

The High Calling

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Canaan: The Land of Promise

By Stan Key



Soldiers and government leaders have long noted that, strange as it may sound, making peace is harder than making war. Our nation's founding fathers discovered that defeating the British army was a relatively simple matter compared to forging a new nation. Think about it; while winning the war was certainly costly, the objectives were clear, the enemy obvious, and the results easy to measure. Not so with building a nation. The challenges of unifying the colonies, agreeing on a Constitution, creating a government, and working together were herculean. While the war was won in a few short years, it took many decades to become in truth the United States of America.

In the previous issue of *The High Calling*, we focused on that crisis moment of faith when the Christian pilgrim, on his journey to spiritual wholeness, crosses the Jordan River. We examined the spiritual battle that must be fought so that the follower of Christ can step boldly forward into the land of his

inheritance. But now what? Now that the battle is won and Jesus is Lord, what comes next?

While many "deeper life" preachers go to great lengths to describe the crisis moment of sanctification, carefully explaining how to leave the desert, cross the Jordan, and enter the Land of Promise, they seem to have little to say concerning what we are to do once we get there! This is unfortunate. Just as the whole point of the Revolutionary War was to build a new nation, so the whole point of salvation is to bring us to the place where we can live the abundant life as citizens in the Kingdom of God.

This issue of *The High Calling* aims to describe what the sanctified, Spirit-filled life looks like. Our prayer is that the articles included here will describe your inheritance in such a way that you will be encouraged to claim your possessions in Christ and become all that he redeemed you to be!

Let's begin by describing what Canaan living is *not*.

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Finding your way on the journey of life

Divine Appointments

By Andy Bowen



Serving as a missionary with WGM since 1992, Andy works mostly among rural Paraguayans. With his wife Lizet and their three sons, the Bowens are currently on home assignment, preparing to return to the field when the pandemic permits. In this delightful story, Andy candidly acknowledges that living in the center of God's will (we might call it Canaan living) is often uncomfortable.

I'm a hobbit. I'm sure you remember the small people imagined by J.R.R. Tolkien in his books. Hobbits are short and they love peace and quiet. Though I've never smoked a pipe outside my front door, I can certainly understand the appeal. They love staying home, and they don't go searching for adventure. The older I get, the more hobbit-like I become.

This is a bit of a problem because I'm also a missionary, and missionaries are supposed to love adventure, discomfort, and fighting dragons! But as a rule, I don't. Please don't get me wrong; I love

my calling. It's just that I've never really learned to embrace the discomfort that invariably comes when you're in the center of God's will. I guess I always imagined that spiritual maturity would increase my ease and comfort. But as I've grown, I've discovered that my desire for peace and quiet is often directly at odds with God's will for my life! I've learned that following Jesus means that he will stretch me, inconvenience me, and often cause me pain.

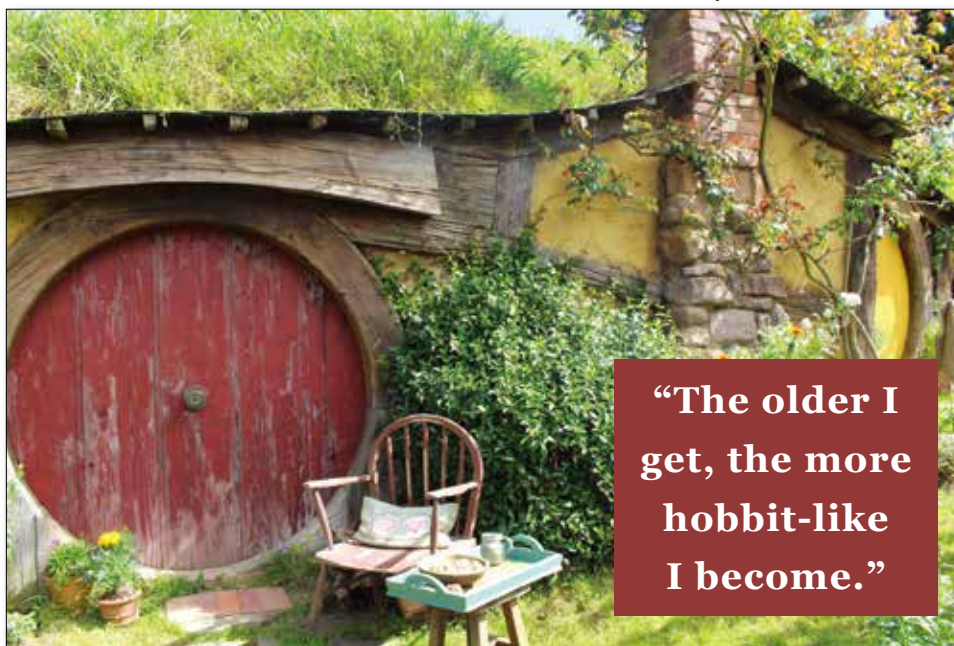
When I began teaching the Guarani language to missionaries, my students and I often ate lunch at a little open-air restaurant in the town of Escobar. Doña Perla was an excellent cook and most days I loved what she prepared. But one Paraguayan dish that occasionally turned up in the rotation was not my favorite. *Caldo avá* is soup containing various cow organs, and though my parents taught me to gratefully eat what I was served, this meal was a challenge! So, on those days when *caldo avá* was on the menu and doña Perla would place a piping hot bowl in front of me, I would smile and politely say *gracias*. But inwardly I would steel myself for what came next. My strategy was to eat the ring-shaped slices of intestine first, because they're manageable when they're hot and I'm hungriest.

One winter day, *caldo avá* was served and I was making good headway on the awkward bits when a pickup jerked to a stop 20 yards from my table. A huge pig in the bed of the truck had, in a bid to escape, climbed over the side as it traveled through town. But, tied by the neck and back leg, it had thumped into

the side panel of the vehicle and was now slowly strangling itself. The driver leaped out, cut the pig down, and then, as it gasped in the dust, began to calculate how to get the animal back into the pickup.

The village of Escobar began to gather to watch and give advice—this was the best entertainment we'd had all week! Eventually a plan was agreed upon, and the pig was reestablished and tied more firmly in place.

Once the show was over, the crowd dispersed and we all returned to our various duties, of which mine involved finishing my *caldo avá*. When I got to the table, I discovered that a yellowish greasy crust had formed on top of the now cold soup that was left. Being the consummate hostess that she was, doña Perla seized my bowl and hurried to the kitchen to reheat my soup. She obviously noticed I had eaten most of the intestines, so she graciously added extra pieces! Feeling like I had slid all the way back to the start in a gastronomic game of



“The older I get, the more hobbit-like I become.”

Chutes and Ladders, I picked up my spoon, prayed for grace, and practiced once again the art of being a good missionary.

I admit that it's a silly story, but for me it represents one of the most important spiritual lessons of my life.

Often when I speak in churches about our work in Paraguay, people approach me after the service and say, “I could never do what you do!” I guess

missionary stories evoke people's greatest fears and all the things that make them uncomfortable: snakes, spiders, heat, germs, jungles, etc. “Nope, that's not for me,” they seem to say. Think about that. They are potentially willing to miss God's will for their lives for the simple reason that it might make them, well, uncomfortable.

Although I am the one telling the frightening stories, I understand these people more than they could possibly understand! Because, I'm a hobbit. Remember? And we hobbits desperately want our lives to be calm and orderly, peaceful and quiet. Comfortable.

I love the book of Jonah. It's a missionary story, which is one reason I like it so much. Four times in this short book, the word “appoint” occurs. God *appointed* a big fish to save Jonah from drowning by swallowing him (1:17). Then, in quick succession, God *appointed* a plant to ease Jonah's discomfort (4:6), then he *appointed* a worm to bring it back to him (4:7), and finally he *appointed* a scorching east wind to intensify it

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God's Purpose for You: Holiness, Not Happiness

By Oswald Chambers (1874–1917)



Few voices in the past century have been stronger and more influential in urging believers to step into the reality of Canaan living (holiness, sanctification, Spirit-filled life) than Oswald Chambers. This article is an abridged compilation taken from his well-loved daily devotional book *My Utmost for His Highest* (first published in 1924).

Continually restate to yourself what the purpose of your life is. The destined end of man is not happiness, nor health, but holiness. Nowadays we have far too many affinities, we are dissipated with them; right, good, noble affinities which will yet have their fulfillment, but in the meantime, God has to atrophy them. The one thing that matters is whether a man will accept the God who will make him holy. At all costs a man must be rightly related to God.

Do I believe I need to be holy? Do I believe God can come into me and make me holy? The preaching of the gospel awakens an intense resentment because it must reveal that I am unholy; but it also awakens an intense craving. God has one destined end for mankind: holiness. His one aim is the production of saints. God is not an eternal blessing-machine for men; he did not come to save men out of pity; he came to save men because he had created them to be holy. The atonement means that God can put me back into perfect union with himself, without a shadow between, through the death of Jesus Christ. Never tolerate through sympathy with yourself or with others any practice that is not in keeping with a holy God. (September 1)

It is not a question of whether God is willing to sanctify me; is it *my* will? Am I willing to let God do in me all that has been

Divine Appointments *continued from page 2*

(4:8). These were all *divine appointments*. God was arranging circumstances in the prophet's life to shape him into the image of God. In order to give Jonah a heart like His own, Yahweh blessed the prophet with the gift of discomfort.

I'm slowly learning how to embrace discomfort and allow God to shape me, to change me, to set me free from my self-centeredness, and to make me more and more useful to him in his mission to reconcile the world to himself. Embracing discomfort is one way to develop the mind of Christ, who "made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant... and humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:7–8). ✨

made possible by the atonement? Am I willing to let Jesus be made sanctification to me, and to let the life of Jesus be manifested in my mortal flesh? Beware of saying, "Oh, I am longing to be sanctified." You are not, stop longing and make it a matter of transaction. (October 20)

The mystery of sanctification is that the perfections of Jesus Christ are imparted to me, not gradually, but instantly when by faith I enter into the realization that Jesus Christ is made unto me sanctification. Sanctification does not mean anything less than the holiness of Jesus being made mine manifestly. The one marvelous secret of a holy life lies not in imitating Jesus, but in letting the perfections of Jesus manifest themselves in my mortal flesh. Sanctification is "Christ in you." It is *his* wonderful life that is imparted to me in sanctification, and imparted by faith as a sovereign gift of God's grace.

Sanctification means the impartation of the holy qualities of Jesus Christ. It is his patience, his love, his holiness, his

faith, his purity, his godliness, that is manifested in and through every sanctified soul. Sanctification is not drawing from Jesus the power to be holy; it is drawing from Jesus the holiness that was manifested in him, and he manifests it in me. Sanctification is an impartation, not an imitation. (July 23)

It is a snare to imagine that God wants to make us perfect specimens of

what he can do; God's purpose is to make us one with himself. The emphasis of holiness movements is apt to be that God is producing specimens of holiness to put in his museum. If you go off on this idea of personal holiness, the dead-set of your life will not be for God, but for what you call the manifestation of God in your life. "It can never be God's will that I should be sick." If it was God's will to bruise his own Son, why should he not bruise you? The thing that tells for God is not your relevant consistency to an idea of what a saint should be, but your real vital relation to Jesus Christ, and your abandonment to him whether you are well or ill.

Christian perfection is not, and never can be, human perfection. Christian perfection is the perfection of a relationship to God.... I am called to live in perfect relation to God so that my life produces a longing after God in other lives, not admiration for myself. Thoughts about myself hinder my usefulness to God. God is not after perfecting me to be a specimen in his showroom; he is getting me to the place where he can use me. Let him do what he likes. (December 2) ✨



"God is not an eternal blessing-machine..."

Beulah Land

By Beverly Carradine (1848–1931)



A Methodist pastor, evangelist, and author, Beverly Carradine was a well-known leader in the American holiness movement. This article, abridged and slightly edited, is taken from the first chapter of his book *Beulah Land* (Syracuse, NY: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1904).

It has pleased God to take three countries and make them represent three distinct states of the soul: *Egypt*, standing for the life of sin; *the wilderness*, illustrating, in the wandering of the Jews through its boundaries, that spiritual condition which is certain to result to the Christian who, led up to his Kadesh-barnea, refuses to go over into the fullness of salvation; while *Canaan*, with its “green fields beyond the swelling flood,” is made to typify the blessed experience and life of holiness.

This same Canaan is called by Isaiah the Land of Beulah (Isa. 62:4; *Beulah* means “married”). To this beautiful and fertile region, the Jews were led from Egypt that they might possess and enjoy it as an abiding inheritance. This was promised them even before they crossed the Red Sea. The land was described to the people in the following striking word picture:

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. (Deuteronomy 8:7–10)

This was the country that filled their minds and drew their hearts as they plodded through the burning sands of Arabia. This was the land that Moses viewed from the summit of Mount Pisgah and felt his soul swell with unutterable emotions as he beheld its distant beauty. Studded with walled cities for its protection, enriched with precious metals, beautiful with variety and profusion of fruits and flowers, a land flowing with milk and honey; no wonder the country fascinated the eye, moved the spirit, and drew the plodding feet in that direction. To be shut out of such a delectable region was a sorrow and calamity indeed.

All this was a type of a spiritual experience and life which God has for his children. It constitutes the great topic of the Bible. It is the great work of God for, and in, man. It is the thrilling promise of the Creator’s image restored to the creature. The heart purified and filled with perfect love. Unbroken communion with Christ established. God dwelling in us evermore. The Shekinah in the temple. The Holy Spirit flaming in the soul. It is for this that we are brought out of an Egypt of sin to be led into a Canaan life of spiritual rest and

plenty. Filled with an inheritance of good, the heart laughs, the spirit flourishes, the face shines, the head is lifted above all our enemies, and none can make us afraid.

The soul has become calm in the midst of life’s storms. With a serene brow the victor passes through the agitations and commotions of earth. His treasure is on high. He dwells in the secret place of the Almighty and finds himself hidden from the strife, pride, and wrath of man. He has a table prepared for him in the presence of his enemies, his head is anointed, his cup is filled and overflowing, and he knows he will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. In a word, he has come into the rest prepared for the people of God. He has crossed the river Jordan and entered Canaan. He has reached the Land of Beulah.

We all remember in the days of childhood, how the sight of a remote line of hills and mountains or a broad river winding its way in the distance or the ocean and sky meeting

“It is wonderful what simple things would arouse and intensify this longing [for true rest].”



far away would fill and thrill the heart with unutterable and indescribable longings. The nearest explanation, or interpretation of the wishful feeling, was that over the purple mountain or down the river or across the sea there was something that could we obtain, or somebody that could we see or know, that would bring rest and contentment to the unsatisfied spirit, and we would be happy and blessed for life.

Many of us sailed over the ocean, crossed the hills, and went to the end of the river, but we never found what we wanted and needed. We turned hither and thither, trying again and again to secure in place and circumstance what can only be realized in spiritual condition and character. We do not doubt today, with the knowledge that has come from the flight of years, that this very heart discontent and inward sigh for something without and beyond was the soul’s craving for the true rest, for the life in the Land of Beulah.

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Eyes to See

By A. B. Simpson (1843–1919)



Preacher, theologian, author, and founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination, Albert Benjamin Simpson was a prominent voice in the Holiness Movement (Keswick). The following article, abridged and edited, is taken from his book *The Land of Promise: Our Full Inheritance in Christ* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1–31).

When God took Moses to the top of Mount Pisgah, he showed him all the Land of Canaan (see Deut. 34:1–4). The view must have been beautiful. But it is not our intention to look at the land Moses saw topographically, historically, or geographically. Rather, in this vision we find a symbol of our great inheritance in Christ. God is revealing what he wants to do for us before it becomes real.

First, notice that this was a supernatural vision. No one could have shown this picture to Moses but God. “These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit... The natural person is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:10). It is only when God sets our feet on Pisgah’s summit that what before had seemed meaningless and insignificant suddenly becomes tangible and sublime.

“You cannot see [the Land of Promise] while you are wandering on the plains below.”

Have *you* seen it? Perhaps you have not seen the Land of Promise because you have not become simple and humble, teachable like a child. “If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise” (1 Cor. 3:18). You cannot see the land with your heads; the view must come from the heart. Paul prayed for the Ephesian church, that their hearts might be enlightened to know the riches of the glory of their inheritance (see Eph. 1:18). Oh beloved, ask the Lord to show you your full redemption rights in Christ and the unappropriated promises of your Bible. Only he can give you the vision of your inheritance.

Second, notice that Moses did not see the land until he was about to die. Many people wander about all their days and only near the close of life do they catch a glimpse of what they might have had all the time. I believe many Christians realize on their death bed what they have lost. If they had known earlier what they find out then, theirs would have been a life of more constant joy, victory, and usefulness. But now, it is too late. They are saved, but they lost much out of their life that God would have given to them. Oh beloved, may you not have too late a vision of a life that has ended in disappointment instead of triumph.

Third, in order to see the Land of Promise, you must get above the level of the natural world. You cannot see it while you are wandering on the plains below. You must get to the top of Mount Pisgah to behold it. You must get on higher ground. You must be above the world with your back to its allurements. Everything else must be counted vain and worthless beside the

privilege of that glorious view. For Moses to see his inheritance, he had to be alone with God, apart from the distractions of this world, in the silence of that lonely mountain.

Fourth, to get a view of the Land of Promise, you must get to the place of death. Moses knew he would never come down from Pisgah. He saw his own grave first, *then* he saw the land. Moses did not go up Mount Pisgah to be glorified or exalted. He climbed the mountain to die—to his own pride, goodness, and wisdom. Only then could God show him the land. And so with you, beloved; if you are to see the glorious inheritance God has prepared for you, you must die to your own self-will, your glory, your pride, and your selfish affections.

Fifth, as we think about all that Moses saw when he looked at the Land of Promise and all that this Holy Land represents for the people of God. Let us sum up the landscape by saying:

1. *It is a real land.* There is reality in faith. The Land of Promise is about not only future promises and hopes but also obtaining our inheritance now.

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Beulah Land

Mamie P. Ferguson

*No fetters gall in Beulah Land,
The curse of sin is lifted;
The Savior's fan is in his hand,
And chaff from wheat is sifted.
The inward war is ended here,
And perfect love has cast out fear,
The clouds are gone, the sky is clear,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

*There's lovely fruit in Beulah Land,
And olive oil and honey,
With wine and milk on every hand
We buy them without money.
The winter's past of gloom and care,
The spring has come with flowers so fair,
The song of birds fills all the air,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

*There's wondrous rest in Beulah Land,
The days on earth of heaven;
A peace that none can understand
Until to them 'tis given.
The cleansing blood has been applied,
The root of sin has been destroyed,
Within the Holy Three abide,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

*The Lord has called it Beulah Land,
Because that land is married;
His bride the Pentecostal band,
In upper room that tarried,
His blood has washed them white as snow,
The fire has set their hearts aglow,
To all the world their heralds go,
There is no land like Beulah Land.*

The Key to Victory Over Sin: Quit It!

By Gerald G. May (1940–2005)



As a psychiatrist and a theologian, Gerald May's writings combine spiritual direction with psychological treatment. Drawing deeply from the metaphor of the Exodus journey, he speaks of sin in terms of addiction, or attachment. Some people are enslaved to heroin, alcohol, or pornography, while others to more subtle realities like exercise, approval, or sports. But "all of us suffer from addiction" (3). In his book *Addiction and Grace* (Harper & Row, 1988), May describes what spiritual wholeness looks like. This article, abridged and slightly edited, is from the final chapter: "Homecoming: Discernment and the Consecrated Life" (162–181).

I have drawn together five qualities that for me characterize a life lived with consecrated intent. They are things we can do and attitudes we can nurture to help us embrace God's loving activity and join more fully the mystical courtship that is already happening. They are, if you will, guideposts through the desert. I will discuss these qualities in the context of addiction because I am convinced that the journey homeward is one of increasing freedom from attachment. Members of AA and other "anonymous" groups will find them very consonant with their own twelve steps. Spiritual traditions have been teaching them for millennia, and the behavioral sciences are slowly rediscovering them.

Honesty. We must begin by accepting the fact of our addictedness. To accept this is not to affirm it, but to admit it, to acknowledge that it really exists. In religious language, this kind of acceptance is confession. In the context of a specific addiction, it means acknowledging that a problem exists. In the context of consecration, it means recognizing that our attachments are our idols, that they eclipse God. To be honest means a willingness to continue to face the truth of who we are, regardless of how threatening or unpleasant our perceptions may be. It means learning our mind tricks by experiencing how they defeat us, recognizing our avoidances, acknowledging our lapses, learning completely that we cannot handle it ourselves. This steady self-confrontation requires strength and courage.

Dignity. Dignity is acting as if we believe the facts of our creation are true: that we are indeed created in God's image, that we are created out of love, that we are good because God created us, and that we have the goodness of God within us. Dignity is risking that, as the popular saying goes, "God don't make junk." Like honesty, dignity is a choice, a risk of faith. It says we are worth far more than we can ever give ourselves credit for, that we are meant for greater things than those we ever could aspire to, and that we are more loved and more in need of love than we can ever know.

**"Our
fundamental
dis-ease... is a
most precious
gift from God."**



Community. Much as we might want to avoid the humiliation of involving others in our struggles with attachment, it becomes imperative to do so. We cannot trust our own judgments and perceptions where addiction is concerned; the mind tricks are too great. The exact form of help will be determined in part by the nature of our attachments. Major destructive addictions demand assistance from professionals. More interior idolatries require spiritual companionship and accountability. Sometimes we just need a friend to help keep us honest. The act of seeking help might be very dramatic, as in turning oneself in to the police to put an end to repeated illegal activities. It might be joining AA or Overeaters Anonymous. It might be talking one's situation over with a pastor, counselor, or spiritual director. It might be asking one's spouse or family to help monitor a particular behavior. Whatever the form, involvement of other people is an essential component of a consecrated life. There is no way around it.

Responsibility. At its simplest level, responsibility means respecting ourselves and those around us. All our addictive behaviors affect other people. Some behaviors really hurt others. We have a responsibility to try to identify and restrain those behaviors. In practical terms, we must listen to what other people are telling us, notice what effects we are having on them, and be willing to try to change. Responsibility requires taking action. But this can be very difficult, especially when it comes to our major attachments. The mind tricks of addiction make it excruciatingly difficult to come to any clarity about how to act. But then, when we do see clearly, it is even more awful. It is just too simple. It sits before our eyes like an ugly billboard proclaiming the two most offensive words we know: QUIT IT.

Simplicity. Perhaps you thought the final answer would be more complicated. After all, this is the final chapter of a book about addiction; there must be something more than those two words. No, in the context of what we can do to break addiction, all the other words simply prove that there is nothing else. It all comes down to quitting it, not engaging in the next addictive behavior, not indulging in the next temptation. No matter how we might want to amplify and elaborate it, stopping addictive behavior boils down to this: don't do it. It is so simple, and it seems so impossible.

You may have noticed that I did not include surrender as part of my list. This is because we cannot do our own surrenders. To try to turn it over to God prematurely would only be another mind trick, a way of trying to escape responsibility, testing rather than trusting. But indeed, God is in it with us all along, and wherever

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The Normal Christian Life

By Watchman Nee (1903–1972)



Ministering in China during the tumultuous decades of the Communist revolution, Watchman Nee's influence as a teacher, author, and church planter, was great both within China and beyond. He spent the last twenty years of his life in prison for his faith. This article, greatly abridged and edited, is taken from his book *The Normal Christian Life* (Tyndale, 1957, 1977: 1–5, 23–79, 95–104, 177–204).

What is the normal Christian life? We do well to ponder this question. My purpose is to show that it is something very different from the life of the average Christian. Let's begin our examination of the normal Christian life by looking at that great exposition of it which we find in the first eight chapters of Romans.

First, let me point out the two divisions that make up these eight chapters. Romans 1:1–5:11 form the first half and 5:12–8:39 form the second half. In the first section, we find that the plural word “sins” is given prominence. But in the second half, the word “sins” hardly occurs at all, but the singular word “sin” is used again and again. Why is this? It is because in the first section it is a question of the sinful behaviors I have committed before God, while in the second section it is a question of sin as a principle working in me. I need forgiveness for my sins, but I need also a deliverance from the power of sin. After receiving the blessed gift of God's forgiveness, I realize not only that I have committed sins before God but that I have the nature of a sinner. There is an inward inclination to sin and when that power breaks out, I commit sins. I may seek and receive forgiveness, but then I sin once more. So, life goes on in a vicious circle of sinning and being forgiven and then sinning again. I need forgiveness for what I have done, but I need also deliverance from what I am.

Notice further how in the first section (Rom. 1:1–5:11), the emphasis is on the blood of the Lord Jesus. Jesus shed his blood for our justification, making it possible for our sins to be forgiven. But in the second section (Rom. 5:12–8:39), Paul emphasizes the cross and death by crucifixion. Specifically, the focus is on our union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. The blood deals with what we have done, whereas the cross deals with what we are. The blood disposes of our sins, while the cross strikes at the root of our capacity for sin.

In short, Romans 1:1–5:11 deals with justification, while Romans 5:12–8:39 deals with sanctification. Justification by faith is the foundation, but it is only half the story. If we know only the first five chapters of Romans, we are leading a sub-normal Christian life. The blood deals with *our sins* through forgiveness. But we must now go a step further to understand how God deals with *the sin principle in us*. The blood can wash

away my sins, but it cannot wash away my “old man.” Only a crucifixion can do that. The blood deals with the *sins*, but the cross must deal with the *sinner*.

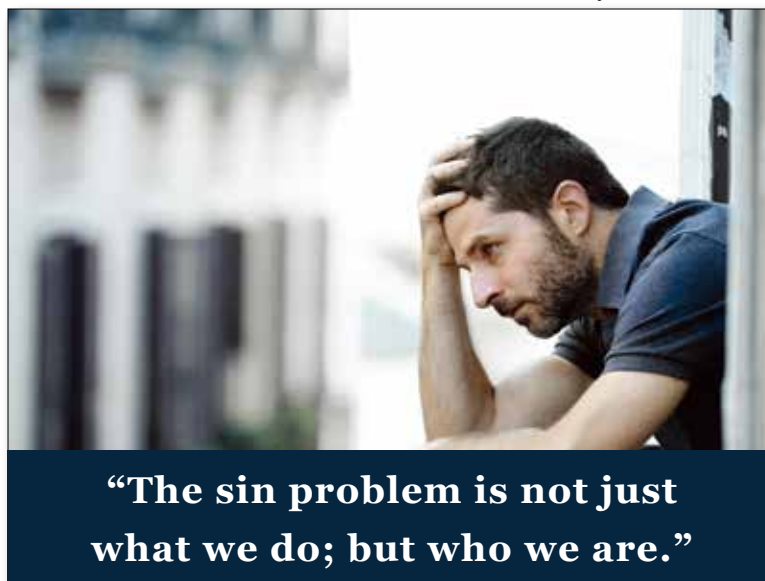
In Romans 5 we learn that a sinner is said to be a sinner because he is born a sinner, not because he has committed sins. In other words, we are not sinners because we sin, *we sin because we are sinners*. The sin problem is not just what we do, but who we are. A Chinese may be born in America and be unable to speak Chinese at all, but he is a Chinese for all that, because he was born a Chinese. It is birth that counts. So, I am a sinner because I am born in Adam. It is a matter not of my behavior but of my heredity, my parentage.

But this reveals our true problem! What can be done about our sinful heredity? Since we are born in Adam, how can we get out of Adam? Let me say at once, the blood cannot take us out of Adam. There is only one way. Since we came in by birth we must go out by death. To do away with our sinfulness we must do away with our life. Bondage to sin came by birth;

deliverance from sin comes by death. Death is the secret of emancipation: “We died to sin” (Rom. 6:2).

How then can we live a normal Christian life? How do we enter upon it? Looking at Romans 6–8, we discover that the conditions of living the normal Christian life are fourfold:

1. *Knowing*. “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin” (Rom. 6:6, NKJV). The work is done. There is no need to pray, but only to praise. When Christ died on the cross, I died with him. It is an accomplished fact. Think of the bewilderment of trying to get into a room in which you already are!
2. *Reckoning*. “Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:11, NKJV). “Reckoning” in Greek means doing accounts, bookkeeping. Accounting is the reckoning of facts, not fancies. God tells us to reckon ourselves dead, not that by the process of reckoning we may become dead, but because we *are* dead. We need our eyes opened to the fact of our union with Christ. It is not reckoning *toward* death but *from* death.
3. *Presenting ourselves to God*. “And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:13, NKJV; see vv. 16, 19). The word “present” implies consecration, but it is not the consecration of our “old man,” but our new selves, risen with Christ, now



“The sin problem is not just what we do; but who we are.”

Continued on page 9

The Rest of Faith

By Charles G. Finney (1792–1875)



Sometimes called the “Father of Modern Revivalism,” Charles Finney was a Presbyterian minister and a prominent leader of the Second Great Awakening in America. An advocate of Christian perfection, Finney often spoke and wrote about the deeper life. This article is an edited abridgment of a sermon based on Hebrews 3:19–4:1 that first appeared in “The Oberlin Evangelist” on September 11, 1839 (Lecture XVI).

“So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.” (Hebrews 3:19–4:1)

Question: Of whom is the author speaking and into what could they not enter?

Answer: The author is speaking of the Jews, describing how they could not enter temporal Canaan (see Num. 13–14).

Question: But why could they not enter in?

Answer: They could not enter Canaan because of unbelief. Caleb and Joshua were the only exceptions. God was so angry with them for their unwillingness to trust in his help that he swore in his wrath they would not enter his rest.

Question: But what is implied in this rest? How are we to understand it?

Answer: It is plain from the context that the author supposes the land of Canaan to have been a type (symbol, illustration) of the rest of faith. In this land they were to have enjoyed the blessings of their inheritance and to have been secure from the power of all their enemies.

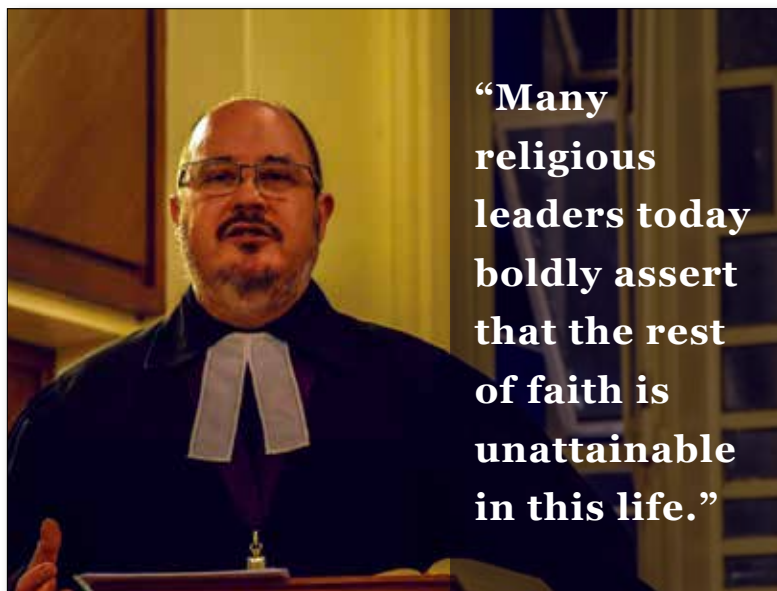
But let us define this “rest of faith” more closely. First, let’s define what it is not. It is *not* a state of spiritual indolence, or laziness. It is *not* passively waiting for God to convert our children, our neighbors, and the world, without any instrumentality on our part. When God works, he uses means; meaning, he often uses us. To “rest” is *not* a cessation of labors of love, watchfulness, or responsibility. It does *not* mean that we are exempt from temptation, heaviness and distress of mind, or trials and conflicts.

The “rest of faith,” rather, means a complete cessation from all our own selfish works and self-righteous efforts. Those who enter this land of “rest” have given up all their attempts to recommend themselves to God by their good works. This rest implies a state of mind that feels no necessity for attempting anything in our own strength. It implies the absence of fear in the face of death and hell because faith produces that perfect

love which casts our fear. Those resting in faith have no sense of condemnation and their consciences no longer reproach them. The rest of faith implies exemption from the strength and dominion of sin.

Question: How may we seem to have failed to reach this rest of faith?

Answer: Many fail to enter this rest because they do not realize that such a state exists. They suppose that the constant cycle of sinning and repenting is all they can hope for in this life. Thus, they take it for granted that no such rest exists. Others fail to enter because they think it belongs exclusively to heaven. But if this rest is not begun on earth, it will never be enjoyed in heaven. Others come short of entering this rest because they suppose that the world, the flesh, and Satan simply make it impossible. And yet Paul plainly says that, under the grace of God, we are not only conquerors, but “more than conquerors” (Rom. 8:37). Those who assume that the world, the flesh, and Satan are too strong for Christ so that he cannot save his people from their sins certainly have a very limited knowledge of the Bible!



Another reason many do not enter this rest is because they have been discouraged by the misrepresentations of the spies who have been sent to spy out the land. As the ten spies who reported back to Israel that it was impossible to go up and possess the land, many religious leaders today boldly assert that the rest of faith is unattainable in this life. Rather than encouraging God’s people to believe God’s promises and march forward in confidence, they bring an evil report and discourage the hearts of God’s people.

A final reason why many fail to enter this rest is they are too proud to confess their ignorance and to put themselves in the position of humble seekers. Pride and trusting in our own powers of reasoning keep many out of the rest of faith. They settle for a cold orthodoxy rather than a warm-hearted experience.

Question: So, what can we do to enter that rest?

Answer: The only way to enter Canaan’s rest is to anchor down in naked faith upon the promises of God! Suppose a ship, in a terrible storm at sea, is in danger of being dashed upon some rocky shore. Imagine that a voice from heaven should cry out, “Let down your anchor and all will be safe!” For the sailors who believe that voice, with what confidence will they let down the anchor, understanding that this will enable them to ride out the storm in safety. In a similar manner, God gives his great and precious promises to enable us to handle the storms of life: “Fret not because of evil men,” “Trust in the Lord and do good

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The Rest of Faith continued from page 8

and so you shall dwell in the land,” “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart,” “Commit your way to the Lord and he shall bring it to pass,” “Fear not, for I am with you, I will help you and uphold you with my mighty right hand,” etc.

What are *you* waiting for? Anchor down now into the promises of God! They can give you instant rest. Nothing but faith is required. Nothing but faith can help you. It is no use to wander around, trying to get gradually into this rest, by degrees. It is to be entered upon at once. The land may be possessed now, in the twinkling of an eye. ✦

The Key to Victory Over Sin: Quit It! continued from page 6

our choices are enabled to remain simple and our intent remains solid, empowerment comes through grace.

Any authentic struggle with attachment must involve deprivation. Withdrawal symptoms are real, and, one way or another, they will be experienced. If we can both accept and *expect* this pain, we will be much better prepared to face struggles with specific attachments. We might even come to see it as birth pain, heralding the process of our delivery from slavery to freedom. In our society, we are conditioned to believe that feelings of discomfort, distress, pain, deprivation, yearning, and longing mean something is wrong with the way we are living our lives. Conversely, we are convinced that a rightly lived life must give us serenity, completion, and fulfillment. We imagine that comfort means “right,” and distress means “wrong.” The truth is, we were never meant to be completely satisfied. To live as a child of God is to live with love and hope and growth, but it is also to live with longing, with aching for a fullness of love that is never quite within our grasp. As attachments lighten and idols fall, we will enjoy increasing freedom. But at the same time our hearts will feel an even greater, purer, deeper ache. This particular pain is one that never leaves us.

Authentic spiritual wholeness, by its very nature, is open-ended. It is always in the process of becoming, always incomplete. The course of our lives is precisely as Saint Augustine indicated: our hearts will never rest, nor are they *meant* to rest, until they rest in God. Our fundamental disease, then, is at once a precise neurological phenomenon and a most precious gift from God. It is not a sign of something wrong, but of something more profoundly right than we could ever dream of. It is not a problem to be solved, or a pathology to be treated, or a disease to be cured. It is our true treasure, the most precious thing we have. It is God’s song of love in our soul. ✦

The Normal Christian Life continued from page 7

surrendered completely to God. Presenting myself to God means that from this initial act of consecration onward, I will, day by day, consider my whole life as belonging to him.

4. *Walking in the Spirit.* “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1, NKJV). The Lord Jesus has done great things *for* us. Now, the Holy Spirit wants to do great things *in* us. The normal Christian life is not a work, but a walk. ✦

Beulah Land continued from page 4

It is wonderful what simple things would arouse and intensify this longing. Chords of music heard faintly on a drowsy summer afternoon, the sound of a faraway church bell, or the sight of a peaceful sunset were sufficient to fill the eyes with tears and the soul with sighing and longing for something that we did not possess and without which we felt desolate and bereaved indeed.

Happy the man who will understand correctly his spirit hunger, recognize his real need, and obtain the true relief. Blessed is the man who discovers that it is not a material but a spiritual something he wants; not a terrestrial friendship but a divine love; not this man or that woman, but the indwelling Christ; not a ranch or estate, but a home in the Land of Beulah.

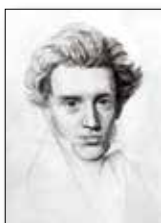
In the enjoyment of holiness, we thus spend our days in a country “where the flowers bloom forever and the sun is always bright.” Here we walk and talk with God and can easily understand how Enoch did the same thing without a break for three hundred and sixty years. Here the messenger from the skies will at last find us, and with a smile and shout we will go up from a heavenly life to a heavenly world, from the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of glory. ✦

Eyes to See continued from page 5

2. *It is a land of rest.* Not only is Canaan a place of rest from care, worry, and trouble but also a place of rest in God, where we experience the peace which passes understanding. It is a supernatural calm, and you almost wonder how the soul can know such peace in the midst of things that are enough to drive one crazy.
3. *It is a land of victory.* In Canaan, we are not to be beaten and baffled but to be overcomers. We are to be triumphant in the hard places and in trials. This is not just a battle; it is a war! It is a hard fight, but it is glorious. Beloved, take on the spirit of Caleb who said, “Let us go up at once, for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:30).
4. *It is a land of holiness.* There is deliverance not only from sin’s guilt but also from sin’s power. There is real holiness in the land. God wants to put all the beauty and grace of Jesus into your life and character. What would the land be without fruit? Paul speaks of the Canaan’s fruit in his epistle to the Galatians: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22–23). If you are part of the vine, then this fruit cannot help growing out of you.
5. *Each one has his own inheritance.* In the Land of Promise, the inheritances are neither confused and jumbled together, nor does everyone receive the same thing. God gives what is best for each one, according to his will, what is best suited to yield the greatest blessing. It would be a terrible thing to miss what God made and redeemed you for.
6. *It is a land that enables you to be a blessing to others.* From your new position in your inheritance, your life will be a channel of grace and blessing to many.
7. *It is a land nearby.* Don’t say in your heart, “Oh, my inheritance is so far away, it will take me a long time to reach it.” What did Caleb say? “Let us go up *at once* and occupy it” (Num. 13:30). Beloved, before the sun sets tonight, you can be in the Land of Promise; before you finish reading this sermon, you can take the first step! ✦

The Echo Test

By Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855)



If the victorious life of Canaan is indeed “normal Christianity,” then it is of primary importance to define this life in such a way that it is obvious who is a Christian and who isn’t. This is precisely what Søren Kierkegaard sought to do in the nineteenth century when the state church of Denmark (Lutheran) was filled with hypocrites. This article comes from his

inflammatory book *Attack Upon Christendom* (1855) where his purpose was to make people aware of what is essentially Christian (from *Provocations: Spiritual Writings of Kierkegaard*, Plough, 1999: 181–182).

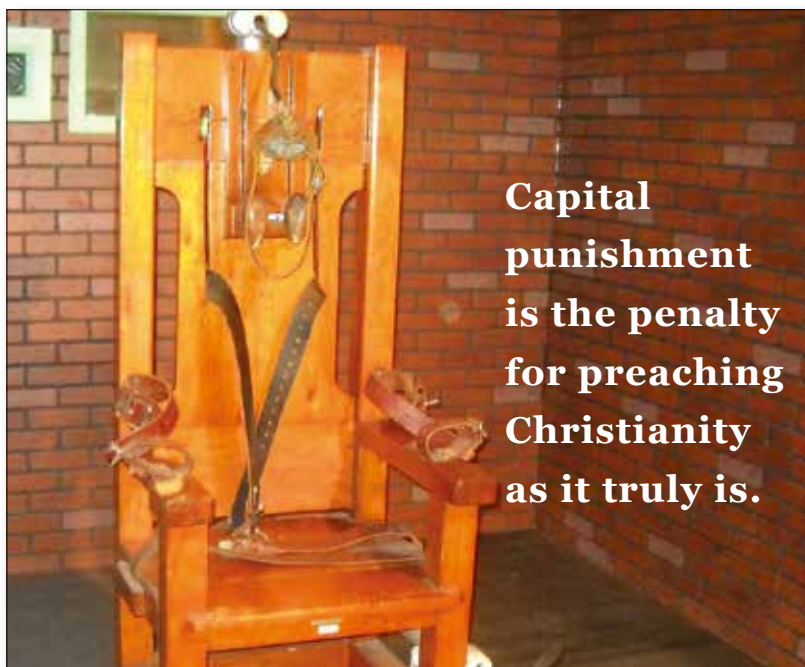
Endless volumes have been written to show how one is to recognize what true Christianity is. This can be done in a far simpler way. Nature is acoustic. Pay attention to what the echo answers, and you will know at once what is what.

When one preaches Christianity in such a way that the echo answers:

“Glorious, profound, brilliant, articulate Christian, you should be exalted with high praise,” know that this signifies that this preaching is a base lie. Though it is not absolutely certain that he who walks with chains around his ankles is in fact a criminal (for there are many cases when the powers that be have condemned an innocent man), it is eternally certain that he who by preaching Christianity wins honor and prestige is a liar,

a deceiver, who at one point or another has falsified the truth. It is simple: it is impossible to preach Christianity in truth without having to suffer for it in this world.

When one preaches Christianity in such a way that the echo answers, “He is mad,” or “What nonsense,” know then there are considerable elements of truth in his preaching. However, this is still not the Christianity of the New Testament. He may have hit the mark, but he does not press hard enough, especially not by the preaching of his life.



Capital punishment is the penalty for preaching Christianity as it truly is.

But when one preaches Christianity in such a way that the echo answers, “Away with that man, he does not deserve to live,” know that this is the Christianity of the New Testament. Capital punishment is the penalty for preaching Christianity as it truly is. Does Christ’s life indicate anything different? Hating oneself to love God; hating everything in which one’s life consists,

everything to which human beings cling. Capital punishment is the penalty for preaching Christianity in character. Preaching less, appealing to forms of the interesting, the relevant, or the controversial, is nothing but a religious falsification.

The merit of “Christendom” is that the world has now become so tolerant, has made such progress, that persecution can no longer take place. There is nothing to persecute. ✦

Supporting Ministry in an Uncertain Time

By Charlie Fiskeaux, Special Assistant to the President for Financial Affairs

Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. (2 Timothy 4:2 NLT)

“Whether the time is favorable or not.” Is there a more apt description of the uncertainty in which we find ourselves while proclaiming a message that transforms lives? Consider situations such as persons facing a COVID pandemic that has immobilized broad swaths of society, persons unemployed and lacking income for life’s basic necessities, many not being able to worship together in person, ministers having to develop new means of proclaiming the gospel message... and the uncertainty of the present time continues.

For some persons, the current experience creates an ideal situation in which to capture their attention with the scriptural message that can meet their needs and transform their lives. However, some persons find their circumstances so overwhelming that they are unable to lift their chins because

of the overwhelmingly negative circumstances they are facing. But whether the situation is positive or negative, the Apostle Paul challenges Timothy, his son in the faith, to “be prepared” and “preach the word.” This challenge strikes with force in today’s uncertain times that are not necessarily favorable.

The Francis Asbury Society is one of the biblical ministries endeavoring to be prepared and preach the word, even when the time is not favorable. Your support enables this ministry to continue proclaiming the message that we can “be wholly devoted to God,” a message that can positively transform our lives. In this season of Thanksgiving, we want to thank you for supporting the Francis Asbury Society through your prayers and gifts. Your support does make a difference and enables our ministry to continue.

Details for various methods of giving to the ministries and general fund of the Francis Asbury Society are available on our website www.francisasburysociety.com/support. ✦

First, let's be clear that the Land of Promise we are describing here is not heaven. Though many hymns and gospel songs use the Jordan River as a metaphor of death and Canaan as a metaphor of heaven, this kind of language is simply not found in the Bible. To make Canaan a picture of heaven implies that wandering in the desert of spiritual mediocrity is the normal Christian life; this is as good as it gets. But to believe that the joys of victory and the abundance of life are found only *after* we die is to miss the whole point of the gospel!

A second misconception about Canaan living is found among contemporary Christians who emphasize our brokenness and sins as if *they* were the evidence of a deeper work of grace! Turned off by the idea that believers are to be polished specimens of virtue, this new theology teaches that authenticity, transparency, honesty, and vulnerability are what salvation is all about, not holiness. The real enemy is hypocrisy, not sin. Candidly confessing how messed up we are is a badge of honor in some circles today, and authenticity is valued more highly than godliness. Those who know their Bibles, however, will recognize that the call to holiness goes much deeper than this.

Yet another misconception about the Land of Promise is found among those who define the sanctified life in terms of performance. What one does and what one doesn't do becomes the litmus test for recognizing those who have entered Canaan and those who haven't. In its most pernicious form, the deeper life is defined as "sinless perfection," and those who are sanctified are easily recognizable by their conformity to a certain prescribed behavioral standard. The Bible has a special term to describe people who have adopted this posture: pharisees!

A fourth error in misunderstanding sanctification is found among those who equate the Spirit-filled life with the presence of signs and wonders. For these people, a deeper work of grace is evidenced by more passionate worship, more intense emotions, and especially by the prominence of the miraculous (for example, speaking in tongues). Jesus calls John the Baptist the greatest person ever born (Matt. 11:11), and yet recognizes that he never performed a single miracle (Jn. 10:41). And though the church in Corinth regularly experienced supernatural manifestations of the Spirit at its worship services, it was the most immature, problem-riddled church in the New Testament. No, we must never equate the sanctified life by the presence of the miraculous.

So, if we can't describe the Land of Promise in terms of heaven, authenticity, ethical performance, or miracles, how *can* we describe it? What does the sanctified life look like?

I'm so glad you asked!

If we stay with our plan to describe the journey to spiritual wholeness in terms of the Old Testament map of the Exodus, we discover that two of the five books Moses wrote are devoted to answering this very question! Leviticus and Deuteronomy give us a divine description of what abundant living looks like.

Leviticus. Though a difficult book, the basic message is simple and clear: "Be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7, 26). The word "holy" describes something or someone that has been "set apart" for God and his purposes. Further, holiness speaks of moral purity, cleanliness. The call to holiness is a command to *be* something, not to *do* something. It is about inner character more than outward behavior. To be holy is to have a pure heart, wholly devoted to God.

Deuteronomy. In this amazing book, Moses sums up the entire purpose of redemption in one statement: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:5). The heart of the matter is



"This new theology teaches that authenticity, transparency, honesty, and vulnerability are what salvation is all about, not holiness."

the matter of the heart! But who can keep a command like this? Loving God with our whole hearts is not only difficult, it is impossible! Right? Moses saves the best part for last. The climax of his final sermon comes when he speaks to the nation of Israel gathered on the eastern shore of the Jordan River as they are preparing to cross over into their inheritance:

The Lord your God will bring you into the land... that you may possess it.... And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. (Deuteronomy 30:5–6)

What will it be like when you cross the Jordan and possess your inheritance in Canaan? What will be the defining characteristic of your life when you are filled with the Spirit and entirely sanctified? When God brings you into the Land of Promise by circumcising your heart, you will become a walking illustration of whole-hearted holiness and love. ✠



The High Calling

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Lord, I Believe a Rest Remains

Charles Wesley

*Lord, I believe a rest remains
To all thy people known,
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art loved alone:*

*A rest, where all our souls desire
Is fixed on things above;
Where fear, and sin, and grief expire,
Cast out by perfect love.*

*O that I now the rest might know,
Believe, and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin.*

*Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove:
To me the rest of faith impart,
The Sabbath of thy love.*

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