

SUMMER '70 July 8, 1970

RESEARCH ASSEMBLY

Spirit Lecture

SOLITARY OFFICES

Without disciplined corporateness the sociological reconstruction of the local congregation cannot come off. Those of you who are passe individualists if you think for a moment that you could do this as an individual, or that you could do it in your congregation you're wrong and you might as well save those two or three years of the only life you have in making an effort. You're only going to do that as a disciplined body of people across this globe marching together in step. But far more true it is that you'll not come off with the sociological reconstruction of the local congregation if you and I do not experience at this moment of our lives something akin to a new birth.

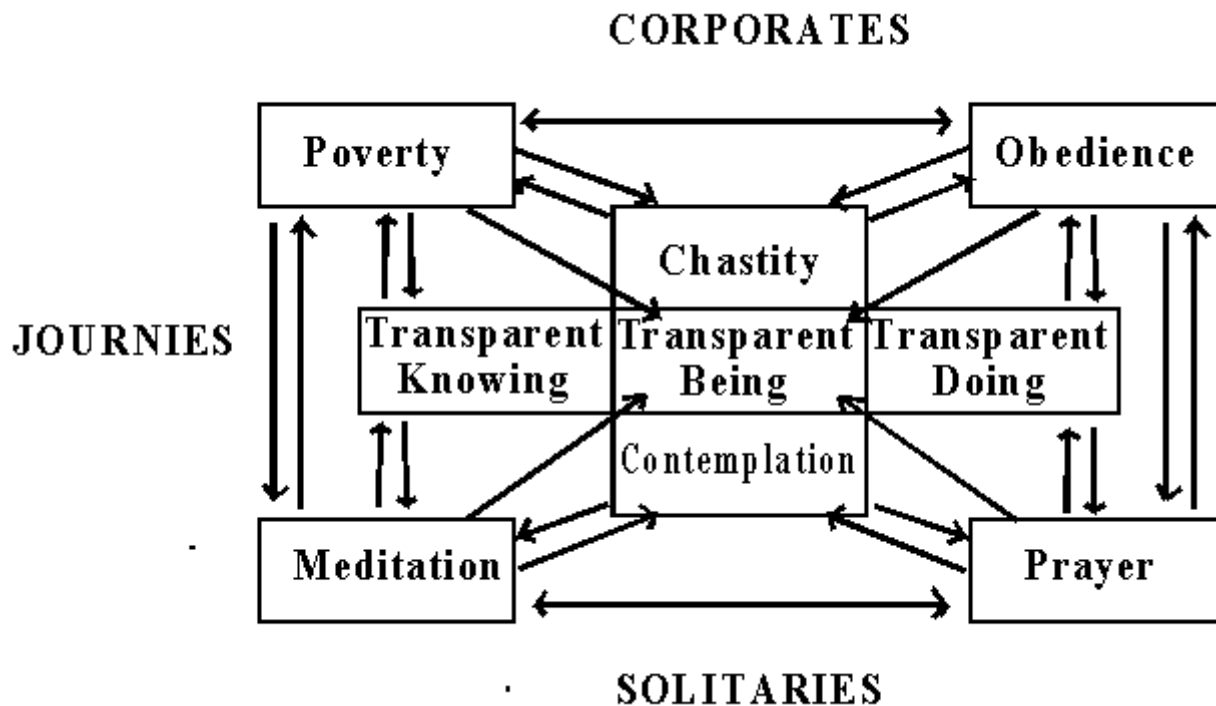
We have to find the release mechanism for the pushing out of the spirit within us in ways that heretofore has not happened. The most important thing in our month together in my perspective is the solitary office and the hopefully edifying discourses we have at the beginning of that office. Now there is nothing very unusual about what I have just said. It's clear that whenever there has been a radical revolution in the civilizing process, [and mark you there are many, many revolutions in history that are not marked by what I would call **radical** revolution] However whenever they have happened, they have been built upon a new breakloose of the spirit. Or man finding a fresh way to articulate what it means to **pray**; what it means to **contemplate**; and what it means to **meditate**; what it means to be one of **poverty**, what it means to be an **obedient one**; what it means to be a **chaste one**; what it means to **transparently know** in the deeps; what it means to **transparently do** in the deeps; what it means, how shall I put it, to **transparently be your being**.

When you look back through the stream of history this is easily discernible and every social carriage that has been radically reconstructed has been preceded by a breakloose of the spirit springs of life. Think of the great social vehicle of Hinduism - it's not a religion - it's a great social vehicle and how that oozed its way into every consciousness of the East and manifest itself in every social structure. That was preceded by a brand new invention of humanness, if you please, which is finding articulation relative to the spiritual oozes that bubble up from the interior. And so it has been time and again in history.

Kind of what we're all about in these hours together is to try to get at the bottomless bottom of the New Religious Mode. The black revolution is waiting, the youth revolution is waiting, the feminine revolution is waiting, the revolt of the non-western world against the eastern world is waiting for this task to be done. And it shall be done! If you and I cannot do it, that will not upset the Lord. And if we choose not to do it, He'll not be upset; He'll just raise up a stone or a stick or a mountain, a little here a little there - and accomplish it. The times demand it! The one thing that's very interesting about the Lord: He always does just exactly what is demanded by the times - that's how we got "Being-in-itself" by the tail (if we've got guts enough to crank it a little bit).

In our Solitary Offices as we call them, the complexity is overwhelming. And I find it extremely difficult to try and hold it in my mind. Then these charts are put on the wall. [I believe this is the way they should be put on (I don't ask anyone else to agree with that).] I find that life is rather exciting. Going around expressing your opinions as your guts are in them. And I don't care for people who express their opinions and then don't deliver their presence into their opinions. But it's fun to go around expressing your opinions with your guts in them and then allow other people to do whatever they do in life.

Now for a moment read them this way: this is Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. And this is Meditation and this is Contemplation and this is Prayer. And this is transparent *ka-knowing*, and this is transparent *ka-being*. You've got to say it a little bit different here because you don't mean what most people mean when they use the words "know, be, and do." And this is transparent *ka-doing*. Now the interrelationship of these is tremendously important. You have to draw arrows like this, and then arrows like this, and arrows like this. This is a dynamical construct and not a static one. {See illustration on next Page} And if you are to know what you mean by prayer, you have to see its relationship to Contemplation and Meditation and also its relationship to Obedience and also to Doing. And then I like to see arrows drawn something like this. I think that Marshall Jones who thought up the scheme on those charts so that you have gold on gold here. That really spoke to me for the center is just a blaze. I think the time has come to put these in a line, but that always disturbs me. I'd like to see it where you try to show the dramatic interrelationship.



Now, the day before yesterday you had an introductory lecture on Prayer. Today you'll have an introductory lecture on Meditation. Yesterday you had a lecture that went through the boxes in Prayer and tomorrow you'll have a lecture that goes through the boxes in Meditation. Now I have a great deal of fun going around being irritated at my colleagues (I suppose that's some of the most meaningful things to me in my twilight days. And I figure that that's one of the privileges that the young permit me - "the old" - they sort of put on the shelf - in fact, I suppose that it would be sort of hard to keep them there if they didn't allow these little things to happen.) But I do not think that what I'm doing today should have come after Prayer....

Those of you who are familiar with some of the jargoneese wrapping of our crew know that we began with the Knowing pole which shoved us into the Doing pole and then the bottom broke lose and this drove us into the Being pole of life. Now, Being does not exist. That's like someone said to me that a halo over any spirit man is a brass zero. I like that very much - that is, he doesn't exist. He is sheer presence if you please. His being does not exist and you don't have anything there. It became pretty clear Being is an intensification of Knowing, or it's knowing become transparent. And it is the intensification of Doing, or doing becomes utterly transparent.

Now, in being shoved into this category we began to try to grasp what the intensification of knowing is. And in our opinion, this (above illustration) is what the intensification of knowing is. Now as we begin to move with the kind of rigorous seriousness into the sociological reconstruction or the socio-spiritual reconstruction of the local church we have to move in our own reflection to the understanding of the intensification of doing and then we'll be able to grasp hopefully somewhat what you mean by that category "transparent being." And when you begin to do it with the Doing you have it on this side. Whereas this is the Knowing that should be there. I mean that when you begin to think in terms of the way life actually comes to you, relative to these graphics, you do not think this way (see horizontal arrow above), you think this way. When you're dealing with the abstraction, which you have to do, you think this way. When you are dealing with the practical manifestation, you think this way (see vertical arrow above) And at this moment I'm concerned with the practical manifestation.

Now, I've got to stop and talk a little bit here to myself. I'm uneasy, on account of before I do what I'm going to do now, all of you needed what I call "lecture number one" in which we look at just the basic meaning of *meditation*. What I want to do today is to take that basic meaning and blow the bottom out of it. And so I'm uneasy. I've got to try and do both. And the second word that I have to say to myself (because of my overwhelming insecurity) is that what I'm going to do this morning has never been done before. I'd like to be in a small group like our collegium in the morning before I start out over 70,000 fathoms of water. But I thought that because this is a research assembly and we come here to just dig together that you could put up with me and my stuttering which manifests that I am nervous. I'll try and put up with your response to it all. So I think that I'm prepared now to start lecturing (it's taken me a little while to do that).

I suppose that we have erasers, don't we? It seems like the whole world is against me. Well, maybe we can do it without them. I hope anyway some of you people can't even see it. And this I might add is some of the finest board work that I've ever done!

In our day, and I mean this is a wonderful day, (this **is** a wonderful day!), mankind has rediscovered himself in ways that sometimes he just doesn't realize. It just sort of vibrates me when I think about it. If I had to say... (and I mean man, not some asinine religious character like myself. I mean just man on the street, secular man,...) if I had what were the three most important discoveries, (sometimes I want to call them rediscoveries, but then no I'll call them discoveries,) about himself (and you can follow these very, very clearly). You have discovered as if we never knew it before in our day - **sociality**. Have you got that?

We have discovered that a man is in society like a fish is in water and that there is no such thing as an individual and that there is no such thing as society. Both of these are abstractions. There are only individuals in society and society in individuals. Those of you who want to be gigantic individualists are going to have to learn all over again that only in the midst of corporateness does anything get done. And by corporateness I mean the intentional manifestation of sociality. That's the first thing we've discovered.

The second thing we've discovered is that we are **freedom**. And this is overwhelming. It is not that man has freedom. That is a degenerated 17th and 18th psychologistic understanding of man that he has freedom. Today we have discovered that man **IS** freedom. He is raw creativity, if you please. Or to use the words "he is a depth being" that Buss was working with the other day. We have discovered that man is act, that man is do, that man is thrust as Luther would like to put it.

The third thing that we have discovered is that there is a mystery in life, not the kind of mystery that goes away tomorrow when we learn more. But there is mystery that never goes away. And that man is only the consciousness of consciousness when he self-consciously embraces his relationship to that mystery that never goes away. And if I were talking on this subject, I'd like to illustrate it for you in the scientific disciplines, in the hippie movement, and in the old youth revolts.

These are the three things that man has discovered about himself. Now Meditation has to do with that new discovery by man. That man is **sociality**. And Contemplation has to do with the **discovery that man is mystery**. He is his relationship to mystery in the final sense. And Prayer is man's grasp of himself as **freedom**. Now I am going to deal with sociality so I'll not deal with all of these at the moment.

Man has discovered, I would say, that he does not exist save in a social nexus. Now the church uses this word Meditation not to point to our sociality - that's the first step, - but to our self-conscious embracement of our sociality. Do you follow that? That is, you not only, whether you like it or not, are in society and society is in you. I remember reading a sermon by Dwight L. Moody. I don't know where he got it, but he said that God got Lot out of Sodom but he never got Sodom out of Lot.

Meditation is the self-conscious embracing of our sociality. But you use the words really in two different ways. One way that you use "meditation" you're talking about a state of being. And that state of being is the self-conscious appropriation of our sociality. The second way you use it is as an exercise of contemplation which whatever else it is doing, enables us to meditate in terms of being a state of being. What I'm trying to say is that when you do you solitary exercise and are dealing with meditation there, that's nothing. That's a huge joke. And if you can't laugh at it, it's like going to church or participating in a liturgy -- if that isn't the most asinine thing you know. To go aside and spend thirty minutes going through that great big old play, when you know good and well life is out there. And so what that becomes is a means so that what the play is all about in worship becomes a living reality in every life situation that you're in. That's what the exercise of meditation is.

I'm not much interested in that point, I am interested in meditation as a phenomenological basis, as an : inward state and there is where I want to take off from and push at. But before I do in some detail, I have got to relate it to its counterparts in the diagram. And that is Poverty. And we're dealing with intensified knowing here. And then the chart of Knowing. Then I have to say a word about its relationship to Prayer and to Contemplation. That will be enough for me to do.

In order to do that I have to cool down a little bit. Before I'm ready to do it in what I want to come later- with what meditation is as a state of being in itself. Very obviously it's brooding, it's brooding. But brooding never takes place alone. Brooding only takes place when you are conversing with another. And this indicates that meditation is dealing with the community before community. What I mean by that is the internalized community. When you use the word sociality you're not talking about the fact that you are among people, that you can wave at. You're talking about that people are in you. That's what the term sociality means. And Meditation deals with this. That is why I like to say that Prayer is the act before the act. So in Meditation it is the community prior to the community, if you please.

Now, I don't know how to get this said, but this state of being is a dynamic, like all states of being are. There's something going on. And I sort of think of brooding, and mark you this is a relationship with others. That brooding is like making stuff and yet it's a funny kind of stuff - it's almost "pre-stuff." It almost taking the void and bringing order before order into that void. And I call that sort of pre-stuff, - but it's imaginal stuff. It's the stuff, and it's a glob. For me really it's a glob. It's that act of which you forge your operating images.

That means then in relationship to Contemplation that Meditation mediates the Mystery. Now maybe it would help you if I just say something real fast. Meditation is that which creates God. If you let Tillich come to your mind and remember that he talked about the God beyond God. And the God that you and I relate to, in terms of the practical is the God this side of God. And the idolatry in that is when you don't know that. Do you understand that? To mediate the mystery. And mark you, you can bite here and you ain't got no mystery. And you can reach there and you ain't got no mystery.

I think that a good bit of the reason that people do not know what it means to "walk and talk with God" in our day is that they no longer know about the state of being of Meditation, which mediates the word and presence of the Mystery. That's its function, if you please, is that it literally creates God. Only I mean by Meditation it's that big glob out of which you forge your images. Yet you've got to remember that it's that Mystery itself that attains the meditative process that mediates the Mystery. For it is only when life is what you're up against here in history that Meditation is even possible. It's a polar dynamic as I grasp it there.

Now in Prayer -- and this is most exciting to me, this glob that I told you about - sometimes I call this an interior montage that is in all of us. But I want to get lower than that. It's almost a form underneath the form. Anyway that glob is the stuff out of which prayers are made. The stuff out of which prayers are made is first of all a glob. To put that in a more secular way: there was never any artist that created the wonder of the miracle of an art piece -- that's prayer, if you please - who did not first meditate. I mean in terms of this state of being. That I'm trying to point out, maybe to use Buss's figure the other day, you're dealing with humanness right up to your armpits.

You're dealing with what you've been engaged in all your life. Whether you were self-conscious of it or not. This is the stuff that creates the act before the act which is that which alters the course of history. And history was never altered in anyway save through prayer. That's what you mean by the deed before the deed, if you please. But then what's prayer's relationship? Well, I sort of see it like this. This fine, spun glob of pre-images and oh wouldn't Hume like to be here this morning. And an image is always practical. The difference between an image and a concept or a construct in logical jargon is that the image is always practical. It has to do with my defining Mystery. If in the concretions of life . . . and its only the pull of actions here, or the demand for creative expression, that even triggers this or allows it to happen.

Which is to say, nobody ever knew of the state of meditation who was divorcing himself from the practical demands of life. Now don't get this mixed up with the religious in history. For although you have many phonies - like you've got non-religious who are phonies - The religious are highly practical individuals. This is to say, monasticism itself was only for the sake of the mission of changing the world. And I mean secular society. And I wish that some of the Catholic orders could get that back through their skulls in our time.

Now then I have to fundamentally relate this to Poverty. Poverty IS detachment. I don't want to talk about that - but Poverty is a state of being and has nothing to do with how much money you've got or don't got or not. As long as you have got to have your wife, as long as you have to have your country, as long as you have got to have your split level house, you don't know what detachment is. And you have not experienced poverty. Some of you clerics in particular ought to pay some attention here. I like to put it something like this. If a person cannot come here to Chicago and live here in this place, then he has got to come. If he can, then it's not necessary. Just period. Now save one is detached in that fashion, this process cannot happen. The last thing you would want to do or can do is to brood on the Mystery. The last thing that can happen to you is an address of the Mystery, that desires to become self-conscious. And it is primarily out of this stuff that transparent Knowing takes place.

Now maybe that's enough for the broad context though you can see perhaps two or three lectures just in that area.

Now I want to deal with Meditation under four basic rubrics. Yesterday and the day before yesterday we had lectures on Prayer. Fred Buss talked about prayer as **sheer happening**. Then secondly he spoke of prayer as **deep resolve within**. And then he spoke of prayer as **radical tactic** and then he spoke of prayer as **mortal combat**. Now in a much more hazy way I want to talk about meditation as first of all **inherent community** and then second as **pristine dialogue** and then as **fanatical discipline** and then lastly as **incessant warfare**. Now, I don't think that that's very good poetry but it's got to be poetry because that's the only way you can talk about it.

Now let's start. What we're trying to do is look at this state of being first this way and then that way and then another way and then still another way. In trying to say out loud what I think I see first of all, it is **inherent community**. I mean before you ever become aware that there is such a thing as community you already have a community inside yourself. What a community it is, for those of us that walk in the way of the Lord. Golly my, it is Jeremiah, Amos, Mark, Paul and Augustine and Anselm and Thomas, Luther, Calvin, Rauschenbush, and my great grandmother and your great grandmother and then all of those who walked along the way with these giants whose names shall never be remembered on earth. We'll only know when we get to heaven. And what a day of rejoicing that's going to be when you meet my great grandmother, I mean yours! This is the community that's inside me.

These ones that are inside me such as Amos for instance, he is far more real to me than most of the flesh and blood people I come across. And I used to make fun of that sentimental image "he walks with me and He talks with me," but I don't make so much fun of it any more. On account of Amos and I belong to the same tribe together and we go down the road walking together and talking together and sometimes he is mean as hell talking to me and sometimes he is fantastically encouraging to me. And both of us have a little secret. He knows that I could not be who I am today if he were not with me and then perhaps a more important secret he knows that he damn well could not be what he is without me today. Do you grasp that. And I mean that the things that we have done to and for one another are wonders to behold. I tell you that Luther is a part of me night and (that's one thing about this community, they never go home night) and day.

Now you've got to expand this a little bit because I just named one group and really there are all kinds of people in your head. When Fred Buss was giving his lecture the other day I was sitting there on the floor and I was worried a little bit and I heard a voice inside say "Hi" and I recognized immediately that it was Brian Mosley's voice. Now Brian is a little neighborhood lad about this high who is wandering around here these days. I said "Hi" to him when he addressed me and I said it as nicely as I could because I am scared to death of that little boy and I go out of my way never to touch him but as we went on in our conversation, said, "I think Brian that the time has come to call the police on you." And Brian came back just quickly, "Kids beat up, windows broken, step up the momentum of stealing typewriters, those things there and whatever else." You know he's friendly as hell. Have you ever noticed that in this community inside there's never anyone who's really angry? They just say it the way it is, quickly in nouns (the verbs are left out usually, it is high short hand). And they leave you with it.

Have you ever noticed that even the most demonic people are there? I tell you that Hitler is in there. But he is never demonic. Everything he tells me is like a statement from angels. He just tells me that if you do what he did, what happens is what happened. And he's not mean at that. What he says I think is angelic wisdom.

And so with Brian. That was angelic wisdom. Call the police and that and that and that. And I said back to him "I think I'll postpone the police a little bit." I became a new human being. I tell you and I started listening to Fred's lecture all over again.

Now I do not know who I am outside of that communion of saints. Mark you, they're all saints. Jesus gave it all. And Hitler is as much loved of God as I am and don't you ever forget that. And Brian I think is a little more loved of God than I am at this moment of history. Isn't it funny how that phrase "communion of saints" became nonsense because it was not rooted in humanness itself? Now the function of this is just rather remarkable. Everybody and his brother is out looking for koinonia, you know, looking for community, wanting to be accepted.

When you dare to meditate, and I mean that as a state of being and not an exercise, when you dare to be present to this host within yourself, you never have to seek the affection of one damn soul in the world. I tell you I'd like to have most of the silly psychologists that have brainwashed you and me about rearing children. These things are stored up in society. I'd like to scream this at them. I say to you, it's been a long time since you've had giants of individuals.

You know, some fellow we took out to dinner not long ago who had gone through the academy was intrigued as hell. But he felt he had to say a few words against corporateness. And so we let him talk. What he said was that corporateness takes away your individuality. And there I was sitting across the table and I am the most corporate guy that you could ever find. The individual giant is a corporate man and he begins his corporateness with the community before community. He walks and talks with those within.

The Roman Catholics have thrown out most of their wisdom. The whole concept of your saint is one who watches over you, your guardian angel. By God I wouldn't want to exist in this precarious world without these and I haven't got just a few. I have thousands upon thousands of guardian angels. You'd be amazed at how quickly Luther will move when I get my foot off the beaten path. And I mean when he calls me into question it's something. I am caught. These stupid colleagues that sometimes stand

up like banty roosters and call me into question aren't anything in comparison. I am called into question by Amos and by Gautama the Buddha. My defense.

Oh, how they defend me. I sometimes think that most of my awakened life I have been under attack and some people thought I was just standing there nude. But no, I have an army that's on my side. Now don't you think that they agree with me. They are the first ones to call me into question. They don't even demand that I agree with them. Sometimes, to use ghetto language, I kick the shit out of them. And Luther has been beaten to a bloody pulp by me. Not simply once but many times. That's alright. They get up again and we grab fingers and go on again. I mean this is community. And when a person no longer has to go out and find some two bit character like himself to be pleased with him, then he can spend his time trying to create community wherever he goes. But as long as you've got to have, community you can never enable community for someone else. That is what I mean by inherent community.

(The above part was delivered on July 8, 1970. The following part was delivered on July 11.)

I was afraid you wouldn't come! Then in the last hour I was afraid you would come! Now I'm afraid you'll leave.

In working in this area for the last month, the Book of Revelation has come alive to me. It has never been alive to me before. For the first time I realized it was talking about what's in my head from beginning to end. I want to read you just a snatch. I wish we had time to read the whole book in one sitting.

"Now war arose in heaven." [of all places. That would sure upset the peace movement, wouldn't it!] "Now war arose in heaven. Michael and his Angels were fighting against the dragon and the dragon with his angels fought but they were defeated. And there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to earth and his angels were thrown down with him and I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, 'Now the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come. For the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down who accuses them night and day before our God and they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony for they love not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, oh Heaven, and you, oh earth and sea for the Devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!'"

Now, what I am trying to do, however, poorly, is to analyze human sociality in its depths by using the phenomenological method. What I'm trying as a 20th Century man who has a very particular way of using language, to try to indicate that no me-ness, that just thereness that I mean to point to with the verbal sign, Meditation. Which, if anybody, if he intends to stand where I am standing, looking in the direction that I'm looking, at that object that I have my sights on, he will say "yeah." Now he might add that he has always called that 'wigeldy worm' rather than Meditation. But you see that won't bother me a bit; for I'm not interested in words for the sake of words, but in signs and symbols that indicate that the thereness that I am engaged in as a human being.

I said, when I was working on this before in your presence, that secular man in our day has rediscovered, as if he never knew it, again that he is freedom. He's rediscovered it, as if he has never known it, again that he is mystery. And outside of Mystery he is not. And he has discovered as if he has never known it before, his sociality. And now it's this area of sociality that I'm concerned with and I want to again put up the four points in a little different terminology, but mostly the same.

INHERENT COMMUNITY. This kind of a hopefully edifying discourse is dramaturgical in its construct. You really have one thing to say, and I'm trying to say that one thing four different times. It's something like this: I do not have an Aristotelian progression but am saying exactly the same thing in four different fundamental images. Meditation is the inherent community.

PRISTINE DIALOGUE. Secondly, meditation is pristine dialogue.

ULTIMATE COVENANT. Thirdly, it is, I want to use the word fanatical, and that at one time was a great word. It pertained to the temple. It means inspired. It's been so misused such that it points to reductionism, and I'm afraid to use it, so I will use ultimate. And I am changing this word to covenant. ULTIMATE COVENANT.

RELENTLESS WARFARE. And lastly, meditation is relentless warfare. Or, I'd really prefer, it's a bloody battlefield.

Now I want to start here and let's see where we get. I say meditation is pristine dialogue, that is primeval dialogue. Primordially. Dialogue. It's the dialogue down under all the dialogues that go on in our heads. And if you remember that I'm insisting that save

a person meditate, he is not a human being. A person meditates whether he knows it or not. By dialogue, I mean the one every moment within our consciousness. But when I use the word meditate I mean selfconscious intentionality that's been brought into our being relative to those internal dialogues. That's what I mean when I say that by meditation I am pointing to a state of being. It's intentionality relative to the dialogues that finally define it. Meditation as a spiritual exercise is something different. I'm talking about that right now.

Every man has the dialogue going on. It's very interesting to me that meditation in the Middle Ages fundamentally meant musing, or reflecting: if you please. And that's the way you and I are conditioned to use it. But in the 20th Century, we have become aware of the fact that musing is impossible save there is an other. You got that? You only muse in relationship to persons who are unsynonymous with yourself. As a matter of fact, the whole reflecting process is grounded in that. Secondly, when you think of musing, you think of an issue about which you muse. Now, this is true. It's almost, and by the way, I read a paper that I had read a long time ago. We use it in our New Testament course. It's Gealy's article called "Encounter and Dialogue". And the process of this dialogue is something like this: Life reaches up and hits you in the face. That's encounter. Dialogue is that which takes place in relationship to that. So that the encounter gives you the issue about which you reflect. I want to come back to that and say that you go through the issue, that dialogue takes place with an 'other' and in the 20th century we are clear about that. In the 20th Century the fact that there is an Other there is more important than

the issue about which you are reflecting. I think that is important that we get that said.

Now, where do these persons within our being come from? You remember Adam Smith who wrote The Wealth of Nations? He was also one of the ten or twelve that the world has produced. And some of you remember the category, and I think he coined it (but it was crucial to his system anyway), of the 'generalized other'. Now if you think sort of in terms of the 20th Century definition of conscience, which I think goes something like this: by the conscience we mean an interior dialogue between ourselves and the generalized other before whom we seek approbation and avoid, if we can, disapprobation. Do you sort of follow that in terms of the philosophy that you're familiar with?

Now the generalized other that is inside that you talk with is sort of a montage of the society represented to concrete individuals that you are a part of. That's what he meant by the 'generalized other'. So that in principal, we have a representational figure within ourselves who represents the whole cultural milieu that we talk with, if you please. In addition to that, everyone of us, and in that sense, we are pretty much alike if we all grew up in Ada, Ohio, or in the United States of America, for instance. Or, if you grew up in Australia, that 'generalized other' is a little different. And if you grew up in India, it's a hell of a lot different. But you see what I mean?

In addition to that, you have your own covey of persons who have directly impacted you, whose name that you can spot. Now Freud got ahold of one of these in the Super Ego, in which that represented your father. Now I'm not reducing Freud here that 'father' was the whole generalized other, but my own particular father is within there talking to me constantly. And your father is also, in you, but you haven't got your father in me and some of you could be damn thankful that you don't have him in me. You think I'm neurotic. You should have met my father. I do not mean to cast aspersions on my brother. So that you have innumerable people with you. This also includes objects. Now you don't have to know Buber very well though I remember when I first read him I was offended. I called it nature mysticism. And then I grew up, see, and discovered that when St. Augustine said that he went all over the land asking little flowers if the meaning of life was in them and they all answered back 'no' That was an experience - trees talk to me.

And what Buber is saying is that the tree becomes a Thou and is mediating the abstract. Thou in the universe which for me is the Mystery. And you know you've got dogs that talk to you and as much as I despise kittens, I find that some of them have talked to me. That's embarrassing. And lots of these things are embarrassing because you got people you wouldn't be caught dead living with you. Do you understand that? And I mean they are yackers in there. You can't shut them up. I think that the more that you dislike them the more they are going to insist on being heard and keen at it.

Now, most people go through life unselfconscious of these people that are always talking to them inside. Don't you once in a while run across somebody that comes across to you as particularly stupid. I find some John Birchers come across this way, in which they are saying things that were said to them and they haven't got the slightest idea who that person was that said it. You bump against that every once in a while. And these are the ones who are utterly unselfconscious and therefore utterly irresponsible in life until they are conscious of who those voices are.

Now this ought to be getting pretty near all of us in this room. And I say this with some empirical data, we have tried to list our saints for two years, I mean those voices in us and it is like pulling teeth, to pull those out of us. And I'll not go into the psychological reasons but that when you have been asleep for fifty-eight years and you wake up, that is a long time to be asleep. This is why those of you below twenty ought to break out right now in the Halleluia Chorus if you are even remotely awake because when you get to be my age, what a human being you could be, simply because you knew the voices that were speaking to you and you knew the ones you had to say NO to that still speak, and the ones you say YES to.

Now, the man of the spirit, the man who, to use my jargon here meditates, that is, brings selfconsciousness to this community that dwells within him becomes a person, I mean a person, in that very act. To be a spiritual human being is fundamentally to decide what community you are going to live your life in dialogue with. Do you have that? This means that you begin to recover the names of these voices within you, understanding that every man lives out of some community. You silly individualists who get ashamed when you repeat an idea that somebody else gave. Why how stupid! All you are saying is that you haven't even begun to be intentional about your community because you never had an idea that did not come out with a dialogue with others. And, oh, I don't even understand you in terms of deep feelings in myself.

If anybody in the room ever knew Richard Neibuhr I want you to hear carefully. I am Richard Neibuhr. I am so proud that he is my friend and that he dwells within me that I am his friend and about nine tenths of everything I know he taught me. I would want to stand on the rooftop and with pride. And Oh, shall I talk about Luther? Shall I talk about Paul? You think I am ashamed to take Paul's great ideas? They're mine, for Paul is within me. I mean he is within me. And I am proud to be his friend. And I sort of think he is proud to be my friend once in a while. This is intentionality.

Now for the Church. Although if I had time I'd want to spell that out a little differently. To be within the Church is to decide that the saints of the Church are your saints. You understand that? To decide to be in the Church, I'm wondering if this isn't the most crucial decision. I am wondering if when we wake up in the Church, the question that we are going to ask somebody that joins the Church is, "Do you, with your whole being intend to embrace the Saints of this community and the dialogue that you fundamentally live out of?"

But then I have got to spread this for the Church of Jesus Christ is nothing. It is but a symbol of all humanity. That is what you mean by the contentless Christ, if you please. The content of the contentless Christ is so full you can't even get your mind around it, for it stands for every human being that ever lived and every human being that ever will live. Do you understand that many of the hosts within my being have not yet been born. Do you say they don't talk. I wish you could get inside of me. It seems that these days they are raising a rukus more than the ones from the past if you please. Then you always have a cultic hero, or in the case of the Church, that is not, strong enough terms. But everybody has their cultic hero who represents the hosts of the intentional community within you that you intend to define yourself in dialogue with.

And this is why the eschatological hero who is the representative of all mankind. Kazantzakis almost got to this when he spoke of the cry of the ape. That cry of the ape is within my being. O Jesus Christ is the representational figure that represents every bit of humanness from the beginning and every bit to the end. And that is why we call him "the Man". Now, all of life, this means, is dialogical.

This selection of the intentional community is that which gives content to my being. I am deeply persuaded that my freedom is my being, but the content within that is defined by the dialogue that takes place between myself and the selected community in relationship to all the other voices within me. It is this dialogue which finally gives form to God. Do you understand that God is the great unconditional and life will not submit himself to anybody's image of Him. And yet he is only present in the images in which you or I, out of the rudimentary dialogue, see him in. The dialogue is that, if you please, which creates God, which brings God near, which makes God a lively thereness in one's life. I say that this is **pristine dialogue** when you are talking about Meditation. It is Meditation that finally bends history, for Meditation is the stuff out of which prayers are formed and prayers are the deeds before the deed which make history go that way rather than that way.

Now, I want to go to the next one and to go over this same thing again under the poetry of covenant. Obviously, life is covenant. I just got through articulating that under the rubric of dialogue. When you talk about meditation you are talking about the covenant in the depths.

Israel is probably the greatest thing that ever happened in history relative to understanding that life is covenantal and what that means. I suppose you might sum up all of Israel's wisdom on this with these kinds of terms which I got from Richard Neibuhr. There are three important things. One is that a man has to have an object to glorify; and without that he is not a man at all. Or, this

is another way of saying all men live by faith and if it is not by faith in relationship to that God then it is this God or it is another God. This defines humanness. Secondly, we have to have a cause to serve. No man can be a man without a cause to serve. And Thirdly, he has to have a community to be loyal to.

Now this is a dynamic covenant, in that it is always on the move and never stands still. But it is a covenant. I think that it is best in marriage. I do not think that Christian marriage is based on love in any form whatsoever. And if you don't believe that you go read the marriage service which the wisdom of the Church has given. You are not asked whether or not you love each other, you are asked whether you will promise each other. That is a moral covenant.

Now this means that in relationship to these within my being, I made a covenant with, them and I suppose the quality of covenant is best seen in that old gospel hymn, 'Trust and Obey, For There's No Other Way.' I mean that this is a rigorous matter of obeying. It is almost as if when I disobey Luther he leaves. It is "almost as if" - not that is not true and I am going to come back and take that back in a little bit. It is almost as if I disobey Amos, he packs up and goes. The one thing they require is obedience.

But you and I are not going to obey where we do not trust. But trust is not something that is finally born by activities unsynonymous with our own in any case. You see, I just don't show up trusting you one day. That is utterly impossible. Because I know things about everybody in this room that they wouldn't dare tell their mothers. That is another way of talking about original sin. That is, every time you stumble on your colleague, he is crummy. And every time he stumbles on you, he finds crumminess. There is no trust that is immediate except you are naive. For one thing, we know about ourselves and therefore, I suppose, about our neighbor, that he is untrustworthy. Period. No, the trust is in the decision.

Within trust is obedience and that is the guts of it. This is why in the Christian marriage ceremony, when we took that word obey out of there we didn't know what we were doing. We were trying to overcome the antifeminine attitude of the middle ages and then destroyed the whole service in the way we came about it. They should have added, not only, "Lyn will you love, honor and obey Joseph?" But they should have said, "Joseph, will you love, honor and obey Lyn?" And in case you get yourself some marriage problems, let me say to you that if you do not obey your wife you ain't got no marriage. And, if she does not obey you, then you haven't got any marriage. That is the guts of trust and in my house when Lyn says, "Hop", I mean when she says "Hop", you had better hop if you want yourself any reasonable facsimile of a marriage. That is not moralism that is ontology. That is the way life is.

Now when you talk about the Church, you have got a fantastic picture. When somebody says where the Church is, do you know where I point? There is Luther there, and there is Thomas. He sits right back here. It is sort of a council, you know, and there Rauschenbusch sits, he has it here, Amos shoved up front in the council of my mind. I don't know where you have Zeus seated, but Gautama is there and a host of others. I mean there is a mess of them. Of course, there are head priors out of my own life who happen to know that I know more about Luther than I do about Augustine. I don't like John Wesley as well as I like some others; so I put John ..., he is, you know, fairly up front, but he's back see, away.

This council sits there and this is the Church. That is to say the body that is a sociological term for me. The body of Christ is within, or the Kingdom of God, which is a sociological category, is within. And then some of you cynical soandsos say that the Church is finished. I wish they would invent a machine that would just show you how finished it is. It is the only live thing in the universe, as far as I am concerned. And the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

This Church, which is the invisible church, to take a medieval category and bring into the 20th Century, is always sacked as the miserable Church. These are these damn cigar boxes with steeples on them. But you know this Church inside cannot exist with the crummy cigar boxes with steeples on them. Calvin long since said, in substance now when you get to know my friends as well as I know them, they let you paraphrase them very liberally - Calvin said that though the Church is never synonymous with any operating image; it is always within some operating image. And the reason why those structures have to be there is because this cannot happen here save they're there. It doesn't make any difference how crummy it is. You should have had my Sunday School teacher: I've often called her with affection "Mrs. Bigbottom". Now she was one of the warpest characters, as I look back on it, you ever saw. But she communicated to an eight year old boy that God loved him. Now, I didn't have the foggiest of what that meant, at that time, but some twentythree years later, when I was trying to get out of sight in a foxhole on a beach in a beach in Saipan, suddenly, what that stupid old fat lady put in my head started to burn and I was afire with the awareness that no matter how crummy I was or this world was, God loved me, and he loved the world he put me in.

The only Church you get to love is the one that is. Do you understand that? And to bring into your being means that you accept responsibility personally for all of its sins, for all of its crimes for all of its decadency, as well as for all of its wonders and all of the

glory. This is another way of saying, "I AM the Church." I remember that all night vigil at the General Conference of the Methodists in Pittsburgh, they had asked me to speak and I got myself a speech and then I listened to a hunk of cynicism all night long and people saying, "Should we leave the Methodist Church?" And so I made my speech on the fact that I **was** the Methodist Church and don't you think I'm not! I **am** the Church!

You have to have the external for the invisible Church. It's as if you got a hell of a lot of people to feed and if you don't feed them they don't keep lively. You see, the external Church in all of its cruunminess **is** symbolism, and the factory where symbolism is produced and my saints within eat only symbols. This what you mean by the meaning of grace, I was going to suggest within our time, when I was reading Gealey. Why? Why do you read the scripture? And do spiritual exercises? To feed the Saints, if you please, to keep them lively. Why do you go to Eucharist? To feed the Saints!

Some character in our midst, when not long ago, when we were thinking about a marriage ceremony for several couples, said, "No! Marriage is an individual thing." Then over in my office, I hit the ceiling. Nobody ever got married in the Church singly. The first vows you make are to the Church; and when you go to that altar, you have this host of witnesses in your head that you talk with about this marriage, if you please, and they are there bowing the knee before radical symbols of life along with you.

The reason why you had spiritual exercises, the reason why you engage in the exercise, this time of meditation, is to feed the saints to keep them lively, to keep them quick, to keep them dancing within you. Oh, those of you who are tired and weighted down by life, I say unto thee, life is a dance, but the dance of it is the liveliness of the intentional community with whom you dialogue night and day. That is the dance of life, period.

Now, the fourth way I want to get this said is to say that meditation is just bloody warfare. The war is between the demons and the saints. The demons slip in, then the interesting thing about the demons is that they never slip in as demons, they come in disguised as angels. One of the best ways to get through is to come in as a part of that 'generalized other'. Have you got that? Now, this is to say that the dialogue that you carry on with that great communion of Saints is never about morality. I want to say that again. The saints don't know how to talk about morality. That is a language that somehow or another, when they get inside of me, they forget. The only language they know is ontology. They never ask me, "Joseph, did you do this immoral thing or the other?"

Can you imagine a pious Methodist growing up in Ada, Ohio? A little boy like me, in a Church who had reduced all of the great Saints into little petty bourgeois morals. This means that the demons had got so numerous and powerful that they had destroyed the communion of Saints within me and stolen their garments. And they were sitting there in some little pious, moral Luther, and some little pious, big, old fat Thomas Aquinas. And some little old shriveled up moral female called Paul. Oh, you want to know what the sickness of the Church and the sickness of humanity is? It is that we have got the gospel mixed up with the moralism of bourgeois man out of the Victorian Age out of the last century.

The battle within is that the Saints make war on the demons that are always disguised as moral angels to destroy them. Let me mention a few angels: "I cannot get up and march with the troops of Jesus Christ, because I got my widdle children I got to take care of." Boy, that would slip a demon in just like that, wouldn't it? Because we are so goddamned sentimental about our children and use that as one of the first escapes of having to stand before the San Hedron of the Saints within us. Or they come in with a little petty world concept of being loyal to your nation. Oh, one of the great things of the youth culture today, is that they have risen up with the saints to destroy the demons guising as moral angels within. This is what I mean by an angel. This is another way of saying that demons always disguise themselves in the 'generalized other'. That morality is being able to stagger by a saloon rather than doing something about the inhuman treatment of the black people of this world. That last is ontology. For it has to do finally with your relationship to the mystery in life. I tell you that is a bloody battlefield. Somebody wrote me a letter. Some young girl just the other day - and picked me to pieces because of what she called my neglect of my children. I mean to tell you we had a battlefield. The Saints and the demons within my being. For you see what she was after, was to crush anything beyond a kind of petty bourgeois moralism. Shall I mention some more of these? This is why St. Augustine called the virtues of the 'generalized other' 'splendid vices'. But I mean they were vices.

This is to say that the Christian faith very early understood that its primal categories were not good and evil. Our primal categories are sin and faith. And sin has to do with being unauthentic and good and evil are relative categories in all places. This is why the Saints never require anything of me but authenticity. You young ones can harken to be that and know who your friends really are. The only question you are going to be asked when you get to heaven (If you'll allow me to use that poetry, there's only one failure in life and that's the failure to get to heaven only one) the only question is "Did you live an authentic life? This is why even at the last moment with the thieves on the cross, you can become an authentic person, but brother when you close those eyes for the very last time, then it is God that says you are through.

This is there in the Lord's Prayer, an amazing thing, "Lord, lead me not into temptation." That word really, I think is trials: "Don't lead me into the bloody battlefields within," he says, then he goes on to say, "But if you do lead me into temptation, deliver me from the unauthentic." That is what it is concerned with. "Don't let me surrender" is another way of saying this. That's Meditation. And I'll not repeat this, but the other night I pointed out that in the man of faith there is only one enemy, and it is because all of the demons who pull this way and pull you that way and rip you to pieces here and there are out to see that you don't live an authentic life, that you are . rather a good mother, and a good citizen, and you are in good health and you live to get to be 92 and you have a lot of grandchildren and a split level house with \$20,000.000! Aren't these splendid vices? You have but one foe many

enemies maybe, one foe and that is Satan,

This in one way makes it easy. You know where as a man of the spirit you have to direct your attention. The only trouble is, Satan seems "hoo-hoo" and he's got big old wings and a great big old tail and he carries that pitchfork. I mean he is a fearsome thing to fight. And I feel, you know, like little old St. George, before the dragon, but at least I know my foe is the dragon and that a man of the spirit I say knows that. So you have to slay the dragon and there is just one way you do. You do it. And, I just did it for you. You name the demon. The moment you are able to name the demon. He is unmasked, and I don't know whether it is like a martian or something --when you unmask him, he disappears. And the way you name the demon, is, you call it what it is, and the best you can call it is 'splendid vice'. Now, mark you, children are simply wonderful, but if they are the meaning of your life then a demon disguised as an angel, is about to, if he hasn't already destroyed you as a self. The only way you can destroy that demon is to name it what it is, and I've got nasty names for that, but I'll stick to Augustine's 'splendid vices'.

He is unmasked like that, which is to say the meaning of life is in God alone and not in any created thing. But when you slay the eternal foe, then mark you, this war is never won. Didn't you use to sort of hope that maybe, perhaps, at least it would get easier? I'm sure it must after 58 years but up to 58 I'll swear it is got harder. It's never done wrestling to be a self. Isn't it terrible the way we treat the old people? As if the battle is over. NO. NO. My papa was retired for 35 years. Can you imagine that? And we stick them aside somewhere as if, as if, they don't need any help in the great battlefield of Armageddon within their being.

There is a second battle and the second is worse than the first. In the second battle you become aware of it when in the midst of the fighting the demons you perceive God standing off to the side with his hands on his hips just looking. Damned irritating. But when you're busy with the devil there, you don't have much time to worry about God's inhumanity. Just standing aside the Mystery does. Then the second irony in that, hell, it's his war to begin with! When you've slain the devil then you reach out for the prize, the Mystery. That damned thing starts to flee. God starts to run. But you better be swift of foot and if you are, you'll get him by the nape of the neck, you see. Now what He is fleeing for, you and I know, it's because we want to know His name that is we want to give him form, we want to give him an image without which we cannot relate to the Mystery. And the Mystery is essence. Nobody names him!

In the wrestling match of Jacob, Moffit translates the angel as the "nameless one." I like that, "the nameless one." That is what you mean by the Mystery. God is the one beyond man's power to comprehend. That is what you mean by "Mystery". Every attempt to sing his image is inadequate, period. This is to say that God is freedom, if you like, God is always beyond any net we build over him. But I got him by the nape of the neck. He has got to wrestle, and I mean we have it out. By this time, having slain Satan, I mean God is over against a protagonist, and we wrestle all night.

Granted it is a lonely experience as Jacob found out. It is an experience in pitch darkness, as Jacob understood. It is dreadfilled to the point of death. The one secret you know this One, it is the Mystery, he gave you life and one day He will destroy you. Ah, finally He gets a hip lock on me, but damn him, I've got a hip lock on Him, and the way I do it is when He gets the lock on me, and pulls me down, I hang on and drag Him with me.

In the story of Jacob, you remember that the way God is able to capitulate, as he turns Jacob's question back on him. He says "No. Alright, Jacob. No. Alright MAN; what is your name?" And Jacob, he didn't want to say it because his name, if you forgive the language, was Son of a Bitch'. It was "The Deceiver". You know, he had raped his brother, raped his uncle, "The Deceiver". Finally, the dawn was about coming. Jacob, gave in, said "Alright, alright, alright, my name is Jacob. I am this horrible creature that I am." And God said, "No more. Your name is Israel." And that means 'one who was in mortal combat with God.' And then old stupid Jacob (Wouldn't you like that name? Well, that is my name. This is why we are children of Abraham, if you like, that is my name) - then stupid Jacob, he says back to "the nameless one", "Well, what is your name?" And the 'nameless one' said, "Do you need to ask that?" God named himself when he called me Israel. And at that moment, God and Joseph get up and we are friends.

Now He is first among equals, we are equals, in this situation. And, God has got a problem on His hands from that time on. Because I am not only in His hands, he has got me on His hands. That is what it means to be a friend of God. That he, I am sure, there are times when God ever regretted making me a friend. And the end of that story is that on that day when God put the notch in me and that day is now as the knife goes in I smile, and He winks. Being itself winks. My victory is that I forced Being-in-itself to wink at my life. And I am through.