

THE OTHER WORLD
SUMMER '72

Trek XIV

TREK LECTURE

David Scott
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Serenity at the Center and Problemlessness at the Center

If you've found some of us haveing just a little bit of difficulty getting started on these trek lectures in the last two weeks, you should not be surprized. I ~~had~~ felt I was already when I crept down here and hid behind the post over there and Charles could not even find me. And my colleague from upstairs, Fred Hess, dropped by, and I don't know, you know, I don't particularly like Fred, ^{but} there is one thing about him is he is always ready, if you have ever noticed that. And he walked over and whispered "would you like to say just one more time what this lecture is all about?" And all of my securities fled.

We have been dealing almost a month now very self-consciously with states of being. Wouldn't you like to have a quarter for every time you have asked yourself this month "now what is a state of being?" And we have self consciously ventured into an area that is a bit frightening. I think that is why I want to underline, and I suspect this has been done in your group several times, underline the necessity of you working on those charts in the back of your trek journal. For when you and I began to wrestle with the edge of where human beings are, ~~we~~ we have to be witless(?) with ourselves in terms of the criteria by which we ~~decide~~ decide whether or not we are on the edge or whether or not we have stepped off the edge. And the first criteria in that kind of a venture is you going(?) to hold your own experiences over against what is going on so represented by that chart. But that is not the only step. The second one is you hold it over against what ~~you~~ you see other people experiencing. Thirdly, you and I ~~do~~ dare to hold what we have before us over against history itself. We have ^{got} to look back to see if this is what man has always experienced. And then for us as a community, that is as the church, we have a ~~final~~ final or a fourth step, and that isto press it over against the scriptures, the Old Testament and the New Testament and finally over against the only criteria we have got, and that is the eschatological hero. And it is not until you and I have done those four things that we can come back

with assurance and say this is the way that it is. That is what those charts in the back of your books are for. For you to be about that kind of rigorous task reminds you that ^{if} you and I ~~cannot~~ go back to our regions and let loose an unthought through struggle ~~with~~ with these steps(?) we will wish we had never got up out of bed. And if you do not have the discipline to sit down and do those charts, then when you go home and people ask you what you did, you say we worked on tactics and we worked on strategies. Period. Do not mention the other world. For you have all experienced that you can get lost in that world. You can get lost and never find your way out. Save you have dared to ~~at~~ take your own experiences and ^{press} ~~mark~~ them over against that tool until you are crystal clear that you and I are delving where every human ~~is~~ being has been and is and will find himself tomorrow. Only then will you and I dare to -----

I don't know quite how to talk about the other world save I talk about it in term of it being one thing. Now mind you, as rational human beings, by necessity, you and I have taken that oneness called the other world and applied our rationality to it. But I have to be careful that I do not fall into the trap of the picture that that is some sort of sequential arrangement up there on the board. That is ~~that~~ one day you are in the land of mystery and if you are a good boy the next day you get in to the sea of consciousness and if you really ~~you~~ open your eyes you show up over against the mountain of care. And if you get your fingers underneath that, you show up in the sea of tranquility. Does not happen that way. It is like whenever you discover your ~~your~~ self over against the raw myster of life, all four of those things are there just like that. Now the ~~you~~ temptation is clear, because you and I theologically now, that is, abstractly, have dwelt in the land of myster and the sea of consciousness for at least the last ~~at~~ ten years. Now we knew that those other two were there, but for somebody to raise how do you talk about it, ^{well} ~~you~~ you just went into shaking palsy right in front of ~~them~~ him. ----- You never experienced that in an RS-1? When somebody walked up and said "what do you do with

life after death?" And you say "Well, what has that got to do with living your life?" ~~RMXXM~~ Or some question~~x~~ like that. Which is to day they have touched on the lower half(?). And you and I have not been ready to talk about that. And some of us still are not. That is why some of us are doing the lectured ~~staring~~ the first part of the~~x~~ week and not the last part of this week. But we have dwelt there for ten years. That is why the mountain of care came to ~~mx~~ you as a bit strange and that is probably where you stopped writing on your charts, I suspect. Was not it convenient that all those manuals came ~~stunx~~ along right about that time? Whether you(?) That is ~~probablyxxgood~~ some legitimate excuse ~~forxxyou~~ not to do your solitary at night. Was not that convenient of Marshall to have thought that through. It is understandable. And it is not that you and I are naughty or anything. That is the way it is. You want to know what life is all about. Well, ask James Baldwin. He says it something like this. What life is birth, struggle and death, and love he said in parenthesis, but none of us understand it. You see Baldwin even understood the difficulty of the mountain of care and the sea of tranquility.

Well, I am going to talk a bit about the sea. Yesterday, we talked about the sea in terms of its crystal clearness. The word on your chart, I think, is radical illumination. In which the transparency of knowing is retransparent. That is to ~~mx~~ say it is the waking up and ~~a~~ discovering that you not only have seen to the bottom of what life is all about, but you have seen all the way through it. And encountered the kind of, the kind of tranquility of ~~f~~ grasping that that no longer is a question for you as a human being in terms of what life is all about. That has been narrowed down, that has been smoothed out. That has been placed before you ~~stunx~~ ^{from} the ~~mx~~ very moment that history began, waiting for you to discover. But the sea is not always that kind of ~~mx~~ glass smooth clear to the bottom. That sea of tranquility is also for me something like what it must be like in the eye of a typhoon. If any ~~mx~~ of you have read Taipen, you will remember those last pages in which there was a calm in the midst of the typhoon. It was in that space ~~that~~ between

when the flood ebbs(?) and the typhoon moves through Hong Kong. And just prior to the back end of that same storm sweeping that same small land area. And that calmness there was very deceptive. In fact, havoc was wrought by the typhoon, and then things settled to a death stillness. And people very interestingly and understandably began to move and almost like take up their life as it had been before only to receive the second shock as they began to awaken to that calmness. Well for me the sea of tranquility in this trek that I ----- to talk about is ~~something~~ like that. It is a calmness that there is turmoil all around you. There is, there is frightful kind of, of, of tempest roaring all about you. But there ~~is~~ ⁱⁿ the center is a calm. The calm comes from you discovering that every hope that you have ever clung to is a hollow hope. One of my colleagues calls this particular state of being discovering wishlessness. That is to say every one of us has experienced the collapse of our wish dreams. For our wish dreams are ~~are~~ built out of the collapse of the last wish dream we had. It is like one kind of metamorphosis after another. One grasping after some hope as a wish dream collapses, a new hope comes to fill the vacant horizon. And you and I grasp after it only to discover that it too is hollow. Until one day you discover that there is only one hope. And that hope is born when that last wish dream is collapsed, ~~and~~ and you ~~have~~ finally have decided there is no other wish, there is no other wish. For what could I wish for?

We have an interesting little game we play in religious houses. It is called how to induce intern disillusionment. What we have discovered is that no matter what previous relationship someone ~~may~~ ^{might} have had to ~~a~~ ^{the} religious house, that once they have picked up their bags and bound their children hand and foot and gotten through the front door that they all come with some strange picture of what a religious house is all about. Now you ~~know~~ ~~do not~~ do not discourage that. Well you know it would not do any good. Even those who come and sojourn, and so forth, Then along about December, and you have to be a little bit ^{a little bit} subtle here, because, you know, your interns are very astute people, and so you say something like this, "you know I have been

noticing that some of our colleagues in the metro are a little bit confused at one point or another theologically. Why do not we have a study this weekend and invite ^{our} metro colleagues in to be a part of the study, you know. And everybody says, "oh, that would be great, boy that would really be a chance to get after some of these metro colleagues." and ~~xx~~ they say "what ~~x~~ shall we study?" And then at that point your second prior, has been primed and you kick him in the shinn, and he says "Oh, let's study Bonhoeffer's Community." And everybody says "Oh yeah, that would be great." So you get around the table, and about fifteen minutes after you get started, you discover, the intern begins to discover, that that study session had nothing whatsoever to do with his metro colleagues, it had to do with him. And all of a sudden you have got this big fight on your hands. That is why I always assign my second taught to teach that paper. But the point is that you have discovered, have you not, that God really does hate wish dreams. That he really does despise wish dreams that that when you find yourself living in the hollow hope of your own feeble imagination, then his love for you is so great that he will ram your head into the nearest brick wall to wake you up to the way life really is. That is powerful love. And when that last one is gone--I like Gogarten's category-- when you finally discover that last wish dream has disappeared, that all you have ~~left~~ is the ----- of this world, then you begin to grasp the peace of the hope that is no hope.. And I mean you do not have any problem understanding why this is called unknowable peace. The ones of this world do not understand that. Because what does that song say, "All you ~~want~~ really need is hope, miles and miles of hope. Not so for ones ~~of~~ the other world. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ He has grasped to the bottom that there is only one hope and that is the hope that is born out of no hope at all/

It is a great victory to grasp that. A great grasp after your own possibility. in the midst of that, and I suspect what occurs when that happens is that you begin to grasp a ^{brand} ~~whole~~ new relationship to the whole category of problems. I like the way Charles introduced me. There is nothing like ^{having} your introduction pulled out from

under you in the first ten seconds of being in the room. But that is what happens. Have you stopped sometime and just measured how long it has been since you since you defined your existence in relationship to your own unique, unrepeatable problem I tell you ~~xx~~ if you stopped to think about that lately. You ask somebody who they are and what you get in reply is their own most personal, unique, unrepeatable problem. Well in this state of being you grasped that there is no problem, and I mean what a peace. Oh my, if somebody from the other world heard you say that, they would not understand, for what is a problem? A problem is a dissatisfaction with the way it showed up. Ever noticed that? Seriously, they are past-oriented. I never had had a future-oriented problem. They are all past-oriented. Well, just look. I got a problem in my family. Something happened back there that should not have happened therefore I have got this situation on my hands that is full of problems. They are always past-oriented. When I are creating the future, ~~headed~~ ~~towards the only/future/you got/~~ with our rear-ends pointed towards the only future you have got, with our great big sword doing battle with doing battle with all those things that happened back there. Well, in this state of being, no longer, no longer, you can dare grasp that God really is in charge. Yet we show up articulating our lives under the rubric of problems,. What we say finally, is that we do not trust, we do not trust, You have got a problem with that, but what you are saying is I do not trust that the way it is will sustain me when I show up the one I really am. You have got a problem with good, what you are saying is I do not trust that the future will hold me up, with what I have got right now. You have got a problem with your family, what you are saying is I do not trust my family to be the family that it is. If you and I could find the ways to get this articulated, I have a friend in Houston who is a psychiatrist who went out of business. And the great thing is, that he was like that. Some of you met him, but I do not know how to get this said. When I show up with a ~~xxx~~ problem, what I have done is taken my life and pushed it over against some-

body's moralistic criteria. Sometimes It is my mother's, sometimes it is somebody else's. And sometimes it is mine. It never matches up; therefore, I have got a problem. I remember one time I decided I had a problem, and being in this outfit you cannot just have a problem, I mean you have got to have a problem, before you can get anybody's attention. You soon develop ways to get communicated that you have got a problem. Like stop showing up for daily office; you wander into meetings late; if you are an extremely gregarious character, you start being silent and quiet in meetings. If you are quiet, you start gabbing like a magpie. And before long the word is out. And so I had my problem and I had it all arranged in terms of moving from one level of crisis to another. And finally I got enough attention that it was decided that I needed to have my problem dealt with, and so I came to present my problem. And I mean it must have taken thirty minutes to get that problem out. After about that length of time, my colleague looked at me and said simply, "You do not have a problem!" The meeting was over. The shortest counseling session in history was over. When I walked out of there, my first thought was, well, he just did not understand. Then it hit me that hell he did understand. But here I was having finally decided that I had found the niche that would enable me to radically avoid having to face the future. And I had dug in with all four heels to avoid being blasted out of that niche. And I was armed and armored against all kinds of artillery. And it just took one thing - "You do not have any problems." It was like there I was - overburdened with armour and he took a feather and knocked me down. I do not know, maybe this is the time to talk a little bit about the family. I discovered that that seems to be a place of some concern these days. But just think what would happen in terms of your spirit energy. Right now I bet you it is what I call negative spirit energy. Negative in the sense that most of your spirit energy is directed towards solving "your problem". Just what would happen if that energy could get turned to a positive direction in terms of having for a moment your problems solved. People come and say I have got a problem in my family. Or lately it has been something like this.

Some very young couples around have been seeking me out and my wife I suspect. with a question like this: how did you folks decide to have babies? And I can always spot them. They are young, no children and they always come up and say, "Could I talk with you a few minutes?" And so I have sort of developed a pattern so that when we finally meet, I say something like, "You are wondering whether to have children, aren't you." And they say, "ya." And I say, "you have been over all of the stuff on overpopulation, conservation and all that hogwash." And they say, "ya." And now you are over against how do you decide. And they say, "ya". And they say, "How did you decide?" And my answer to them is something like this. That what you and I are doing in terms of struggling with being a family whether it be around having children or something else, is just one question. Dare I risk the future with this family? Dare I risk the future? And I mean if you decide to risk the future with that ~~future~~ family, then you do not have any problems. And that means that I do not mean that you are going to build any _____ around your problems, no, no. And sometimes I suspect that that is what divorce is. _____

_____ The grasp on the other side that what you have got on your hands is a clear future. And somebody right now is saying, well, he does not understand. He has never been divorced. , Well, let me share something with you. The first seven years of my marriage my wife and I were divorced. And it ~~is~~ just might be that we were more ~~separated~~ separated than some of you ~~with~~ who have a legal document. So do not tell me that I do not know about divorce. But when we pushed through that, and decided that the future would hold us up. I mean, we had ourselves a symbol. He is about this tall. And he has got all of the neuroses that both of us have got. I do not mean that - I am talking about he is going to be the future on our behalf. He is the symbol that we have decided that the future will hold us up. You want to throw a problem into our family - you throw it. If you want to put a stumbling block out there, called the family, you watch us move through it. That is what it means. And you see, that does not mean there is not going to be struggle there. But we have got ourselves a ritual now. And it goes like this: I sense an

impending battle coming over the horizon, dear. Is it on behalf of the next twenty years of civilization? And if the answer is yes, then we get out the gloves and go to it. If the impending battle is not, then we kick it under the bed, with all the rest of the dirt. And move right on. That is the peace in the center of the typhoon, where there is raging all around you, but there is a peace there. Hatred, hostility. Well, for me hostility is, hostility is, the accompanying affection of saying no to the way it is. That is all hostility is. Hatred is the accompanying affection of saying _____ if I had been in charge, I would have done something different. And when you discover yourself in the problemlessness, of this peace, then what you discover is that you do not have any woes; any foes; any enemies. What could be your enemy? What is it that could come before you regardless of what its dress or disguise was like and be an enemy to you? Oh St. Francis is my colleague at this point, when he reached out and touched everything there was and called it brother. Even the one that all of us stand in dark terror of - death itself. And Francis reached and grasped it and said ah, brother death. No enemy; no foes, just the unbelievable tranquil state of knowing that your life has been said yes to. Every moment, every moment is worth your death that is worth your life. And if you grasp that, you know what happens? Time is given back to you. People say but I do not have enough time, what it means is that they have divided life down the center somehow. On one side of which is mundane things and on the other are the things that need time. And when they say they do not have enough time, it means they do not have enough time to do the things they have decided need time. They are eaten up by the mundane. You discover this state - guess what - it is all given back to you. You have got all the time in the world. For the mundanity is also worthy of your life. The everyday, the washing dishes is worth your life as well as preparing a lecture or giving a lecture. It is all, it is all worth your life. And therefore you have got time back on your hands. Maybe what is going on here as you experience yourself in this state is you begin to see things fall away and what you discover is that there is only one foe and that is satan. Now if some of you are still a little

bit concerned about that category in terms of some kind of second-story mythology, let me reassure that satan is not something that your mother dreamed up to scare you from going into the barn. Whatever I point to in the category of satan is as real as anything you or I have every/ experienced. And several things you have to be clear about, in relation to satan. One, he always comes at unexpected times. Two, he always wears a disguise that in the first immediacy you do not recognize as satan. In fact, he will look an awful lot like your friends. But three, since he is the epitomy of lucidity, and therefore defiance, he knows everything you know. And fourthly, and I got this one from the Scriptures, he has done his homework. And knows more about the Bible than you do. And I am telling ø you that is something to be overagainst. And you discover that that is there in the midst of this state. In the Religious House I happened to be assigned to one time I discovered satan in a situation something like htis. We were having our house meeting, which meant there were about seven or eight people gathered around the table, and one of our colleagues came bursting into the room and I immediately realized that she was in trouble. Deep trouble. I realized for a long time that she was treading on a very thin line in terms of the psychotic abyss. Hanging ojn just with her finger nails. And when she burst into that room I realized that she had lost hold, at least with one hand and was hanging on by maybe two fingers. And when she came in and confronted that situation, which I happened to be a part, I mean the place just lit with electricity. And it was anything but calm. in that room. But what happened in that room was that I discovered in that situation that the real battle that was going on there was not between me and her, it was between me and the devil. But we had some preliminary bouts. that went on. Now mind you, they might not like that but there were several of them. Like when she burst through the door, all of a sudden, he was there. And the first thing he whispered into my ear was all right Scott, how do you get out of this? You are shrewd- you have gooten out of worse situations than this. That was the first one. And I had to give him a good hard jab with my elbow and now it popped up over here. And went something like this - you did not

want to be a prior anyway. And I had to give him a left elbow and he popped up again like - they are not treating you fair. They did not send you out with a manual on how to handle a situation like this. And you see, the answer to every one of those is yes. If you see, I mean he was right. But that happened just like that. The preliminaries took very short time and then I realized that the main event, was on hand. Because at this point it was almost like that was not satan that showed up there - those were henchmen. Because Satan, because satan only shows up when there is a real battle going on. Most time the squirmishes are won by the lieutenants. And the big general does not even have to be called. You remember Screwtape Letters? I discovered, I got rid of the preliminary bouts, but the main event was next. Because what happened was satan did something like this - you, you go ahead and deal with this woman's problems and demonstrate to the other seven around the table that you damn well know ~~W~~ what it means to be a prior. That is, turn this situation into a big local prayer and feast on your own greatness, David. That was not any genius speaking, that was the real one. And he did not stop there, even though boy was I glad I read the New Testament. Because all I need to say is that man does not live by status alone. And he reappeared. And he said something like this you solve her problem - do not worry about the gospel, you give her the help she needs. Which is to say, David, All of these kingdoms are mine. Would you not like to have them? And again boy was I glad I could shove the New Testament at the devil. And then the last ~~f~~ one went something like this. Go ahead and do something you have never done before and see ~~f~~ if God will sustain you. And boy at that point I knew I was in a battle; I knew I had but one enemy. standing in front of me. And it was not that situation I happened to find myself in. It was the only battle any human being every has to fight. And that is the battle with satan. When I finally spoke to satan, and mind you that did not take long either, all that battle took place between the time she burst in and gave her proclamation and I spoke, which may have been no more than two minutes, that the whole battle went on. And there was a calm there, but I mean I was torn to the bottom. But, but I love dracula movies. You know how ~~dracula holds up~~ you get rid of dracula - you hold

up, you hold up something like the New Testament and Dracula, well, that is what I did. with satan. I said , there is your answer, you bastard. And lo and behold he fled out the door, but as he left he laughed and said, until next time. There is peace there. And it is surrounded by fury . There is a book out that you all might read called _____. And it is, I like it. It is a good book. I do not think it will ever make our briefcase library, but there is this scene in there that has to do with this, I think. In which this Jesuit priest is in the midst of exercising this demon in a ten year old girl and he is talking directly with the devil through the little girl and the devil has gotten to him. The older priest said now whatever you do when you exercise a demon - do not pay any attention to what the devil says. Pay no attention to it. And in the midst of this the devil go to this priest. He got to talk about this priest relationship with mother and how he had abandoned her to die and so forth and so on and the priest began to get just a little bit angry and said ~~Why?/and/the/didn't/didn't/didn't/~~ That is a lie. And the devil said no, it is the truth. He said I am quite capable of using lying to get my job done but it is so much more fun to use the truth. You have got to watch satan. And that temptation of satna is always there. If you read, if you read the myth of Galcoma or Sidhartha becoming the Buddha, oh you ought to, Any little Indian book will have it in there. You see, Sidhartha struggle d for a long time to reach nirvana, and he just about decided to forget when he decided to give it just ~~of~~ more go. And after many days of fasting and prayer and meditation, and being confronted by the temptor in terms of women and food and ~~I~~ all kinds of things, he finally made it to nirvana. And guess who he ran into right offthe bat - the temptor. There was the temptor. And he said to Sidhartha, isn't it great here in nirvana? Would you not like to stay here allways? And Dishartha's reply was, no, no. My task is to return free salvation to all men. And at that point he became the buddha. You see, you find the peace in the midst of the storm. And my God, would it not be great to stay there. Or maybe what is really going on is that that peace that is there is that one that you know is only there in the midst of that

turmoil of being an alive human being . That that is the only peace that you or I could ever grasp. Anything else everybody already knows about. The peace that is there in the midst of utter, utter turmoil - that is the peace that passed all understanding. That is the peace that you and I do not go looking for , for it gets us. And that is why when most times when it occurs you and I do not even recognize it as peace. I suspect that I like the Jacob story at this point. Again I searched that story to find where the peace was. And the conflict, oh the conflict there. You read that lately? Jacob wrestling with the angels? I mean it is, it is a great story. And And I searched last night to find where is the peace in this conflict. And I finally found it. It is something like this. You know they have been going at it for quite awhile. And finally they get into a death grip. I mean they get into a death lock. And it is something like the angel finally catches Jacob with his weight just slightly tipped in the wrong direction and he has got a real hold on him and they begin to tip and fall. And in that space, in that little time they loose their balance and start toward the ground something happened that goes something like this - Who the hell are you? Why will you not be Israel? Why will you not bless me? Why I have already blessed you, you dumb-dumb. Well, if you just tell me who you are. I have told you - you are Isarel. Does that not tell you who I am? And Jacob says, go away. They hit the ground. That is the peace. In that little battle in which you get clear that you are overagainst only one thing and that is Yaweh. And I mean you wake up with a crushed hilt. And everytime you walk around and feel that bone crunched, you remember, you remember that battle. I think Kazanzakis got it said for me. in the Last Temptation of Christ. Where he got said that what happens to you and me in the midst of that tranquility is that we are sorely tempted to lead an ordinary life. I went through that book back when I was a little more moralist than I am now. I went through that book waiting for Kazazakis ~~to~~ to spell out some gory temptation to throw at this character Jesus. And I was ~~so~~ sorely disappointed the first time I read through it. To discover that there is an end ~~to~~ what Kazanzakis grasped was the

temptation that was the last one was for Jesus to have been an ordinarily good guy. You know, not a bad guy. Just a good guy. The good guy. To belong to his village and creat a great family and been the wise one of that village to be the one they came to with their questions and to be the one who had the answers. And in the midst of that, he discovered that was the temptation. That is the temptation that is there in the midst of this state. To be the ordinary one - to be the normal one. To be the ones that ~~go from this world and~~ those from this world look ~~and~~ at and say ya, ya, he is jst a regular old guy. When in fact you and I know that there is more in this state, which is the unknowable peace of being in the eye of the typhoon - that you and I are marked human beings. You and I could no more be normal now than we could stand up now and fly backwards to the moon. The only way for you to be normal now is to have a frontal lobotomy. which is to say to get back into the garden of eden. and naievete. The only way for you and me is the way of the weird ones, the strange ones. Who know that at the depths of our own being, that at the center of the turmoil that is life itself that there is an unknowable peace from which you and I drink and by which you and I heal and through which you and I dare to know the Mystery, to know what it means to be a self, to dare to grasp and lift the mountain of care and who dare to grasp that in every moment my death is there.