

POVERTY

I feel very close to the Church at Phillipi these days.

Yet every advantage that I had gained I considered lost for Christ's sake. Yes, and I look upon everything as loss compared with the overwhelming gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I did in actual fact suffer the loss of everything, but I considered it useless rubbish compared with being able to win Christ. For now my place is in him, and I am not dependent upon any of the self-achieved righteousness of the Law. God has given me that genuine righteousness which comes from faith in Christ. How changed are my ambitions! Now I long to know Christ and the power shown by his Resurrection: now I long to share his sufferings, even to die as he died [Is that the death urge transfigured? It doesn't say here], so that I may perhaps attain, as He did, the resurrection from the dead. Yet, my brothers, I do not consider myself to have "arrived," spiritually, nor do I consider myself already perfect. But I keep going on, grasping ever more firmly that purpose for which Christ grasped me. My brothers, I do not consider myself to have fully grasped it even now. But I do concentrate on this: I leave the past behind and with hands outstretched to whatever lies ahead, I go straight for the goal - my reward the honor of being called by God in Christ. (Philippians 3:7-14. Phillips)

We are going to talk about poverty. I wish St. John of the Cross were here, and we could turn a button and he would be a twentieth century man, and then we would let him talk. Or I would be more than willing to settle for dear St. Teresa. What a woman!

We turn a corner today. We move from what we've called the solitaries to what we call the corporates. Sometimes I haven't the foggiest idea what we mean by that. But I am aware when you move from one to the other you're going around a corner of some type. So, I have to look at the big picture in order to get enough security to start my lecture.

I believe, the Lord willing, that when some of us assemble this time next year, we're going to be working hard on all kinds of little details that have to do with forging the concrete visional picture of the new global social vehicle that our times require. That is a prophecy. As far as I'm concerned, all we're doing this summer is preparing for next summer. The imperative upon God's people is to build the picture of the new society that is even now being born in our time. Putting our own house, the Church, in order is but the necessary means to get that done.

I want you to think of the interior box in this illustration as the new social vehicle, and the outside one as the new religious mode, though where there is no new religious mode, there is no new social vehicle, and where there is no new social vehicle, there is no new religious mode. And the problem of getting straight when you are turning this corner is trying to get some kind of clarity upon that which is almost a paradox in the way you have to state it, so that you see that the new religious mode and the new social vehicle interpenetrate one another.

What we call the solitaries are at the bottom of the chart in the new religious mode square, and what we call the corporates are at the top of the new religious mode square. Within our model the social aspect of this is always at the top, and the individual aspect of this is at the bottom, so that the top of the new religious mode square has to do with corporate individuality, and the bottom has to do with solitary individuality. Therefore, both of these have to do with what Kierkegaard calls "the solitary individual." I want to come back to that.

In the interior square you are dealing with the new social vehicle (and I prefer that it be sitting in the midst of the new religious mode, rather than the other way around). This is the new civil carriage and the new religious carriage. The new civil carriage has to do with the sociological reformulation of civil society, and the new religious carriage has to do with sociological reformulation of the religious community. We are well on our way, I suspect, in creating the new religious carriage, although the end, I would insist, nobody can see. And both of these have to do with society. There never was a new civil carriage until a social vehicle that carried the religious mode was formed, and we'd better hearken well to that!

There is another box in the middle of the chart which I like to call style. Where you are concerned with

the solitary individual, the manifestation of that is the journey. Thus, you have the corporates, the solitaires, and the journeys. The square in the very center doesn't exist. That is sheer being, if you like. And, to flip that coin as one of my colleagues did the other day, it is the only thing that exists. The other boxes do not exist. I suppose you can see that that's what I mean by radical transparency. I think that is what Kierkegaard meant, long before he knew me.

Next are the journeys. The sociological equivalent of journeys is "movement." If you want to put this in secular language, you could call it "revolutionary force." I think the man who came closest to it of anyone I've read was Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*. And you see, every revolutionary body is this if it is authentic. I prefer the word "movement," which is actually both religious and secular when it becomes highly transparent. Maybe that will give you enough of a broad vision to feel a little of how you are turning a corner and still staying within the religious mode.

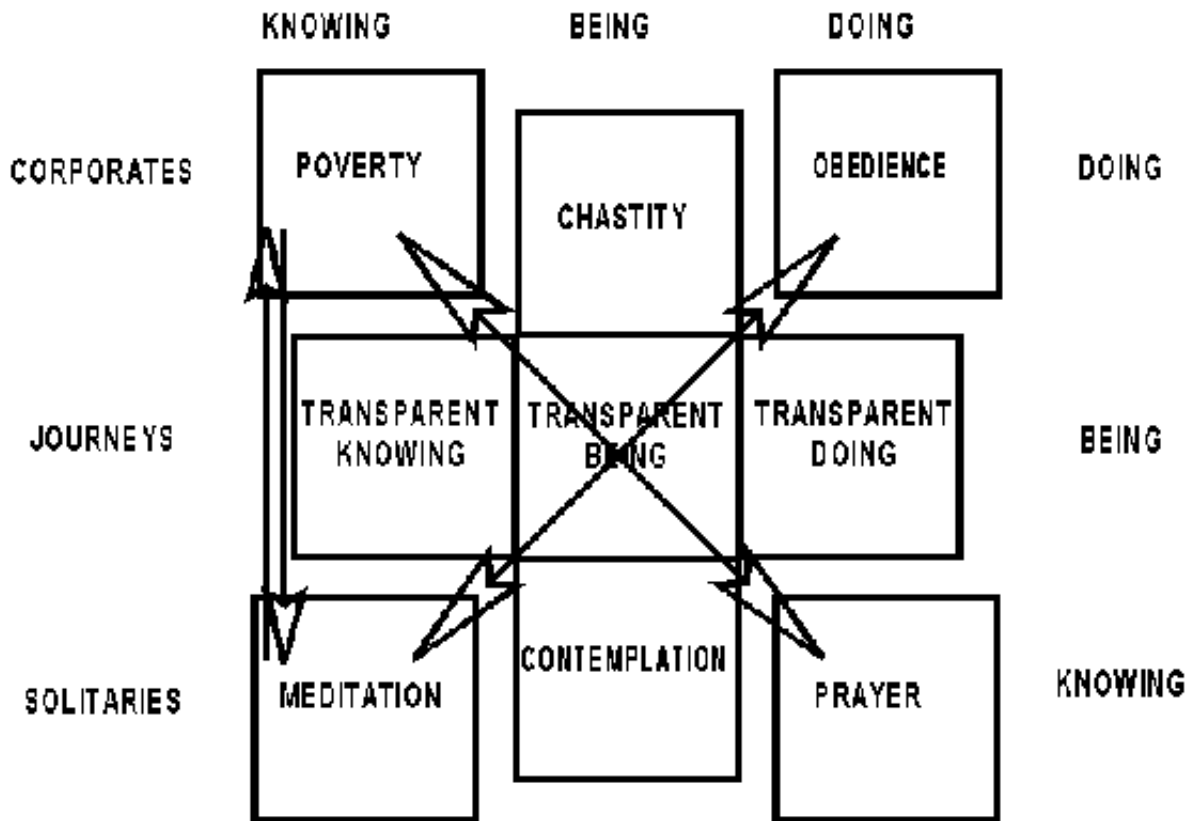
If we were dealing with solitary exercises, as we are not in these lectures (we're after the phenomenological state that these categories represent), I would have to insist to myself that in the solitary exercises you do both the solitaires and the corporates, and at the same time.-.then you push the bottom out of it, or the middle out of it, and you do the journeys.

The second thing that we have to do before we can start is to go back once again to the diagram of the new religious mode charts. Actually it's a tic-tac-toe with the ends filled in, isn't it? Here is Prayer, this is Meditation, and this is Contemplation, and this Transparent Knowing, and this Transparent Doing, and this Transparent Being, and this Chastity, this Obedience, and here we are today: Poverty.

A poetic way of talking about the self, the individual, is the consciousness of consciousness, or perhaps the consciousness of consciousness of consciousness. The last category would be equivalent to Kierkegaard's definition of the self as the relationship that relates itself to itself. And when that relationship becomes the relationship that relates itself to itself, it grounds itself transparently in the power that constituted it. That is what I mean by a third consciousness. Anyway, consciousness of consciousness, for me, is knowing, and it's acting or doing, and it's presence or being. That is what I mean by consciousness of consciousness.

That gives you the most abstract category in grounding the religious mode in humanness itself. This is the way in which you check yourself every moment to be sure that this is in the context of the secular world view, and not sneaking in the back or side door.-.the one the medieval world used that hasn't existed for 300 years. I mean this has to talk about humanness as you and I experience humanness.

The categories would go like this: on the left is the knowing column, on the right is the doing column, in the center is the being column. If you are going to shove interior consistency to the bottom, or ground it in a phenomenological state that you and I can recognize, then you have to say that the solitaires are the knowing, the journeys are the being, and the corporates are the doing pole. Then you remember that the social arena is in the top row and the arena that defines the individual is in the bottom row. Notice what this gives. Poverty is the doing-knowing corner, and it has to be in that order. Obedience is the doing-doing corner. Prayer is the knowing-doing corner. I'm not going to take time today for the interrelationships here. It's rather fantastically interesting. Meditation is in the know-know corner. Now it is very interesting that transparent knowing is in the be-know corner, transparent doing is in the be-do corner, and chastity is the do-be, and contemplation is really the know-be corner This helps you to keep these oriented and interrelated to one another.



Now finally, before I leave this: the only thing that exists on the board are four boxes: poverty, obedience, meditation, and prayer. In the lecture on contemplation it was said that the center categories don't really exist. The lecture on chastity will probably have a statement saying that chastity does not exist, and I don't know who is going to do the knowing and doing lectures, but they don't exist either. But that makes the center box a double negative, which would be the only thing on the board that really does exist, if you please. I don't know enough about mathematics to talk about a double zero, but there must be some meaning in that because it is up on my picture. It is reality, if you like.

Now we have to get to poverty in some way or another. I don't think I'll take time to go over the dynamic relationships in detail, only just point to a few things. If these are dynamic relationships, then you have to talk about the interrelationship of meditation and poverty.

You remember that meditation is that great host of witnesses, in the center of which is King Arthur's round table, around which sits the primary council with which you dialogue self-consciously. In a moment I'm going to speak of freedom in connection with poverty, once again. Prayer is individual, radical freedom. This kind of freedom, as any kind of freedom or individuality, exists only in corporateness. And since prayer is raw freedom, and meditation is raw corporateness, then the relationships between poverty and prayer and meditation and obedience are produced.

In talking about meditation the other day, I left out a sizable hunk of what I was going to say. You probably noticed when I jumped pretty quickly through the section on the conscience. Let me say this much so you get clear. A man of faith always lives out of his own interior resources. The way you can

spot a man of faith - not finally, but as a clue - is whether he dares to live out of his own interior resources. Another way to say that is this: The man of faith keeps his own conscience; and nobody keeps it for him. But, you see, he's got a secret that the naive person hearing that doesn't know anything about. He is not an individual here. It is a collective we. It is as if Luther, Amos, Jeremiah and I keep my conscience - a host of witnesses.

I tell you, what a fellowship, what a fellowship! The external activity of the divine happens and puts a question upon my life, and I have to run to the council and there we discuss it. And after we discuss it, I had better make a decision. And it must be a loyal one, although it may very well be in loyal opposition to Mr. Luther, if you please. But it's *we* who keep that conscience. It's not *I* who live out of my own interior resources. It's *we* - through the gracious activity of God by peopling my being with the great spirit people of the world.

Out of that meditation comes the possibility for radical poverty, which I want to talk about in a few minutes. And I don't know how to get this said with adequate poetry. The one thing that council demands is action. They are not even going to sit at the table with you if you're piddling around with some intellectual theoretical problem. Poverty is the issuing out of meditation that is required before meditation is even possible. If those of you who haven't got your life on the line in terms of poverty haven't understood what I've been talking about with meditation, it doesn't surprise me a bit. That's what I am trying to say.

Now I'm going to swing to poverty. The basic category I'm going to use is the word *detachment*. I don't like the word disengagement. I don't even know how it got here. I like detachment. Poverty is detachment, and obedience is engagement. Anybody who is engaged without detachment is pseudo-engaged - engaged not with authenticity, as I want to come to it in a moment. Unless you are detached from this world and the concerns of this world, you cannot stuff your total being in any given spot within this world. And then, vice versa. This detachment is not a withdrawal *from* the world. It is a withdrawal *in* the world. Any kind of withdrawal which is not intimately related to engagement, or is not for the one purpose of fanatical engagement within the world, is not what I mean by detachment. Detachment and engagement are interdependent as poverty and obedience are interdependent.

I probably have to say this now, and yet I have to say it over again when I get into my lecture. When I use the verbal sign "poverty," I mean to be talking about a human state of being that every human being does, or can, know about. I can also use the word poverty as something like a religious exercise, but I'm not talking about that right now.

Part of turning the corner from the solitaries to the corporates is that the states of being are different. I mean by poverty, radical detachment, which is an inward posture essentially related to an external sign. When you are dealing with the state of the solitaries, you are talking about something more passive. The state of the corporates is more active. The state of the solitaries is more subjective. I don't mean that the way some of you will read it. Both of these states of being are the most objective things in the world. To help you, the state of the corporates is more objective in the sense of being perceivable from without, or having signs that are perceivable from without. The key difference between these, minus one thing, is that the corporates as states of being have to do with postures towards the world or society. The solitaries have to do with relations to the mystery. I use the stylistic category, posture, intentionally, to get at a part of it. The solitaries are more the givers; the corporates are more the intendeds. You cannot actually divide any of these from one another. There is an intermixture at every point. But keep that in your mind as now I get started.

First of all I want to put up the basic categories by which I intend to talk about the state of being that I call poverty. First **of all poverty is intentional detachment**. That is what I have been trying to point to here to get started. Secondly, poverty is **conquered contingency**, and I don't like that term. Thirdly, poverty is **fantastic benevolence**, fantastic in the sense of the word meaning "unrestrained imagination." In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "benevolence" was a tremendous word. It has been out of favor now for a good fifty years. It was there in the Victorian age. I want to recover it again. In one translation of Luke, "Peace on earth and good will to men," reads: "And benevolence to men," or if you take the other, "to men of benevolence." I prefer the former translation. And finally, by poverty I mean

sacramental portent. I'd like to use the word "sign," but I want a rough and mighty word for the fourth category.

Recollect if you can what I said a moment ago, that by poverty I mean an inward posture (intentional detachment) and an outward sign (sacramental portent). The middle two categories put the content into that. I'm going to use some ancient words here. I think I can. Conquered contingency is humility, divine humility, if you like, and the other is benevolence, or love, if you please.

You are not going to get on top of this if you are not keenly aware that the great monastic movements in history were not going aside from the world. I think, and hope, most of you are aware of that. They were missional in their intent. They saw society going one way to its destruction and they decided it had to go another way. They threw their lives into the breach of history to create a style of life that would do that. Nothing has ever bent the course of history except a style of life. They were missional. I would like to rehearse for you the Dominicans, the Benedictines, and the Jesuits in terms of their fantastic secular, secular causes that brought them into being.

It was in the midst of this that the great classical language of the orders came into being. It was there that their vows were formed, the vow of poverty, the vow of chastity, and the vow of obedience. Each one of these was pointing to a stumbling block that would keep the mission from coming off. This was not some kind of an ascetic superimposition of something upon life.

If you are not well aware of the fact that the economic aspect of existence is one of the most gigantic stumbling blocks to corporateness that gets a mission going, then you haven't even lived in the twentieth century, let alone the eighth.

Secondly, obedience. Every two-bit character who hasn't decided to be human wants to do his own little thing. He wants to become bishop, he wants, he wants, he wants. "Nobody is going to tell me what to do!" Unless that problem is solved, there is no corporate mission.

Thirdly, chastity. Do not think for a moment that this is to be understood primarily in terms of the psychology of the Greeks. This again is missional. Those of you who haven't been married very long have to see that the family always gets in the way of corporateness. Not sometimes. It always gets in the way! I need not rehearse in sentimental language about the woman who has to have so much attention from her husband, or she just can't stand it. "The mission doesn't matter. I am here." As a matter of fact we've written tons of psychology books to support that kind of wretched unselfhood. Shall I mention the children? Or shall I mention the father in the case? Chastity was dealing fundamentally with the problem of the family as it related to God's purpose in history. What a solution they had to it! Oh, they didn't get rid of all their problems. You have a family with you even if you don't have a family. In the twentieth century the answer to celibacy is the missional family - and it's going to be people like you in this room who are finally going to get the answer out. That is the new celibacy. That is the meaning of chastity whereby one thing can be willed.

The people we are talking about are always the fanatics in history. They are always the odd ones. They are always the psychotics, or are seen as such, because as everybody knows, to be normal is to be just what the "generalized other" always tells you.

These people are the perpetual revolutionaries in history. And now by these people I've gone way beyond the religious orders. Any revolutionary, secular or otherwise, always - not sometimes - always lives by these three vows: obedience, chastity, and poverty. Are you clear about that? Shall I pull out the little red book of Mao and read his discipline? If you didn't know he wrote it, you would have thought that Thomas Aquinas could have written it. Shall we pull out the rules of some of the other revolutionaries -

Che, for instance - and look at them in terms of poverty, chastity, and obedience?

But I haven't hit the bottom yet. A revolutionary who is authentic is himself a presentation of a style which is a manifestation of humanness at the radical bottom. Therefore, you and I have to grasp that if one does not participate in poverty, he is not participating in authentic humanness. The same statement is true of chastity, and the same statement is true of obedience.

Now let's get to the four categories that point to poverty. I say that *detachment* is foundationally human. Adler, the renegade Freudian, based his whole psychology upon one image: that man has a hole in his center. In the center of a person's spirit or being there is a hole, a bottomless hole. Man spends his whole life pouring sand into that hole to fill it up. Now, the basic propensity of man is for status or power, according to Adler; but he cannot get enough of it. I mean, it is bottomless. That's what I mean when I say that man *is* detachment I mean utter detachment from things of this world.

Because that hole is in the center and cannot be filled up, man is consumed with dread. I mean with dread. Those of you who know Soren Kierkegaard's *Concept of Dread* will remember that he works this out. Because of who man is - that is because he is contingency - he experiences dread. This dread is turned into the drive after security, and man denies the is-ness that he is - that is, his detachment - by attempting to grasp security by taking things of this world and bestowing upon them the power to fulfill the meaning of his life.

Do I need to say that over again? Out of this dread comes the drive for security, which means that man attaches himself to things of this world - his nation, his mama, his children, his fortune, and right down the list naming all of the gods. In doing that, he surrenders the detachment that finally defines him. This is to say that whenever any man comes upon himself, I would want to insist, his detachment is fallen. His being is his detachment. His being is fallen. He finds himself along with the mass of the rest of humanity seeking after one hunk of security and then another hunk of security all of the time, knowing and not knowing inside himself that that security can never come. So in the midst of his fallenness, he still experiences his detachment, though it is a fallen detachment. Poverty is this kind of **intentional detachment**.

Now, I've brought in the word "intentional." What I mean by the word "detachment" is a return to the pristine detachment that defines what it means to be a human being, from the dawn of consciousness. This is what consciousness means. It means over and beyond the stated situation, over and beyond the given situation. The return to detachment is the decision, the intention, if you please, to be what one actually is. This means it is an experience in the twilight of the gods, or the death of the gods. It is breaking the bondage that I am in, when for security's sake I am related to any of the goods of this world whatsoever.

This is a liberation of the freedom that I am. It is not that I have freedom, but that I am freedom. Soren Kierkegaard tried to illustrate how you and I expend our freedom. He said it is like having a penny. A little kid has a penny. He's got that penny and he wants an ice cream cone. If he buys the ice cream cone with the penny, it is expended. I mean it is gone, and it is gone forever! The fallen detachment is expending the freedom you are for the security that comes from having a mama, a child, a nation, a philosophy, a theology, or any of the worldly goods about us. When you have spent that freedom, I mean it is spent. You don't have it any more! If you are worshipping any idol whatsoever, you are not free, except in the sense that you and I can talk about having expended freedom.

What I mean by intentional detachment is setting out to recover the freedom that I am. That is detachment, intentional detachment. Then there is a little secret. There is only one place that you can expend this freedom that you are, without it being expended, and that is upon detachment. It's like the

bowl of gruel in the Old Testament. They kept taking it out and it never went down an inch.

All of that is another way of talking about radical monotheism. The man who is detached lives exposed before God. I mean just exposed. His basic loyalty is there and his basic obedience is there. Remember the section on "Freedom" from Bonhoeffer's *Ethics*? What he is getting around to saying there is that a man of faith is utterly obedient. He is obedient to God, and God has only one rule for man: *be free*. Yes! "That is what I made you. *Be* what I made you." That is practical, radical monotheism - that in every situation you live before the final.

One last word here has to do with my friend Gautama, the Buddha. I tell you, I love that man. You remember how in his understanding of life, a human being had to overcome all desires. Overcoming desires is detachment. He was very clear about one thing, that if all of a sudden you could overcome all of the innate propensities, you would go to Nirvana immediately.

Oh, wouldn't it have been a sight to see somebody all of a sudden overcome all of his desires and disappear, right before your eyes? Who was that in the Old Testament? I'll bet that is what happened to him. Probably he was back there in Gautama's time or before, and maybe Gautama was there to behold him going to heaven when he overcame all his desires.

But I want to shove back at dear Gautama. It's not overcoming these desires that's the problem. The problem is dealing with the dread at the fundamental core of being that is always turning itself into a drive after security. That is the problem. Another way of talking about what I'm saying is that man is discontinuity.

The second category is **manifest contingency**. The man who is detached is aware of his contingency in a highly lucid fashion. He understands his frailty. He is aware that he was born naked and he is going to die naked. I don't mean intellectually aware. I mean he is aware with his whole being.

In the lecture on contemplation the absurd was mentioned. The awareness of contingency here is simply absurd. Did you ever notice how absurd a dead person is? Jean Paul Sartre said that any fluids that we have within ourselves seem fine as long as they are inside ourselves. But if you spit, that is about as repelling as somebody else's spit - or your mucus. I'll not mention anything else, but you understand that experience. That is highly dramatized when you are able to picture yourself as that cadaver. I mean it is repelling! But the man who has experienced detachment *pre*members his death - as one *re*members or *re*collects the past. This one *pre*members his death, so that before him at all times is the horrifying experience of his own death. That is what I mean by his manifest contingency. He manifests in detachment his contingency. Other people are in the midst of always fleeing from that scene I just described - the fatefulness of their death. But the man who is detached, on the other hand, is always living before it.

When you talk about the cruciform principle, some people say, "You don't really mean really dying, do you?" I tell you, I go all to pieces inside when I hear that! How stupid can you get? Barth said this. He said, "When I'm talking about this, I'm talking about a six-foot hole in the ground." I mean this is utterly literal. A man lives literally before his death. Only then can you say as Socrates said, "No harm can befall a righteous man." I'll put that in the gospel: "No harm can befall a dead man." You cannot scare a man who is holding his own cadaver within his hands. Now, he may be trembling down inside; but after the steam roller has gone over him, he is still standing there, trembling as he may. This is what I mean by divine humility, in which you embrace the total givenness. We have got to become humble in a new way.

This is also **radical benevolence**. The detached man is the only man who has comprehensive concern. Do you understand that? The man who is driven by his security is always concerned for his family, his

nation, or whatever else his idols define. The detached man is the man who is comprehensively concerned. This is an impartial concern. The only man who can be impartial is the man who is detached, who has given up the things of the world, if you please. It is an endless concern. I mean it is there every day. Not, you know, going a week and not giving two hoots about anybody, and then the next week beginning to be concerned. What I am pointing to is that if you are not continually concerned, you have not discovered what detachment is. I'll come back to Paul's statement that "none of us has arrived"; but that is not my point at the moment. It is unlimited concern.-the man who will and does lay down his life on behalf of other people.

It is this detachment which is the basis of all society. The social structures of humanness - family, fraternity, nation, church - were based on this detachment. I might point out here the times when God acts in history and says, "No." You remember Amos. He wasn't after those cows of Bashan wallowing in their riches because riches were wrong. Amos always attacked the religious dimension - their relationship to God - because that is the foundation of any social structure, not other issues coming from that.

If you look for a moment at the revolutionary, you can see this. The revolutionary is the one who is loose from the given situation that he is in. The detached person is a perpetual revolutionary. He is always loose. He is the one that keeps society fluid; and only when society is fluid is it society. I want to point out what I did earlier. You watch that revolutionary. He is always under the discipline of poverty.

The last point is the **sacramental portent**. One of the things that makes me unclear in this area is this external sign. The external sign is to the corporates what transparency is in meditation, contemplation, and prayer. The transparency is that which (and my poetry is very bad here) travels you the distance to the mystery - face to face.

I forgot the greatest quotation in the Jacob story I told the other day when I talked about meditation. At the end of it all it says: "He saw God face to face and did not die!" Interesting, isn't it? That is the moment of transparency.

What I mean by this sacramental portent, or this external sign, is that which gets you to the world. It is that which gets poverty to the world. It is something like this. Poverty is a posture towards life. It is the posture of detachment. The sign is that which quickens it. I mean, I have to create a literal sign in history before this is anything else than an intellectual insight. That is what I mean by traveling the distance.

Let me illustrate that. About two weeks ago there was some trouble in the neighborhood here early in the morning. When I heard about it, God made it clear that it had happened because of me. Do you understand what I mean? That wasn't anybody else's problem. It was my problem. I had done it, and it had happened to me. When you obey God in terms of forging a posture, that posture does not become alive until you make a sign. Now I get up about 30 minutes earlier, and every day I'm on that street if at all possible. That is my sign in traveling the distance.

How else shall I say this reality comes to me? One of my boys came home one time with long hair, and I did the most outrageous thing. I don't worry about people criticizing me here and there, but when I misuse one of my boys - I had him cut it - and I lied to him - I didn't know I was lying - well, I'm not sure of that - (You have to keep your theology clean, don't you?) - I told him it was for the sake of a cause. What a fool! He did it! Now that was stupid to have done it! He should have told me off, but he didn't. If he had told me off, I wouldn't have violated him. Do you understand? So I let my hair grow long. That was my traveling the distance - to try to embrace the fact.

I like to say if you live in the white suburbs, and if you are not willing to live in the crumminess of the ghetto, then you have got to live in the crumminess of the ghetto. But if you are willing, you don't have

to. And then some people are just stupid, and they've got to. There are other people, as Soren Kierkegaard says, who can do it in their imagination. Then there are people in between. Those are the ones who have to put all their furniture in a big van, and drive it all down to the ghetto, leave it all night, and then go back and put it all back in. This is the only way they could possibly know, so that this position becomes quickened and alive in their life

So you have to become poor. First of all, that is literal. I want to underscore that! If you have got to have anything, if you have **got** to have your husband; if you have *got* to have your sanity, if you have *got* to have your children, if you have *got* to have your automobile .. I've seen guys in our Order keep ice boxes around here two or three years locked up, because they couldn't get loose enough to life to say they didn't need them. I find people who keep their cars when they come here. They can't get loose from them. I have nothing against their keeping their cars, if they find another way to communicate to themselves that they own nothing.

On the flip side of that, then you don't have to become poor at all, because the disposition of poverty has nothing to do with how many goods you have, or how many you don't have. It doesn't have to do at all with how much money you have or don't have - on the other side of your not having to have any of it. But then it gets transferred into the rubric of mission.

How does a person capture one of these signs? One man that comes here on the weekends has a rather luscious house in the suburbs. One day, sitting around at a party of some kind at his house, I looked over at him and said to him - no, I didn't put it that way. I said to the other people, "One thing I know of this man, and that is if tomorrow I needed this gorgeous house, he would give it to me." You should have seen the look on that man's face! But I didn't give up. . . I said, "Wouldn't you? Wouldn't you?" Very reluctantly, in a low voice, he said, "Yes." Interesting, isn't it?

Whatever that sign is, that sign has to be there. Without the sign, what I mean by detachment is not there at all. The person who is not detached has never authentically engaged himself in life. As Luther put it, he is always subtly serving himself. Only the detached man can labor to his death without trying to save his own soul by his labors. That is poverty

Religious orders come in here, too. God bless them all. Sometimes you need a sign of your sign. If the man with the large house turns the deed over or has it there, so that any time, anybody can pick it up - let's say that would be his sign that he doesn't have to have it. But maybe he needs another sign. St. Francis tied a rope around himself, and every time he saw that rope, that reminded him of his reminder that he was a detached man. Thereby he called upon himself to be universally benevolent.

Now, the religious orders - oh, my, the sign of poverty that they created! It's been so misused. The worst thing about it is that today they don't even understand it any more. And then the Catholic priests are asking for a raise in salary. I was kidding a Sister the other day about the nuns taking off their habits. You see, every time - not every other time - every time anyone beheld a nun, they were held up to the sacrificial portent of detachment, and they were recalled. It didn't make any difference whether they hated the nun or whether they respected and loved her. I mean, every time they passed a black habit, though they may never have known it, this happened to them. That pointed beyond. I said to the Sister, "After all the blood has been spilt to get that done to the habit, the Sisters come up and yank it off as if it were nothing, and have all kinds of excuses about the modern world." That was a serious move. The religious orders in history have been a sign of the possibility and the glory of detachment. They have been an indication that man is detachment and that he has to be a slave to none. What a price has been paid to build that up.

But you don't have to go to the orders for that to be a sign. Why, that man's house, his not having to have

it, his having come to terms with this - that's a sacred sign that points beyond. This is like a sacrament itself. Indeed it is a sacrament - an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace. It is a call to humanness.

My last word is that you are not about to come off with anything remotely related to the revitalization of the local congregation if you have not taken upon yourself the discipline of poverty. One of the greatest social inventions that history has ever seen was the invention of the tithe. There was nothing pious about it. It was just the machinery worked out whereby if ten people gave up one-tenth of their income, they could have a guru sustained in their midst. By the time I came along the tithe didn't seem to have any relation to authentic reality. But the tithes were a sign that they were detached from the world. If you want to know one of the secrets of the unbelievable accomplishment of the Israelites and Jewish people even to this hour, it has been that no matter how they've perverted it, they've had signs of detachment in their midst.

I sometimes think that in the Movement the way we ought to support our overseas work - I'll tell you right now that it is costing \$60,000 to run those two ITI's. Where that's going to come from I don't know! The glory of it is that 120 people from every nation of the East will be in Hong Kong, and there will be 7080 in India alone.

I sometimes have thought that in the Movement - and not simply for the sake of money, but in some way or another trying to recover the sign of poverty - that we ought not give . . . that we ought to reduce our incomes by fifty dollars a month - not give money, but reduce our income, whatever it might be - and shove the mission ahead with power.

But whether it be that or another, that sign must be. And when that sign be's, then it is a sacrament to all men everywhere, pointing to the wondrous, and glorious, and painful deeps of being human, and to that mystery which is beyond all of our petty gods.