

COMMUNION WITH GOD

By Paul Penno Jr.

June 27, 2014

In His love and mercy, Jesus described for His followers what life would be like in the last days where we live today: “And because iniquity shall abound, the love (*agape*) of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Mt. 24:12, 13).

In a recent News Hour on PBS several thoughtful observers were noting how “during the past 25 years” sewer language has become accepted and popular on radio, TV, and in the press. One of them was “Miss Manners” herself who forcefully said she is all for “prudery.”

Politicians have furthered the slide into the cesspool of language. Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have most of them never had the privilege of knowing there ever was something in the world known as *agape*, the once-sacred “sweet mystery of life.” For them, love is barnyard sensual, sexual attraction; when they live together or get married, they don’t have love (*agape*), they have a “relationship,” and it’s not “till death do us part.”

Parents and grandparents who have known a little of what *agape* is are appalled; children and youth are growing up in a world where “the *agape* of many [has] waxed cold,” where as one wise writer has often stated it, “The Holy Spirit is being withdrawn.”

Where formerly God’s people looked forward to spending the Biblical millennium in heaven, now

they apparently face the bleak prospect of spending it on earth with the Holy Spirit withdrawn. Many even lament that they don’t find that Spirit in church.

But there is some precious Good News: there are those who will “endure unto the end.” (Mt. 24:13). They will cherish *agape* in their hearts; they will love the Holy Spirit, not drive Him away. God has never withdrawn His Holy seventh-day Sabbath in which we can realize His presence. The Sabbath is an island of refuge in a stormy sea where we can still experience the calm of heaven and the refreshment that comes in communion with God. The Holy Spirit may be withdrawn from the wicked world, but He will not withdraw Himself from even one humble soul who welcomes His presence.

What is the cause of all this brokenness? Adam’s sin against God cut off communion with God, and the conscious knowledge of God was lost. “Ever since Adam’s sin, the human race had been cut off from direct communion with God.”¹

Considered from a mental point of view the first result of sin in Adam—the expulsion from Eden—was a separation between what is on the surface of the mind and what is not on the surface. There was an establishment of a mental wall between them. The emergence of the unconscious mind, was actually caused by sin. The unconscious mind before Adam’s sin was vacant. There was nothing hidden in the mind of Adam before he sinned against God.

¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 116.

Think of the mind of Adam as a computer. When you want to get rid of a file on your machine, you delete it. You move it into the waste basket. When you empty your waste basket, you believe that the file has been scrubbed from your computer. But not really so, because every file leaves its mark on the hard drive and can be recalled.

Before Adam sinned there were no files in his mind that were deleted. Everything there was perfectly accessible to him and known to him.

When Adam sinned, his immediate response was to delete from his conscious files, all that he had done. He couldn't live with himself. He wanted to delete the knowledge of God from his surface memory banks of the mind. So he repressed those painful memory files into an inaccessible, unconscious system of his mind. Such concepts as are thus repressed in the unconscious are repressed because they are unwelcome or repugnant to the conscious ego, and they are therefore held in prison in the unconscious by his super ego. His evil acts were deleted by a protector of his mind so that he could have a temporary peace from these unwelcome thoughts.

Adam's sin against God cut off communion with God, and the conscious knowledge of God was lost. But not completely eradicated—God provided an "enmity" in the human heart against sin, which would tend to restore, eventually, that lost knowledge of God. We were not abandoned, by any means, after Eden.

The lost knowledge of God was therefore not completely lost, but rather buried in man's

unconscious. It was held there by the sense of guilt which was manifested in Adam and Eve running to hide from God. He was now unwelcome to them. He is still so, is He not?

Thus the knowledge of God is locked in the subconscious content of the human mind. The heathen religions, however primitive and barbaric, are to be regarded as the outward manifestations of the searching of the human mind for that truth about God which is locked in the unconscious and only released in its completeness by Christ. Christianity is thus the fulfillment of the religious strivings of the world.

So when the knowledge of God is revealed, the human heart recognizes it. When the human heart is honest, through heart-broken penitence the unconscious part of man's mind is responding to the drawing love of God. When a person is dishonest, through enmity he repeats on Jesus the original sin of Adam in getting God out of the way, crucifying Him.

Jesus, being born of a Virgin, inherited the subconscious collective content of the human mind, including the lost knowledge of God. But He differed from other human beings, in that the office of the gate-keeper of His mind, or super-ego was absent. He knew no repressions, the outlet of which would be unpleasant to the ego. You know why? For Him it was the principle of the cross. The guilt of the human race pressed against His soul. But He chose to let it come out in the open of His conscious mind. The temptation for Jesus was to allow that human guilt to break His communion with the Father.

For us there are some things that tend to make the content of our subconscious mind available and bubble forth to the surface. Sometimes those deleted files of our computer come out as a disturbance of the mind in sleep, when our gate-keeper is caught off its guard, and dreams result. Things are then brought to mind which the conscious mind would not think of in consciousness.

Sometimes when we go through life-changing events such as a health crisis, accidents, or loss of loved ones, these recent events produce impressions or experiences which are so much like the deleted files from our computer, those repressed thoughts, that they have the power to awaken it.

But in none of the these cases the material that has been repressed succeed in reaching your consciousness unimpeded or without change. It must always undergo distortions which bear witness to the not entirely overcome resistance derived from your protective gate-keeper.

But there is a fourth way that our deepest memories of anger and hatred toward God and others can come out of the closet of the mind. The Holy Spirit brings to our awareness the acceptance of the principle of the Cross. Do we not recognize the “old man” in the office of this gate-keeper protecting the peace of the self?

Now—it is a startling conclusion, which I hesitate to put on paper, but it will “out” before the end, I know: In the case of Mary Magdalene, she discerned the Lord’s body before His crucifixion.

She recognized the principle of the cross herself which the selfish stupid disciples did not recognize. She knew what was the right thing to do at the right time. She anointed Jesus’ body for the burial. “Such as Mary can divine”, says Bruce. Indeed, her knowledge was mysteriously prescient. She embraced Jesus forthcoming death upon the cross.

She is spoken of by the Lord as the model Christian. If the Cross gave her an almost prophetic foreknowledge, will not its acceptance wholeheartedly restore to us the body of Christ, the long-lost gifts of the Spirit?

If the services of the “old man” and the gate-keeper of our souls are dealt with by the acceptance of the this Way, the Cross of Jesus, will not the content of this unconsciousness be released? Then, at that time, when Israel attains to that experience, what, logically can prevent Moses’ recorded prayer in from being fulfilled? “And Moses said unto him, . . . would God that all the LORD’S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!” (Num. 11:29).

God keeps shaking our people. Perhaps someone will wake up. Here is something clamoring for recognition, and we are so absorbed in our *per capita*s that we haven’t a thought for light. All we want is a megaphone, and we’ll blast the world’s ears off with what we think is the third angel’s message, *in verity*. It hasn’t dawned on us yet that the loud cry is going to be more *light* than it is noise. And the propagation of light is quite different from that of sound. You *let* light shine. And failure to

understand the glorious truth of the cross is basic to that *superficial* misunderstanding.

We as yet do not know the profound implications of our own doctrine of the cleansing of the sanctuary. We think we know exactly what happened October 22, 1844. We do not dream of what should have happened, immediately thereafter. Over a century has passed. Is the sanctuary yet cleansed?

Our place of true union with Christ is *on* the Cross. Thereby we become partakers of the divine nature. May we abide there, and come to know Him indeed. He is the unknown One, the misunderstood One, the unloved One, among those who are His own. What poignant drama is being enacted before the entire universe today!

Could it be that just a handful are just *beginning* to sense what it is all about? If so, is there any room for pride? Boasting is excluded. When we discern the Cross, we bow our heads in shame. No more humbled, shamefaced group is there in eternity than ourselves, in 2014 A. D.

Was Balaam's donkey proud when he saw the angel? Thank God, he was just an animal, for a man could not have endured the glorious sight!

That last meal that Jesus ate with His disciples ("the Lord's Supper," to many) illustrates the idea of "substitution" that the New Testament teaches (yes, and the Old Testament, too), a shared experience with Him.

Jesus did not say to His disciples, I am eating this Bread instead of you, nor did He say, I am drinking from this cup instead of you. He ate with them, He

drank with them; they ate and drank with Him. Using the clearest illustration possible of intimate oneness He represented His believers as "drinking My blood, eating My body." "Abide in Me, and I in you," He pleads. You are branches and I am the Vine (John 15:4, 5). "Ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you."

In sending the Holy Spirit to dwell with those who believe in Him, Jesus represents Himself as not leaving them orphans, "I will come to you" (John 14:20, 18). Open your heart, receive His Spirit; you receive Him.

"Take, eat," He says in that last supper; "this is My body which is broken for you." And then in the same way, "He took the cup, when He had supped," and said, "Drink ye all, of it, for this is the blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28, 1 Cor. 11:23-26). The idea again is intimate one-ness. Jesus does not want us to think of Him as separate from us, doing everything "instead of us," while we look on in childish wonder, uncomprehending.

He did indeed die instead of us, He died our second death so we don't have to die our own second death—that is all true; but it is only part of the truth He obviously wants us to understand and experience. He wants intimate oneness with us where we enter into His feelings and His experience as a branch enters into the life processes of the Vine.

And then coming down to the last days of history just before Christ's return, Revelation introduces us to a oneness with Him even more intimate, even

closer to our human understanding. We see how He wants us to sense an even deeper identification with Himself—a Bride’s nearness to her Husband. Here is a shared experience with Him, one in which human pride can have no place. When “I am crucified with Christ” all my “glory” is laid in the dust forever.

What Jesus said about the Lord’s Supper impressed me: “My blood . . . is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Who are the “many”? Since everybody has sinned (Rom. 3:23) it must mean that Christ shed His blood for the same “everybody.” He said, “Everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life. . . . The bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of *the world*. Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:40, 51, 53). What He gives is universal.

And then 1 Timothy 4:10: Christ “is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.” Every one can think of Him as already his Savior! It was beginning to look certain that Christ accomplished something that applies to “all men,” and no one is excepted. It reminded me of a song I have heard:

“And once again the scene was changed,
new earth there seemed to be.
I saw the Holy City beside the tideless sea.
The light of God was on its streets,
its gates were opened wide,
And all who would might enter, and no one was denied.”