME

YHWH. This is God's NAME. This is the NAME of the LORD. Jesus called Himself by this NAME when He said, "I AM", for He Himself is God, one with the Father in Heaven.

The Tetragrammaton, the four-letter NAME spoken to Moses on Mount Horeb at the burning bush.... The LORD's servant asked for His NAME, and He answered graciously. What a grace it is! What could be more marvelous than to know God's NAME? Only to have Him present with us.

Now Jesus stands before us. Now He has come to us and made the Father known. Now He even gives Himself to us in Holy Communion. But do we know the NAME He shares with the One who sent Him (and with the Spirit)? If not, do we really know Him whom we receive?

YHWH. Four Hebrew letters whose pronunciation silences the tongue and leaves one in a state of pure wonder. Here is the very Breath of God spoken to our hearts. Here is surpassing glory coming even to our life.

Do not forget what the LORD has revealed. Do not fail to speak His silent NAME.

16. Speak

Speak the NAME of the LORD, remember it always. He places it in your heart and upon your tongue – it is never far from you. It is His love.

The man would speak the NAME of God, he would sit in silence and wonder at the surpassing glory of YHWH and the blessing of being as His child, and in Him he would find nourishment. He knew that the Most High had given him a special grace to know His presence so intimately... but often he would forget.

It is not hard to forget when those around you do not remember, when no one seems to understand what you understand and would share with them. The world goes on in its frantic pace with its own interests and desires, speaking of things other than God, and so one easily finds oneself engaged in this conversation, and even adopting the world's addictions as one's own.

How vigilant one needs to be, how much grace is necessary to keep one's heart and eyes and tongue to what matters. For very quickly the addictions come and make their home even in the gentlest soul.

17. Addictions

Of what do you think and speak? What is your mind and heart set upon? What do you desire and how do you express this desire...? Principally in our words we show what is in our mind, and so we must be careful what we become addicted to.

The man became more and more conscious of the words he spoke and especially the thoughts that were always being spoken inside himself. He realized how these revealed what was in his heart, and so who he was, really. And he did his best to speak of God in all things, and to recognize when he was not successful, when he was becoming addicted to other things.

Study of the Bible, spiritual reading, contemplation of the Word of God and of His holy face... this is what he set his heart upon. He would soon realize how necessary is reception of the sacraments, particularly Confession and Communion, to fulfilling the presence of the Word in one's life – but first the Word itself, both in the air and on the page, became his concern. And so he read of God and spoke of God and taught of God – and so he took up a pen and wrote a book about God in his life and the lives of all His children.

III. THE BOOK

1. The Book

It is in the pages of a book so many are drawn closer to God these days. The Word used to be only, or at least primarily, spoken, preached to the people by those so appointed by the LORD, and all heard as one and came to faith. Now we read the pages of a book alone, in a room somewhere....

The man knew how influenced he had been by the words of men and women who had come before him, and of course by the Word of God itself, and so he thought he would do well to leave some inspired words on simple pages to help his fellow pilgrims along, perhaps those who would come to them long after he was gone.

It was a noble thought and the best he could imagine doing in his limited circumstances... and so he set to work. He prayed to the LORD quite frequently, seeking to remain in His presence, and when a word came to him that seemed invested with a measure of wisdom and grace, he wrote it down. He did not let any of these words pass unrecorded, rising even in the night to get them onto paper. Because of his diligence he soon had several notebooks filled with lines, lines which

began to coalesce and become a logical whole before his eyes. There's no telling how this was accomplished.

2. No Telling

Who could say how the Spirit moves, or where or when or upon whom? The Church has the power to decide what is and what is not from God, but the movement of the Spirit remains a mystery. Why does He alight even on some who may be less than saintly? On the saints the Spirit always rests, but what of us who are at best only on our way? How much is He attracted by the way we live our lives and to what degree does His touch simply come out of the blue? There really is no telling.

The Spirit's grace cannot be told, but it can be shown in the lives we lead and our response to His call. Do we put into practice what He inspires in our souls, or do we somehow turn away, whether in ignorance or in sin? If we seek Him, He will find us, and if we act according to His Word we will be blessed; but He is under no obligation to stay with any man for He is far above our minds and the ways we travel. Yet He does work with those who love Him and follow in His Light.

3. His Light

The Light of the Spirit be upon every word of this page and every page I write in the LORD's holy NAME, I pray. If it is not, the writing is nothing worth; if it is not, the writer would do well to put down his pen – if it is not, let it turn quickly to the dust for which it is destined.

What is any of us worth if we do not stand in the light of God? What good then is any of our fruit? It is His light that makes the tree good, and the lack thereof that causes the tree to rot. And if the tree be rotten, if a man be without the light of faith, what can he be but cast in the fire?

The man called on YHWH to direct and guide his every thought and every word he wrote. To Him he consecrated his work. And entrusting himself and his pen entirely to God, the books he wrote were thus blessed. He needed not to revise his words because it was not he who wrote but the Spirit that guided him in His light. If it were not so, if his words were not inspired, if they were not of the light of God, well then, let them indeed be cast to the ground and raise their heads no more. All is in the hands of the LORD.

4. His Hands

Why would you hold things, even your own things, even your own soul, in your own hands? Are they not soiled by selfishness and self-deceit? Are they not too weak to carry the gifts of God? Or do you not wish the blessings of the LORD at all?

We cannot possess or control the graces that come from the Most High, we cannot grasp them with our fingers or even with the comprehension of our mind – they easily slip through these flawed instruments and fall to the ground. Only the perfect can contain that which is of perfection, and so only the LORD Himself can hold the gifts He offers us poor humans; and only remaining in Him are they made fruitful.

And so, indeed the man placed his hand and his pen, his mind and his soul, his very heart, into the hands of God and let Him speak through what he scribbled on earthen pages. And so should all men put their works in the encompassing grasp of the transcendent LORD, if they have any sense at all, if they have any desire to see their works bear fruit unto the heavenly kingdom... if they wish to come to eternal life.

5. Heavenly Fruit

What good is your fruit if it does not bring you and others to eternal life? What good is fruit that dies on the vine? Why should you work for things that pass away rather than those that last forever?

How clearly the man saw the futility of worldly things and how foolish it was to pursue them. How well he knew that good is only found in the things of God, in the things that are eternal or lead one there. Vain pursuits held no attraction for him, nor words that are of this earthly plane. How quickly indeed these pass away!

And though all words, all the works of man, will one day return to the dust from which they come – this too the man saw, and accepted humbly the limits of anything one does – yet there are works and words that are blessed by the LORD and do in fact resound unto Heaven, that do indeed serve to carry one beyond their limitations, beyond the confines of this passing life. With these alone he desired to concern himself. All else rang hollow.

Why should one read or write of what so soon must die? Let us rather work toward what is beyond the instrument in our hands.

6. The Instrument

Into our hands the LORD places the instruments of His love, and they become such when we use them as He desires, in accordance with His holy will. The instruments are neither good nor bad in themselves but become either by the way we use them. The tongue may be used to praise God and edify our neighbor, or it may utter curses and lies and all forms of deception. How do you use the tools at your hands?

Without the instruments we could do nothing, as without our bodies our lives would be quite useless. True, we are useless servants regardless – it is God who does anything that is good – but if we do not use well the gifts we have (and all are provided such gifts), then, in fact, we are less than nothing; for if we do not do good, necessarily we do evil.

We cannot avoid the doing, we human beings, for we cannot escape the fact that we have bodies. Indeed, we are human beings and not angels (or devils). So let us take in hand what the LORD gives us and offer up our work in His NAME. It will then be blessed.

7. Blessed

The LORD blesses those who set their hearts on serving Him, and so their work is likewise blessed. Though still subject to the limitations common to all the things of this earth, indeed it reaches beyond this earth to Heaven. It is blessed.

The blood of Christ was upon the words the man inscribed on the paper at his hand. It was the Spirit that moved them, in union with the sacrifice of the Cross as they were. They spoke of Jesus' holy offering, yes, but more than this, they bled with Him, for the man himself bled with Jesus upon the wood. It was his sole desire to be as one with our Savior, for, again, what else matters?

He swam with Jesus up the stream of His love, though it went against the current of this world. It did not matter. He did not receive recognition for his work or any payment at all – for what we receive for free we should freely give away... and the books he composed were certainly a gift. These were not his words. If some recognition should come, all well and good: Praise be to God! But this he did not seek. His sole concern was to do the work to which he was called. This is what he had to do, and so he continued on.

8. Continuing

At times the man wondered, because of the lack of fruit, the lack of production or publication of his work, if he should give it up, if he should cease to write. Other times his own sin seemed sufficient cause to put down his pen. But he continued on. The LORD seemed to want him to move forward, to keep composing... and ideas and inspiration kept driving him along.

Also, at these moments an encouraging word would come to help dispel the darkness of the words of doubt and disparagement with which he was ordinarily surrounded. And so, in this way YHWH would rescue him from despair and set him back on his course again. It seemed that those who took a moment to read what he'd written were pleased and edified (and often surprised), and so there did appear a point to all the time he'd spent scribbling across blank pages.

And the man knew all along that there is a Word beyond words; there is a silence at the heart of all speech, and this NAME of the LORD is all of significance in the end. He had no delusions of importance but realized all that is of any worth is the Word of God.

9. The Word of God

What word could surpass the Word of God? What could even approach its glory, unless it were blessed by the Word itself? What book is like that Book written not by the mind and imagination of man but by the LORD Himself? There is none other like it, and never shall be. We can only hope by the grace of our Master to somehow, in some small way, become like Him, to enter into His Word and be written into the Book of Life that is the holy Gospel of God.

The Bible. The Holy Bible. The Holy Book, the Book of books, the Word of words... what can we say of it to bring souls closer to realization of the glory it contains? The man knew this was the Book. He believed in his soul the Spirit rested on this text, and so with invocation of the Spirit and as a reverent child he came to these pages and imbibed the wisdom therein. The light of faith was his guide, and the understanding he received he took to heart and sought to make his own, that it might be reflected in his own words, in his own poor, passing writings. But there is only one Book, and one Word speaking in it.

10. One Book

All souls come from the One God, and all words, all holy words, from the One Spirit. All are cut from one cloth and bear the imprint thereof. And all in all there is only one Book, one Text, in which all our lives are written.

What other book could there be than the one composed by the Hand of God? What book could even stand in its shadow? None is even as a footnote to such a work... though by the grace of the Author, our lines are incorporated into His pages.

The Book is One and those who are grafted into it become one with the Author and with each other as well. All copyrights are forgotten as we enter His domain, for truly nothing then is our own. Though we participate therein, though the Breath of the Spirit be upon us, yet only His Breath is of any worth... we cease to breathe on our own.

And our words become His, if we receive such grace; what can I tell you, brother, of this wonder, of this transformation of the soul in God's Light? Indeed, we become as another person as we are joined to the Person of Christ.

11. The Person of Christ

What is the Word of God but the Person of Christ? Yes, the Word is a Person, and into the flesh of Christ we are written as into a book, for He Himself is the Book of Life.

Here is the Temple in which we dwell. Here is the Word that burns in our hearts. Here is the food of everlasting life, here in the Body and Blood of Christ. In Him we are transformed.

Take my words, O LORD, every word, every breath, I pray. Join it all unto His flesh, unto the Son come into our midst. O make us all one in Him!

The man became speechless when Jesus stood before Him, when He revealed His eternal presence to his eyes, to his mind. And so, what else could he write about (or even think about) than vision of the LORD our God? Once he knew who it was who made him and so where he came from, where could he have desired to go but into His arms?

And His arms were open. They are open for all, and so they were open for him as well. Into the LORD's arms he ran, without turning back, without a care for what was behind him... desiring only for the blood of Christ to course through his veins.

12. The Blood of Christ

How could he express the love and wonder and cleansing grace to be found in the blood of Christ, which pours forth for the forgiveness of sins? Who could put into words that blood's marvelous effect on the soul? Who could picture it?

But the blood of Christ he did his best to image in his writing, in the work of his hands. How it washes the world clean! How the innocent soul receives such surpassing grace and mercy... how this holy offering is life itself to those who drink from His cup!

From the cup of salvation poured forth the blood of eternal life for the salvation of his soul, and though he would forget such a gift, ever he would return to Jesus' blood to be renewed, restored, forgiven. As yet he did not attend to regular Confession of his sins with God's chosen ministers – for as yet he did not comprehend the great grace of this sacrament – and though he would still fall into sin with an often disturbing regularity and a general blindness... still the blood of Jesus he desired to beat within his heart; and still the Savior was faithful when he turned to Him.

Wash over us, blood of Christ! In you alone we find salvation.

13. Salvation

Jesus' blood brings us to eternal salvation, if we but turn to it, if it is the desire of our souls... if our blood is mixed with His own.

For what other purpose did Jesus come than to save men's souls? This was His entire mission, and was wrought even into His blessed Name – Y'shua: God (YHWH) saves.

Is it not salvation we need? Is this not what every soul longs for? Whether a man knows it or not, it is Jesus he needs; and so Jesus and the salvation He brings should be all we want.

Do you not see the darkness all around you, my brother, and within your very heart? Are you so blind to sin, to your straying from the truth and the life? Do you find yourself now in Paradise?

This is not Paradise; this is not the place prepared for us from before time – this is not that for which we yearn. Do you think the child starving in the sand has found his home? Or do you think he has none? I tell you he shall come quickly into the LORD's arms, and there be fed forever with the Bread of Life.

14. The Bread of Life

It is the flesh of Christ upon which we feed; this is our food, this Bread from Heaven. In it we indeed find life, life everlasting.

The Word of God is food for our souls – how well it nourishes the one who comes to it in faith and patience. Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Word incarnate, and we read of His glory in every page of Scripture. Feed on the Word; let it nourish your soul.

The man had begun to come to the altar of God to receive Holy Communion. He had started to understand Who it was he was receiving. In the Word in the Holy Book he had found great understanding and wisdom – its teaching he had learned to treasure. And he began now to see how that wisdom was embodied in the Sacrament of the altar, how that Word is fulfilled when we eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood.

We cannot be whole, cannot be holy, if we do not partake of both the Word of Scripture and the Word of the Eucharist, which are but one Word. One is incomplete without the other, and so, alone each is ineffective. Bring to fulfillment what you read in the Book, and find meaning in the Host by feeding on God's Word. Why should you be lacking in perfection?

15. Perfection

When we complete a work of art we put a frame around it, and so it is finished – it is thoroughly done, and, as far as it goes, perfect. There will be no touching the canvas again, for no change or alteration is anymore needed.

When Jesus breathed His last, His life, His mission, was finished; it had reached perfection – there was no more to do for mankind to save them. And so, in this frame (the frame of the Cross, if you will) we must find ourselves, we must, as it were, be pictured. In His crucified flesh we find our home, our only refuge in this world.

And, just so, all we make with our hands must be framed by the Cross of Christ, must be penned with His blood, engraved into His flesh... if it will be perfect, if it will be finished – if it is to accomplish the purpose for which it is intended.

Is the Cross surrounding this page, O LORD? Is this book written with the blood of your Son? Does your Spirit hover over it to guide it and keep it in the parameters of the flesh of Christ? YHWH, let it be so! or let it be nothing worth.

16. Nothing Worth

Really, in the end all our work, all our labor, is worth nothing of itself – it must be allowed to die and return to the dust with our bodies themselves. We must let them go, for if we attempt to hold on to these, we will be as nothing as well.

The works are passing with our lives. The most astounding construction known to man is less than an anthill in the sight of God; and we too must see that in the end it is nothing. There will not be left a stone upon another on His Day.

But this does not mean that we should cease to build with our hands. It does not mean there is no point to life or any of the accomplishments of man. This knowledge should not lead us to despair. It is, in fact, in this knowledge of the passing nature of all things of this world that hope is born, a hope unto eternal life.

Jesus made clear that unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth, it produces no fruit – and so He died. And so He calls us to die to ourselves and all the emptiness of this world, including the work of our hands. If we can free ourselves from attachment to these, we may find the kingdom to which they lead.

17. Lead

All our works should lead us, and others, to the LORD's holy presence. Though born in this realm, they should point us upward, beyond this realm to the kingdom of God. We must listen to the Teacher of souls and imitate Him in all our words, in all our works upon this earth.

We shall not get to where Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father if we do not travel the same path He trod, if we do not join Him now in the works He inspires in those who would be His disciples. The disciple cannot exceed his Teacher, but he can become as He is and share in His blessing if he is led by His teaching and follows closely therein.

And so, let us sweat and bleed with Jesus and perform His works on the face of this earth. We must be His hands and feet and call others to walk with us as well.

Do you not wish to share in the glory of the Son, my brother, my sister? Then certainly you must be obedient to His Word and to those who preach and teach in His Name. The way is narrow but listening to Him and heeding His instructions, you will come soon to His holy mountain.

IV. THE MOUNTAIN

1. The Mountain

Up a high mountain the LORD leads us; up this mountain He led the man, and all men must likewise follow Him. He would reveal Himself to us, He would show us all His transcendent glory... but are we willing to walk in the way He leads? Are we willing to embrace our cross?

The air on YHWH's holy mountain is pure and clean – it is without alloy. There is no pollutant on the LORD's mountain, for no sin lives where He is. And so there can be no sin in us, no defilement at all, if we are to make our home on the mountain with Him.

The man could feel the breeze, the wind of the Spirit, blowing against his face. He could smell the clean air and the fragrance of Christ's flesh like a heavenly flower.... Paradise illumined his mind and to the presence of God he drew close.

And there, no question remained, no doubt, no fear. There all was as it should be, as it was meant to be – as it is. As a child he sat and knelt and walked upon the mountain of the LORD. And there a voice spoke to him of the surpassing glory awaiting those who repent of their sin.

2. A Voice

A voice cries in the wilderness and a voice cries in our hearts. A voice cried on the holy mountain for the man to turn away from all sin. The voice called him to encompassing light, the light of the face of God.

“Come to me, all who are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest.” “All who desire it, come and drink of the cup of my holy blood.” “Come up here,” a voice said to the man, and his heart was lifted to the mountain’s height.

Without cost eternal life is offered to each one of us, for Jesus has paid the price of our salvation and we need but accept His gift and listen to His voice calling to our souls. He is nearer than our arms, closer than our breath, and wishes to embrace us... but will we repent of all sin to find Him?

Do not be deaf to His call, my friend; do not turn a blind eye to the Garden of delight which awaits a word of acceptance from deep in your spirit, a word that says “yes” to His Word for all. Why should you continue to wallow in the mire?

3. The Mire

Why should you want to remain stuck in the mire of this world when the LORD is calling you up to His holy mountain? Can you not bear His holiness? Do you think it false and your profligacy true? Do you find yourself to be wiser than He, and any other man on the face of the earth... or at least those in the Church? Or do you simply enjoy sinking in the mud?

There is a pit into which all may fall when they turn their backs on the LORD, and if one continues in sin, that pit becomes endless. His mercy is ever being offered forth, albeit through the hands of unworthy and sometimes defiled ministers; yet its grace remains undimmed by any man's sin. If it is your desire to obtain mercy, you will not be distracted by the vessel through which it comes, but freely drink of the cup of God's forgiveness and so find yourself raised from the mud.

Will you then be perfect? Well, the LORD would see you so. But inevitably there will be struggles even as you approach the heights of His mountain. Still, the mire will be far gone.

The song of the angels is beckoning you forth: there is a better place beyond the dust of this earth.

4. A Better Place

You must have hope, my brother, my sister. You must see the light shining beyond the horizon. It is there; it is real. You have seen it and you must not forget it – simply gaze upon the Sacrament, the Body of Christ, if your memory should begin to wane. And ask Him (if you still have doubts) if He is there. He will reveal Himself to you for He cannot deny the request of any sincere soul, and it is His desire you should know Him.

Seeing Him there, knowing He is present, you will then be drawn beyond the building, beyond the room in which you sit. You will come to Heaven, for this is where He is.

Open your eyes; do not hide from the light shining before you. Yes, you are still flesh and blood but His flesh and blood will make you more, will make your spirit like His own.

This is what the man discovered. He found that God is true, that Jesus exists, that He is present upon the altar... that His kingdom awaits us all. Simply by being truthful himself, expressing his doubts when they arose but honestly seeking answer from the LORD, he came to Truth itself. And his heart was lifted above the sky.

5. Lifted

Lift up your hearts and sing to the LORD who has saved you from your sins and called you into His presence. Here in His House let your souls be lifted to the heavens, to the kingdom that is beyond this world... that is this world reborn, renewed by the Spirit of God.

Jesus reaches down to you; He comes from the holy Mountain where He dwells with the Father and walks this earth with feet like our own, with a heart like our own.... Born into our exile, He comes to set us free, to redeem our lives from slavery to sin and darkness. He indeed is the light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it but is overcome by its piercing rays. For this grace you should shout in joy!

Lift us up to you, O LORD; raise us in the arms of your only Son, that we might kiss your face, that we might feel your cheek against our own. How marvelous you are and how surpassing your love! that you should send Jesus to carry us to your side by the death He undergoes for our iniquity. May we climb to your eternal presence on the ladder that is the Cross.

6. The Ladder

Is the Cross not the ladder to Heaven? On its arms are we not lifted up? By the sacrifice of the Christ we are raised from the dead and seated with Him at the right hand of God.

The Cross is planted firmly in the earth, and its arms span all space and time... but its top is above the heavens, and those who climb there find passage to Paradise.

“This day you will be with me in Paradise,” Jesus says to the thief beside Him on the Cross. His cross is not like the Savior’s – it emanates not the same light – yet Christ carries him with Himself, lifting him up on His ladder and its wood. And all the man needed to do was nod his head in acceptance. All any man needs to do is acknowledge his sin and cry out to Jesus, and He will indeed hear and answer his plea.

We shall no more be bound upon the wheel. Though we raced through this life like a squirrel in a cage, turning round and round and getting nowhere but further in debt for our sin... the Cross has made the payment that was beyond our means and brought us into God’s arms.

7. God's Arms

The arms of the Cross are indeed spread out for all, desiring to embrace mankind in their encompassing love. These are as the arms of God reaching down to His children from on high to draw them up to Himself, into His arms.

The man felt the warm embrace of the LORD of all; His soul was nourished by the Bread of Life that comes to us by the sacrifice of the Cross and is present in Holy Scripture. Feeling this warmth, this grace within himself, he knew the arms of YHWH surrounding him with His love.

It is not easy to express this blessing, the comfort God gives us by His presence with us. It is beyond words. But knowledge of the love of the LORD and His nearness to our spirits, at the very core of our being, was with the man now... and would remain with him forever.

Not that he would never sin again; he was not yet perfect, certainly. But the LORD held him in His arms and would not let him go, and the man himself wanted never to leave such embrace.

When the Prodigal Son returned home, his father threw his arms around his child. The man now found himself at home.

8. At Home

When Moses asked to see the LORD, YHWH placed His servant in the crevice of a rock and covered him with His Hand. As He passed by He removed His Hand, and Moses was given vision of God's back... which left him effusive with humble praise and petition to the Most High.

Moses was also given vision of the Promised Land, though he was not allowed to enter therein. On the mountain he saw from afar the blessing that was to come to the LORD's people.

But now no one knows where the grave of Moses is. With Elijah he appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, in heavenly light with the only Son of God. We can say he is now at home. We can say his vision has been realized, that upon the face of the LORD he gazes with Jesus, the Holy One.

We are only at home in Heaven, never on this troubled earth. But there is a mountain to which YHWH brings us to reveal His glory to human sight.

On Mount Horeb the LORD shared with Moses His NAME, and so His very self. This NAME, fulfilled in Jesus, reveals the transcendent God: "YHWH".

9. YHWH

Up a high mountain Jesus leads us with Peter and James and John, that with Moses and Elijah we might enter into His holy Light. When the Christ stood before His captors, He said, "I AM", and (as they fell on their faces before Him) uttered in their presence the silent NAME of God, revealing Himself as the incarnate Word to those who deserved least to know Him.... And He would do the same for you.

How can He who is transcendent become flesh and blood; how can we look upon Him who is so far beyond our vision? How can silence speak of the One who passes understanding?

O the wonder of the LORD! His surpassing glory. He is the light that saves the world, the mouth by which all was created. Beyond words is the awesome wonder we know when we come into His presence, when we stand (or kneel or sit...) before His glory. Yet there He is.

Speak His silent NAME, my brother; live in accord with His purity and love. Remember the gift He has given Moses and the way that gift has been realized in Christ.

In Jesus is the silent wonder of the LORD, His NAME, made known. On the Cross He speaks most clearly of the One who transcends Heaven and earth... and calls us to be with Him.

10. Be with Him

Emmanuel. A Virgin has given birth to a Son and He is now with us. But are we with Him?

There is no question that Jesus has come, that He has revealed the Father and brought new life to mankind. He is with us now, but do we turn to Him for redemption? Do we come into the light that is His presence in our midst... or do we prefer the darkness? O let us be with Him!

But how hard it is even for those who desire to embrace Him as He has embraced us; how forgetful we are of His presence, His light, His call to salvation.

Such it was with the man. He had come to the mountain's peak; he was shown the essence of God and made able to contemplate His glory in the silence of His NAME and the knowledge of His presence among us in the Eucharist – every day he began to receive Him in the Sacrament... yet still it seemed the LORD was beyond his grasp. And He was.

YHWH will always be beyond our grasp, beyond our comprehension (Alleluia!), and this we must realize if we are to sense His embrace, if He is to dwell in us.

11. The Indwelling

What paradox have we here! What a paradox is God to us – does not the teaching of Jesus often seem contradictory? Yet it is true. Yet He Who Is forever beyond us dwells within us when we come to Him.

As the humbled are exalted so does the Most High God make His home in His poor creatures, so does He who is most exalted walk among us as the humblest of all... and so we must do the same. We must be humble, acknowledging our limitations, acknowledging our nothingness before the goodness of God; and thus facing the truth, the truth of our base humanity, thus do we come to union with Him who is far above this helpless dust – thus do we find oneness with the LORD.

It is within us YHWH lives and reigns, but are we there to meet with Him, or somewhere outside ourselves in vain pursuit of what is not Him? His indwelling will be known by all who set their hearts on this one thing that matters, on the one thing that does not pass away.... His presence is all that is of consequence to the enlightened soul.

12. The Enlightened Soul

What is it to be enlightened? It means, first of all, to seek only light, only truth; then one cannot but find Him who is both Light and Truth, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Jesus alone who enlightens our souls, who causes the Spirit to dwell in us, for He alone is one with the Father and the Spirit; and so, uniting ourselves to Him we become of the light of God.

O to have the LORD speaking His transcendent NAME in our hearts at all times! What else is there to wish for or desire? If one has this, one has all things, for one has Life itself. All darkness flees from him who sits on the holy mountain of God.

Jesus, come to us this day; bring to us the surpassing light of your face, in which is revealed the Father of all. O let the Spirit breathe in us, illumining our every thought, word, and deed! Let us become one with you who have so longed to become one with us.

The man prayed to God in words such as these; he knew the light about which they spoke. A branch of the vine of Christ he became, realizing the grace of his Baptism.

13. Baptism

What can one say of the grace of Baptism, so often overlooked, so easily taken for granted? It plants the seed of eternal life in our souls. And though it must be nurtured all during our journey, though it must be brought to fruition by prayer and good works and the reception of the other sacraments of the Church... here is the first and necessary step to a life with God.

Jesus told His apostles to go out and baptize all the world. And this they did, faithfully and with understanding of the seriousness of such a call. For it is not merely water upon skin that is at work in this sign – the Spirit Himself comes to cleanse our own spirits and so make a place for YHWH to dwell.

Eternal life, the life of Heaven... this is what becomes our own in the first of sacraments. We had been separated from our God, who is Life itself, and so death was a shadow ever hovering above our souls. But how that darkness is dispelled! How union is made possible again with the eternal LORD! And if we eat His flesh and drink His blood, we shall never die.

14. Never Die

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood will never die.” Such is the promise of Jesus to His faithful disciples, to those who partake (with a believing heart) of His Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

But do we believe this? Do we not at least wonder how it can be? Many turned away from Christ when He entreated all to eat His flesh and drink His blood, when He declared that they must do so to have life. And though we do not turn away, still, do our hearts not doubt His Word? Who can grasp such a promise, and how?

Only by faith, of course. Only by faith do we know Him present in the Sacrament, and only by faith can we believe the promise of eternal life found therein. This faith strengthens us to overcome the flesh and live in the Spirit with the LORD Himself.

O to never die! It is the fate of all, for all have an immortal soul. But what a difference there is between living forever in the light and grace of an all-loving God, and gnashing one’s teeth for eternity, hoping vainly for death to come and relieve one’s pain.... O LORD, let us never die in this latter way but live forever in your Body.

15. The Body

The Body of Christ. Is it not the holy mountain of God? Is it not His Church, the New Jerusalem? Should we not dwell on this mountain?

The man's faith in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist was firmly founded one day when it was tested by a priest. The man had to confess his doubts, had to tell the truth of what he seemed to read in Holy Scripture in Jesus' instruction to eat His flesh and drink His blood. Could He not have been speaking spiritually, symbolically, of His teaching, of His presence in our midst? Did He really mean to *eat His body*?

This is something a Catholic must believe or leave out the church doors, lest he be a hypocrite. And so the blessed priest put it to the man. In giving him communion shortly thereafter he held the host up and close to himself, as if he would not give it to the man should his faith be lacking... and in that moment the man believed; and before the minister of God and God Himself, he said: "Amen," with a conviction that would never waver again.

And so, in this moment the man came into the Body of Christ. So he truly became a member of God's Church.

16. God's Church

God's Church exists here and in Heaven. It may be said that a member has one foot on this earth and one foot in the Kingdom – from here we reach up to the House on high, and from there the saints reach down to us.... And all pray for the souls in Purgatory.

In this family, in this Household of God, all are one in Jesus the Son, and all share in the same Spirit. And the Father of all sits at the head of the table.

We are all children of our Heavenly Father, all blessed to be His holy offspring. By Him we are made and to Him we return, if we follow His Way, if we walk in the footsteps of the only Son.

The Father is greater than any being and He would gather all souls together in His love. And all souls are gathered there in His holy Church.

The Church is one, the Church is holy, the Church is catholic, and the Church is apostolic. Come into the Church, my brother, my sister; there you will find the home you desire, the truth which you seek – there you will find the God you long for and live forever in His peace and love.

17. His Peace and Love

On this holy mountain you will feel the wind of the LORD against your face. Like Elijah who sat on this mountain and heard YHWH speak in a still, small voice; like all the saints who have heard Him calling in the silence... like all who are overwhelmed by the presence of God when they open their minds and hearts to His light, to His truth shining in our midst – if you come to the mountain set aside by the LORD, you will be enveloped by His peace and His love.

Such was the man. Undoubtedly. Such grace was upon him. Beyond words, beyond time, beyond all things of this earth he sat (or knelt, or stood, or walked...) and knew the presence of the Almighty God.

He whispered to him with such remarkable force, with such undeniable light... by His peace and love he was taken, rapt in the awesome wonder of the transcendent LORD, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the great I AM: YHWH.

And living as one with this Being that is beyond all expression, what could the man do but sing an exultant song?

V. THE SONG

1. The Song

Alleluia! Praise the LORD!

There is a song of exultation that cannot but pour forth from the soul that knows the presence of the LORD all around, and within.... And so the man did sing.

He sang songs of praise with brothers and sisters who had likewise discovered the glory of God in their midst. With tongues of joy they shouted aloud the praises of YHWH in thanksgiving for all the gifts and graces that had been poured upon them. (Won't you join in this song, my brother, my sister?)

No longer was the man at all afraid to express his love for God and his neighbor. Indeed, his tongue was loosed to speak of the LORD and to defend Him against His enemies. And his arms were opened to embrace his brethren and greet them with a holy kiss. All he would take in his arms in the NAME of God.

And songs rolled off his tongue hour to hour and throughout his days. Some he would write down but most he just sang. And in this time he picked up a guitar to play.

2. A Guitar

O LORD, let us sing to you with stringed instruments! Let us offer praises to your holy NAME. Let us enter your courts with thanksgiving in our hearts and rejoice in you all our days.

With spiritual songs and hymns the man gloried in the LORD God, a guitar in his hands to accompany his song. And many souls sang with him, though often he also sang alone.

When the man first picked up the guitar, he strummed it more contemplatively, so the songs he made were quiet and reflective. But even in these he began to speak in tongues, to sing the praises of God beyond words and syllables. When he joined in song with other souls, the music grew louder and more enthusiastic... but the tongue of the Spirit still spoke in this praise. And it would lead again to quiet time.

Do we not need the accompaniment of harps and lyres, of timbrels and tambourines? Should we not with David give glory to God with all our heart and soul, with all our mind and body? And when the song is over, we return to the silence of the LORD; yes, the song comes from the silence of YHWH and gives expression to it, before returning whence it came.

3. The Silence

It seems strange to say the song comes from silence, but of course this apparent paradox is true, and most important to be kept in mind in everything we do. Without God (whose NAME is pure silence) at our center, we are nothing worth – in vain does the builder labor.

And with song this should be evident in a more obvious, practical fashion: in the song itself there is always silence, breathing, speaking between the verses and notes and bars.... And so, not only does the music come from silence and return to silence, but it is imbued with silence as well. (Let us never forget your NAME, O LORD!)

And so let all be spoken in silence; let every word we utter, every work we perform, come from God and return to God and be blessed by YHWH and His presence every step of the way.

The man understood well that without the LORD his work was nothing, and so he began all things in prayer, ended all things in prayer, and sought to give all he did to the LORD in prayer. This is the treasured goal of every Christian soul, ever to remain in prayer, in the presence of the Almighty God.

4. In Prayer

When we sing we pray twice, St. Augustine tells us, for then we pray both with words and with song, with the melody we make to our LORD. And so, let us sing our lives and we shall be praying in Spirit and in truth, in love and in action.

How your life should be a prayer lived in the presence of God! Remembering His NAME, contemplating His glory and doing His will in all things, truly our lives become as a song to the LORD.

He is with us now, you know. He is closer to us than we are to ourselves, more real than anything we see or touch. This is His universe. He made us and not we Him, and He hears and sees all we say and do. Indeed, He knows what we will say even before we speak. And so, speak to Him simply and clearly, knowing He is present. You need not strain to speak to Him for He does not strain to hear your voice. He is listening.

The man came to realize that God is not the product of our imaginations. No. We are the work of His hands. And so he prayed to Him, lifting up his voice in song, sensing His light all around himself... And he came to know the greatest prayer of all, found where the LORD is especially present, at holy Mass.

5. Holy Mass

The source and summit of Christian life is indeed the Eucharist, the celebration of the people of God around the table of His Word and His Body and Blood. There can be no greater prayer for there is no place the LORD is more greatly present. Though all be ignorant of His glory in their midst, yet He is there – and those who receive Him well come to the gates of Heaven.

Should not our prayer take us to the kingdom of God? Is this not the purpose of prayer, to draw us closer to the LORD, and to draw others there as well? And so, why would anyone be foolish enough to absent himself from the assembly, particularly if he is a praying person, a soul seeking our LORD and God?

Here earth touches Heaven and here our poor souls touch the glory of God. Here in a special way we hear His Word speaking to our hearts, and here alone we eat His Body and drink His Blood and so become one with Jesus Christ.

It is as members of His Body we must come to the LORD, not as individuals on our own. And so let us join as one in YHWH's holy presence, and give Him thanks for this great gift.

6. This Great Gift

The man came indeed to know how great this gift of the Eucharist is – the greatest of gifts, the Song of songs. And so, soon enough he began attending Mass and receiving Jesus in the Sacrament every day. It became the high point of his day, the food he could not live without. Though a short time before he had been blind to this gift, now he thirsted for it as nothing else.

And he began, too, to confess his sins weekly, thinking this was the least he could do to try to prepare himself for that of which no soul is worthy. If he was receiving Christ every day, should he not confess at least once a week? He also became aware of the great gift the Church offers in plenary indulgence, and daily he performed the acts necessary to gain such a grace; and so for this, too, he needed to go regularly to Confession. (These pious practices he maintained throughout his life.)

O the overwhelming gift the Church is to her members, to her children! Her teaching, her saints, her sacraments... and especially the Blessed Sacrament. Who could imagine such grace coming to the human being, not only to see and know but to receive and so become one with God Himself! For so great a gift should we not fall down in adoration before Him?

7. Adoration

Here the silent song of adoration is sung most poignantly, most profoundly, here before the LORD of all exposed in a simple, golden monstrance on the altar of His sacrifice. Who would not be overwhelmed? Who could be restrained from offering unending praise to His holy NAME? Here the song is made complete, at least insofar as earthly existence is concerned.

Sitting in silence before Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament, the man often felt himself overwhelmed... overwhelmed by awe, overwhelmed by tears, overwhelmed by the ineffable gift before him – the presence of Almighty God! What can one say when sitting in His holy throne room?

All we can do is adore the LORD; all we can do is give Him thanks for the gift of His presence before us. All we can do is empty ourselves of all iniquity and falsehood, of all darkness that keeps us from knowing His surpassing Light, that that Light might come to our minds and our souls, our hearts, our fingers and our toes...

O Glorious LORD, let us bow down before you and rise up to sing your praise.

8. Praise!

“Praise the LORD, O my soul, and all my being bless His holy NAME!” Let sun and moon and all the stars of heaven, wind and rain and all the elements, the earth and the sea and all their creatures give praise with man to the Most High God. Let all holy souls praise the LORD!

The man treasured the chorus he now joined, the choir of voices singing the praises of the Almighty. Here was a foreshadowing of the heavenly Kingdom, where all living creatures join in praise of the Triune God. For all eternity they sing His praises, and of this they never tire... and now the man approached that glory as he opened his mouth and declared the surpassing greatness of the Creator and Redeemer of all.

O may the Holy Spirit fall upon all men, even the children and the servant girls. Let young and old be filled with the grace of the Spirit and so be inspired to sing the LORD’s praises freely.

Vision grant to all who follow you, YHWH, vision of your glory on high. Far beyond us you dwell in perfection, but your Breath you breathe upon those who cherish your love. Speak your Word to humble hearts.

9. Humble Hearts

How wonderful it is that you come only to humble hearts, O LORD. For only those made in your image are your own, and you are the humblest of all. Though transcendent, you have deigned to walk among us as a simple man; and so it is that simple, humble men may walk with you to Heaven.

The grace, the wisdom, the surpassing glory found in humility and obedience, the man began to know and live. As the black/brown earth he came to see that more than earth was he. Burying himself in the wounds of Christ he found a peace surpassing understanding, a peace only of Heaven.

What a great gift is humility, the foundation of all virtues! And how we should sing its praises. The world is blind to such grace and so can but demean the humble soul, exalting instead a vain pride... but he who knows the LORD and desires His company sees that it is found in profound humility.

Yes, the exalted are humbled and the humbled exalted in the sight of God. And so, let your heart be grounded in the dust of this earth that it might be lifted from the ground by the bleeding hands of Jesus.

10. Bleeding Hands

It is Jesus' bleeding hands that save us, that bring us comfort and peace, that bring us salvation. His humble sacrifice on the Cross is the source of our glory. And we must join Him there.

O how the man's heart began to beat with the blood of Christ! O how he started to understand and love the Cross to which he was called by the grace of God! It is the natural tendency to run from such sacrifice, from such apparent loss of life – but the man knew Jesus did not lie when He said that in this laying down of our lives, eternal life is found. And in the blood He shed for our sins, the man indeed found refuge, even in this life.

O LORD, hold us in your hands, in hands so wounded for our sins, so wounded for the great love you hold for us. O Jesus, even now I can see you, I can sense your presence, your sacrificial arms reaching out to me to hold me to yourself. O let all your children know such genuine blessing!

Here is joy, my brothers and sisters. Here is surpassing glory, ineffable love, here in our Savior's hands, in His heart beating just for us.

11. Just for Us

Yes, His heart beats and bleeds just for us. He comes from the Father to this barren place to die on a cross just for us. As a criminal He is scorned and condemned, and has His hands and feet and side pierced by nail and sword only for our sake. He gains nothing from it except hopefully our salvation, except hopefully our love in return.

Only that we might know love and its boundless glory does He suffer and die as a man. Only that we might enter the kingdom prepared for us before all ages does He stand before us and call us home. And would you despise Him, my friend? You do so only at great peril to yourself.

There is no hope except in Jesus, this the man came to understand. By no other Name do we come to Heaven, do we find our way to the Father who is the origin of all. And so, without Him we are lost.

The man remembered, too, the confusion from which he had come, the path he had been misled upon... and knowing now the embrace of Christ, he could only sing in praise all the more.

12. All the More

All the more does Jesus love us and all the more do we understand His great mercy because of the sin we have known. Because of the darkness from which we've come, all the more does His light illumine our vision.

In this is shown how the light of God is never conquered, how the LORD takes even what brings suffering to our souls and makes it into something good, something beyond our grief and mourning. For indeed His mercy is greater than any evil, and where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more. The devil is never able to trump our loving God; he can only be frustrated to see his plots turned against himself.

Do we not see this in the Cross, brothers and sisters? Is the Cross not the paragon of God's power? Is it not the greatest sign of His love and mercy and the source of our very salvation... and yet does it not represent the most horrific of crimes?

What freedom the man found in knowing there is nothing the devil can do to defeat the all-encompassing love of God. However much he may have sinned, now the forgiveness and grace of the LORD filled his immortal soul.

13. Immortal Soul

The soul is immortal. There is no escaping this. You are not like the other creatures, my friend. You are the only one even capable of conceiving of immortality.

You will live forever. But how, where? This you must choose. But know that YHWH desires your company in His kingdom.

The man knew this; yes, he knew this. He knew that though he sometimes doubted, in facing his doubts and calling on the LORD for light, the light of reason and of faith, every time answer came. And so, every time his faith was strengthened.

It is true that we seem to die. This is how it appears to the eye. But do you not hear that voice inside your head speaking to your heart? Do you not hear it calling to you, making known the light that never dies? Unless you are blinded by sin, you must certainly hear it. Listen then.

Some souls attempt to kill the song, to dim the light shining in their minds. But the song is never-ending: life does not die. Let the Spirit envelop you, my brother, and carry you on high.

14. On High

Where but on high can the soul be carried when it is filled with faith and led by the Holy Spirit? The Spirit indeed gives it light and so it sees what is beyond the vision of worldly eyes. Though still upon the earth it stays, to Heaven it often flies, seeking to make its home in this transcendent place.

The LORD lives on high, not in the clouds or the sky or on another planet, but far beyond this realm... yet here He dwells as well. And the soul set on Him comes to dwell with Him.

Rise above yourself and your worldly concerns, my brother. Set not your heart on passing things. There are things that shall not pass away – on these should your sights be set. And you will come to them, and you will be blessed in them, whatever your situation may be on this earth.

Jesus' feet walked this earth, too. The transcendent God made Himself so present here. And now on high He waits for your company, your coming to Him, even now, even here.... Do not be afraid of the heights to which you are drawn; though you must die to self, forever you shall live and sing in joy.

15. In Joy

What is there but joy with the LORD? He Himself is pure joy and those in His presence cannot but rejoice. The angels dance and sing, all the saints raise their voices in praise of His NAME – the sound of joy is like mighty thunder filling Heaven end to end. O how the man would join them!

Sometimes he wanted to die that he could be there with the holy ones forever. At times the world held no attraction for him, so much so he would have happily gone. But never did this joy he took in heavenly things lead him to despair of the goodness of life on this earth. Though much evil he saw around himself (and within himself), and though many tears it did bring to his eyes, he knew that Jesus, too, was here... and there is always hope for new life.

For had not he himself come from a life that was far from God? Are there not countless stories of those converted from evil ways to good? And so, while here we must remain in joy for the salvation that is available to every soul, as long as they are here. And we must pray the joy of salvation come to all.

16. Salvation to All

Jesus died for all men's sins – His arms on the Cross are open to all. There is none who is barred from coming to this Tree of Life and finding the new life the Spirit breathes upon the soul. Though it remains for all to choose the LORD or not, the offer stands in the holy sacrifice of Christ.

And Jesus indeed desires all souls to come to Him, to kneel beneath His Cross and be washed clean in the blood that pours down from His open wounds. He indeed desires the salvation of all. And we must desire the same, if we are to be worthy of His Name.

The salvation of all souls should be our principal prayer, our greatest song, akin to that sung in praise of YHWH. For this is truly how we show our love for Him, that we love as He has loved.

It does not seem like all will enter there – Jesus has said some will go into everlasting fire. But the Church pronounces definitively only on a few who are in Heaven, not on those who may have come to the other place. This is for God alone to judge and Him alone to know; it is for us to declare that hope remains for all who travel through this world.

17. Hope Remains

Though our song come to an end, hope remains. Though our bodies return to the dust, there is yet life. Though our voices be silenced by death or the wrath of a dictator, yet the Word goes out to the ends of the earth, calling us beyond this plane.

Hope remains, and nothing can kill it – the darkness cannot overcome the light. Rather, the light overcomes all falsehood and sin and reveals the things that truly exist: God, and man redeemed.

All Creation will be made anew and a new song will be put into our mouths that day, a song only hearts made pure can learn. And the chorus will build to such a great crescendo that it will overwhelm every lie with grace... and there shall be a smile on every face.

Come, O Holy Spirit, and make us new;
make us now as one with you.
Let the blood of Jesus pour over us
and bring us to the land He promised,
where you dwell with the Father and the Son
and all the angels and saints in Heaven.
To you alone let us be wed...
on our finger let us find your ring.

VI. THE RING

1. The Ring

Should we not be wed to the LORD of all, become the bride of the Bridegroom? Who else is worthy of our love? Even the love we give to others must be given first to Him or it is nothing worth; and most especially the love of spouses must be founded in Christ.

For most of the man's life he had longed for and sought a wife. Because he sought not well, because he was so mired in blindness, his search often led him to sin. There was a certain selfishness that continually plagued his soul and made him incapable of truly loving as the LORD: he was unable to give himself wholly to another.

He tried, but he failed. Again and again he tried, but indeed he was blind and so ever chose the wrong woman. Led more by his senses or his fantasy, his attempts came to naught, for love is what is most real.

After many years he had all but given up – he had, in fact, found himself at peace with remaining alone with God. Then he had a final fall... before meeting the woman he would marry in the LORD.

Now there was a ring on his finger; now he had become one with another who wished to become one with him. Now they could share their life in the LORD.

2. Life in the LORD

What good is life if not lived in the LORD? What good is a marriage if not founded in Christ? Can it last? Will it prosper? We need God to give our lives meaning, to produce fruit of consequence.

The man and his wife shared in common a profound love of God and a desire to serve Him and others. They wished only to do His will. Committed fully to His Church and her teachings, and filled with a love for her sacraments, they indeed had a firm foundation that saw them through any difficult weather. For to their faith they always returned, and there found answer.

In fact, they met in the presence of the LORD, in adoration of His glory, and shared in this holy hour each day. It was alone before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the monstrance on the altar the man proposed to his wife, and it was there she accepted, on a great feast celebrating the Church; and on the vigil of Pentecost they took their vows before God.

Their flesh became as the walls of the Church, housing souls that sought purity and light. Though far from perfect, they ever had the help of their Mother.

3. Mother

The Church is our Mother, and so is Mary. And a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin the man and his wife also shared. Both had previously given themselves to Our Lady, and during their wedding Mass they repeated their act of consecration together.

Having Mary as their Mother and intercessor only compounded the firmness of their foundation in God. She always leads souls to her Son, and so to turn to her is to turn to Him. As at the wedding at Cana the servants approached Mary to find the help of Jesus, so the man and his wife (like all souls truly devoted to the Mother of all the living) found their way to Jesus through Mary. Through her the Son of God came to us; should we not go to Him in the same way?

Be not Motherless, O poor soul, but turn to the Virgin for the grace you need. Here you will find the conduit of God's love, and His wisdom and understanding. As only in the Church you will find the fullness of the faith, so through Mary it is that God will come to you with His mercy. She is the

Church, the Model and Mother of all the redeemed
– may all of this generation call her blessed.

4. Call Her Blessed

Should you not call blessed the one whom God has blessed? Should you not recognize her special role in the plan of the LORD? If the Holy Spirit has declared that all shall call her blessed, why do you avoid the term? Are you not thus separated from the Word of God?

Call her blessed, my brothers and sisters, if you are brothers and sisters of Jesus and sons and daughters of the Father. If you are inspired by the Spirit, you will raise your voice on high to proclaim what He desires. Call Her Blessed!

O Blessed Mother, open the eyes and the hearts of all souls to the truth of your place in the plan of salvation. Did not Jesus come to us through you and through your “yes” to God’s call? Did not the angel of God himself praise you and declare you full of grace? O that we would all be so full of grace, so full of the love of YHWH, and so know and pronounce only truth.

The man loved his Mother, as did his wife. They had no trouble proclaiming her blessed. And so their marriage was blessed by her and by the LORD. And so they reached out to others.

5. To Others

The Christian cannot but reach out to others when he is wed to Christ through His Blessed Mother. He cannot help but raise his voice in praise of what he owns by the grace of God. How he desires to share such a gift with others, that it might grow!

The possession of grace is a very special thing; it is not like the things of this world. If we give these away, they are lessened and we are left without them; but in the giving away of grace, in the sharing of this gift, it is multiplied. The more who partake of the love of God, the more abundantly it flows for all as a whole, and for every individual.

Thus does Jesus compel us to share freely with others what we have been freely given by Him. For in this sharing we shall know no loss, but find our account ever growing. Yes, he who has will receive more, but he who has not (and shares not) will lose the little he thinks he has.

This is true even of material goods for the Christian soul. If he has the LORD's grace at work in him in sharing these, in giving them away... they too will be multiplied for the good of all.

6. The Good of All

If one is wed in the LORD and to the LORD, if one wears the LORD's ring upon his finger and has his heart aligned with the LORD's will... one cannot help but care for the good of all.

It is like this: in the first place we are wed to God; this spiritual marriage is most important and the foundation of all the love we share with the world. It was, as we have said, the foundation of the man's marriage to his wife, and led to their turning toward others to do them good.

The rings move out like concentric circles from the central point of God's love in the soul... and so they reach to the ends of the earth. One cannot turn in upon oneself, nor a marriage upon itself, without blocking the flow of God's love. One ring rests upon the following and as long as each is strengthened in itself, each reaches out to the next.

If one is sincerely concerned for the good of God, if one is seriously wed to the LORD and led by the love that comes from this bond, then one will reach out, will be compelled to reach out and embrace the others in one's life, and indeed all souls. In the Name of Jesus, such is the way God's love moves through the world.

7. Move Through

Move like the Spirit through this world, bringing life and light to all those you touch. Radiate the light and love of God and so become a child of that light, in turn bearing children in the LORD's NAME.

This is your purpose as a soul wed to the LORD: to share His love with all. This is the purpose of your marriage, of your work, of all you do – move through every place bringing light and new life to everyone you meet. Pray for their salvation; desire only their good. Let them know that they are loved and YHWH wishes only their being with Him for eternity.

There is a purpose to this life, to this time we spend on earth. Though we move through this pilgrim place, not stopping long but hastening on to the kingdom that awaits us, we bring others to that kingdom as we travel on our way.

Do not be afraid to speak to them. Do not be afraid to encourage others and offer them the wisdom that comes from God. This should be on your heart at all times – praise of the LORD's NAME and the salvation of souls.

8. The Salvation of Souls

Pray. Pray indeed for the salvation of souls. Pray for the salvation of those in Purgatory; offer up prayers for plenary indulgence every day... and pray, too, for the salvation of everyone you meet. Let it be on your heart and kept in mind to pray for the redemption of every person with whom you come in contact day to day.

The man would try to remember as he walked down the street, sometimes very busy streets filled with hundreds (even thousands) of people, to pray for each one's salvation... a quick word, a sudden glance to God for them, even just a desire of the heart. And the souls in the cars driving by, in the houses that surrounded him, those whom he read about or saw on TV – all he sought to give to the LORD in hopes of their salvation.

Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to live in such a way! to be in continual remembrance of what is most important in life? And so, the man sought two things: to remember always YHWH's silent NAME, and to pray for the salvation of souls every day. Should we not all seek such holy purpose in our lives?

9. Holy Purpose

The ring around his finger gave holy purpose to the man's life, as it does all who are a bride of Christ. In what a wonderful way and for what marvelous good does Jesus wed Himself to the Church!

He became poor for our sakes, abandoned by the Father that He might gather to Him those who are abandoned here. And so, how rich do we become! graced with the blessings that are His own. And now to the heavenly marriage feast do we come.

Should we not be drawn, brothers and sisters, drawn by the love of God and concern for one another to make our way together to the banquet table? There is no other food worth consuming, no other food worth working for than this Bread of Life upon the sacrificial altar to which we come even in this life. For there we are joined with Him who made us, with Him who redeems us... with the One who makes us one with Himself.

May all come to your table, O LORD! Let all be reborn by Baptism in your NAME and then partake of your holy food. We long for the day when we shall eat it with you in fullness in your kingdom; then our union shall be complete.

10. Union

How shall we become one with the LORD if not by love? Love has come first from Him, and this love we must imitate and so share. His Son He has given to us, He has sacrificed His life for us, and we must answer this love in kind to come into union with our God. For our God is love and wishes to share His love – that is, Himself – with us, which He does especially in the Blessed Sacrament. We must partake of this food of love, yes, and we must become as food for others, sharing the LORD's love with them in the sacrifice we make for their sakes.

Wrap us round with your arms, with your love, dear LORD; hold us in your embrace. May we indeed come into union with you, a union that shall not be broken, that shall last unto eternity. May we answer your call to love as you love and so know love as you do... transcending the limits of this world, which indeed passes away.

The man drew into closer union with God, realizing more and more that this love is all that matters, and seeing how glorious it is. The greatest gift of all is certainly love.

11. Love

Love is its own merit; it needs nothing outside itself, and it is realized in its practice.

Yes, love is its own reward – nothing else is needed to him who loves. Why this is should be obvious, and it became so to the man: who needs anything aside from God?

God is indeed love and God is all we need, and so as long as our love is rooted in Him and we love with all our strength, we have all we could ever require. There is nothing lacking to him who loves.

But be not separated from this source of love, seduced by some imposter of love. For how many times the man thought he had found love, and how many loves had the man heard about from others... but to what emptiness these selfish loves inevitably led.

Only in the sacrifice of Christ will you find love. There alone it is pure, free of all self-centeredness that breeds but sin. Give yourself away! Give yourself away to another, yes, as in holy matrimony, but give yourself away first and foremost to God and to His will for your life.

12. His Will

Let us love and be of love and we shall be doing the will of God: His will is love.

Ravish my heart, O LORD! This is your will for me, that I be overwhelmed by your love. In this light all else is burned away but your love – the soul ravished by your love loses all else it may have had.

How naked we must be of the things of this world; to what great poverty you call us! For you would have us know you alone and be perfectly wed to your glory... and how can we accomplish this if tied to things of this earth?

Your special servants, your perfect ones, give up not only attachment to things but the things themselves, and so they are specially blessed to live in the moment where you dwell, unencumbered by anything or anyone. How great is their union with you!

This special blessing, this perfection of your loving will for our lives, you offered to the rich young man – but how hard it was for him to turn from his possessions and dwell with you alone.

13. With You Alone

O how wonderful it is to dwell with the LORD alone! The man would touch this glory during his holy hours as he adored Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. His eyes could see Him, he could sense His presence... he was often rapt in light and wonder in some small chapel in the basement of a poor urban church.

But he was not alone. He was surrounded in these moments by a great company of saints who adore YHWH at all times, and by those here who set their hearts on Him. All are one in the Sacrament that is Christ, all participating in the Body of the Risen One.

With Him alone let us be. Let there be no separation of the members of His Body from their Head. This is our heavenly call, the home to which we come when our faith is so strong that we are ready to die to all else to find it.

O what a precious pearl you are, dear God! O what a special treasure! Let us be with you alone that we might live forever and know nothing else but your light, your love. Let all souls come to such glory by your grace.

14. By Your Grace

By your grace are not all things done, all things that are for our good, that bring us into closer union with your Son? O LORD, let your grace pour upon us like the rains coming down from the heavens; let it nourish us and make us whole in you.

What a wonder is the grace of God! Could one not muse on it all the day long – as perhaps we shall in eternity? He comes to us, children forsaken and without love, starving in the gutters of this corrupt age... and touches us with His grace and mercy. And so our eyes are lit, shining with His light; and so we are clothed in majestic garments and brought into His bridal chamber. Is this not a great wonder for all to behold?

Like a wife cast off for her infidelity were we, unworthy of His favor, unworthy of His love... and yet His favor we find, His love we possess.

The man knew well how unworthy he was of the LORD's unending embrace – he could easily recall all his many sins to mind. Yet the LORD more readily forgave him and brought to his mind vision of His greatness.

15. Vision of His Greatness

When one's mind is filled with the greatness of YHWH, in wonder and awe he sits, quite speechless. One cannot even mutter "Thank you" before such a marvelous gift. Any word would detract from His infinite majesty.

And so we are silent before Him. And so we are left without a word or a thought as we gaze upon His Heavenly face. There is but love exchanged between the creature and his God.

We should say this is why His NAME is silence, an utterance that stills our lips and tongue... our very spirits within us. YHWH. (Do not move. There is no worthy sacrifice you could make.)

O let us drink in the wonder of your presence among us, of your presence within us and above us, O Almighty LORD! Let us but open our mouths wide, like young birds awaiting food from their mother... nothing more are we before you.

And there is nothing, NOTHING, to compare with you or to image your greatness – vision of you surpasses our eyesight and requires the illumination of the Son.

16. Illumination of the Son

How shall we see God? How shall we come to know Him who is beyond our ability to understand? How can eyes so blind be opened? How else but by the illumination the Son of God brings?

“Have I been with you so long and still you do not know me,” Jesus said to Philip when he begged to see the Father. Yes, the Son and the Father are one, and to see Jesus is to see the Father. But, you say, many eyes looked upon Jesus, including the disciples’, and did not see the Father. How can it be that he who sees Jesus sees the Father, and why did so many not recognize Him?

To see, one’s eyes must be open. If one holds them tight shut, very little light can enter there. So it was with the apostles and all those of Jesus’ time who were blind to the living God walking in their midst. And so the light He carried, the Light He was, eluded them.

Then how do we see the Father in Christ today, He does not even walk among us? Like the first disciples and all disciples, we must have the Holy Spirit fall upon us, and become flesh of the flesh of Christ.

17. Flesh of His Flesh

Here is where marriage leads, for the man and for us all: in Christ it is fulfilled – flesh of His flesh we must become. Otherwise we shall remain alone.

We cannot see the Father, we cannot know the Father of all, if we do not become one with His Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. Only looking with His eyes, only entering into His Body, will we be blessed with His vision. Outside of Him and His Church, we remain blind; we look with eyes that see only the surface of things.

How much emphasis Jesus placed upon eating His Body and drinking His Blood, so much so that it caused many of His disciples, many who had followed Him closely and with great anticipation, to walk away. This was too much for them.

O to what overwhelming ends the LORD calls us! to become united with Him, as He is... to eat His very flesh and so share in His very life. Who could bear such an awesome call – who could stand in the brightness of such radiant light? But flesh of His flesh we poor mortals must become, if we are to have life within us, if we are to enter God's kingdom.

VI. THE KINGDOM

1. The Kingdom

The Bride of the Lamb, the New Jerusalem, comes down from Heaven shining with a glorious radiance, the apostles as her foundation stones, the sons of Israel as her gates.... Here is the Kingdom in which all hope to dwell – here is our final resting place, the home we shall never leave, where we will never be desolate again.

O the wedding feast that takes place in this holy Kingdom on high! O the song that emanates from within its walls! O the food spread upon the banquet table, the dancing in blessed garments of purity and love!

Who could measure the glory of that perfect realm infused in every square inch with the LORD's eternal presence? No temple one finds in this City, for it is itself the Temple of the LORD, His holy dwelling place. And here we dwell with Him, not apart.

There is no need to take a step to find Him, no need to make a movement or utter a single word.... Here He is with us! always and forever and at every moment in the eternal splendor of this House of joy.

2. House of Joy

What joy is known in the House of the LORD! What unending glory is given to God the Most High by all His saints and angels! What is there we should not be willing to give up, including our lives, to find the wondrous blessing of joining in that holy choir?

Heaven is filled with joy, a joy beyond words, without limitation... with no dark shades to taint it. On earth we may begin to know that joy, to serve that joy, though indeed it is only fulfilled in the Kingdom. And the way to that Kingdom is a narrow one; the path to such joy is the Cross.

Embrace the Cross, brothers and sisters, while it is yours on this earth! This is the final lesson the man learned in his life, one that had eluded him and which he had eluded for many years – it is the Cross of Christ that leads to glory. It is on every page of Scripture, and the man read it every day... but still somehow that true joy of suffering in union with Jesus escaped his understanding, or at least his willing practice. O embrace this source of joy!

3. Source of Joy

The Cross of Christ is the source of all joy – how odd that must seem to the worldly mind, but how undeniably true to the Christian soul. Those who take up their cross and follow in Jesus' steps know the love and joy that come to them even through such suffering and sacrifice. It is a treasure they would trade for no other.

But the pull of the world is indeed strong, presenting a path in direct opposition to that of the LORD, one pleasing to the flesh but abhorrent to the soul. Indeed it says to please yourself and in this you will find happiness. But those who have been fooled into following this glamorous path know well to what emptiness it leads. Yet some still hold to such vanity.

Do you not wish to know true love, my brother? Has the truth no worth to you at all? Do you want to turn your back on true joy and ultimate fulfillment for the sake of some golden calf, some idol constructed by this evil age?

Do not be afraid to come into the light; do not be afraid of the darkness the Cross brings – it will purge you of all illusion and prepare your heart to receive surpassing blessing.

4. Surpassing Blessing

The blessing of Heaven surpasses anything the mind could conceive. For the mind is limited as this earth, but the Kingdom of God is not limited, in scope or in love, and so it far exceeds our thoughts and our ways, as good as these may be.

This is why we can make no image of YHWH, who transcends us and our imaginations. This is why His NAME is a silent Word, for no tongue could name Him Who Is. The presence of the LORD and His love are but to be accepted, taken in with great gratitude that we might become one with Him and so begin to know His glory.

O the radiant splendor of God's holy face! Of course, Jesus shows us this glory, gives flesh to this wonder beyond measure... and what a wonderful thing to have Him with us! By Him we do begin to enter into YHWH's transcendent presence.

O the surpassing blessing, the glory beyond words, beyond the conception of man! Give yourself over to it, my friend, through obedience to the only Son; following in His way you will come even now to that which is beyond description.

5. Beyond Description

There shall be new heavens and a new earth; they shall not be like the ones we know. A glorified body shall we have, not this poor vessel that gets sick and dies. We can describe the heavens we see in all their tremendous beauty, along with the beauty of earth and sea; we can speak of the marvels of the human body and of the most precious gift it is in all Creation – these indeed are in our ken to delineate and praise. But the Heaven that comes down from God, the New Jerusalem with all the saints and angels... this is beyond our ability to describe. We can but hope to participate therein.

Then how do we know it at all if we cannot comprehend it with our minds – do you not speak of fantasy? says the doubting soul. It is not fantasy, for that indeed has its source in things that can be seen and heard and touched by our hands. What we speak of is beyond words, and so it is only in silence one comes to know it. Only bowing down in humble obedience to what is beyond you, will you find your head lifted to look upon a world made new in love.

6. New World

A new world awaits those who seek truth, who set their hearts on the One who created them. He will make this world anew and place them in His Garden, never again to be cast out.

The world made new will not be like the old one, which so soon passes away. Though they might look alike to the unenlightened eye, it is precisely this light, which those without God lack, that makes things new, that brings the soul to eternal life. With this light, one is transformed with all Creation; without it, one remains blind and dying.

In this new world the LORD reigns upon His throne, plain for all the redeemed to see. The blazing fire that comes from His presence does not harm those saved by the blood of Christ but illumines their minds, gently, yet thoroughly and completely... even as the chaff is burned away.

The old will be gone, my friend; anything of ill you recall of this world will be no more. All evil, all lies, all corruption... all weakness and sin will be consumed by the fire of God and only the good will find a place to dwell.

7. The Good

What is good but God alone? And who can be good but those like Him? He alone dwells in the heavenly Kingdom, and only united with Him can we enter there.

Heaven is defined by the presence of God, by the presence of good; Heaven and God are one – it is where He is. And all that is with Him is good. So how can one who does not renounce all the evil in himself expect to find his way to the Kingdom of God? It is not possible.

The man knew well how good he had to be; and now he was afraid no more. He knew he would have to die, to lay down his life and all his possessions, all he might have treasured... but he did not care. He was ready to enter there.

Through the narrow gate the good alone may pass, for all that is corrupt will be stopped in its path – the imperfect soul will be denied entrance, for nothing imperfect dwells with the LORD.

We call Jesus good because He is God and it is through Him we poor souls come to the Father. He is the gate opening wide.

8. Opening Wide

The way of Christ that leads to life is very narrow; but once inside this gate, we find the horizon opening wide on the vast expanse of Heaven. And all things in this Kingdom are ours.

Another paradox it is that one finds all things in giving up everything. He who empties himself of all possessions is filled immeasurably with the blessings of the LORD – indeed, his cup overflows!

Such is the cup that Jesus offers, the cup of which He Himself has drunk. The complete poverty and absolute obedience He shows us brings the uncountable riches and unlimited freedom known in the Father's Kingdom.

The narrow path is open to all but only those who walk it come where it leads. The Savior's arms are open wide on the Cross to embrace all who care to come to Him, all who care to join Him where He is. It is the Cross that leads to Heaven, having nothing that makes everything ours... so lay down your very life, and He will take it up again.

9. Up Again

The lowly will hear Him and be glad. The humbled shall be exalted. The last shall come first and the dead to new life when Christ returns to bring justice to this earth.

We will rise again, brothers and sisters; He will not leave us abandoned and alone. Though now we cry out from the Cross with Him, asking why we have been forsaken, why the land is left so desolate – why hearts have grown so cold – an answer shall indeed soon come in the return of Jesus.

Now on the ground we sit and kneel, but up from our knees He shall draw all faithful souls who mourn the abandonment of the LORD. We will rise again with His only Son. And there shall be falling no more.

Let us rise up with you, O LORD, even now in our hearts and minds. Let our souls cry out your glory even from the ground in which we are planted. We shall not die but live with you in the Father's eternal Kingdom.... Bring to fulfillment your divine justice.

10. Divine Justice

The LORD's love and His justice cannot be separated, for love must be fair and justice kind: those who suffer for His sake must be rewarded with the glory only He possesses; but those who spurn Him and His love, how will they find their way to Heaven?

Sin has its consequences, as does virtue. As the lowly are raised from the dust for their obedience and their love, so the arrogant cannot but be cast down for all the pain they cause God and others. This is what they choose by their willful actions, actions that deny the need for humility and charity toward all.

It was one of the man's greatest discoveries to realize the union of justice and love in the Word of God and in God Himself. The world would falsely separate the two, setting them in opposition to one another. But what should the LORD do when His poor ones cry out to Him; what should He do about those who oppress them, who press their faces into the dust and refuse to repent of their wickedness? Would it show love to ignore the troubled cries of those who suffer? Would justice dictate blindness to oppression? No. As the humble rise, the proud shall fall, for only the loving and the just find a place at the LORD's table.

11. The LORD's Table

Who can sit at the table of the LORD? One should wish but to be in the room and not outside, but YHWH in His grace and mercy, in a justice that shows great love, draws us even to sit beside Him with His apostles and all the saints. And as many as may be crowded around that table, all remain very close to Him.

Mother Mary is there as the first of those to be at His side; she precedes all souls into the Kingdom of God. And be assured that she prays for all who would come there, that they shall learn to love and to pray for salvation from their hearts. For all who are just indeed come to the LORD's side by the intercession of Our Lady, who waits with Him on high.

And there we shall taste in fullness the glorious food known only in this Banquet Hall. There that food shall fill us so with His presence that we shall remain perpetually in His light – there we shall partake forever of eternal life.

He will come to us and feed us then; and we will be nourished by His love.

12. Nourished

Nourished. Fulfilled. All things complete, finished in the sight of the LORD and within our souls, and we living in that perfection forever... there is nothing we shall want. There is nothing we shall need. There is nothing we will desire for every good desire will be satisfied – no poverty of body or spirit shall remain.

And all will live fruitfully; every creature, every life, will have holy purpose and prosper beyond imagining, giving light to all around. For everyone from least to greatest shall know Him, shall share intimately in His light; and there will be no need for one to teach another, for the wisdom of YHWH will fill the new heavens and the new earth as water covers the sea.

And the sea will overflow all its bounds and course through the hearts and minds of every sentient being, immersing Creation itself in incomparable, unfading light, stronger than the light of seven suns but burning the skin of no one... only giving life to all.

Do you not wish to be nourished by such light, my friend? Then walk toward that light this day. That light is the Heart of Christ.

13. The Heart of Christ

The Heart of Christ must beat within us; it is the sign we have entered the Kingdom's gates, the proof we are one with the LORD. Jesus' blood must be upon us and within us it will course, through our veins.

What else has worth but this Sacred Heart? What else should direct and guide our lives but Christ's love? Without it we are nothing; with it we become as God.

And how does the Heart of Christ show itself, in what way is it known? Indeed, only by the love it offers the whole world. The Heart of Christ beats for all, desires the salvation of every soul... and it weeps for those who go astray, who turn their backs on Him this day.

And so, what should we do, brothers and sisters, but love all and so desire their salvation? No soul is excluded from Jesus' embrace, and so no soul we should think condemned. There is none that is beyond hope as long as they are breathing and their heart is beating. And so, those with the Heart of Christ will fervently seek the conversion of all sinners and wish upon them the blessings of Heaven. The one who does otherwise is not prepared himself to enter the gate of mercy.

14. The Gate of Mercy

The Heart of Christ is the Gate of Mercy, for His blood was shed for the salvation of all mankind. His very Name is mercy itself and pours mercy on those who call upon it.

Call upon the Name of Jesus, brothers and sisters. We are all the same in our need for His compassion, His forgiveness... the saving grace that comes only through Him. I am the man of this story, and you are the man of this story, whether you are a man or a woman, or still a child. This is a tale written for all of us in the very blood of God.

Yes, I am guilty in the death of the Son. By my sins I have caused Him to suffer, caused Him to bleed and die on the Cross as the worst of criminals... but *I* am that criminal! He is me! In my place He stands, fixed to wood by nails.

Is He in your place as well, my friend? Do you recognize your sin? Only by this recognition will you enter the gate of mercy and be cleansed of such deadly transgression. You must admit your guilt before Him to feel a drop of His blood pour upon you, to come to the gates of Paradise, and enter therein.

15. Paradise

“This day you will be with me in Paradise,” Jesus says to the thief on the cross beside Him. “This day you will be with me in Paradise,” Jesus says to all who repent of their sins and embrace Him with all their heart... all those who join Him on the Cross.

We move from the foot of the Cross where His blood drips upon us, to being fastened with Him there (O what an inexpressible blessing!), to rising with Him unto Heaven. He loves the thief, He loves all who nail Him to the Cross, and He draws them into His Heart when they turn to Him begging, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

Into His Kingdom the repentant thief indeed comes, into the LORD’s Paradise, surrounded by high walls. The walls of the Kingdom keep out all that is evil and make those within one community, one Person in Christ. His flesh is as the walls of this Temple, and one must indeed enter therein.

There is not much more to say, brothers and sisters; we are nearing the end of our story. But before we leave the man and his life to God, let us look more closely at the place to which he comes.

16. The Place

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, what God has waiting for those who love Him, for those who desire to share in His unconditional love. And so, how can we describe the place to which we come? How can that which is unimaginable be imagined? What figure shall we use for the Kingdom of Heaven?

Perhaps we should use none. Perhaps we should remember the ones the LORD has given us in the parables come forth from the mouth of His Son: the precious pearl, the hidden treasure, the humble tree in which the birds of the air make their home, the yeast that rises into a whole loaf.... Perhaps it would be wise to recall the words of the saints and the marvelous visions they have received – perhaps the vision of the Evangelist himself.

We could speak more of celestial light and sparkling gems and streets paved with gold, of trees beside a river whose fruit blossoms throughout the year and whose leaves serve as medicine. We would do well to remember the angels in glory around the throne with the living creatures and all the holy ones, and their song that thunders like the sound of many waters in a tongue only the redeemed can understand... but let us speak of the holiness that takes us there.

17. Holiness

“Who can ascend the mountain of the LORD?
or who may stand in His holy place?
He whose hands are sinless, whose heart is clean,
who desires not what is vain.”

Ps. 24:3-4

“Be holy for I AM holy,” says the LORD. Be holy and you shall be as He is, and so come to where He is. In holiness alone do we become one with our God and so enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is quite an invitation, my brothers and sisters, to ascend His mountain and stand in His place. But it is His sincerest call, expressing the greatest desire of His heart. “Be like me,” He says. “I made you to be like me, and though you have turned to yourself and the things of the world, though you have by your disobedience separated yourself from me and my holiness, yet I can make you clean, drawing you up from the mire into which you have fallen and sitting you beside me with my Son.”

O brothers, if you answer His call in like sincerity, if your heart responds with the same love, what will not be yours? All that is the LORD’s shall become your own. Be holy as He is holy. Let Christ’s blood pour upon your soul!

P. S.

There's still time to shed a tear
and be bathed in the LORD's divine Light.

God Love You!

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