

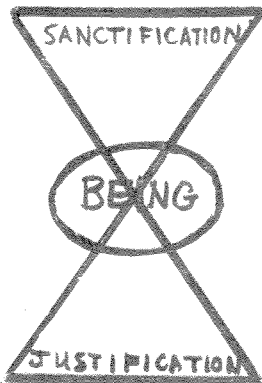
Base Centrum

Winter Quarter

Research Guild

THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE

March 12, 1973



There are many ways we have talked about the relationships between Justification and Sanctification. Using our old categories of Knowing, Doing, and Being, we have spoken of Justification having more to do with Knowing, Sanctification more to do with doing, and the white-hot center holding it together as the category of Being.

Justification has to do with "dying to live"--dying to everything that has been and being thrust out into a new life. Sanctification has to do with "living to die"--the decision about the intentional giving of the death. In Justification we experience being saved by God, or being loved by God. In Sanctification we experience being saved by God, or being loved by God. In Sanctification we experience being the Savior of God, or loving God. Justification is believing the Word, the Gospel. Sanctification is living out of the Word, or living under the law. The law is a school teacher until you are justified; then, the law is given back again as the guide or the rule of what it means to love God, not in terms of some kind of "achieving" but in terms of obedience.

The address of Justification would be like the Old Mood--or the death of all things and the experience of your own death in the midst of that. That of Sanctification would be the New Mood--just sheer effulgence, sheer resurgence, the overwhelmingness with possibility in the midst of life. That overwhelmingness is not the terror of death, but the terror and fright of the overwhelming burden.

The experience of Justification and Sanctification is like the constant reversing of polarities, so that you first see one and then the other emerges out of it--like a picture which, when reversed, comes out negative, and then in switching becomes positive. It is that sort of thing in terms of your experience of life. It is not that you experience Justification once and for all, and then down the line somewhere you become sanctified. It is more like a constant interweaving presence of both.

There comes a point in one's life when the radical event of one's Justification -- the understanding that "I am loved of God always" -- happens again and again. In England, on the first Sunday of the New Year of 1971, I had the strange experience of going to a little Methodist church down the road and participating in John Wesley's Covenant Service. That service came as a great address to me. Those people were trying to say to themselves that, "My business from now on is to love and serve God; that is the only task I have; and I must somehow remind myself that not only am I justified, but that I am called to live always in the service of God."

And now, beloved, let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us.

This taking of His yoke upon us means that we are heartily content that He appoint us our place and work, and that He alone be our reward.

Christ has many services to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some bring honor, others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural inclinations and temporal interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves, in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is assuredly given us in Christ, who strengtheneth us.

Therefore let us make the Covenant of God our own. Let us engage our heart to the Lord, and resolve in His strength never to go back.

Being thus prepared, let us now, in sincere dependence on His grace and trusting in His promises, yield ourselves anew to Him, meekly kneeling upon our knees.

O Lord God, Holy Father, who hast called us through Christ to be partakers in this gracious Covenant, we take upon ourselves with joy the yoke of obedience, and engage ourselves, for love of Thee, to seek and do Thy perfect will. We are no longer our own, but Thine.

I am no longer my own, but Thine. Put me to what Thou wilt; rank me with whom Thou wilt; put me to going, put me to suffering; let me be employed for Thee or laid aside for Thee, exalted for Thee or brought low for Thee; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to Thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.*

Now, if you said that very often you would begin to sense you had the demand or burden of living as a Sanctified man. That is, you are in the process not of working out your own salvation, but of being a radical obedient servant of God. The experience of Universal Benevolence in this comes to me as that of being sent out to a Religious House. You believe that corporate network will somehow do your job for you and you can rest in it, be carried by the whole corporate design, the strategies of the Movement, the ordering of the priorities. But suddenly, the

hammer drops with all its weight, and you find there is no word which will tell you what to do. There is no plan or model which fills out the particular need in relationship to your region, or area, or continent, or anything else you are responsible for. You become aware that finally the whole battle--the whole burden is thrown on top of your being.

But with that something else happens. The Lord of History is served or loved in that situation. It is you who are to be the one who loves. You are to be the one who creates. There is nobody else. In the midst of radical corporateness, with all of the tools you have, comes that kind of awareness. The rock drops and you find the whole universe in your hands.

I remember I experienced a couple of years ago that we were just ready to have the British Isles explode. A few colleagues were scattered here and there around the country. We needed troops and we would write letters to Chicago about how we needed troops over there, but the troops did not come. I think they were probably saying, "Why don't you raise up your own?" So we continued the attempt to call them out of the tombs. Then when the troops began to come forth, we found ourselves nurturing them, getting them up and on the move. We discovered some one we thought was going to really be the one. He would get a little bit off the ground and then turn to ashes. A whole meeting seemed to be a swirl of excitement, a whole network. I remember one in particular a little over two years ago in Sheffield. I said to myself when it was over, "We have finally decided to get going!" For a substantial number of people who were there, the fire was too hot, so they did not do what we expected them to do.

It is then that you suddenly discover (and you cannot figure out why) that you are finding it harder to get out of bed. When you really get conscious about what is happening you know that this is nothing but a mirror which reflects your own priorship. Or how about those people who have to be nurtured into giants? You can always find excuses. It is those people over somewhere else. We sent a bunch of people from England to Academy once, and thought that they were the ones who were going to make it. The Academy was white hot and they decided that was not for them. That is not indicting anybody, except the Lord perhaps. You begin thinking about those people over at the Academy staff. Just what do they think they are doing irritating all these fine upstanding people we are sending them? So, you get on the phone and you chew out Baggett or Marshall. Everybody ought to come through the Academy perfect, we all know that! It goes on; it never ends. And the problem with the whole thing is that you and I are so lucid. You get up from your chair and you are bowled over by the Word. You shake your fist. But beneath that fear you also know that you are grounded in the Word and that life is about constantly deciding to pick up and move. It is in that context that we understand Sanctification, the living in utter self-consciousness of knowing that you live out of the Word.

I had an unusual experience at the end of the summer which was such an important period in my life. We had three or four months of what I describe as an intensified whirlwind. It was the most violent kind of tornado you could ever imagine. It is like being caught up in the eye of one of those Pacific typhoons. It is threatening and yet, the most exhilarating experience you have ever had--the excitement and the burden of it.

The Eye of the Hurricane

It began with the end preparation for our Summer 1972 program in the British Isles. We worked hard trying to see that everything was structured properly and would come off well. We had just a week but it was a tremendous week. We had most of the people there we had hoped for. It was a real spirit happening for them, and we came out of there just sailing, deciding that things were really ready to go in a new kind of way.

Two days after we closed the program the elders, Joe Mathews, Joe Thomas, and Lyn Dresslar, stopped on their way to the World Council of Churches. In less than two hours after they had arrived a telephone call came saying that John Mathews had been killed. There were just three of us at the house at the time; Doris, myself and Joe Mathews. All the rest had gone out to do something else. Joe asked us not to say anything about it until he had a chance to think some more. That evening we had some guests in the house making a large gathering for our setting. Joe gave a fantastic lecture--not a lecture exactly but a sitting at the table and sharing--what had happened in the summer, the edge of the movement, and all of that. At the close he wound up by saying with filled eyes and trembling hands and voice, "I have a secret." Then he shared his secret. We were rocked to the core and nobody there will ever be the same after that evening.

Two weeks of discontinuity followed that event. We found ourselves in a bit of an economic pinch. Because you could make at least twice as much money in London as you could in the north, we decided to go to London and get jobs, while we also tried to find a site for the London Religious House. We had two people offer their houses for us to use while we were there so we would have discontinuity, work, earn money, all at the same time. Everybody in the whole house finally got jobs, except Desmond and I who were commissioned to look for a house. The Duffy's stopped by and spent about six weeks in the British Isles and Europe, so they also went to work. Everybody was working in the day, and at night we had discontinuity with people doing various things. One evening on the last Sunday of August after House Church, some of the House decided to go to Salisbury to see the famous Stonehedge. So about two o'clock a.m. they piled into the car, went to Stonehedge getting there just as the sun was rising. From there, they went to see the great cathedral. They came back from the trip transformed people. They had been over against the archaic and sheer mystery.

Another thing for me in the midst of that time was watching the International Olympics on television. In the opening rites, at that gigantic Olympic stadium people from around 140 nations came in, with everything from 600 representatives from the United States and Russia to some nations who had just one competitor--perhaps he wrestled. There was this lone character. Sometimes he would have a trainer who would be carrying the flag for the nation. But in some instances, this one representative would be carrying the flag of his nation. It was as if he was not just himself, but he was his whole nation. More than that, in the context of that Olympics, he was the whole world. He had the whole thing on his back in that situation. You just wondered how that guy stood it. How was it possible for him to march around that huge oval carrying that flag. But there he would go, while you sat amazed, reflecting on your own self in the midst of that.

In the midst of that, almost every time you turned around there was a new record being set--either a new Olympic record or a new world record. You saw a

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Your spirit is expanded. You see that the burden is totally on yourself and you are released to have no problems. The man who walks out in the arena of meaningless and restlessness in society has no problems. All of that is behind. All he has to do as the man of spirit is to create the spirit. There are objective situations to deal with, but there are no problems. There are regional colleagues he is related to, courses to be recruited, galaxies to be drawn into being. But there are no problems. The radical reliance upon the love of God is there in the midst of that situation. And it is endless, endless, Endless Felicity--sheer tactic, sheer fulfillment.

-Charles Hahn-

thirteen old East German or Hungarian girl win one of those gold medals in swimming; the unbelievable poise and stamina of those Russian girls fifteen and sixteen in gymnastics. For me, it exploded the fact that we are in an exploding age--that it is just limitless possibility. And with that possibility before you there is no limit to the burden. An athlete today is a man who harnesses his energy, his skill, his own being. It is not just his physical being, but you know what has to happen to his spirit in order to do that kind of job. When you begin to reflect on those people your mind begins to explode. You discover that your fascination with them is transformed; you begin to see that what they were about was great, tremendous, and yet it was nothing. You experience yourself being demanded to take your being and all you are and hone it and sharpen it and discipline it in order to win, to dream that impossible dream. The Olympics laid the whole world on my back and reminded me of the sheer possibility that the movement is.

During that time we finally tracked down and located a place for that London House to move into. When autumn came I waited and waited around for colleagues to make decisions (some of you have had that experience of waiting around and waiting for your colleagues to make decisions). Out of this waiting around that strange body called the Panjayet became more and more remote and I wondered if we had been forgotten.

Then I discovered when I came back that I was to be assigned with John Baggett to the Academy. Now I have experienced every assignment I have ever had in this outfit as more demanding than the one before. It is just sort of a spiral of difficulty and demand. Someday it is going to come to the point where it cannot be any more. We had not been doing any teaching but RS-1 and RS-111A for three years, but when we got in the Academy we found ourselves inundated in that whirl, working with colleagues who had it all under their belts, who just breezed in and did the job on a paper. You wrestled all night, during the lecture and the study time, trying to get clear on it. Well, it was a burden, but it was great. It was an unbelievable explosion of consciousness again. The great thing about being in the Academy is that once you get over there in that building, you are locked in. It is as if you go through an eight-week ever-intensifying acceleration in which, by the time you have finished that Academy, as you go faster, your body mass gets heavier. That is the way I experienced the Academy.

Then to launch into December I discovered when I walked into the Centrum building that everything I had been going through in these past few years was Sanctification. So it was really no problem and I might as well enjoy it! Once you are able to name the name it seems to work out. It was very releasing to know that I suppose all I have been talking about is not myself, but the experience all of us have been having in life. You would have to add your own content to it, but it would be, I suspect similar.

One experiences the kind of Radical Integrity, in which the creation of the future is given as a great and overwhelming kind of gift; the excitement of the creation of the future, the excitement of the creation of the Movement, the excitement of the calling forth of the dead, the excitement of going into the graveyards of this world and calling forth the Lazareses out of every kind of congregation. That kind of excitement which is sheer burden comes as yours.