

SPIRIT JOURNEY RETREAT: Empowering Our Faith

Rational Intent: To make the connection between Christian symbols and life

Spirit Intent: To reflect on our faith in order to empower our faithfulness

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p><i>Travel to Mount Olivet, meeting, greeting, and getting settled into space for the weekend</i></p>	<p>7:00 am Worship & Conversation on Jesus 8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast in dining room</p>	<p>7:00 am Worship & Conversation on Vocation 8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast in dining room</p>
	<p>8:45 – 12:00 Session Two Presentation: The Meaning of the “Christ” • The <i>event</i> and <i>word</i> of our life – “Christ” symbol • Tillich seminar – when <i>grace</i> strikes • Life question: How do I respond to <i>grace</i>? • Personal grace reflections, huddles and plenary</p>	<p>8:30 – 9:00 Retreat Center check-out</p>
	<p>12:00 – 12:30 pm Lunch in dining room</p>	<p>9:00 – 12:00 Session Five Presentation: The Meaning of the “Church” • H. R. Niebuhr seminar – “Church” symbol • Life question: How do I serve creation? • Closing ritual • Retreat reflection</p>
	<p>Personal Reflection</p>	<p>12:00 – 12:30 Open Lunch & Departure</p>
	<p>2:30 – 4:30 Session Three Presentation: The Meaning of the “Holy Spirit” • Bonhoeffer seminar – “Holy Spirit” symbol • Life question: How free am I?</p>	<p><i>Travel home</i></p>
<p>6:00 – 6:30 pm Dinner in dining room</p>	<p>5:30 – 6:00 pm Dinner in dining room</p>	
<p>7:00 – 9:45 Session One • Introductory conversation • Context for the five sessions Presentation: The Meaning of “God” • Bultmann seminar – “God” symbol • Life question: Yes or No to reality? • Fifth City Preschool rituals and songs</p>	<p>6:00 – 9:45 Session Four Life Reflection on Primary Christian Symbols • Art context • Oscar-winning movie • Movie conversation based on three faith symbols • Spiritual exercise</p>	

ESSAYS

THE CRISIS OF FAITH by Rudolf Bultmann

When we speak of a "crisis of faith", we mean something different from the crisis in morals, for example in reliability and loyalty, or in political ideology and respect for the laws; indeed we mean something other than a crisis in religion. For in all these instances the crisis is one of human attitude and human character, and is concerned with the problem of a particular age or generation -- that is, with a sociological phenomenon. Although faith is connected with morality and religion, and is always at the same time a human attitude, it is nevertheless differentiated from them by its being a particular faith, faith in an up-againstness, in something beyond humankind. Faith is not religiosity, not a disposition of the soul to devotion, gratitude, reverence, and awe of the world and of life as a whole. On the contrary, it understands the world and life in the light of a reality lying beyond them, of a power lying beyond them, which is their origin and their Creator -- that is, God. A crisis of faith therefore arises when their supramundane [unworldly] reality has been called into question.

The situation is exactly the same as in the relation of one person to another, to which also we apply the term "faith" -- for the friend or the lover has faith in the other person. Faith here does not mean an attitude of love -- or that can persist even when faith wavers or collapses. Nor does it mean an attribute of character, for that can also exist before and after love. But it is faith in the particular of the other person, who is recognized as such in just this faith-giving love. Such faith undergoes a crisis when it is established that the other person is not what faith in them made them appear to be.

To speak, therefore, of a crisis of faith in the sphere of religion does not mean that we are referring at all to a crisis in religion or religiosity, as, for example, in regard to their being shaken by events in the history of the world or of the mind or -- to their awakening under the influence of these factors. Nor does it mean that we are referring to indifference in regard to religion, but rather to the crisis of a particular faith. For us there is point only in speaking about the crisis of our own Christian faith.

I. GOD

1. What then is this Christian faith, the crisis of which is our concern? What is that supramundane reality which is the object of Christian faith? *What is God in the Christian sense?*
2. God in the Christian sense is *nothing other than what God is to every faith* in which the idea of God is treated at all seriously. What, then, is conveyed by the idea of God?

3. Every human being knows or can know about its finiteness, for, consciously or unconsciously it is driven this way and that by this finiteness, as long as it exists. It is no more its own master than it is its own creator. It is never perfect, but is driven this way and that by *care*, which reminds it of its finitude and of its imperfection:

*If no ear would hearken to me,
In the heart 'twould echo surely;
Changed in form before your eyes,
Gruesome power I exercise.
Vexing ever as you follow
On the pathway, on the billow;
Ever found and never sought,
Cursed when not with flattery bought . . .
He whom once I make my own
Might as well the world disown . . .
Fortune, failure stands revealed
As whims -- he famishes though filled,
Joy or torment equally
Postponing to another day
And as everything he leaves
For the future -- naught achieves.*

4. In the first place, it is *everyday care for the morrow*. Human beings are taken up with the provision, procuring and preparation of the means of living. Yet fundamentally they know that they cannot make life sure with the means of living. Everyone understands the story of the rich husbandman who thought to fill his barns with the rich harvest and then to say to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But God said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" Everyone sees that the husbandman was a fool.
5. This mysterious power -- the power which limits human beings and is master of them even when they think they are their own master -- is God, the controller of humanity's future.
6. Or again, no matter how little life can free itself from this care for the things of every day or for the morrow, it refuses to see in this care what gives life its significance, but goes beyond it. Life is driven this way and that by the *longing for the true and the beautiful*, or even just by that *indefinite longing* which awakes in the "deep of the night" and in which it becomes clear that:

*Every pleasure seeks to be
embedded in eternity.*

7. And yet even in all of its lofty moments human life is not granted this eternity of pleasure or this pleasure of eternity. Does it indeed know any hours in which it could say to the moment -- "But tarry, for thou art so fair"? And even if it does -- then the moment just does not tarry! Humanity has no power over the temporal and the eternal. The power which controls them is God.

8. Or again, life is driven this way and that by the *desire for love*, and by the feeling that there is truth in what in Karl Spitteler's "Olympian Springtime" Apollo says to Hera, who is haunted by the fear of death and would like to escape from death:

*In Ananke's cruel domain
In vale or mountain flourishes no solace to remain,
Save the solace of the eyes - twin stars in friendship blest,
And the syllables of love, by grateful lips expressed.*

9. Some lives are poor in friendship and in love, and some rich, but even the rich life is aware of a final solitude into which it is forced:

*Can e'er man as he'd wish belong
On earth, to his fellow?
In the long night I thought of it and could but answer: No!*

The power which drives humanity into this final solitude is God.

10. Or again, life is motivated by the *thirst for knowledge* and one is led to admit, "I see that we can nothing know." Or perhaps it is the *impulse to action and to work*. That in fact is the way in which Faust finally sought to reach that moment to which he could say, "But tarry, for thou art so fair!" Yet behind Want and Guilt and Care, for whom access to him or mastery over him is forbidden, comes "our brother, Death". And when the blind Faust takes delight in the clanking of spades they are not the spades which are getting busy on his work and bringing it to completion, but those which are digging his grave; and it is the foretaste of sublime happiness which is the highest and final moment. The power which sets a terminus to knowing and doing is God.
11. Or, finally, human existence is dominated by the *idea of duty*, by knowledge of the principle that "You can, for you ought". But it is well aware that life in accordance with the "You ought" is a struggle, in which it is a question of mastering oneself. It knows the *voice of conscience* which summons to duty and recalls from thoughtlessness and aberration to everyday things, and pronounces the verdict "Guilty!" on wasted time and lost opportunity, impure thoughts and mean actions. The summons of the "you ought", divesting humanity of its self-determination, and the dictates of conscience showing human beings how small, incomplete and wretched they are -- these are God.
12. It is God who makes humanity finite, and who makes a comedy of one's care, who allows one's longing to miscarry, who casts one into solitude, who sets a terminus to one's knowing and doing, who calls one to duty, and who gives the guilty over to torment. And yet at the same time it is God who forces humanity into life and drives one into care; who puts longing and the desire to love in one's heart; who gives one thoughts and strength for one's work, and who places one in the eternal struggle between self-assertion and duty. God is the enigmatic power beyond time, yet master of the temporal, beyond being, yet working in it.

Adapted from *Essays: Philosophical and Theological*, SCM Press, London, 1955

YOU ARE ACCEPTED by Paul Tillich

Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. ~Romans 5:20

1. These words of Paul summarize his apostolic experience, his religious message as a whole, and the Christian understanding of life. To discuss these words, or to make them the text of even several sermons, has always seemed impossible to me. I have never dared to use them before. But something has driven me to consider them during the past few months, a desire to give witness to the two facts which appeared to me, in hours of retrospection, as the all-determining facts of our life: the abounding of sin and the greater abounding of grace.
2. There are few words more strange to most of us than "sin" and "grace." They are strange, just because they are so well known. During the centuries they have received distorting connotations, and have lost so much of their genuine power that we must seriously ask ourselves whether we should use them at all, or whether we should discard them as useless tools. But there is a mysterious fact about the great words of our religious tradition: they cannot be replaced. All attempts to make substitutions, including those I have tried myself, have failed to convey the reality that was to be expressed; they have led to shallow and impotent talk. There are no substitutions for words like "sin" and "grace." But there *is* a way of rediscovering their meaning, the same way that leads us down into the depth of our human existence. In that depth these words were conceived; and *there* they gained power for all ages; *there* they must be found again by each generation, and by each of us for ourselves. Let us therefore try to penetrate the deeper levels of our life, in order to see whether we can discover in them the realities of which our text speaks.
3. Have the people of our time still a feeling of the meaning of sin? Do they, and do we, still realize that sin does *not* mean an immoral act, that "sin" should never be used in the plural, and that not our sins, but rather our *sin* is the great, all-pervading problem of our life? Do we still know that it is arrogant and erroneous to divide human beings by calling some "sinners" and others "righteous"? For by way of such a division, we can usually discover that we ourselves do not *quite* belong to the "sinners," since we have avoided heavy sins, have made some progress in the control of this or that sin, and have been even humble enough not to call ourselves "righteous." Are we still able to realize that this kind of thinking and feeling about sin is far removed from what the great religious tradition, both within and outside the Bible, has meant when it speaks of sin?
4. I should like to suggest another word to you, not as a substitute for the word "sin," but as a useful clue in the interpretation of the word "sin" -- "separation." Separation is an aspect of the experience of everyone. Perhaps the word "sin" has the same root as the word *asunder*." In any case, *sin is separation*. To be in the state of sin is to be in the state of separation. And separation is threefold: there is separation among individual lives, separation of men

and women from themselves, and separation of all individuals from the Ground of Being. This three-fold separation constitutes the state of everything that exists; it is a universal fact; it is the fate of every life. And it is our human fate in a very special sense. For *we* as human beings know that we are separated. We not only suffer with all other creatures because of the self-destructive consequences of our separation, but also know *why* we suffer. We know that we are estranged from something to which we really belong, and with which we *should* be united. We know that the fate of separation is not merely a natural event like a flash of sudden lightning, but that it is an experience in which we actively participate, in which our whole personality is involved, and that, as fate, it is also *guilt*. Separation which is fate *and* guilt constitutes the meaning of the word "sin." It is *this* which is the state of our entire existence, from its very beginning to its very end. Such separation is prepared in the mother's womb, and before that time, in every preceding generation. It is manifest in the special actions of our conscious life. It reaches beyond our graves into all the succeeding generations. It is our existence itself. *Existence is separation!* Before sin is an act, it is a state.

5. We can say the same things about grace. For sin and grace are bound to each other. We do not even have a knowledge of sin unless we have already experienced the unity of life, which is grace. And conversely, we could not grasp the meaning of grace without having experienced the separation of life, which is sin. Grace is just as difficult to describe as sin. For some people, grace is the willingness of a divine monarch and parent to forgive over and over again the foolishness and weakness of subjects and children. We must reject such a concept of grace; for it is a merely childish destruction of a human dignity. For others, grace is a magic power in the dark places of the soul, but a power without any significance for practical life, a quickly vanishing and useless idea. For others, grace is the benevolence that we may find beside the cruelty and destructiveness in life. But then, it does not matter whether we say "life goes on," or whether we say "there is grace in life"; if grace means no more than this, the word should, and will, disappear. For other people, grace indicates the gifts that one has received from nature or society, and the power to do good things with the help of those gifts. But grace is more than gifts. In grace something is overcome; grace occurs "in spite of" something; grace occurs in spite of separation and estrangement. Grace is the *reunion* of life with life, the *reconciliation* of the self with itself. Grace is the acceptance of that which is rejected. Grace transforms fate into a meaningful destiny; it changes guilt into confidence and courage. There is something triumphant in the word "grace": in spite of the abounding of sin grace abounds much more.
6. And now let us look down into ourselves to discover there the struggle between separation and reunion, between sin and grace, in our relation to others, in our relation to ourselves, and in our relation to the Ground and aim of our being. If our souls respond to the description that I intend to give, words like "sin" and "separation," "grace" and "reunion," may have a new meaning for us. But the words themselves are not important. It is the response of the deepest levels of our being that is important. If such a response were to occur among us this moment, we could say that we have known grace.

7. Who has not, at some time, been lonely in the midst of a social event? The feeling of our separation from the rest of life is most acute when we are surrounded by it in noise and talk. We realize then much more than in moments of solitude how strange we are to each other, how estranged life is from life. Each one of us draws back into the self. We cannot penetrate the hidden center of another individual; nor can that individual pass beyond the shroud that covers our own being. Even the greatest love cannot break through the walls of the self. Who has not experienced that disillusionment of all great love? If one were to hurl away one's self in complete self-surrender, one would become a nothing, without form or strength, a self without self, merely an object of contempt and abuse. Our generation knows more than the generation of our forebears about the hidden hostility in the ground of our souls. Today we know much about the profuse aggressiveness in every being. Today we can confirm what Immanuel Kant, the prophet of human reason and dignity, was honest enough to say: there is something in the misfortune of our best friends which does not displease us. Who amongst us is dishonest enough to deny that this is true also of ourselves? Are we not almost always ready to abuse everybody and everything, although often in a very refined way, for the pleasure of self-elevation, for an occasion for boasting, for a moment of lust? To know that we are ready is to know the meaning of the separation of life from life, and of "sin abounding."
8. The most irrevocable expression of the separation of life from life today is the attitude of social groups within nations towards each other, and the attitude of nations themselves towards other nations. The walls of distance, in time and space, have been removed by technical progress; but the walls of estrangement between heart and heart have been incredibly strengthened. The madness of the German Nazis and the cruelty of the lynching mobs in the South provide too easy an excuse for us to turn our thoughts from our own selves. But let us just consider ourselves and what we feel, when we read, this morning and tonight, that in some sections of Europe all children under the age of three are sick and dying, or that in some sections of Asia millions without homes are freezing and starving to death. The strangeness of life to life is evident in the strange fact that we can know all this, and yet can live today, this morning, tonight, as though we were completely ignorant. And I refer to the most sensitive people amongst us. In both humanity and nature, life is separated from life. Estrangement prevails among all things that live. Sin abounds.
9. It is important to remember that we are not merely separated from each other. For we are also separated from ourselves. *Man Against Himself* is not merely the title of a book, but rather also indicates the rediscovery of an age-old insight. Men and women are split within themselves. Life moves against itself through aggression, hate, and despair. We are wont to condemn self-love; but what we really mean to condemn is contrary to self-love. It is that mixture of selfishness and self-hate that permanently pursues us, that prevents us from loving others, and that prohibits us from losing ourselves in the love with which we are loved eternally. Those who are able to love themselves are able to love others also; those who have learned to overcome self-contempt have overcome their contempt for others. But the depth of our separation lies in just the fact that we are not capable of a great and

merciful divine love towards ourselves. On the contrary, in each of us there is an instinct of self-destruction, which is as strong as our instinct of self-preservation. In our tendency to abuse and destroy others, there is an open or hidden tendency to abuse and to destroy ourselves. Cruelty towards others is always also cruelty towards ourselves. Nothing is more obvious than the split in both our unconscious life and conscious personality. Without the help of modern psychology, Paul expressed the fact in his famous words, "For I do not do the good I desire, but rather the evil that I do not desire." And then he continued in words that might well be the motto of all depth psychology: "Now if I should do what I do not wish to do, it is not I that do it, but rather sin which dwells within me." The apostle sensed a split between his conscious will and his real will, between himself and something strange within and alien to him. He was estranged from himself; and that estrangement he called "sin." He also called it a strange "law in his limbs," an irresistible compulsion. How often we commit certain acts in perfect consciousness, yet with the shocking sense that we are being controlled by an alien power! That is the experience of the separation of ourselves from ourselves, which is to say "sin," whether or not we like to use that word.

10. Thus, the state of our whole life is estrangement from others and ourselves, because we are estranged from the Ground of our being, because we are estranged from the origin and aim of our life. And we do not know where we have come from, or where we are going. We are separated from the mystery, the depth, and the greatness of our existence. We hear the voice of that depth; but our ears are closed. We feel that something radical, total, and unconditioned is demanded of us; but we rebel against it, try to escape its urgency, and will not accept its promise.
11. We cannot escape, however. If that something is the Ground of our being, we are bound to it for all eternity, just as we are bound to ourselves and to all other life. We always remain in the power of that from which we are estranged. That fact brings us to the ultimate depth of sin: separated and yet bound, estranged and yet belonging, destroyed and yet preserved, the state which is called despair. Despair means that there is no escape. Despair is "the sickness unto death." But the terrible thing about the sickness of despair is that we cannot be released, not even through open or hidden suicide. For we all know that we are bound eternally and inescapably to the Ground of our being. The abyss of separation is not always visible. But it has become more visible to our generation than to the preceding generations, because of our feeling of meaninglessness, emptiness, doubt, and cynicism -- all expressions of despair, of our separation from the roots and the meaning of our life. Sin in its most profound sense, sin, as despair, abounds amongst us.

12. ¹"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," says Paul in the same letter in which he describes the unimaginable power of separation and self-destruction within society and the individual soul. ²He does not say these words because sentimental interests demand a happy ending for everything tragic. ³He says them because they describe the most overwhelming and determining experience of his life. ⁴In the picture of Jesus as the Christ, which appeared to him at the moment of his greatest separation from others, from himself and God, he found himself accepted in spite of his being rejected. ⁵And when he found that he was accepted, he was able to accept himself and to be reconciled to others. ⁶The moment in which grace struck him and overwhelmed him, he was reunited with that to which he belonged, and from which he was estranged in utter strangeness. ⁷Do we know what it means to be struck by grace? ⁸It does *not* mean that we suddenly believe that God exists, or that Jesus is the Saviour, or that the Bible contains the truth. ⁹To believe that something *is* is almost contrary to the meaning of grace. ¹⁰Furthermore, grace does not mean simply that we are making progress in our moral self-control, in our fight against special faults, and in our relationships to others and to society. ¹¹Moral progress may be a fruit of grace; but it is not grace itself, and it can even prevent us from receiving grace. ¹²For there is too often a graceless acceptance of Christian doctrines and a graceless battle against the structures of evil in our personalities. ¹³Such a graceless relation to God may lead us by necessity either to arrogance or to despair. ¹⁴It would be better to refuse God and the Christ and the Bible than to accept them without grace. ¹⁵For if we accept without grace, we do so in the state of separation, and can only succeed in deepening the separation. ¹⁶We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow them to be transformed by that stroke of grace. ¹⁷It happens; or it does not happen. ¹⁸And certainly it does not happen if we try to force it upon ourselves, just as it shall not happen so long as we think, in our self-complacency, that we have no need of it. ¹⁹Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. ²⁰It strikes us when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life. ²¹It strikes us when we feel that our separation is deeper than usual, because we have violated another life, a life which we loved, or from which we were estranged. ²²It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. ²³It strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage. ²⁴Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. ²⁵*You are accepted*, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. ²⁶Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. ²⁷Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. ²⁸Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. ²⁹*Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!*" ³⁰If that happens to us, we experience grace. ³¹After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. ³²But everything is transformed. ³³In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. ³⁴And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual presupposition, nothing but *acceptance*.

13. In the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in our relation to others and to ourselves. We experience the grace of being able to look frankly into the eyes of another, the miraculous grace of reunion of life with life. We experience the grace of understanding each other's words. We understand not merely the literal meaning of the words, but also that which lies behind them, even when they are harsh or angry. For even then there is a longing to break through the walls of separation. We experience the grace of being able to accept the life of another, even if it be hostile and harmful to us, for, through grace, we know that it belongs to the same Ground to which we belong, and by which we have been accepted. We experience the grace which is able to overcome the tragic separation of the sexes, of the generations, of the nations, of the races, and even the utter strangeness between humanity and nature. Sometimes grace appears in all these separations to reunite us with those to whom we belong. For life belongs to life.
14. And in the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in our relation to ourselves. We experience moments in which we accept ourselves, because we feel that we have been accepted by that which is greater than we. If only more such moments were given to us! For it is such moments that make us love our life, that make us accept ourselves, not in our goodness and self-complacency, but in our certainty of the eternal meaning of our life. We cannot force ourselves to accept ourselves. We cannot compel others to accept themselves. But sometimes it happens that we receive the power to say "yes" to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and that our self is reunited with itself. Then we can say that grace has come upon us.
15. "Sin" and "grace" are strange words; but they are not strange things. We find them whenever we look into ourselves with searching eyes and longing hearts. They determine our life. They abound within us and in all of life. May grace more abound within us!

Adapted from *The Shaking of the Foundations*, Scribner's, New York, 1948, pp. 153-63

FREEDOM by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

1. We must therefore conclude our analysis of the structure of responsible action by speaking of freedom.
2. Responsibility and freedom are corresponding concepts. Factually, though not chronologically, responsibility presupposes freedom and freedom can consist only in responsibility. Responsibility is the freedom which is given only in the obligation to God and to our neighbor.
3. ¹Responsible men and women act in the freedom of their own selves, without the support of others, of circumstances, or of principles, but with a due consideration for the given human and general conditions and for the relevant questions of principle. ²The proof of their freedom is the fact that nothing can answer for them, nothing can exonerate them, except their own deeds and their own selves. ³It is they themselves who must observe, judge, weigh up, decide and act. ⁴It is they themselves who must examine the motives, the prospects, the value and the purpose of their actions. ⁵But neither the purity of the motivation, nor the opportune circumstances, nor the value, nor the significant purpose of an intended undertaking can become the governing law of those actions, a law to which they can withdraw, to which they can appeal as an authority, and by which they can be exculpated and acquitted. ⁶For in that case they would no longer be truly free. ⁷The action of the responsible person is performed in the obligation which alone gives freedom and which gives entire freedom, the obligation to God and to our neighbor as they confront us in Jesus Christ. ⁸At the same time it is performed wholly within the domain of relativity, wholly in the twilight which the historical situation spreads over good and evil; it is performed in the midst of the innumerable perspectives in which every given phenomenon appears. ⁹It has not to decide simply between right and wrong and between good and evil, but between right and right and between wrong and wrong. ¹⁰As Aeschylus said, "right strives with right." ¹¹Precisely in this respect responsible action is a free venture; it is not justified by any law; it is performed without any claim to a valid self-justification, and therefore also without any claim to an ultimate valid knowledge of good and evil. ¹²Good, as what is responsible, is performed in ignorance of good and in the surrender to God of the deed which has become necessary and which is nevertheless, or for that very reason, free; for it is God who sees the heart, who weighs up the deed, and who directs the course of history.
4. With this there is disclosed to us a deep secret of history in general. The man or woman who acts in the freedom of their own most personal responsibility is precisely the one who sees his or her action finally committed to the guidance of God. The free deed knows itself in the end as the deed of God; the decision knows itself as guidance; the free venture knows itself as divine necessity. It is in the free abandonment of knowledge of their own good that they perform the good of God. It is only from this last point of view that one can speak of good in historical action. We shall have to take up these considerations again later at the point at which we have left off.
5. Before that we still have to give some space to a crucial question which makes an essential contribution to the clarification of our problem. What is the relationship between free responsibility and obedience? It must seem at first sight as though everything we have said about free responsibility is applicable in practice only when one is in what we call a

"responsible position" in life, in other words, when one has to make independent decisions on the very largest scale. What connection can there be between responsibility and the monotonous daily work of the laborer, the factory worker, the clerk, the private soldier, the apprentice or the student? It is a different matter already with the owner-farmer, the industrial contractor, the politician or person of state, the general, the skilled supervisor, the teacher and the judge. But in their lives, too, how much there is of technique and duty and how little of really free decision! And so it seems that everything that we have said about responsibility can in the end apply only to a very small group of men and women, and even to these only in a few moments of their lives; and consequently it seems as though for the great majority one must speak not of responsibility but of obedience and duty. This implies one ethic for the great and the strong, for the rulers, and another for the small and the weak, the subordinates; on the one hand responsibility and on the other obedience, on the one hand freedom and on the other subservience. And indeed there can be no doubt that in our modern social order, and especially in the German one, the life of the individual is so exactly defined and regulated, and is at the same time assured of such complete security, that it is granted to only very few to breathe the free air of the wide open spaces of great decisions and to experience the hazard of responsible action which is entirely their own. In consequence of the compulsory regulation of life in accordance with a definite course of training and vocational activity, our lives have come to be relatively free from ethical dangers; individuals who from childhood have had to take their assigned place in accordance with this principle are ethically emasculated; they have been robbed of the creative moral power, freedom. In this we see a deep-seated fault in the essential development of our modern social order, a fault which can be countered only with a clear exposition of the fundamental concept of responsibility. As things stand, the large-scale experiential material for the problem of responsibility must be sought for among the great political leaders, industrialists and generals; for indeed those few others who venture to act on their own free responsibility in the midst of the pressure of everyday life are being crushed by the machinery of the social order, by the general routine.

6. Yet it would be an error if we were to continue to look at the problem from this point of view. There is, in fact, no single life which cannot experience the situation of responsibility; every life can experience this situation in its most characteristic form, that is to say, in the encounter with other people. Even when free responsibility is more or less excluded from one's vocational and public life, that person nevertheless always stands in a responsible relation to others; these relations extend from family to workmates. The fulfillment of genuine responsibility at this point affords the only sound possibility of extending the sphere of responsibility once more into vocational and public life. Wherever human beings meet one another and this includes the encounters of professional life -- there arises genuine responsibility, and these responsible relationships cannot be supplanted by any general regulation or routine. That holds true, then, not only for the relation between married people, or for parents and children, but also for the supervisor and the apprentice, the teacher and the pupil, the judge and the accused.
7. But we can go one step further than this. Responsibility does not only stand side by side with relationships of obedience; it has its place also within these relationships. The apprentice has a duty of obedience towards the master, but at the same time has also a free responsibility for his or her work and achievement and, therefore, also for the supervisor. It is the same with the student, and indeed also with the employee in any kind of industrial undertaking and with

the soldier in war. Obedience and responsibility are interlinked in such a way that one cannot say that responsibility begins only where obedience leaves off, but rather that obedience is rendered in responsibility. There will always be a relation of obedience and dependence; all that matters is that these should not, as they already largely do today, leave no room for responsibilities. To know one's self to be responsible is more difficult for the one who is socially dependent than for one who is socially free, but a relationship of dependence does not in any case in itself exclude free responsibility. The employer and the servant, while preserving the relationships of obedience, can and should answer for each other in free responsibility.

8. The ultimate reason for this lies in that relation of each person to God which is realized in Jesus Christ. Jesus stands before God as the one who is both obedient and free. As the obedient one he does God's will in blind compliance with the law which is commanded him, and as the free one he acquiesces in God's will out of his own most personal knowledge, with open eyes and a joyous heart; he recreates this will, as it were, out of himself. Obedience without freedom is slavery; freedom without obedience is arbitrary self-will. Obedience restrains freedom; and freedom ennobles obedience. Obedience binds the creature to the Creator, and freedom enables the creature to stand before the Creator as one who is made in the Creator's image. Obedience shows men and women that they must allow themselves to be told what is good and what God requires of them (Micah 6:8); and liberty enables them to do good themselves. Obedience knows what is good and does it, and freedom dares to act, and abandons to God the judgment of good and evil. Obedience follows blindly and freedom has open eyes. Obedience acts without questioning and freedom asks what is the purpose. Obedience has its hands tied and freedom is creative. In obedience men and women adhere to the decalogue and in freedom they create new decalogues (Luther).
9. In responsibility both obedience and freedom are realized. Responsibility implies tension between obedience and freedom. There would be no more responsibility if either were made independent of the other. Responsible action is subject to obligation, and yet it is creative. To make obedience independent of freedom leads only to the Kantian ethic of duty, and to make freedom independent of obedience leads only to the ethic of irresponsible genius. Both the dutiful person and the genius carry their justification within themselves. Responsible people stand between obligation and freedom; they must dare to act under obligation and in freedom; yet they find their justification neither in their obligation nor in their freedom but solely in the One who has put them in this (humanly impossible) situation and who requires this deed of them. Responsible people deliver up themselves and their deeds to God.
10. We have tried to define the structure of responsible life in terms of deputyship, correspondence with reality, acceptance of guilt, and freedom. Now the demand for a more concrete formulation brings us to the question whether it is possible to advance a more exact definition of the place, the *locus*, at which responsible life is realized. Does responsibility set me in an unlimited field of activity? Or does it confine me strictly within the limits which are implied in my daily concrete tasks? What must I know myself to be responsible for? And what does not lie within the scope of my responsibility? Is there any purpose in regarding myself as responsible for everything that takes place in the world? Or can I stand by and watch these great events as an unconcerned spectator so long as my own tiny domain is in order? Am I to wear myself out in impotent zeal against all the wrong and all the misery that

is in the world? Or am I entitled, in self-satisfied security, to let the wicked world run its course, so long as I cannot myself do anything to change it and so long as I have done my own work? What is the place and what are the limits of my responsibility?

Adapted from *Ethics*, the Macmillan Company, New York, 1955, pp. 248-54

THE CHURCH AS SOCIAL PIONEER by H. Richard Niebuhr

1. ¹Finally, the social responsibility of the Church needs to be described as that of the pioneer. ²The Church is that part of the human community which responds first to God-in-Christ and Christ-in-God. ³It is the sensitive and responsive part in every society and humanity as a whole. ⁴It is that group which hears the Word of God, which sees His judgments, which has the vision of the resurrection. ⁵In its relations with God it is the pioneer part of society that responds to God on behalf of the whole society, somewhat, we may say, as science is the pioneer in responding to pattern or rationality in experience and as artists are the pioneers in responding to beauty. ⁶This sort of social responsibility may be illustrated by reference to the Hebrew people and the prophetic remnant. ⁷The Israelites, as the major prophets ultimately came to see, had been chosen by God to lead all nations to Him. ⁸It was that part of the human race which pioneered in understanding the vanity of idol worship and in obeying the law of love for others. ⁹Hence in it all nations were eventually to be blessed. ¹⁰The idea of representational responsibility is illustrated particularly by Jesus Christ. ¹¹As has often been pointed out by theology, from New Testament times onward, he is the first-born of many others not only in resurrection but in rendering obedience to God. ¹²His obedience was a sort of pioneering and representative obedience; he obeyed on behalf of all people, and so showed what others could do and drew forth a divine response in turn toward all those he represented. ¹³He discerned the divine mercy and relied upon it as representing human beings and pioneering for them.

2. This thought of pioneering or representational responsibility has been somewhat obscured during the long centuries of individualist overemphasis. Its expression in the legal terms of traditional theology is strange and often meaningless to modern ears. Yet with our understanding of the way that life is involved with life, of the manner in which self and society are bound together, of the way in which small groups within a nation act for the whole, it seems that we must move toward a conception similar to the Hebraic and medieval one.

3. In this representational sense the Church is that part of human society, and that element in each particular society, which moves toward God, which as the priest acting for all men worships Him, which believes and trusts in Him on behalf of all, which is the first to obey Him when it becomes aware of a new aspect of His will. Human society in all of its divisions and aspects does not believe. Its institutions are based on unbelief, on lack of confidence in the Lord of heaven and earth. But the Church has conceived faith in God and moves in the spirit of that trust as the hopeful and obedient part of society.

4. In ethics it is the first to repent for the sins of a society, and it repents on behalf of all. When it becomes apparent that slavery is transgression of the divine commandment, then the Church repents of it, turns its back upon it, abolishes it within itself. It does this not as the holy community separate from the world but as the pioneer and representative. It repents for the sin of the whole society and leads in the social act of repentance. When the property institutions of society are subject to question because innocent suffering illuminates their antagonism to the will of God, then the Church undertakes to change its own use of these institutions and to lead society in their reformation. So also the Church becomes a pioneer and representative of society in the practice of equality before God, in the reformation of institutions of rulership, and in the acceptance of mutual responsibility of individuals for one another.

5. In our time, with its dramatic revelations of the evils of nationalism, of racism and of economic imperialism it is the evident responsibility of the Church to repudiate these attitudes within itself and to act as the pioneer of society in doing so. The apostolic proclamation of good and bad news to the colored races without a pioneering repudiation of racial discrimination in the Church contains a note of insincerity and unbelief. The prophetic denunciation of nationalism without a resolute rejection of nationalism in the Church is mostly rhetorical. As the representative and pioneer of humankind the Church meets its social responsibility when in its own thinking, organization and action it functions as a world society, undivided by race, class and national interests.

6. This seems to be the highest form of social responsibility in the Church. It is the direct demonstration of love of God and neighbor rather than a repetition of the commandment to self and others. It is the radical demonstration of faith. Where this responsibility is being exercised there is no longer any question about the reality of the Church. *In pioneering and representative action of response to God in Christ the invisible Church becomes visible and the deed of Christ is reduplicated.*

From the last section of "The Responsibility of the Church for Society," chapter five in *The Gospel, the Church and the World*, ed. Kenneth Scott Latourette (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1946), pp. 111-133

**PERSONAL
REFLECTION
EXERCISES**

The Way Life Is or Magic?

Meditation from *Motivation for the Great Work: Forty Meaty Meditations for the Secular-Religious*, by John P. Cock

God Did NOT Promise . . .

long life
good health
financial security
a marriage that works
loving children
a nice house
a solid job
sweet dreams
no pain
a good education
kind in-laws
responsible government
safe cities
no taxes
good neighbors
cessation of wars
and the end of poverty.

Job in the Old Testament was getting clear: “Though God takes away my family, my possessions, and my health, yet will I trust him.”

Paul got clear: “Though Jesus’ way leads me to shipwreck, jail, persecution, and martyrdom on a cross upside down, yet I know that nothing can separate me from the love of God.”

Jesus was clear: “Let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.”

They found whom they could trust, who would not let them down, who would not let them go, who would go with them all the way.

God DID Promise . . .

to love us absolutely
to be with us no matter what
to bind up our deepest wounds
everlasting arms to catch us when we’re falling
faithfulness amid our unfaithfulness
grace sufficient for every need
peace that passes understanding
a calling whether we want it or not
courage in spite of fear
purpose when we have lost our way
mercy without our ever asking
future when all seems impossible
balm for the deepest grief
forgiveness when we deserve none
more freedom than we will ever want
welcome home with open arms regardless
resurrection in this life

comfort when we are in greatest pain
refuge when the storms of life are raging
rest for the weariest
hope against hope
light in the darkest night
joy unspeakable
... *all this abundant life, but not as the world promises or giveth.*

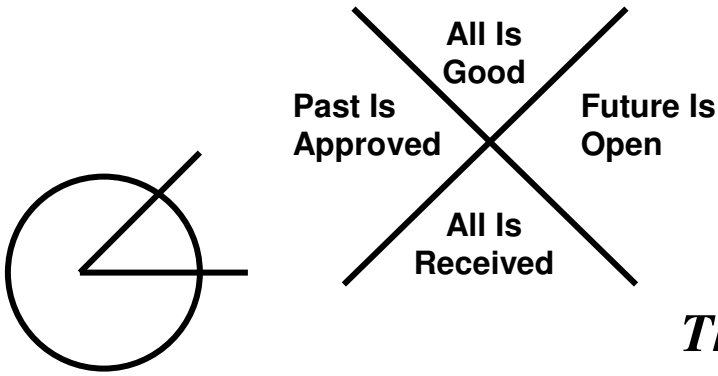
Who gets in on these promises? All creation receives some, for example, grace and love. Universal holy writ is effulgent with the witness of those who cashed in on the rest of the promises of the *One*.

This type of traditional poetry still has power. Nothing is demanded except our utterly trusting the promises of *God* to be true and testing them to the limit, like Job, Paul, and Jesus did.

Rereading the poetry, we are faced with two possible interpretations: 1) *the way life is*, or 2) magic. For me, there is no magic in *God's* promises. My take: Life is good and full of possibility; I am free to serve *God's* creation. All that is required is my relentless *Yes*.

Reflection

1. Which of the non-promises (first list) do most people yearn for?
2. Which items of the first list do I wish were promised?
3. Which of the real promises (second list) do most people yearn for?
4. Which promises of the second list have I received?
5. At this time, I yearn for which promise of the second list?
6. The poetry I use for "God did not promise/God promised" is
7. I know there is no magic because
8. What Job, Paul, and Jesus knew in their hearts is
9. I experienced what they knew when I was



The “X” Word in Our Lives

Profound truths can come true for us when they are grounded in our own life experience. In the columns below, apply the statements in the column headings to your own life, following a-d below.

A.	B.	C.	D.
<u>All Is Good</u>	<u>I Am Accepted</u>	<u>Past Is Approved</u>	<u>Future Is Open</u>
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.

- a. In the column “all is good,” list what in creation you struggle to name as “good.”
- b. In the column “I am accepted,” list those aspects of yourself – physical, psychological, mental, spiritual – that you have a hard time saying *Yes* to.
- c. In the column “the past is approved,” list those events in your past that have not been resolved or forgiven.
- d. In the column “the future is open,” list those hopes and dreams and decisions about your future that seem impossible.
 1. Write a sentence on what difference it would make in your life if you could say *Yes* to column A.
 2. What difference would it make in your life if you could say *Yes* to column B?
 3. What difference would it make in your life is you could say *Yes* to column C?
 4. What difference would it make in your life if you could say *Yes* to column D?
 5. Are your lists evidence of your separation from self, others, and the Ground of Being? Does the separation cause you pain?
 6. Are you a candidate for grace? What would a grace experience be like in your life if you “simply accept the fact that you are accepted” just as you are?

Who Is My Neighbor?

Spirituality and Care of the Earth II, led by John P. Cock, West Market Street, UMC,
Greensboro, NC - January 15, 2003

1. My biggest neighbor is _____.
2. My smallest neighbor is _____.
3. My farthest neighbor is _____.
4. My oldest neighbor is _____.
5. My neighbor I can't do without is _____.
6. My most caring neighbor is _____.
7. My neighbor that delights me most is _____.
8. My meanest neighbor is _____.
9. My most fragile neighbor is _____.
10. My most abused neighbor is _____.
11. My most needy neighbor is _____.
12. The new neighbors I intend to help this year:
 - a. _____;
 - b. _____.
13. The neighbor that keeps coming to mind is _____.
14. Summary statement for *Who Is My Neighbor*:
"My neighbor is (neighbors are) _____."
_____."

[In answer to which is the greatest commandment, Jesus said,] "The first is 'Hear, O Israel [Shema]: the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself. No other commandment is greater than these'" (Mk. 12: 28-31 [REB]).

"A lawyer once came forward to test him [Jesus] by asking: 'Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said, 'What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?' He replied, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.' That is the right answer," said Jesus; 'do that and you will have life.'

Wanting to justify his question, he [lawyer] asked, 'But who is my neighbor?'" (Lk. 10: 23-29 [REB])

RECOMMENDED READING

Reading Suggestions by John P. Cock

20 favorites (*); Underlined books are more recent

- Armstrong, Karen. *Through the Narrow Gate: A Memoir of Spiritual Discovery*
Berry, Thomas. *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*
Evening Thoughts
* *The Dream of the Earth*
The Great Work: Our Way Into the Future
and Brian Swimme. *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era – A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos*
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Cost of Discipleship*
Ethics (“**Freedom**” essay, pp. 248-54)
* *Letters and Papers from Prison*
Testament to Freedom: The Essential Writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer
Boulding, Kenneth. *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society*
Borg, Marcus. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*
Brunner, Emil. *Our Faith*
*Buber, Martin. *I and Thou*
Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*
The Power of Myth
Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*
Castaneda, Carlos. *Journey to Ixtlan*
Cock, John P. (nine books on hand-out page)
Crompton, Samuel W. *100 Spiritual Leaders who Shaped History*
Cummings, E. E. *100 Selected Poems*
Crossan, John Dominic. *Who Is Jesus?*
Ellsberg, Robert. *All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for our Time*
Engleman, Vance. *In Search of Profound Humanness*
Elliott, William, *Tying Rocks to Clouds*
*Epps, John, gen. ed. *Bending History: Selected Talks of Joseph W. Mathews*
*Eiseley, Loren. *The Immense Journey*
Farmer, Paul. *Mountains Beyond Mountains*
Fox, Matthew. *Original Blessing*
Frankl, Viktor. *Man’s Search for Meaning*
Funk, Robert, Hoover, Roy, and the Jesus Seminar. *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*
Funk, Robert. *Honest to Jesus*
*Hammarskjöld, Dag. *Markings*
*Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*
Jenkins, Jon and Maureen. *The Other World in the Midst of Our World*
The 9 Disciplines of a Facilitator: Leading Groups by Transforming Yourself
Johnson, Robert. *Rudolf Bultmann: Interpreting Faith for the Modern Era*
(“**The Crisis of Faith**” essay, pp. 240-243)
Kabir. *The Kabir Book*, trans. Robert Bly
*Kazantzakis, Nikos. *The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises*
Keen, Sam. *Hymns to an Unknown God: Awakening the Spirit in Everyday Life*
Ketcham, Charles. *A Theology of Encounter: The Ontological Ground for a New Christology*

*Kierkegaard, Søren. *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness Unto Death*
Purity of Heart Is To Will One Thing
Training in Christianity

Knox, John. *Jesus: Lord and Christ*

Dalai Lama. *Ethics for the New Millennium*

*LeFevre, Perry. *Prayers of Kierkegaard*

Lao Tzu, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, ed. Timothy Freke

Latourette, Kenneth Scott, ed. *The Gospel, the Church and the World*. (H. Richard Niebuhr's
 "The Church as Social Pioneer" essay, pp. 132-33)

Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God*

*Lawrence, D. H. *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*

Lesser, Elizabeth. *The New American Spirituality*

McFague, Sallie. *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril*

Marshall, Gene. *The Call of the Awe: Rediscovering Christian Profundity in an Interreligious Era*

Mathews, James. *Brother Joe: A 20th Century Apostle* (biography of Joseph W. Mathews)

*Mathews, Joseph W. *The Christ of History* (in John Cock's *The Transparent Event*)

Michalson, Carl. *Worldly Theology*

Muggeridge, Malcolm. *A Third Testament*

Merton, Thomas. *The Way of Chuang Tzu*

Nhât Hanh, Thích. *The Heart of Understanding*

*Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture*
The Meaning of Revelation

Obama, Barack. *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*
The Audacity of Hope

Ó Murchú, Diarmuid. *Reclaiming Spirituality: A New Spiritual Frame-work for Today's World*

Otto, Rudolf. *The Idea of the Holy*

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Whose Bible Is It?*

Perrin, Norman. *The Promise of Bultmann*

Ruether, Rosemary. *Gaia & God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*

Rumi. *The Soul of Rumi*

Smith, Huston. *The Illustrated World's Religions: A Guide to Our Wisdom Tradition*

Spretnak, Charlene. *States of Grace: Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*

Stanfield, Brian, ed. *The Art of Focused Conversation*

* *The Courage to Lead: Transform Self, Transform Society*

*Tagore, Rabindranath. *Gitanjali*

Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre. *Building the Earth*
Hymn of the Universe

* *The Human Phenomenon*, ed. and trans. Sarah Appleton-Weber

Tillich, Paul. *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality*

* *Courage to Be*

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. I-III
The Eternal Now
The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message
The New Being

* *The Shaking of the Foundations* ("You Are Accepted" essay, pp. 153-63)

Tutu, Desmond. *No Future Without Forgiveness*

*Wilber, Ken. *Grace and Grit*.
One Taste: Daily Reflections on Integral Spirituality

Wilson, Priscilla. *The Facilitative Way: Leadership That Makes the Difference*

Wink, Walter. *Engaging the Powers*

Zohar, Hannah, with Ian Marshall. *Spiritual Quotient: Connecting with our Spiritual Intelligence*

transcribe books

by John P. Cock

By Cosmic Design: Spirit Poems (1974-2006) (164 pp., September 2006, \$9.95)

Cover description by Thomas Berry, author of *Evening Thoughts* (Oct. 2006)

- *Poems about our deepest reality, spirit, and how it guides every being's journey*
- *Unpublished, published, and new poems that try to get to the bottom of it all*

Daily Spirit Journal (vol. II): Quotes and Reflections for 365 Days (editor/author) (2006, \$11.95)

- *Universal spirit journey ponderings; for everyone to bow and give thanks daily*
- *Contemporary expressions that honor and transcend religious and secular traditions*

Daily Spirit Journal (vol. I): Quotes and Reflections for 365 Days (editor/author) (2005, \$9.95)

- *The cloud of witnesses care for us: from Lao Tzu to St. Francis to Thomas Berry*
- *Some big chunks of meat in saucy soup to motivate care and service*

Journer, a contemporary spirit-journey novel similar to H. Hesse's *Siddhartha* (2005, \$11.95)

- *Led by spirit, Peter and Suzanne and their son, Adam, journey far and deep*
- *Through life-changing events, bigotries peel away and wider service evolves*

At One with the Heart of Creation: Reflections and Verse on the Spirit Journey (2004, \$12.95)

With Lynda L. Cock

- *The experience of communion with the power at the heart of creation . . .*
- *Motivates all to be agents of intercommunion and reconciliation*

Our Universal Spirit Journey: Reflection and Verse for Creation's Sake (2002, \$14.95)

Foreword by Thomas Berry, author of The Dream of the Earth and The Universe Story

- *All creation is transparent to spirit – always already present*
- *All religions and cultures are spirit literate; therefore, spirit is our unifying symbol*

Motivation for the Great Work: Forty Meaty Meditations for the Secular-Religious (2000, \$13.95)

Foreword by Thomas Berry, author of The Great Work: Our Way into the Future

- *Individual and group meditations for the great work of the 21st century*
- *Spirit awakens, forms, engages, sustains, and unites us on our great journey*

The Transparent Event: Post-Modern Christ Images (300 pp., 2001, 2nd ed., \$15.95)

- *Secular-religious interpretation of grace and faith (recounts his guiding theologians)*
- *Some individual reflective exercises with a group Study Guide at the end*

Called To Be: A Spirit Odyssey (2000, 2nd ed., 20 photos, \$15.95 – reduced from \$19.95)

- *300-page memoir of a mountain boy's journey to becoming a citizen of the universe*
- *From a small town, to the suburbs, to ghettos, to third-world villages, to the Earth*

Co-editor of Two Books (read about both at www.ResurgencePublishing.com)

Bending History: Selected Talks of Joseph W. Mathews (295 pages, 2005, \$19.95)

- *Thirty talks by Joseph Mathews (mentor), founder of the O:E, EI, ICA*

Brother Joe: A 20th Century Apostle (244 pages, 2006, \$17.50)

- *Biography of "Joe" Mathews by his brother Bishop James K. Mathews*

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Daily Reflection: www.reJourney.blogspot.com

As of 1-19-2007

Reading Suggestions – from the Retreat Team

Armstrong, Karen – *Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*, 2001

Armstrong, Karen – *A History of God:
The 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, 2004

Armstrong, Karen – *The Great Transformation: The Beginning of Our Religious Traditions*, 2005

Borg, Marcus J. – *The God We Never Knew: Beyond Dogmatic Religions to a Contemporary Faith*, 1998

Borg, Marcus J. – *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*, 2004

Borg, Marcus J. – *JESUS, Uncovering the Life, Teachings and Relevancy of a Religious Revolutionary*, 2006.

Borg, Marcus and Crossan, Jon Dominic – *The Last Week*, 2006

Friedmann, Thomas – *The World is Flat*, 2006

Gore, Al – *An Inconvenient Truth*, 2005

Moyers, Bill – *Moyers on America*, 2004

Moyers, William Cope – *Broken: My Story of Addiction and Redemption*, 2006

Nelson-Pallmeyer, Jack – *Saving Christianity from Empire*, 2005

Tabor, James D. – *The Jesus Dynasty: The Hidden History of Jesus, His Royal Family and the Birth of Christianity*, 2006

Pallmeyer, Jack – *Saving Christianity from Empire*, 2005

Jim Wallis, *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets it Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*, 2005