

Global Priors Council

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### "GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU"

I am reading from the tenth chapter of John:

It was winter, and the festival of the Dedication was being held in Jerusalem. Jesus was walking in the temple precincts, in Solomon's Cloister. The Jews gathered round him and asked: "How long must you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah say so plainly." "I have told you," said Jesus, "but you do not believe. My deeds done in my Father's name are my credentials, but because you are not sheep of my flock you do not believe. My own sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish; no one shall snatch them from my care. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's care. My Father and I are one."

Once again the Jews picked up stones to stone him. At this Jesus said to them, "I have set before you many good deeds, done by my Father's power; for which of these would you stone me?" The Jews replied, "We are not going to stone you for any good deed, but for your blasphemy. You, a mere man, claim to be a god." Jesus answered, "Is it not written in your own Law, 'I said: You are gods'? Those are called gods to whom the word of God was delivered -- and Scripture cannot be set aside. Then why do you charge me with blasphemy because I, consecrated and sent into the world by the Father, said, 'I am God's son?'"

This talk is on "God Will Take Care of You." It is a spin, it is not a talk yet. I cannot dignify it that way.

Now, I have tried to say four things: first, taking care of yourself means you experience your experience. My father was a nut on chewing your food. He would sit there and almost count the times we had to chew before we swallowed. It burnt me up as a kid. That came back to my mind last night as I was thinking about experiencing your experience. I think my father wanted cows and he got kids. I am not sure that is entirely true. Experience your experience, and then, second, taking care of yourself has to do with the Dark Night of the Soul, and third, it has to do with meditation, and fourth, it has to do with the whole idea of God taking care of you. But, I am not flowing I am not going anywhere. I am saying the same thing each day. And if I am not clear on that, I am sure I am going to go to pieces again in my thinking.

Standing at attention to your life is something you do not like to do. The bottom of that is the Dark Night of the Soul. Standing at attention is the triggering of what I mean by meditation. And meditation has nothing to meditate on except the Dark Night of the Soul. Whatever machinery it uses, standing at attention to the Dark Night of the Soul is meditation. I want to put it that strongly. And the stirring of the waters of the Dark Night of the Soul is Being's care for Being. That is what I want to talk about for a little bit.

Now, the first thing I want to call attention to is that God IS the sovereign of your life. You have got no choice about that. That is not true, that is a faith statement. But, now I will change it. There is a sovereign that is unsynonymous with any activity initiated by the subject: that is the absolute sovereign. Now, when you say "God," that is a faith statement. You do not experience it as God who is your sovereign in the raw experience of the fact that you are not running your life. Now, usually, a word that is a nice easy word to use is "faith." But the trouble is, we are so trained in abstraction that we think of faith as a philosophical principle rather than a reality that we phenomenologically are aware of. Now, even when I say "I showed up a man rather than a woman," I tend to think of being yanked out of my Mama's womb and coming out male rather than female. That is a subtle form of abstraction to the degree that I really experience myself limited in a concrete situation by being male, and you damned women ought to listen to this. At that point I am experiencing the overagainstness that I am trying to talk about as sovereign. Male is just one thing. I could go on with the fact that I am 64, I am not 24. These days every time I come upon myself, I am nearing 64. But, now you could go on with that. I want to make a short speech.

Now, maybe this is a better way of coming at it. I go around filled with resentment all the time. When I peel back the artichoke and get at the core, I find that resentment is to the conative volitional aspect of my being as absurdity is to the intellectual

dynamic of my being. For instance, I am always out to do something and as yet nothing has come off the way I have set out to do it. Minus absolutely nothing. Do you understand what I am talking about? There is a factor in every situation that is unsynonymous with my own volition that enters in between my deed and the consequences thereof. And that tree remains unfathomably mysterious. It is the enigmatic power. Now, when I say that resentment is the cognitive equivalent to absurdity, why, you can understand resentment! Here I am, a being with consciousness and therefore creativity, and in every, not every other, situation, it is thwarted. And finally, I die and nobody asks me. This is what I mean by the experience of a sovereign power. And, of course, you and every man, whether he knows it or not, sooner or later, has got to say before that one "Faith" or "Father" or the equivalent poetry thereof. Now, about this you have got no choice. I speak from "Faith." God is your sovereign and God is my sovereign.

This is point three. People ask these days, "What does it mean to trust? What does it mean to trust God? I am talking about taking care of yourself. Whatsoever else it means, it means that you self-consciously in every given situation acknowledge God's sovereignty. Never in my 33 years of marriage, have I once picked Lyn up off the floor of despair. That is an honest statement. Now that woman has stood and she very likely knows that I know that secret. Now for my point. We were in a group of people four months after John died, and she made a statement that made me feel that John ought not have died. I cannot describe the explosion that went off in me! It took me a long time to know something about it, but do you know what the explosion was? I went through hell to maintain the faith posture that I was not simply the subject of fate but my Father was my father. Do you hear what I am talking about? I believe that when you understand the sovereignty of God you never again have any excuse about anything. Do you understand what I mean? I am talking about trusting God. I am talking about trusting God, not in some abstract theology, but in the concretion of your life. If you can ever blame any situation on anything, then you are not hearing what I mean by trusting God. I am talking about taking care of yourself. You get up one morning and you forget, and you say, "This is a hell of a day." That is sacrilege. That is untrust of God. This is the day God gave you. You let go one day, and you will not notice it, but the next day when you get up you are exactly that much shorter than you were the day before. You do it two days in a row and you are that much shorter. You do it three in a row, and then pretty soon you are there like a heap of shaking palsy collapsed in life. You let one go and the trouble has started. I could go on with that, but I won't.

Oh, I have got to tell this, though, on myself. Slicker one time told me seriously that I was the kind of a guy who shot and killed the bearer of bad news. Just imagine the general who is fighting a war and his whole right flank has collapsed. If he does not do something about it, everything is gone, but he shoots the guy who brought the news, because it is bad news. You got that? And then recently, Slick, a few days ago I read in history that in the old days generals did precisely that; they shot the bearer of bad news. I suppose that is where the saying came from originally. Well, you know that is not entirely true about me, but Slicker has a point, as some of you have learned. Anybody is welcome in my cubicle as long as they have good news. Well, so that my boasting will be tempered, to the degree that Slicker is right or in that situation where Slicker is right, that is what I mean by lack of trust in God. Then it is that your caring for yourself is in bad shape, real bad shape.

Now what do you mean when you say God cares for you? If I were going on with trust I would deal with power and presence of God, but I won't. To get this in secular language so you will not think it is some religion stuck in here, Being cares for Being. Now, you have noted that Being couldn't care less about deeds and couldn't care less about knowledge. Have you noticed that? Evidence of it is that the edges of the pyramids are beginning to round off. Every deed passes away. Or, maybe the best evidence is this fine body I have, which is my deed. One of these days they are going to stick it in a 6foot hole and then finally it will not be there anymore. Now what is my being? I do not want to deal with it in abstract philosophy, but in concrete experience. The way I experience my being is to know my knowing and to do my doing. Do you grasp that? When somebody says, now empirically what are you pointing to when you are talking about your being? Well, I am talking about the experience of the intensification of knowing and the intensification of doing, more concretely, of my knowing and my doing. And, by "knowing my knowing", I mean standing present to my knowing. I mean being in the sense of expression, in the sense of manifestation, in the sense of presencing in whatever form, my knowing. I used to sometimes say to Frank Hilliard, "Frank, you and I must do something." Then the night before we would sit down and make a model and then lay it aside and the next night make another one. What you make models for is to bring them into being, and the way you bring them into being is to appropriate them in your being. That is knowing your knowing. This is why abstract thinking of any kind whatsoever is finally naught. This is what the existential dynamic, of our time, if we had eyes to see and ears to hear, has taught us all. This is my being. Knowing my knowing. Almost like eating my knowing. I do not want an idea that I am not. This is what I mean by integrity.

I have often said to Slicker that he knew more in RSI we called it "grounding" Slicker knows more about grounding in his life than ~ anybody I ever met. That is knowing your knowing. Whatever awe Slicker has comes from this. One time, I remember Townley said that if there were ever any saint remembered in our outfit, it would be Slicker. I thought about that a long time, and I concluded that that is what he was pointing to in Slicker.

Secondly, being does not care anything about your doing. Somebody asks you, now what do you mean? My way of knowing my knowing is doing my doing. In some ways that is a little harder to get said, but in another way it is not. It is the difference between doing a job and sticking the one Godgiven life you have even into washing a white linen handkerchief. The cross is not something that happened two thousand years ago. It is at the heart of Being itself when you stick your life, the one life you have, which means stick your death into the least of all deeds. That is your being, that is doing your doing. Now, what I am trying to say is Being takes care of being. This is what I mean by endlessness. You know your knowing and you do your doing. . . . What does it mean to take care of yourself? Very simple! You know your knowing and do your doing and Being always takes care of being.

My last point has to do with this thing I read. I have been taught in theology that I studied and probably by preachers long before that, Jesus never said he was the Son of God. I have come back to that tenth chapter over and over again. The thing that shocks me is that he did make that claim. The fact that he grounded it in the Scripture, that is beside the point at the moment. That was strategy. No, it was not, it was saying, "Why aren't you saying the same thing?" That is more than strategy. He stood tip, "I am the son of God". It was the tenth chapter that rocked me into seeing that precisely in the aliveness of the Dark Night of the Soul, precisely there and only there one hears the heavens open and the voice saying "Thou art my beloved son". But the Jews could not hear that day what Jesus had heard as he said "I am the son. I am the son of God." What does it mean to take care of yourself? Well, you cannot divorce it from standing at attention to life. It would not even dawn on you to say "I am God's son". If the meditation were not happening symbolically with the council that is internalized in yourself, you would never agree or dare. If you were not taking into yourself the humiliation and the weakness and the resentment and the suffering and the dislocation and the sense of ineffectivity and expenditure and unfulfillment, you could not even dream of making such a statement. I wish for one second I were not quite so fat and not quite so short. I would like to stand tall before you. I am God's son. It is like in Faust, the broken sword picked up with the hilt showing, there is the cross and Satan flees. I am proud, as I hope you are proud, this day and every day to be a son of God. I hope always when I feel the pressures that I will not forget to throw my shoulders back. I hope I do it so you can see it. I am a son of God. I am not what you think I am. I am not what I think I am. I am not what anybody thinks I am. I am what God thinks I am, therefore I say, I am a son of God. Taking care of yourself.

I was going to have a quartet come out and sing an old hymn "God Will Take Care of You," and that is not an abstract pious statement.

Joseph W. Mathews

JWM: Porter, come up here and give us the insight you had on meditation.

PORTER: I wrote a couple of statements. The first one, I think just got me into a further mess, but let me read it because it is a part of the journey. We were talking about the role of Satan in meditation and I wrote this: "Not only is meditation the only point where Satan attacks, Satan's attack is the only point where meditation happens. A concrete happening which results in a threat to your relationship with consciousness, that is, your relationship to the Dark Night and the Long March, at the same time triggers meditation. That is, it triggers a dialogue with your council that is the intensification of consciousness which allows the defeat of Satan. And your meditative council is built only out of such happenings. It is not just any group of people, it is an alive community of those who have been helpful in maintaining your relationship with consciousness. That is, they are the successful combatants with Satan. Satan, therefore, makes possible the intensification of consciousness through the threat of nonbeing."

Now, that little bit of writing took me on some weird journeys. Now, I tried to get the insight in about five simple statements. Now, I begin with myself (not myself but my self) as a relationship to mystery. The content of this relationship is consciousness or is the Dark Night and the Long March. A self is also a relationship to this consciousness. I find myself having to relate to the Dark Night and the Long March and the content of this is profound consciousness. I suppose you could say that it is integrity. It is this relationship which becomes threatened and must be cared for. I think the mystery itself in daily events cares for the first relationship. That is, mystery always sees that you stand present to life being the Dark Night and the Long March. You do not have to worry about that one. It is the second relationship that is the arena of taking care of yourself. That is to say, I have to care for the profound relationship. That is the activity I engage in. Now, in a strange kind of way, what Joe was saying about Being taking care of Being also operates here, but somehow or other I have to get involved in that care. A concrete situation raises the threat to my **Self**, or to my radical integrity in the form of a vision of life being other than the Dark Night and the Long March. And therefore that becomes a threat to my relation to what is. That is the Dark Night and the **Long** March. Or, it becomes a threat to my integrity, it becomes a threat to my profound consciousness. Meditation comes into play at this point in that it is the council of wisdom which dialogues with whatever it is that is threatening that relationship. I think that meditation is not a dialogue, it is a triologue. That is, my council gets in a conversation with whatever it is that is threatening my relationship to being the Dark Night and the Long March, that is, being life itself. And it is as if I am a third party. My Self as a third party

watches that conversation going on. It is the meditative council arguing or debating, or dialoguing with whatever it is that threatens that relationship which is the process of my Self being cared for. I suppose that is the sense in which you can say that being cares for being. Now let me see **if** I can illustrate that.

Very early in the assignment process my name showed up in Hong Kong. It went on quite a journey Hong Kong, Singapore, Chicago, Singapore and something of this has gone on at every point. My first reaction to that was "Well, just be patient, it will shift". Now that was the concrete incident at which Satan got in. That is, I discovered that it was not the assignment or the possibility of it shifting but it was my assumption, unconsciously at first, that there is a situation in which the Long March and the Dark Night are more or less intense than some other situation. That was the point at which Satan got in through my armor. At that point my self was in mortal danger. That is the point at which I cranked up meditation. I am not sure who all got into the dialogue but David Scott got into it with "AHA." He was making me aware that that was the threat, or that I was thinking rather subtly that there was some situation that was less intense or more intense than the Long March and the Dark Night.

One of my meditative council comes in and just says, "Aha!" And that becomes the argument on that side of the debate. It is as if that was going on and I was sitting there watching it go on. At some point, the decision I had on my hands was how I was going to relate to the dialogue that was going on. My selfhood was at stake. My radical selfhood had to do with sorting out all of what was going on and ferreting out what indeed it was that maintained my relationship to the Long March and the Dark Night. That is, it was that dialogue going on between my council and the threat that gave me the possibility of deciding. You can see that what was going on was sin, as I was intrigued with there being something other than the Long March and Dark Night. I was separated from life. That is, I was in sin at that point, and so my meditative council, in dialoguing with that threat gave the possibility of ferreting out what it is that maintained my relationship with the Dark Night and the Long March that allows me to continue to stand in relationship with mystery or the way life is.

JWM: That's great, Robert. David McCleskey Where is David?

McCleskey: What got me triggered on the same thing basically was that it starts with the intrusion of awe. It's the bump in your life which he has just described in the assignment illustration. And keeping that awe alive is meditation. Taking care of yourself is, you don't shut that off. Quite often, what satan says is "Oh, that wasn't really a bump." Or "You ought to go on to the next situation." Those are all trying to block off an initial encounter with Mystery. And then he said satan attacks only there. That is the only place where he attacks. Meditation is the activity of keeping those things alive.

We were talking in the cubicle yesterday and the illustration was mentioned of Liz Banks saying "Nonsense" to satan: that was meditation. That was a little poetry she remembered about another occasion in which awe was encountered. And my last point would simply be that it is always for the sake of continuing that experience in the future for the sake of something else. It is not just for the sake of having a fine meditative council and I ought to have more fine meditative council, so I would read more. Reading does not necessarily mean meditation unless that is going on.

JWM: Gene Marshall.

MARSHALL: You can tell these comments all stem from the same basic breakthrough, that Meditation is a dialogue between profound consciousness and fallen consciousness. The dialogue between profound consciousness and fallen consciousness, that I am watching and dialoguing with, is that point of dialogue. In other words, fallen consciousness is the creation without awe, and the real creation or profound consciousness is in dialogue with fallen consciousness. It is like that dialogue is going on out here, and I am watching. My meditation is watching this dialogue and my meditation is deciding to choose sides in the dialogue. I say "Nonsense" to fallen consciousness and "Amen, Praise God" to profound consciousness. I have noticed that I tend to divide all the people on the entire earth into two groups one group that I say "Nonsense" to before they speak and then pick out a few things to say "Amen" to, and the other group of people whom I say "Amen" to before they speak and then pick out the "Nonsense." That dramatizes how complicated meditation is. It is naming God and satan, hopefully correctly. If you watch this dialogue, then you have to name what is God and what is satan. That is your job just to give the name properly. You cannot trust anybody entirely. Some people you can hardly trust at all. Satan's job is to fool you. If he fools you, he wins. God does not help you choose, but he gives you hell if you choose wrong. He also gives you heaven if you choose right. It is sort of like that. And so what it means to have God take care of you means that He is constant wrath on fallen consciousness. You can count on Him to clobber satan. So if you get on Satan's side, you have had it.

JWM: It occurred to me while they were talking that even though I do not feel very skilled in the area we have been dealing with, it is absolutely crucial, and not simply for us but for the future. What if everybody who chose or who could discipline themselves

in our group would write in that area? And then we would print it and take it home with us. Why not? And I went and tried to clean up my speech yesterday. I will write a page on that or something, too. Why don't we do that? Isn't it almost worthwhile in terms of where we are? All right, we will do that.