

We have really three jobs to do as we look at our edge work on sanctification. One of those jobs we began in this quarter's study of Tillich. It is doing a series of historical outlines on the doctrine of sanctification as it has been articulated in the life of the church. Although it has been dealt with by almost every Protestant and Catholic theologian, there is not a great deal written directly on it in Protestant theology. But there is a wealth of historical background, both doctrinal and theological, that we need to be on top of. Then we also need to be able to articulate the three first-level triangles and the nine second-level ones in terms of the phenomenological flow or the existential experience of the depth as we move around the points of the triangle. We also have a rational or relational job to do, and it has to do with what we call the dynamics, with the reason why Universal Benevolence comes first and how that experience then feeds into and is sociologically related to Radical Integrity, for example. It is a relational job so that if we start at any point and move around the triangle, it would allow us to analyze what is happening in the world.

Perhaps the best way to start is with the second-level triangles for UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE: Imposed Dominion, Impossible Obligation and Boundless Caring. This whole triangle on Universal Benevolence has behind it our whole study of Christ the Crisis, which is an attempt by Gogarten to spell out the caring of that individual for the whole world. IMPOSED DOMINION is the kind of thing Gogarten was talking about as taking upon oneself the responsibility for the doom of the whole world. We have struggled the last few weeks to say how this happens--for it happens to everybody, finally. A person wakes up and realizes that he has been brutally overburdened with the responsibility that he has in his post or station, whether it be here or elsewhere. There is a kind of sorrow, a kind of woeful countenance that comes about by virtue of simply realizing that in that particular post or station where you showed up you have and can exercise responsibility for the whole world. When that breaks in upon a person, when that dominion or the kingdom of the whole world, is put into a person's lap, you have something like sheer pain, all the way down to your toes.

But do you recall St. Teresa talking about delectable pain? Do you remember the metaphors in which pain and pleasure were put almost side by side? This pain has to do with realizing that you are totally alive at the same time that you have the whole world on your back. It is having realized that you do have a kind of basic sympathy for every situation that you come upon. Not that you have a strategic position in which you can exercise responsibility for the whole world--no, it is simply coming upon the children's structures and realizing that deep care needs to be exercised, and that if you dare to touch that situation you have a world of care on your back. Or it has to do with coming upon a colleague for whom you have deep sympathy, either because of his own decision to struggle or because of his own decision to be in despair. That primary sympathy for each particular situation is what finally causes that burden to come down with the force that is there. Then IMPOSSIBLE OBLIGATION makes sense. Once you have grasped that there is within your own day-to-day existence the drive to sympathize in the depth sense with every particular situation--although you may not acknowledge every particular situation you

come upon--then you realize your total inadequacy to deal with those that you have been given. The humiliation here is experienced as acute inadequacy and comes when you actually experience care for that particular situation. There is nothing superimposed here, nothing belittling. It is simply that, in the midst of exercising the drive to invest yourself in that situation, you wonder what difference you could finally make anyway. Or you say, "Why don't we just go on the way we have been going?"

The horrifying awareness in the midst of this Impossible Obligation is like that desert that we talked about. It is almost two sides of the same coin. Once you make a decision to do something in response to that care, then every vision of clarity you had about what you ought to do in that situation disappears. Have you noticed that? How easy it is to criticize those who are taking responsibility for the children's situation, but the point is that you see very clearly what is required on your part if you are to care for this situation. If you allow yourself to exercise that obligation, what you come up against is perpetual sacrifice. That is, you can take any caring situation and see completely through it to the fact that the rest of your life is going to be sacrifice--and that is painful. Every situation reveals the perpetual sacrifice that you are called upon to make.

This is the clarity of sanctification. It is not a surprise. The difference in sanctification is indicated by the word obligation. For while that realization of the painful responsibility inherent in any structure is an experience of every man, the difference for one who participates in sanctification is that that obligation becomes his personal destiny.

This is Gogarten again. He takes upon himself the care, not just of that particular situation or those children, but his whole life in that moment becomes totally dedicated to that situation. This is total engagement, this is the total giving that is required. Again, he is no different than anybody else in terms of the struggle to be a good teacher, to be a good pedagogue, to be a good parent. The difference is that that becomes particularized to the point that your destiny depends on the decision that you make in that next encounter with the children, with the spouse, with the colleague. Therefore, total consciousness, total intensity of the future is brought to bear in that situation.

And that is BOUNDLESS CARING. It is not for that particular situation, but it is experienced more like a drive relative to the external emptiness of every human being. The emptiness now is sanctification and is not experienced as the emptiness of meaning that is in justification. The emptiness in sanctification has to do with the emptiness that you feel once you have actually seen the possibility and realized how short you have fallen of that actual possibility. In sanctification, the despair is over possibility, the possibility of actually accomplishing something which you can see the end of. This is a full emptiness. In justification the experience is of a painful intrusion in which you are thrown into a dizzy whirl, into a franticness. The intrusion of a situation in sanctification comes like somebody opening a door, and on the other side of that door you find a whole other universe as big as the one you just came out of; and in the midst of that, all the air is gone. It is like being in an open-air theatre and not being able to breathe. You want to fill the space full. You want to inject something into it. The drive to care, therefore, is for fulfillment; but it is to get that care objectified, to get that care to have a literal object.

The kind of object that one finds himself driven to care for is literally the human environment. By that I simply mean the three billion people that make up the environment of this world. It is not some return to a loving land and loving rivers. Those are metaphors that point to the fact that the environment in which you and I participate is three billion human beings. The final eternal drive is to fill your care full with the object of that care which is three billion people and to see that actually objectified in the midst of history. Radical Integrity has no meaning except on the other side of that object of care, namely, the whole world.

When you move to the triangle of RADICAL INTEGRITY, you find Boundless Affirmation. That sounds a bit like, "You are accepted," but the affirmation that you make in sanctification, is that you have not just embraced the givenness of your situation, its meaninglessness or guilt, or the goals that you have; the affirmation in sanctification is the affirmation of the self that creates that situation, of the possibility, not the limits. It is the affirmation of the possibility of actually creating yourself in that situation. Now you have not only the job of creating yourself but also the job of creating the self that can carry the burden of the whole world which you picked up back in Universal Benevolence. It is not just any old kind of creation that you are talking about here. It is inventing the self that can stand under that burden. That is a particular kind of demand.

But you not only have the possibility of creating the self that can stand under the burden of the whole world, you have the burden of creating your own society. That is another way of saying the same thing. You now have the burden, the affirmation here is affirming the possibility of creating your own history as well.

The despair you feel here is not for yourself; it is for the imbalance in society. That is where your sensitivity is driven. It is at the point of society being out of joint. The despair you have is not over your vocation; it is not over the goals or objectives of your station of work; it is not over any family crisis unless you so decide. The despair has to do with the imbalance of society. The only authentic response then is to be the self who creates the New Social Vehicle. It is that response, in light of that burden under Universal Benevolence, that defines the integrity in which you then go about the job of creating your own existence.

REPRESENTATIONAL EXPENDITURE is crucial because freedom is exercised here, but freedom has a different twist. This expenditure, the free decision to give yourself undergoes a shift. In the midst of going around trying to be the person who is going to bear the weight of the world, and having that rock always on your back, you realize that that rock is getting heavier and heavier, and you become intimate with the rock. It becomes familiar to you, but not in a sentimental way. What you realize is that that rock, the burden of the whole world, has been on your back from the beginning of the world and that it is going to be on your back until the end of the world. You really have no way of winning over-against that burden.

It is almost as if, after you have seen that you have a choice as to how you are going to live your life, you see that you do not have any choice: it is death both ways. You can give up that responsibility and go to your grave,

or you can bear that responsibility and go to your grave. The choices here are limited in terms of the struggle. You have that rock and so you decide to leave that rock on yourself. If you could get that rock off, it would be all right; but it would not be nearly as much fun--just death. Here you have death and responsibility both! And it is at this point that you almost do not have a decision to make. Now it is a matter not of picking up your freedom; it is a matter of surrendering.

This metaphor has been in Christian theology before; it is the exercise of freedom as the laying down of freedom. This is where a person sees that the essence he has to invent was the essence that was intended before the foundations of the earth were laid. The destiny to which you have been called, to bear the world, was what it meant to be human, from the beginning of mankind, and it will be what it means to be human until the end of mankind. Therefore, if you are going to be really human you have to carry the whole world on your back. This is the experience of eradication. It is the eradication of the rebellion against the way life is--and this is freedom. Something like the eradication of the rebellion against the struggle of bearing the whole world. When you embrace all of this, you are representationally expending your life. I think you can see how that phrase fits here.

The LIFE-GIVING PRESENCE has to do with understanding this second dimension to freedom. Although it is still freedom, it is not any different than in RS-I. This limitation in the midst of your freedom now becomes concrete. The Life-giving Presence has to do with putting flesh on that freedom, on making that freedom that we just articulated manifest in the world, making it present. This is the freedom that saves the world, the decision to take that rock upon yourself. There has never been a civilization that made what anybody would call progress until there were those in that society who gave up their freedom in order to take upon themselves the burden of that whole civilization. They gave up the right to their family, they gave up the right to their vocation, they gave up the right to their community and took upon themselves the deciding of the future of that society. Unless there were people in the society that did that, no civilization has ever moved. There has to be a sign of that presence, of the freedom manifested by those who have intentionally taken that rock upon themselves.

But it is not some kind of sign that you set up and people come and look at. No, it is engagement. It is vocationally manifest, and it has to do with loving the neighbor. What you finally see happening where you see Life-Giving Presence is love of the neighbor. It sounds too easy. This business of giving life is not so easy, as I learned from some poetry once. It has to do with seeing that your love of the neighbor is a manifestation of your love of the way life is, or of your love of being. To say it another way, the love of neighbor here is still not some direct one-to-one simply more intimate relationship than the priesting that goes on in RS-I or in justification. No, what you love in the neighbor is the essence of being in that neighbor.

This is not something simple. To love the essence of being in your neighbor is to speak to the essence of that neighbor. That is to say that you speak to that neighbor as Being has spoken to you. This is an articulation of that freedom which we just talked about. What you mean by loving the neighbor is to love the being of that neighbor or the-way-life-is in that neighbor. And

the-way-life-is is what we just talked about in terms of the nature or essence of freedom. You articulate to him what Being has articulated to you--that to be human is to bear the weight of the world. That is evangelism. That is what wins the world. That is what changes whole nations of people. I believe we are going to see once again that it was this kind of articulation, this kind of possibility that finally motivated every serious movement, every group, every effort of the church. If you are going to be a human being, you are going to carry the weight of the whole world. No punches pulled at this point, no second road in terms of humanness, this is just the way it is.

In that context, happiness is no laughing matter. That is why we call it ENDLESS FELICITY. That is to say, the definition of happiness, the experience of fulfillment, is there. What it means to be a human being is to be fulfilled. But this comes only at the point of accepting the rock, only in the certitude that your life is to be fully lived in being the one that bears that rock. In this posture, meaning is everywhere and you have become an exemplar. Now there is nothing great about being an exemplar; it simply means that you have decided to die for something. This is always in the particular, but your death now is not for any particular, but for the cause of the whole world. It is for the cause of articulating this possibility for the last skinny man.

It is like this. In the depths of human existence, one sees that the very context of his own problems is the content of the problems of the world. Therefore, I have no personal problems; I have the problems of everybody. The tragic and the woeful nature of mankind, "debauched and debased as can be," in Don Quixote's words, is the only care that is worthy of our lives. Everything else is piddling by comparison. This is the transcendence that comes in that fourth principle of the Tillich paper we studied, in which the engagement of yourself in the actual problems of the world renders all personal problems impossible.

Of course, it is a happening when you decide to expend your life for that rock. The release, the fulfillment, comes in grasping that you and I have been given, in the twentieth century, a unique set of contradictions. Nobody has ever had the possibility and the opportunity of dealing with those problems. Thomas Jefferson would be green with envy with the opportunity for enlightenment that this group has. The men that framed the Constitution would be sick if they saw what we have as a possibility for world law. Mahatma Gandhi is turning over in his grave with what we know about religious exercises. The uniqueness of our situation is overwhelming in terms of both the actual problems we have and the actual possibilities within those problems.

This is the glory of showing up at this moment, this is PROBLEMLESS EXPENDITURE. It is when a person comes to see that his problems are his glory because they are not his problems, but the problems of the whole world. Man's destiny has always been linked with the particular struggle that he shows up in. The old debate was over whether man makes history or history makes man. But the glory of life, the real hope in life--and I can talk about hope now--the real hope that I have is that nobody ever lets me off the hook, that life never lets me off the hook of dealing with the glorious actual problems rather than some illusory and superficial idea out there. That is what releases a human being, what releases a person to act. That is what gives a person certitude in the midst of his life. This problemless expenditure is the simple life. I realize that it does not come to us that way in the first instance.



But this is what you mean by the simple life of service. It is very clear what we are supposed to do today, and that is to give ourselves on behalf of the whole world. There is no question about that. And that is blessed assurance, for some folks are not really sure what they are supposed to do today. Now, we may take some time to work out the contradictions, but we are about the job of working out the contradictions so that we can give our life on behalf of the whole society. That is what I mean by blessed assurance. This is a strange kind of victory.

The GLORIOUS PERSERVERANCE is the other category, and I think the way to talk about it is to restate what we mean by happiness. Happiness has to do with persevering or maintaining your integrity every day. Perseverance flows out of the decision to be the self that creates society. The perseverance is to be sustained in that decision. You realize that you are not synonymous with the situation in which you show up, and therefore it does not dictate to you. You are self-conscious, although you say "yes" to whatever the place in which you find yourself. Secondly, man is not synonymous with his conscience; he is not synonymous with what he has been told he ought to do in that situation. Quite the contrary, what it means to be a human being is to stand outside and decide the content of that situation.

Therefore, the indicative which you decide for is the indicative of the self, of the essential self. What you decide in every situation is that you are mystery, you are freedom, you are love, and you are fulfillment. In any situation, if you do not choose the actual happiness, that is in your life situation, then it is not there. There is nothing that is going to make you and me happy. We have seen too much, we have experienced it all. It is only when a person decides his happiness out of the actual content of the self of integrity, in a world in which the attitude of benevolence is there, that any man has a chance to be happy. I am my happiness, in that context. The content of my life, the content of my care, and the struggle of my integrity is what it means to be happy. Never again, then, are there any superimposed categories. No one can superimpose a category of happiness upon you. This is what is meant for me by the Glorious Perseverance.

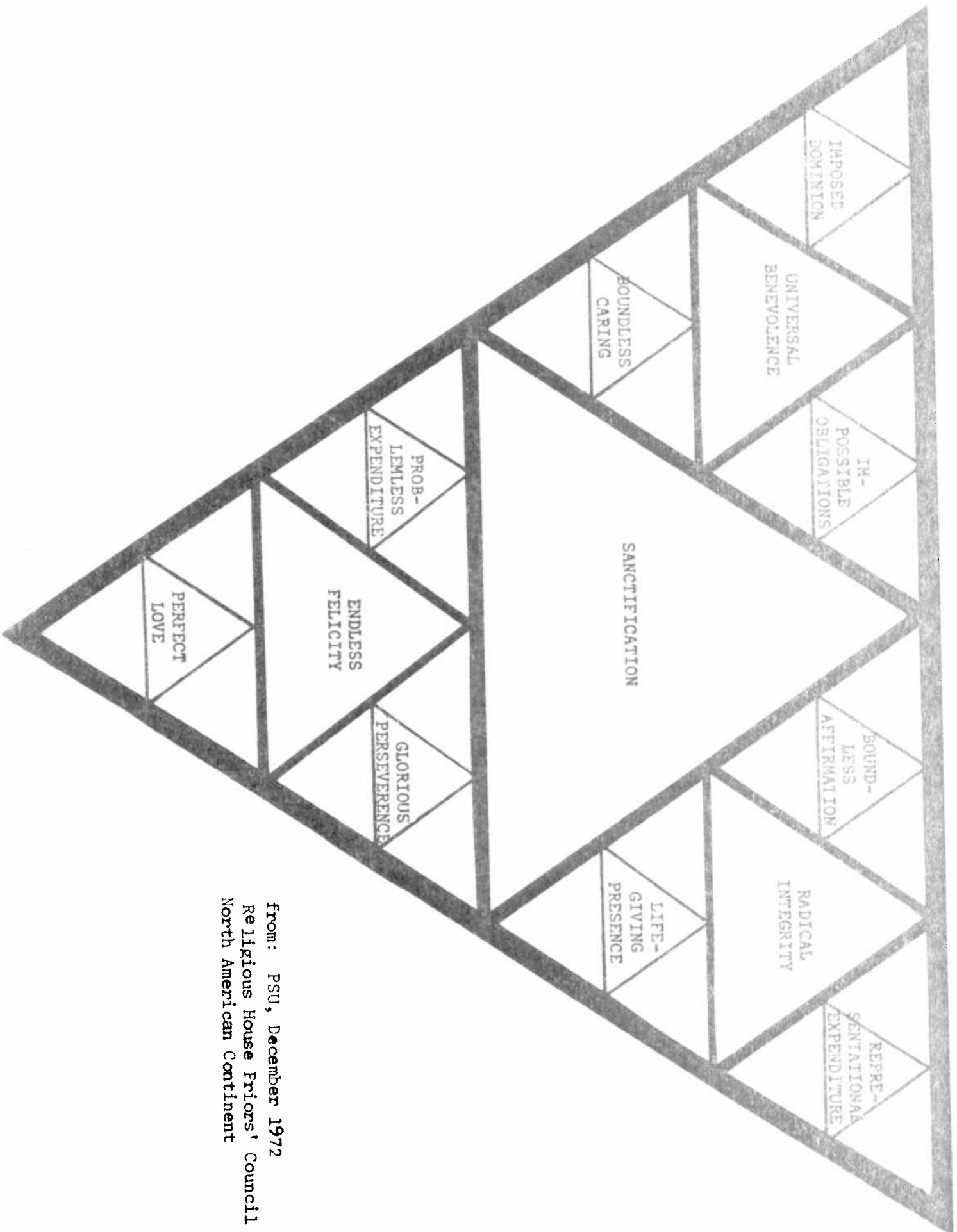
PERFECT LOVE is the last triangle. This is really very simple. It has to do with loving and affirming the fact. For you and me, death is a fact of life, just as birth is a fact of life, and man never finally lives his life until he lives his death. Therefore, those who have died are one step further along the line that you and I. They are more human than you and I. It is something like this: when you hear the word of justification, that life and death are good, you begin to see that there is really no difference between life and death. You discover that what life is about is mystery, freedom, love, happiness. It is clear that real life is about those four things. What is death about? Death is about mystery, freedom, love, and fulfillment. You notice the similarity. St. Francis put it this way: "You are in the hands of the same final reality in your death as you are in life." The icy finger that taps you on the shoulder and puts you in that grave is no different from the one that woke you up the first time. When you grasp yourself then as one big ball of awe, you really no longer experience living and dying, you experience life as being. I think that this is what we mean by being. It is simply the mystery of it all.

Perfect Love is the love that is willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause, the love that loves both heaven and hell, that loves both life and death. Kierkegaard said that the man in dread or the person who is in awe is repulsive to us. Therefore to get rid of that awe, we invent an end to the awe and we call it death. Death is man's creation, his way to handle awe. The Scripture says that man came to live his life awakened, so that death does not have a victory any more. We know this but we do not allow ourselves to know it. Instead, we operate as though the word was, "eat, drink and be merry and maybe tomorrow I can get out of this mess." Man knows that he creates his own universe. To push that to the bottom is to see that death is not death. When you grasp that death is not death, you grasp man as man. It is only the intentional man who can take that stinger out of death. Once death has died, once perfect love has been made manifest, the Endless Life is possible, and that is LIFE. That is Resurgence. Until the question of endless life, or immortality is dealt with, a society does not move forward, it is not rejuvenated. This is not some pollyanna dream but the depth of Perfect Love, Glorious Perseverance, and Problemless Expenditure. It is the way life is. It seems to me that this articulation of sanctification can be a foundation upon which we build for the next twenty years of the Long March in the midst of the Great Resurgence.

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