

The High Calling

a bimonthly publication of The Francis Asbury Society

In This Issue

- *Why Two Moments?* (Mildred Bangs Wynkoop)
- *The Power of a Witness* (Dallas Willard)
- *Peter Pan Christians* (J. I. Packer)
- *Can I Get a Witness?* (J. C. McPheeters)
- *He Brought Us Out to Bring Us In* (Andrew Murray)
- *The Verge of Jordan* (Denis Applebee)
- *Crisis and Process* (J. Sidlow Baxter)
- *Learning to Unlearn* (C. S. Lewis)



Crossing Jordan

By Stan Key



Not all moments are created equal. In the journey to spiritual wholeness, there are certain occasions when the traveler comes to a fork in the road and all eternity hangs in the balance. When such moments of destiny come, we realize that not only is the choice inescapable (we *must* choose), but once made, the consequences are permanent. James Russell Lowell (1819–1891) wrote a poem that captures the reality well:

*Once to every man and nation,
Comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood,
For the good or evil side;
Some great cause, some great decision,
Offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever,
Twixt the darkness and that light.*

The nation of Israel confronted such a moment of truth at Kadesh-barnea (see Nm 13–14). It had been approximately two years since their miraculous deliverance from Egypt at

the Red Sea and now the pillar of fire had led them to the southern border of the Promised Land. After their preparation at “University of the Desert,” God indicated that *now* was the time for the conquest of Canaan. This was the moment they had been waiting for. This was the reason God had redeemed them from bondage and established a covenant with them at Mount Sinai. The whole point of salvation was wrapped up in this decisive moment. *Now* was the time to march forward and possess their inheritance! But alas, something tragic happened at Kadesh-barnea that turned a two-year journey into a 40-year nightmare.

This issue of *The High Calling* is devoted to the crisis experience of entire sanctification. Entering the abundant life of victorious living is an opportunity that comes rarely to the people of God. When it comes, it must be seized, or the opportunity may be lost forever.

When the Israelites finally crossed the Jordan River 38 years *after* the debacle at Kadesh-barnea, we have one of the primary metaphors in Scripture of entering into this deeper

Continued on page 11

Finding your way on the journey of life

Why Two Moments?

By Mildred Bangs Wynkoop (1905–1997)



An ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene, Mildred Wynkoop served as an educator, missionary, and theologian. For years she was a professor of theology and philosophy at Trevecca Nazarene College in Nashville. This article, abridged and slightly edited, is taken from her important book *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Beacon Hill Press, 1972:

346–52). It deals with the question of whether sanctification should be called “a second work” of grace.

There is a profound significance in the structuring of the Christian life into more than one “moment.” The *definite* number, rather than the indefinite “many blessings,” is also highly significant in the Wesleyan way of thinking. It must be granted that the number (two) is not directly derived from Scripture. But this is the point: the meaning of “second” is not in the mathematical sequence of blessings. What is called “second” points to a different *kind* of step in the process of redemption, a “depth” relationship for want of a better term.

“Two” simply points up the moral/spiritual dimension of grace. Salvation is not merely one act of God “for us,” releasing us from any further obligation. Nor is it a building up of merit on our part by adding to our fund of virtuous acts. Forgiveness is the reality that launches us into a new orbit. The second “moment” is a crucial, midpoint correction which “locks” the compass to the Morning Star. In these two kinds of response to God lie all the crisis moments, major and minor, and the processes in grace which characterize responsible Christian experience.

The second moment is not a correction of the first nor a completion of a partially realized work of grace. It is most certainly not a stratification of the spiritually elite, elevating them from the common crowd. *One* and *two* are parallel and interpenetrating moral experiences in relation to a human response to God. They are usually separated in time but by their basic nature are not necessarily so. They are really two halves of a sphere or two elements in a substance (such as H₂O). Together they constitute true moral experience which

is impossible without both. *Second* is implicit in *first* and completed by it.

The Bible does not know anything about a place between *first* and *second* which can be considered “normal.” It speaks only about the danger of failing to press forward into the fullness of grace. Privilege and responsibility are two sides of the same coin. Justification and sanctification are parallel truths, each describing an aspect of the relationship of God and man but separable only theologically, not in life. That there is a time lapse between the two elements simply testifies to the moral weakness and psychological makeup of mankind. It is a quality, not a quantity. The emphasis on the second crisis experience, then, is not on the temporal succession implied by *one* and *two*. It is not on the limitation of life’s religious experiences to two. It is not any crisis as a terminal point. It is not an experience as an emotional or psychological state.

Men do not *grow into* Christian status, nor is the progress in Christian grace realized apart from points of moral decision. Although it is not a biblical term, *second* is used to emphasize a point in Christian life particularly stressed in Scripture where the entire personality is united in total love to God, where the divided heart is made one under the lordship of Christ and double motives are cleansed.

To speak of a *first* and *second* crisis, then, is far more than to make a numerical distinction. Properly, *first* is the entrance of the person into the whole provision of the grace of God. Provisionally everything God can do *for us* is done. Nothing is reserved arbitrarily. But a response is required of men and in this human response *second* has definition. The beginning of it must occur in relation to forgiveness. But *second* has unique significance at the point where human commitment is so intelligently complete that the Holy Spirit is not thwarted at any conscious level. “Crisis” is a moral word, not a “clock time” word. This means that it is not the time value of the word in experience that is of ultimate importance but the changed direction in life which is stressed. ✨



The Power of a Witness

By Dallas Willard (1935–2013)



Longtime professor of philosophy at The University of Southern California, Dallas Willard is perhaps best known for his writings on spiritual formation. In the following article, he humbly shares the very personal story of how a “deeper life” book shaped his spiritual thinking. Abridged and slightly edited, this article is taken from *The Great Omission* (HarperCollins, 2006), chapter 19, “When God Moves In” (214–20).

The one book other than the Bible that has most influenced me is a little-known book by James Gilchrist Lawson called *Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians*. It was first published in 1911 by Warner Press of Anderson, Indiana, and was most recently republished in 2000 by Barbour Publishing of Uhrichsville, Ohio.

From a literary or scholarly point of view, the book is of little distinction, which perhaps explains why it is not widely known and seems never to have been widely read or influential. But, given to me in 1954 by a college classmate, Billy Glenn Dudley, it entered my life at a very appropriate time, and, perhaps even more important, it opened to me inexhaustible riches of Christ and his people through the ages. This brought before me, in turn, a world of profound Christian literature of much greater significance for the understanding and practice of life in Christ than that book itself.

The peculiar doctrinal slant of the author led him to interpret “deeper experiences” almost entirely in terms of the filling with, or baptism in, the Holy Spirit. That is an unfortunate grid to place upon the deeper experiences of famous or not-so-famous Christians, as becomes quite clear from the “experiences” of the individuals described in the book. But, fortunately, that peculiar slant did not hinder the author from going, in considerable detail, into what actually happened in the lives of a wide range of outstanding followers of Christ—few of whom would have shared anything close to his view of the relationship between filling or baptism and deeper experiences of God.

The first individual selected by Lawson for a separate chapter was Girolamo Savonarola (born 1452), a major precursor of the Protestant Reformation. What most struck me about Savonarola—and I truly was *smitten*—was his drive toward *holiness*, toward a different and a supernatural kind of life—a life “from above”—and his readiness to sacrifice all to achieve such a life. Indeed, *this* is what stood out in all of the people Lawson dealt with in his book.

The experiences of these people did from time to time have the character of a filling or baptism, but more often than not they were moments of *realization*, of extreme clarity of insight into profound truth, together with floods of feeling arising therefrom. These experiences often were what George Fox

called “openings,” and they went right to the bone and changed the life forever.

Thus, of John Bunyan, Lawson writes, “Bunyan’s complete deliverance from his dreadful doubts and despair came one day while he was passing through a field. Suddenly the sentence fell upon his soul, ‘Thy righteousness is in heaven.’ By the eye of faith he seemed to see Jesus, his righteousness, at God’s right hand. He says, ‘Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that, from that time, those dreadful Scriptures of God left off to trouble me! Now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God.’”

I think the book’s effect on me will be better understood if we indicate the individuals singled out for chapter-length treatment. After Savonarola came Madame Guyon, François Fénelon, George Fox, John Bunyan, John Wesley, George Whitefield, John Fletcher, Christmas Evans, Lorenzo Dow, Peter Cartwright, Charles G. Finney, Billy Bray, Elder Jacob Knapp, George Müller, A. B. Earle, Frances Ridley Havergal, A. J. Gordon, D. L. Moody, General William Booth, and, in

the final chapter, “Other Famous Christians” (Thomas à Kempis, William Penn, Dr. Adam Clarke, William Bramwell, William Carvosso, David Brainerd, Edward Payson, Dorothea Trudel, Pastor Johann Christoph Blumhardt, Phoebe Palmer, and P. P. Bliss).

Now clearly this is a very selective and not well-balanced list of “famous

Christians.” But that was not something that bothered me as I took up the book and studied it. In fact, that these were, by and large, quite ordinary people only impressed upon me all the more that the amazing life into which they were manifestly led could be *mine*. I had been raised in religious circles of very fine people where the emphasis had been exclusively on faithfulness to right beliefs and upon bringing others to profess those beliefs. Now, that, of course, is of central importance. But when that *alone* is emphasized, the result is a dry and powerless religious life, no matter how sincere, and one constantly vulnerable to temptations of all kinds.

Seeking was clearly, from the lives portrayed, a major part of life in Christ. The “doctrinal correctness alone” view of Christianity was, in practice, one of nonseeking. It was basically one of “having arrived,” not of continuous seeking, and the next essential stop on its path was heaven after death. But in the light of these “famous Christians,” it became clear to me that the path of constant seeking, as portrayed in the Bible (for example Phil 3:7–15; Col 3:1–17; 2 Pt 1:2–11; etc.), was the life of faith intended for us by God. Salvation by grace through faith was a life, not just an outcome.



Continued on page 9

Peter Pan Christians

By J. I. Packer (1926–2020)



Coming from the Reformed tradition, J. I. Packer is well acquainted with the notion that believers are to *grow* into holiness, emphasizing *process* rather than crisis. Yet he recognizes that this theology of gradualism has certain inbred dangers. In this article, abridged and slightly edited, Packer reminds us of both the importance of growth *and* its limitations. (*Rediscovering Holiness*. Servant Publications, 1992.

Chapter 6, “Growing in Christlikeness,” 159–99).

Peter writes, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pt 3:18). God intends that all Christians should grow. Parents of newborns find great joy in them; but imagine the distress they would feel if months and years went by and their baby remained a baby, smiling and kicking in its crib, but never growing! We should not forget that God must know comparable distress when we, his born-again children, fail to grow in grace. In his classic book *Holiness*, J. C. Ryle explains what is meant by growth:

When I speak of growth in grace, I do not for a moment mean that a believer can ever be more justified, more pardoned, more forgiven, more at peace with God, than he is the first moment that he believes.... When I speak of a man growing in grace, I mean simply this—that his sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual-mindedness more marked. He feels more of the power of godliness in his own heart. He manifests more of it in his life.

The point I am trying to drive home is that holiness is the healthy growth of morally misshapen humans toward the moral image of Jesus Christ, the perfect man. This growth is supernatural. It takes the sanctifying work of the indwelling Holy Spirit to effect it. It results in an all-around personal wholeness; a life that is God-centered, God-honoring, humble, loving, service-oriented, and self-denying, of a kind that we never knew before.

And yet, there are many mistaken ideas about spiritual growth. A first mistake is *to think that growth in grace is always clear to see*. There is no problem involved in checking bodily growth: height and weight are obvious indications that it is occurring. Spiritual growth, however, is a process wrought by the Holy Spirit that centers on the human heart, and Scripture highlights the inaccessibility of the heart to everyone except God himself. Our judgments as to who has and has not grown in grace, and how much growth there has been in those who have thus grown, can only be provisional.

A second mistake is *to think that growth in grace is always a uniform process*. We think of physical growth as a steady

process, and of human beings as all the same. We then project these ideas into the realm of grace. The truth is, however, the changes and developments in individuals that sanctifying growth involves vary from one to another in speed, in degree, and in what we may call internal proportioning. Christ finds us in different places in terms of our character and personal story, and he works on us by his Spirit in the place where he finds us. No wonder, then, if God’s health-giving, growth-producing work of sanctification is differently shaped in detail, and appears to proceed at different speeds, in different lives.

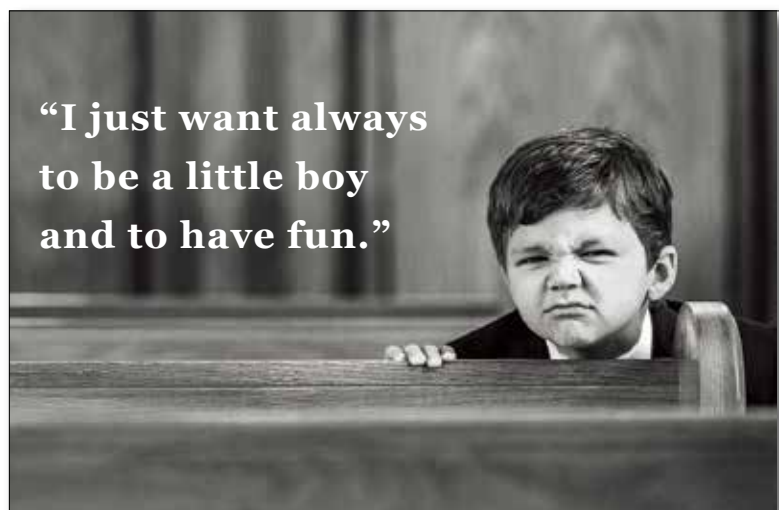
A third mistake is *to think that growth in grace is automatic if you are a religious professional*, whether minister, missionary, full-time Christian worker, monk, or nun. In reality, growth in grace is never automatic. Being a Christian professional makes it harder to grow spiritually rather than easier. Why is this? The reason is that since professionals are expected to perform—to fulfill roles—the temptation is strong to settle for an appropriate form of mask-wearing and role-play. Professional

identity then eats up personal identity, so that one is no longer closely related to anyone, neither to people nor to God. This means that one is shrinking, rather than growing as a person.

So, what did Peter mean when he said, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord” (2 Pt 3:18)? We should notice that this is put forward not as an option, but as a necessity; not suggested, but commanded. Peter’s verb is in the imperative. This is the apostle’s last injunction, set

forth in the last verse of his last letter, at a time when he knew that his death was imminent. So, it has the special weight and solemnity that last words always carry. To obey this command on an ongoing basis (which is what Peter intends; “grow” is in the present tense, and means “keep growing”) is a matter of being consciously Christian, and trying all the time to be more Christian, in every department of our lives.

A haunting twentieth-century literary creation, haunting because he mirrors so much uncomfortable truth about us, is J. M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, “the boy who would not grow up” as the subtitle puts it. Most people think of the story as a delightful children’s story about Peter, the pirates, and Wendy. Yet Peter is not a person with whom any wise child, or wise adult for that matter, will identify. His twice-repeated declaration, “I just want always to be a little boy and to have fun,” is really bad news. Peter represents the fixation of a phase that a boy goes through and, if all is well, grows out of. His choice (for such it is) to arrest his own development leaves him so flawed that we must describe him as an anti-hero. Though brave, clever, and leaderlike, he is also a conceited show-off, self-absorbed, heartless, and unable either to love or to accept love from others.



Continued on page 5

Can I Get a Witness?

By J. C. McPheeters (1889–1983)



No treatment of the doctrine of entire sanctification (crossing the Jordan River) would be complete without a testimony. Julian Claudius McPheeters was a prominent pastor (notably at Glide Memorial Methodist Church in San Francisco) but was best known as the president of Asbury Theological Seminary from 1942 to 1962. He delighted congregations everywhere with his godliness and contagious zest for life! The following article (slightly edited) is a transcription from a taped interview conducted in 1976 and can be found in George Allen Turner's book, *Witnesses of the Way* (Beacon Hill, 1981: 170–72). Converted as a child, McPheeters felt called into the ministry during high school. Then...

I chose to attend a small church college in Missouri. There I ran across a young man who had come over from Asbury College. He was a little different stripe. This boy's name was Greene and he would say, "Amen," in chapel at times. We never heard that in our school, but we thought a lot of this young fellow. We would whisper around quietly among ourselves, "He is a good fellow, but he is awfully religious." Greene returned from his circuit one Monday and told me, "I have met the most wonderful woman on the way down on the train, and she has had a wonderful experience. I think you ought to meet her."

We were having a college revival in the Methodist church and this dear woman, a retired deaconess, came to the meetings at her own expense, all the way from St. Louis, about 150 miles distance, just to hold prayer meetings. Her hair was gray but her face was radiant and young. Three of us college boys went to see this lady that evening before the church service. I looked in her face and saw a shine and radiance upon her countenance that convinced me that she had something I didn't have. It was beautiful to look into her face.

She asked me, "Do you believe in sanctification?"

I replied, "I don't know whether I believe in sanctification or not; you'll have to tell me what you mean."

She told about a life of abounding love for God's children, a completeness of victory, loving God supremely and loving

Peter Pan Christians continued from page 4

The Western world's current drift from its Christian moorings into secular materialism has generated what can only be called a Peter Pan culture. Here all the facets of Peter's childish egoism are encouraged to emerge and entrench themselves; and they are treated as virtues when they do. Today's world is full of people with adult bodies housing a juvenile, even infantile, emotional make-up—people, in other words, who just always want to be little boys or girls and to have fun.

Christians today can also get infected by this Peter Pan syndrome. Disciplines of devotion cannot help us if we are not prepared to be changed at this point. Am I willing to learn whether I need to grow up emotionally? Are you? May you and I be enabled to grow in grace at this present time, "perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Cor 7:1). 🌿

your neighbor as yourself, a life of love and of great victory. That appealed to me. I said in my heart, "I like that." She went on talking and unfolding the Scriptures to me in a wonderful way, and then she paused. I inquired, "Is that all there is?" She affirmed, "That's it."

I told her, "Well, I'll take that right now." While she was talking, something said to me, "Would you be willing to say, 'Amen,' in chapel like Greene and have the people talking about you and saying, 'McPheeters is a good student, but he is off a little?'" I answered back immediately, "Yes, Lord, I will say, 'Amen,' in chapel; I will even say, 'Hallelujah,' if you want me to."

And then something happened in my heart; I assured dear Mrs. Skinner, "I take that now." She got up out of her chair and



started to cross the room and said, "Do you believe that Jesus sanctifies you?"

I said, "Yes, I do." When I said it, I clapped my hands and said, "Glory." It was the first time in my life I had ever said, "Glory." Well, as an adult I have been saying "Glory" ever since; not only that, but I've been trying to get other people to say it too!

Sure enough, it was a test; in chapel shortly afterwards, the president made a good point and I said, "Amen." The students all looked around. As could be expected, in a few days one of my friends, who later became the president of the University of Mexico, said to me, "McPheeters, we think a lot of you, and you are one of our best students, but since you have entered into this experience you call 'sanctification,' some of us have been a bit concerned about you. We feel that you have gotten a little bit off. We are your friends and just want to say that we hope you will be your old self again."

The truth is, I never did recover! And it has been getting better all through the years. Now as I walk the eventide of life at four score years and five, I can say it is better than ever. It is a life from glory to glory, from victory to victory, from triumph to triumph. 🌿

He Brought Us Out to Bring Us In

By Andrew Murray (1828–1917)



Deeply concerned about the lack of spiritual maturity in the lives of Christians, Andrew Murray sought to point believers toward the life of victory promised them in the gospel. In this article (abridged and slightly edited), Murray bases his remarks on Deuteronomy 6:23: “And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land...” Writing from a Dutch Reformed persuasion,

Murray understands the importance of the Jordan River in the journey to spiritual wholeness (*The Deeper Christian Life*, Francis Asbury Press, 1985: 47–56).

I want to speak about the crisis that comes in the life of the man who sees that his Christian experience is low and carnal and who desires to enter in the full life of God. Some Christians do not understand that there should be such a crisis. They think that they ought, from the day of their conversion, to continue to grow and progress. I have no objections to that, if indeed they grow as they ought. But I want to deal with those Christians whose life since conversion has been very much a failure. I want



By taking one step, you can get out of the wilderness and into a life of rest, victory, and fellowship with God.

to say, for their encouragement, that by taking one step, they can get out of the wilderness and step into a life of rest, victory, and fellowship with God.

In our text, we read: “[God] brought us out from there [Egypt], that he might bring us in [into Canaan]” (Dt 6:23). There are two steps: one was bringing them out, and the other was bringing them in. So, in the life of the believer, there are ordinarily two steps quite separate from each other—the bringing him out of sin and the world and the bringing him into a state of complete rest afterward.

It was the intention of God that Israel should enter the land of Canaan from Kadesh-barnea immediately after he had made his covenant with them at Sinai. But they were not ready to enter at once, on account of their sin—unbelief and disobedience. They had to wander after that for forty years in the wilderness.

Now, look how God led the people. In Egypt, there was a great crisis, where they had first to pass through the Red Sea, which is a figure of conversion; and when they went into Canaan,

there was, as it were, a second conversion in passing through the Jordan. At our conversion, we get into liberty, out of the bondage of Egypt; but, when we fail to use our liberty through unbelief and disobedience, we wander in the wilderness for a longer or shorter period before we enter Canaan—victory, rest, and abundance. Thus, God does for Israel two things: he brings them out of Egypt, and he leads them into Canaan.

My message, then, is to ask you, dear reader, this question: if you know you are converted and God has brought you out of Egypt, have you yet come into the land of Canaan? If not, are you willing that he should do so? Today? Are you hungering to be set free from sin and its power? Are you longing for victory over temper, pride, and all evil inclinations? The God who brought you out of the Egypt of darkness is ready and able to bring you in to the Canaan of rest.

And now comes the question: But what is the way by which God will bring me to this rest? What is needed on my part if God is really to bring me into the happy land? I give the answer by asking you, dear reader, three questions.

1. Are you ready to leave the wilderness?

The mark of Israel’s life in the wilderness, the cause of all her troubles there, was unbelief. The people did not believe that God could take them into the Promised Land. This led to many failures and sins: lust, idolatry, murmuring, etc. That has, perhaps, been your life, beloved; you do not believe that God will fulfill his Word. Are you willing now to leave that wilderness life? Are you ready now to give up your whole life to him? Will you today give up your sins, walk where God leads you, and submit yourself wholly to him so that you have no will of your own apart from his?

2. Do you believe that such a life in the land of Canaan is possible?

Many will say, “Ah, what I wouldn’t give to get out of the wilderness! But I cannot believe that it is possible to live in this constant communion with God.” We must remember what it was that kept Israel out of Canaan. When Caleb and Joshua said that Israel could overcome the enemy, the ten spies replied, “We are not able to go against the people, for they are stronger than we are” (Nm 13:31). Take care, dear reader, that we do not repeat their sin and provoke God as these unbelievers did. He says that it is possible to bring us into the land of rest and peace. Will you then believe his promise?

If you are ready to leave the wilderness and if you believe that God can do what he has promised, then the third question must now be asked.

3. How does God bring us in?

God leads us in by a very definite act: that of committing ourselves wholly to him, trusting that he can both bring us into the land and keep us there. You remember that the swollen Jordan River blocked the path to Canaan for the Israelites. Unbelievers among the people likely said, “What fools to attempt to cross now! The current is rapid, and the water is

Continued on page 9

The Verge of Jordan

By Denis Applebee (1928–2012)



Having served many years as a pastor in his native England and then as a professor of preaching (Emmanuel College and Wesley Biblical Seminary), Denis Applebee was best known for his role as “International Pastor” for World Gospel Mission. He delighted congregations around the globe with his British wit, biblical wisdom, and passionate proclamation of scriptural holiness. The following article (abridged and slightly edited) is taken from his book *When I Tread the Verge of Jordan* (World Gospel Mission, 1988: 15–26).

William Williams, writer of the famous hymn, “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah,” invites us to sing about the experience of crossing the Jordan River. But what of his theology? Can we accept as biblical this concept of Canaan as heaven and the Jordan as the “river of death”?

*When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.*

Glance through almost any hymnbook and you will see that this imagery is common. Listen to quartets and duets, solos old and new, and the Jordan River is rolling at the feet of the dying saint, waiting to be traversed, often, it seems, needing the hand of the Savior to safely bear us safely through the swelling current.

But study the biblical account of this crossing and the land beyond, and the concept becomes a false one and the picture an untrue type of death or heaven beyond. The Jordan River is crossed by God's people dryshod, by faith, to a land of battle and challenge, conquest and defeat, temptation and compromise. Is this anything like the heaven Scripture pictures, where sin and sorrow cease and all tears are wiped from our eyes?

The Jordan River lies before us, not as death, but as the greatest challenge to the believer's spiritual advance into a land of the Spirit, a promised inheritance of spiritual experience in the here and now of Christian living.

You will remember how the Lord had earlier led the Israelites out of Egypt by opening a way through the waters of the Red Sea. Their escape is a picture of our separation from a world in slavery to sin and disobedience to God. This is the standard miracle of the Old Testament, by which God is often identified in his power and ability: “For the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt” (Dt 20:1).

The wilderness into which they were brought was obviously not the Land of Promise. Their journey through it was to take but a matter of months. The purpose of that journey was to prove them, to train them, to weld them into nationhood, and to prepare them for their inheritance in Canaan. Their prolonged stay in the wilderness was not the purpose of God. That came through their unbelief and disobedience to his commands.

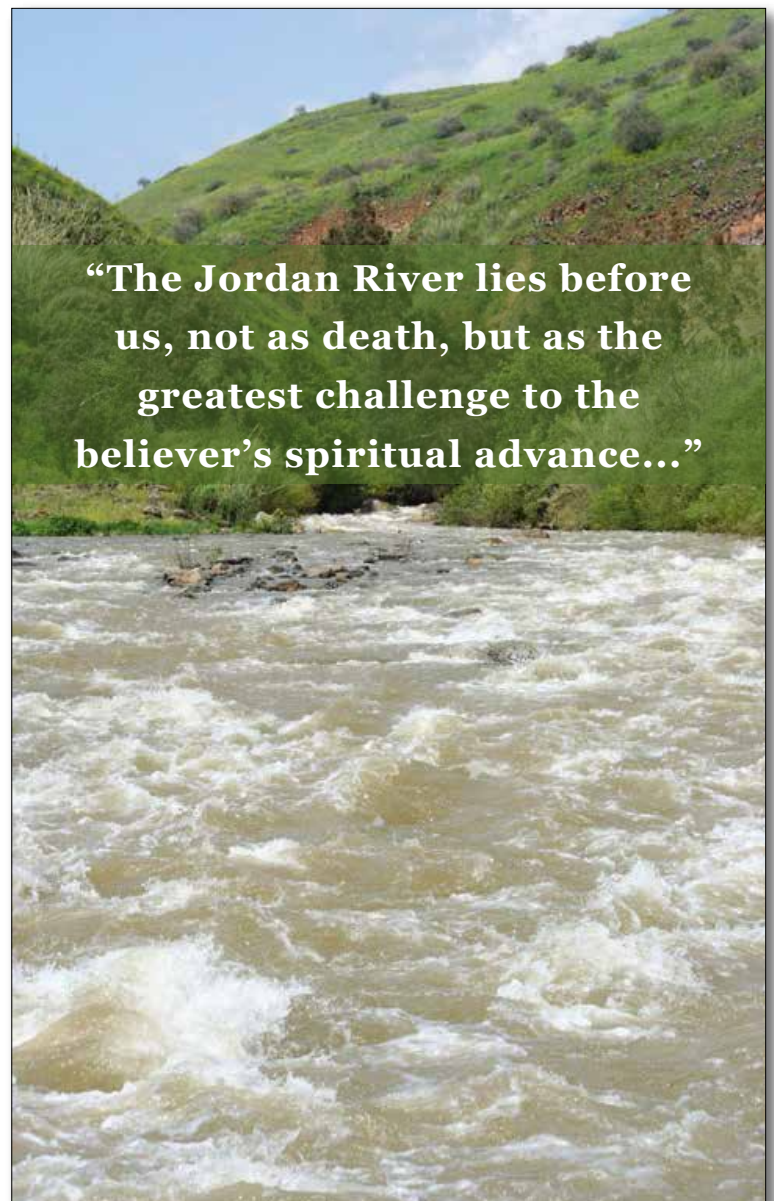
Their entry into Canaan was to have been via Kadesh-barnea, a straightforward progression of obedience. But when the people refused to enter, the adult generation was punished; they perished in the wilderness. An alternative entrance was

provided years later that was reminiscent of their deliverance from Egypt when they crossed the Red Sea. This second crisis, wherein they were to cross the Jordan River, had both similarity and difference. It was similar in that they faced a barrier of water. It was different in the way they were to advance and conquer that barrier. On the shores of the Red Sea, Moses raised a hand and the waters parted. It took little faith for the people to cross a dry seabed with an advancing Egyptian army behind them. A healthy fear of what lay behind and an aspiration for freedom ahead was their motivation.

But on the banks of the Jordan there was no Moses and no Egyptian army! The motivation was pure obedience to God's command, desire for his promised inheritance, and faith in his ability to fulfill his word. Some were indeed content to stay on the east of Jordan, accepting less than the promised inheritance provided. They actually visited the land and helped fight in its battles, but they chose to settle on the wrong side of Jordan.

This crisis of entry, however, was not the end of the story; it was the beginning! This was not the closing of the book; this was the opening of a new chapter. The spiritual and theological

Continued on page 9



Crisis and Process

By J. Sidlow Baxter (1903–1999)



Born in Australia, Sidlow Baxter was a pastor, evangelist, theologian, and prolific author. Scholarly, yet practical, he often wrote about the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. The following article (abridged and slightly edited) is taken from his book *Our High Calling* (Zondervan, 1967), Chapter 2: “Sanctification: Crisis and Process,” 29–39.

Repeatedly in the pages of both the Old and New Testaments, we are called to a life of holiness (sanctification). Among the many verses we could cite, the standard-bearer and banner verse, which lifts up all the principle aspects of sanctification is this:

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:23–24)

First, then, let us learn what this text tells us about the *nature* of sanctification. Often when we explore a New Testament text, it is useful to look at the original Greek wording. In this case, however, we may learn much from our own English word, “sanctification,” which is an excellent translation of the Greek original. It comes from two Latin words—*sanctus*, meaning “sacred” or “apart”; and *facio*, which means “I make.” So *sanctus* and *facio* together mean, “I make sacred,” or “I set apart.” To be sanctified means to be set apart. Entire sanctification is complete set-apartness to Christ.

This helps us to iron out some misunderstandings right away. Sanctification is *not* sinless perfection. And let us not mystify ourselves, either, by thinking that sanctification is some heavenly-minded superiority which is only available to the mystically minded or those who are far advanced in Christian knowledge and piety. No! Sanctification, according to the very etymology of the word, is set-apartness, a complete yieldedness to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit.

When understood as a voluntary set-apartness to Christ, it becomes clear that, on the human side, entire sanctification may begin with *the crisis point of a moment*; for the instant that I become really and fully set apart to Christ I become entirely sanctified. It has nothing to do with any supposed inward, spiritual surgery by which the Holy Spirit cuts out a so-called “old nature” or “body of sin” in the believer. I would be the first to agree that sanctification is a *process* as well

as a crisis; yet never can there be any unimpeded *process* of sanctification apart from this initial crisis of the moment by which we become *completely* set apart to Christ.

One other thing which we ought to mention here about this beginning of sanctification is that there are *two sides* to it—a negative and a positive. We are to be set apart *from* sin, and set apart *to* Christ. These two aspects—the “from” and the “to”—must always go together. There cannot be true separatedness to Christ without a true separatedness from sin.



Sanctification is not some heavenly-minded superiority.

But now, secondly, our text also indicates the *effect* of sanctification in the heart and life. It says, “your whole spirit and soul and body be kept *blameless*.” That word “blameless” is of key importance. It is just as important in what it does *not* mean as in what it *does* mean. Mark it well: our text does not speak of our being “kept *faultless*.” There is a world of difference between faultlessness and blamelessness. Faultlessness has to do with our abilities and behaviors, whereas blamelessness has to do with our *motives*. In this present life, while we occupy these mortal bodies, we shall never have faultless powers, either mental or physical. But our motives can be pure when acted on by the Holy Spirit.

But *how* does sanctification effect this inward cleansing of our motives so that we are blameless? A look at our text tells us that the working of this moral miracle is attributed exclusively to *God*. It is not something which *we* achieve by our voluntary set-apartness to Christ, or by any sort of ascetic rigor following our self-surrender. It is a result which God himself effects in *response* to our yieldedness to him. Our text reads, “May the God of peace himself sanctify you,” which plainly indicates an activity of *God*. And again, it says, “your whole spirit and soul and body

be kept blameless”—which clearly implies something done *for* us, and not *by* us. And verse 24 adds, “He who calls you is faithful; *he* will surely do it.”

This brings us to the third arresting feature of our text, namely, the intended *extent* of this sanctification and blamelessness. Look again at the words, “Your whole spirit and soul and body be kept...” By the body, man has *world*-consciousness; by the soul, *self*-consciousness; by the spirit, *God*-consciousness. When you and I become really set apart to Christ, the Lord Jesus comes in to take possession of the total human personality—infilling, subduing, refining, illuminating, and transforming the mind, by the glory of the Holy Spirit, so that

Continued on page 9

even our faces, eyes, expressions, and the tone of our voices share in the sanctifying experience. This is what it means to be “sanctified wholly.”

You will perhaps remember the hymn written by W. T. Longstaff entitled “Take Time to be Holy.” One of the verses goes like this:

*Take time to be holy, the world rushes on.
Spend much time in secret with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus like him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct his likeness shall see.*

In this matter of initial sanctification followed by life-long holiness, it takes *time* for us to take all of Christ. We cannot “get there” in five minutes or by hurried snatches of prayer. We need time to quiet our hearts and be alone with Jesus, to wait on him, to listen to him, and to let him search our hearts. We will never be entirely sanctified and blameless until we “spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone.” ✠

He Brought Us Out... continued from page 6

deep.” But those who had faith gathered behind the priests with the ark and obeyed the command of Joshua to advance, even though they did not know what God was going to do. As the priests stepped into the water, the waters rose up on the upper side into a high wall and flowed away on the other side, and a clear passage was made for the whole camp.

Dear friend, the same God who brought you out of bondage can lead you into a place of rest. Look to him and say, “O God, make an end of my unbelief and sinful wilderness life and bring me into the land of victory, rest, and blessing!” Is this the prayer of your heart? He can take you through the swollen river this very moment, yes, *this very moment*. ✠

The Verge of Jordan continued from page 7

significance of all this is very important and, unfortunately, it has been largely neglected by preachers and teachers in recent years.

The marked difference between the two crossings must be recognized if one is to see the theological significance of what is happening. At the Jordan River, there was no Moses and no parted water, and yet there was still a call to cross. Specific instructions were given, and an example was set by the priests as they dipped their feet in the edge of the water. This was a step of faith. Finally, each person had to take this step to enter into the land. Once on the other side, the children of Israel were as clearly in a new experience as they had been forty years earlier when they crossed the Red Sea. It was a clear crisis experience.

Similarly, for the New Testament believer to enter God’s inheritance, there must be an effort of faith exercised in the promises of God. The first disciples were to tarry for the promise of the Father. That promise was extended to each generation in Acts 2:39 and this promise has never been removed from the Christian’s inheritance. It may be effected by faith as and when the believer is prepared to make that full commitment to God which was required at the Jordan River. The essence of the experience, historically, and theologically now, is surrender to God’s will and a claiming of God’s promise. The challenge to each generation since that time has been right here. Are they prepared to seek, by faith, all that is available in God’s inheritance for them? ✠

Now, “deeper” also meant “broader.” Lawson was remarkably unbiased in his selection of the “famous Christians,” and this taught me a lot. The individuals selected for presentation ranged very broadly as to cultural and denominational connections. There were a lot of Baptists in the group, which was my own denominational background. That helped me. But there were also Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Salvation Army, and others.

Seeing that the experience of God in the calling to holiness and power did not respect sectarian boundaries taught me that I should disregard a lot of things that make for doctrinal and practical insularity in others and place no weight upon them for myself. It taught me, in Paul’s lovely image, to distinguish the treasure from the vessel (2 Cor 4:7) and to attend to the treasure: Christ living in the individual life, and the individual living into obedience to Christ.

As I moved on from Lawson’s book to study the works of these and many other “famous Christians,” it was first of all *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis that became my constant companion. Then it was the works of John Wesley, and especially his *Journal* and the standard set of his *Sermons*. Then William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy life*, and Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. Then the various writings of Charles Finney, especially his *Autobiography* and *Revival Lectures*.

The effect of all my reading has been constantly to bring me back to the Bible, and especially the Gospels, and to find in Jesus and his teachings the wisdom and reality for which human beings vainly strive on their own.

I’ll never cease to be thankful for James Gilchrist Lawson and his little book. It came to me at the right time and helped me to see the actual presence of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom and Spirit in the real life of real people. Any reader should take from the reading of this book the simple but profound truth that they too can know by experience the truths of Christ and his Kingdom that are set forth in the Bible: that if with all their heart they truly seek God, they will be found and claimed by him (Jer 29:13). This is what human life is for. ✠

Returning to Pleasant Places

Dorena and I would like to greet our Francis Asbury Society family in the glorious name of Jesus Christ! We rejoice to be serving once again with you as your new president. In our 43rd year of ministry, the Lord has “caused our lines to fall in pleasant places” to be living in Wilmore once again and working with you.



It is a joy to offer you this edition of *The High Calling*. Stan Key, now serving as our Director of Publishing has penned and drafted an edition that will feed your soul!

Please add us to your prayer list as we seek to place before Jesus our “loaves and fishes” with the prayer that He will multiply our humble offerings to feed the multitude. It is an awesome privilege to once again serve you.

For His Glory,
Ron Smith

Learning to Unlearn

By C. S. Lewis (1898–1963)



The first book C. S. Lewis wrote after his conversion is, in a sense, the story of his own search for God. *The Pilgrim's Regress* (Eerdmans, 1933) tells the allegorical story of a pilgrim named John and his quest to find the meaning of life. The climax of his journey comes when he reaches an impassable body of water that blocks the path to his destination. He can only cross this "Jordan" when he unlearns what he thought he knew, illustrating how sanctification is all of grace, not of works. The following article is abridged and slightly edited (166–68).

Mother Kirk, crowned and sceptered, stood looking eastward to where John slowly descended the cliff. She was on the margin of a large pool which lay in a semicircle against the western cliff. On the far side of the water that cliff rose sheer to the edge of the canyon.

"I have come to give myself up," John said.

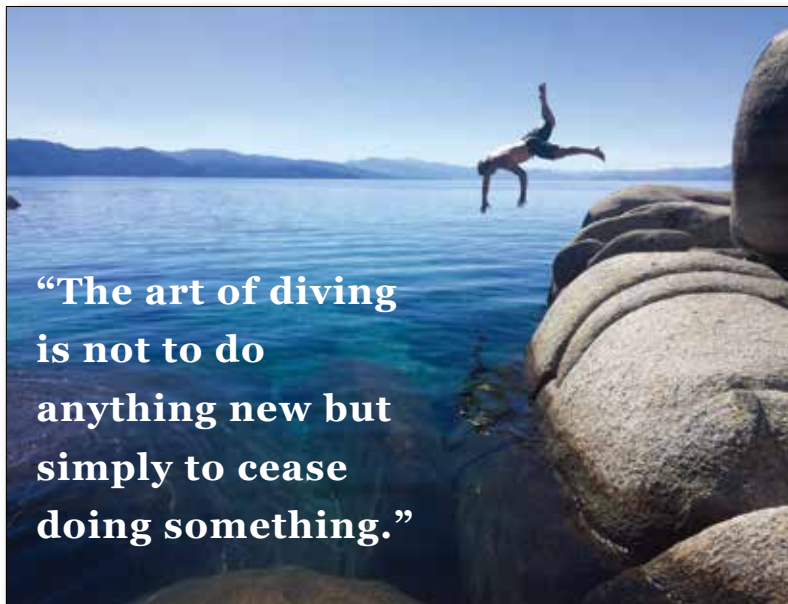
"It is well," said Mother Kirk. "You have come a long way round to reach this place, whither I would have carried you in a few moments. But it is very well."

"What must I do?" said John.

"You must take off your rags," said she, "as your friend has done already, and then you must dive into this water."

"Alas," said he, "I have never learned to dive."

"There is nothing to learn," said she. "The art of diving is not to do anything new but simply to cease doing something. You have only to let yourself go."



"It is only necessary," added John's friend, with a smile, "to abandon all efforts at self-preservation."

"I think," said John, "that if it is all the same, I would rather jump."

"It is not all the same," said Mother Kirk. "If you jump, you will be trying to save yourself and you may be hurt. As well, you would not go deep enough. You must dive so that you can go right down to the bottom of the pool: for you are not to come up again on this side. There is a tunnel in the cliff, far beneath the surface of the water, and it is through that that you must pass so that you may come up on the far side."

"I see," thought John to himself, "that they have brought me here to kill me," but he began, nevertheless, to take off his clothes. They were little loss to him, for they hung in shreds, plastered with blood and with grime: but they were so stuck to him that they came away with pain and a little skin came with them. When he was naked, Mother Kirk bade him come to the edge of the pool, where John's friend

was already standing. It was a long way down to the water.

John hesitated a long moment, fighting off the temptation to turn and run away. But finally, the voice of his friend broke in: "Come on, John," he said, "the longer we look at it the less we shall like it."

And with that John took a header into the pool and they saw him no more. And how John managed it or what he felt I did not know, but he also rubbed his hands, shut his eyes, despaired, and let himself go. It was not a good dive, but at least he reached the water headfirst. ✨

Shaking or Unshakeable

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

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. (Hebrews 12:28 NKJV)

When we look around at society, we often see instability. In fact, it seems the foundations are shaking. For example, consider how family life is threatened by entertainment lifestyles, jobs are unstable, protests in the streets are violent, political discourse lacks civility, and a virus disrupts our daily life. But when we remember these features are part of a world system that ultimately will pass away, why are we surprised that things are shaking?

In contrast, there is an intangible sphere in which all of us can elect to participate. It is a "kingdom which cannot be shaken" that exists in a spiritual world governed by our Lord Himself. To the extent that our lives are centered in our Lord's kingdom, our daily life need not be shaken by the external influences of society around us. A key to living this unshakable life is focusing our attention on, participating in the life of, and investing our resources in our Lord's kingdom.

One tangible means of participating in the unshakable kingdom is to support the ministries of the Francis Asbury Society with both prayers and gifts. Details for various methods of giving are available on our website www.francisasburysociety.com/support. ✨

work of grace. But to understand what happened at the Jordan River, we must first recognize what did *not* happen at Kadesh-barnea so many years earlier when God's people stood at the crossroads and made a tragic choice.

The author of Hebrews urges Christians to learn from the failure at Kadesh-barnea so they will not repeat the same folly as their spiritual ancestors. Hebrews 3:7–4:13 encourages people like us to press forward into the fullness of blessing that God has prepared for the redeemed. Four commands are given to those who yearn to leave the desert of spiritual mediocrity and step into the abundance of their inheritance.

The *first* command lays the foundation: "Do not harden your hearts..." (Heb 3:8, 15; 4:7). Repeated three times, the author knows that this is the greatest of all dangers for pilgrims on the journey to spiritual wholeness. The failure at Kadesh-barnea occurred not because of outward enemies but because of inward heart disease. The Greek word for "harden" is *skleruno*, from whence our term "sclerosis" is derived. In other words, beware of spiritual arteriosclerosis! Hardening of the arteries of the heart can be fatal.

When I had a heart attack five years ago, I discovered three troubling truths about heart disease:

1. Heart disease typically happens when we are older. In spiritual terms, this reminds us that the greatest dangers on the journey of salvation may come far down the road.
2. Those who have heart disease usually don't know they have heart disease. If you had asked me how I felt on the morning of my heart attack, I would have replied, "I feel great."
3. You cannot heal yourself. The only cure for heart disease is to submit to the counsel, and sometimes the knife, of the cardiologist.

This awareness leads naturally to the *second* command: "Let us fear..." (Heb 4:1). Not all fear is neurotic. In fact, it is the *absence* of fear that causes some of the greatest failures on the journey of salvation. We need more sanctified trembling in the church today!

The author of Hebrews is specific concerning what he wants us to fear: "While the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it" (Heb 4:1). Though there is joy in the assurance of our salvation, there is wisdom in remembering I could really mess this up!

Not everyone who starts the journey reaches the finish line. Oh Christian, be alert!

A *third* command, though not direct, is implied and takes us to the very heart of Christian discipleship when we are encouraged three times to exercise our *faith*: "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, *unbelieving* heart..." (Heb 3:12, emphasis added); "They were unable to enter because of *unbelief*" (Heb 3:19, emphasis added); "For we who have *believed* enter that rest..." (Heb 4:3, emphasis added). Just as faith was required to get the people *out* of Egypt, so faith is required to get them *in* to Canaan. Sanctification is by faith even as justification is. The failure at Kadesh-barnea was not caused by some scandalous sinful behavior. Somewhere, along the journey, God's people simply ceased to believe that God was able to do all that he had promised. As Jesus said, "Whoever does not believe is condemned already" (Jn 3:18).

The *fourth* command summarizes the message the author is passionate to communicate: "Let us therefore strive to enter that rest..." (Heb 4:11). The paradoxical nature of the exhortation is delightful: strive to rest. In other words, work really hard at not working! The sanctified life is the joyful discovery that his yoke is easy, his burden is light. Crossing Jordan does not usher us into a life of passive inactivity. No! There are battles to fight, crops to plant, and cities to build in Canaan. But here we discover that the abundant life is unlike anything we have yet known: the way up is down. We are victorious when we surrender, strong when we are weak, rich when we give everything away, wise when we become fools, and great when we serve. We find ourselves when we lose ourselves, discover joy when we mourn, and live only when we die!

The purpose of this issue of *The High Calling* is to encourage *you*, dear friend, to work really hard at resting! Let God do what you cannot. This is what it means to cross the Jordan and possess the inheritance that God has prepared for you. ✠



"Hardening of the arteries of the heart can be fatal."



The High Calling

PRSRT STD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SHOALS, IN
PERMIT NO 18

The Francis Asbury Society

PO Box 7
Wilmore, KY 40390

Sign up to receive our companion e-newsletter, *Ministry Matters*, at www.francisasburysociety.com

Cross Over Jordan Today

By Charles W. Naylor (1911)

*Dost thy soul ransomed from Egypt,
Yet in the wilderness stay?
Canaan's fair land is before thee,
Cross over Jordan today.*

*Spend not thy life thus forever
Treading the wilderness way;
Enter the fullness of favor,
Cross over Jordan today.*

*Life will be pleasanter, sweeter,
Stony no longer the way,
Many the foes left behind thee—
Cross over Jordan today.*

*Why dost thou shrink from the crossing?
Thinkest thou still of delay?
Waiting will not make thee stronger,
Cross over Jordan today.*

*Thou art abundantly able,
Falter not now by the way;
Grace all-abounding is waiting,
Cross over Jordan today.*

The High Calling—September–October 2020

The High Calling is a bimonthly publication of The Francis Asbury Society to serve as a link between FAS and its constituents, building loyalty and awareness so that the teaching and experience of Christian holiness may continue to be lived and proclaimed throughout the world.

The Francis Asbury Society

PO Box 7 | Wilmore, KY 40390 | 859-858-4222

FAS@francisasburysociety.com

www.francisasburysociety.com

Managing Editor: Stan Key

Editing/Design/Layout: Jennie Lovell