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"When there is much desire to learn, there of necessity must be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making."
--- John Milton

SAFE FROM GOD?

by John Hsu

"Do you know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember nothing? Where is the life we lost in living?" The cloak we call "living" hides something terribly wrong with us. What is wrong? Where is the life we lost in living? Is it just that our individual libido is strangled by a hostile society? Is it just that we haven't quite wholeheartedly joined the Cult of Acceptance in an Era of Adjustment? Is it just that we haven't quite worked hard enough in fostering the divine good in every man? Is it just a tragic misunderstanding? Is it just a simple mistake made by simple people which can be simply corrected?

No, no; under the cloak of living we are surrounded by our own abyss. We are alienated from our own being. We are alienated from people. We are alienated from Deity. Have you ever felt victimized by a self you never knew, estranged in a world you never made, and abandoned by a God you never met? Have you ever felt hostile to the past, impatient with the present, and cheated of the future? The stoplight never turns green; the traffic inevitably cuts you off; and your life is becoming too impotent to venture. So, without memory and without hope, you wear the cloak the only way you could—by sleepwalking through life! Almost unconsciously, in willful ignorance, you lose your life in living. You unify your world by a careful indifference. You make nothing count against you. But then, nothing counts for you either. Life is neither good nor evil but only painful and without meaning. The cloak grows thicker and heavier. You have lost your identity in defensive living. Life becomes a shield against people, against yourself, and against God.

So we peer into the human plight (our plight, if we are human) and we are smitten by the unavoidable verdict—Man Is Lost. Who of us can help but cry out, "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

Then we find the surprise of our lives: God reaches behind our cloak, frustrating all our ways, and astonishes us with the truth that the last reality in the world is not as we feared—sin, condemnation, alienation, death—but a love which bears itself to sin and takes it in all its dreadful reality upon itself, and out of the very passion in which it does so, appeals to us.

In our amazement God appears behind our hostilities. What we shield from ourselves, we cannot shield from him. Contrary to our dread, God does not recoil

(continue p 3)


JOHN KWANG-HAN HSU received his B.A. in Mathematics from Wesleyan University in 1961 and is a second year special student.
EDITORIAL

Does a seminary student have any right to rebel? Rightly or wrongly, quietly or explosively, some seminary students do rebel. Theologically and intellectually they rebel by criticizing the doctrines upon which they were raised and advocating a radically different position. They rebel ethically and culturally by adopting practices which were forbidden in former days. Emotionally they rebel against their past dependence and securities by rejecting conventional authority.

Is this rebellion a step toward maturity or away from it? Is it necessarily a rebellion against God? If some rebellion is valid, how does one avoid the obviously unwholesome extremes? Who or what determines the rights and limits of rebelling seminary students?

Will a person rebelling at the student level find a place in the ministry? If not, should he leave seminary? If so, can he be accepted and loved now?

Does the rebelling student have a responsibility to his seminary? What responsibility does the seminary have to this rebellious student? What is YOUR responsibility?

Letters to the Editors

The Chest

It is good to read in The Semi that Fuller's contribution to the Community Chest has been "negligible." We must give thoughtfully. There are distinctively Christian activities to which we may contribute, e.g. Fuller Seminary, FMF, evangelical missionaries. Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead." Let the world support the Community Chest - the world has no better "gospel."

Donald Tinder

The Party

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all those who helped make the ALL FULLER INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS PARTY a success. Special thanks should go to my two able co-workers on the Social Committee, Charlotte Quick and Robert Bason. To Nash's Department Store, J.C. Penny Inc., and Preble's, we are indebted for the decorations and the Christmas Tree that helped to give the hall a party spirit. To all those who participated in the program and to those who helped with the decorations and food - a MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Ralph B. Wright, Jr.
from us in holy horror and condemn and destroy us in our sin. He fakes us out completely and confronts us with himself in love.

How do we know that he is love? Does he broadcast authentic tidings from a lofty throne? Does he beckon to us from a distant heaven? Does he make the sun to rise on the evil as well as on the good and then water the flowers? Does he mail his greetings on Christmas cards? Or does he radio for a St. Bernard? No, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them." All along the initiative was his—to baffle our defenses and to embrace us. God embraces us as we are without overlooking our sin. God embraces us wholeheartedly because he does not overlook our sin. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin." Christ was not only one of us but he bore the entire burden of our existence so intimately that he is declared to "be sin." For our sake, Christ abdicated, relinquished his privileges, abandoned all status, and loved us—not at arm's length, nor by delivering a personal CARE package—but in giving us himself. Christ knew no estrangement as the result of sin; thus he could enter all the way into our estrangement as the result of our sin.

In taking our nature, our experience, and our sin as his own, he understands us wholly in the understanding of his vicarious love. He understands our savage circle of sin succeeding sin. He understands the fantastic fears by which our cloak draws tighter around our throat. He understands the patterns of our escapes—the narcotics of sensuality, the fantasies of princesses and castles, the dictums of dusty intellects. He understands when our faith is but a dogmatic tradition of religious jargon. He even understands our using Biblical motifs, textual insights, and hermeneutical principles as a shield against the very love of God. Christ understands us not from the highest Ivory Tower, but as one who was numbered among the transgressors. He ached behind each cloak and suffered what we suffer because we suffer, and suffered infinitely more than what we suffer because he suffered in our place—perfectly. God's love, because it is The Costly Love, has the sense of "complete loving accountability for the sinner." How do we know love? "By this we know love," St. John wrote, "that he laid down his life for us." "Sin is exhausted in Christ's experience on the Cross. The cup is not tasted but drained."3

God's love is vicarious. Moreover, God's love transforms. When you can evade him no longer, when he confronts you face to face, what do you do? Are you the courageous wag that says, "Thanks, old buddy! Sure glad you went to all that trouble. How I don't have a thing to worry about. If I feel guilty, it must be neurotic, so I'll just forget it. Thanks for erasing those little chalk marks against me. Uh, by the way, I'm awfully busy now. Could you come back some other time? Uh, don't call me. I'll call you." Do you treat his love as you would treat soap samples left at your side steps—pleasant additions to ease domestic chores? Has the love of God become a bathroom item like alka-seltzer, aspirin, and anti-histamine? God forbid! Did Christ die in vain so that you can keep on sleepwalking through life? Did he die to save you from the experience of being saved—from peace and joy? No, he died in order to welcome you into the family of God. The only forgiveness Christ recognizes is that which makes the forgiven heart the home of the love which forgives. It is the forgiveness by which you are born again the child of God. "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." God amazes us with his ambition. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might pass out peacefully." No, "so that in him

we might become the righteousness of God." God wants to rescue you and me from our frightful state of lost identity and remake us into his own image. Oh, Lord, thou hast made us for thyself, and we are restless until we find our rest in thee.

When our heart is becoming the very home of the love which takes our place, when we yield to God's ambition to transform us, then we know the love which controls us. How does God's love control us? God's love controls us as we no longer regard or relate to anyone—to God, to ourselves, to one another—from the point of view of offensive living, but from the very point of view of the vicariousness of God. First, we relate to God himself no longer, in J. B. Phillip's terms, as the resident policeman, the parental hangover, the grand old man, meek-and-mild, absolute perfection, God-in-a-box, pale Galilean, and assorted projected images. But we relate to him as the God of vicarious love, vast and deep, the God who was in Christ reconciling us, yea, the whole world to himself. Second, we no longer relate to ourselves in terms of self-seeking—self pride, self-forgiveness, self-pity, and self-condemnation. Instead, as God has sought us out, confronted us, understood us, accepted us, and given us a new identity, even so, we must seek out ourselves, confront ourselves, understand ourselves, accept ourselves, and live out our new identity. Third, we no longer relate to others as threatening or irrelevant strangers, but as God has also reconciled them to himself, we relate to them in the ministry of reconciliation. Does this mean we minister to them by calling down divine imperialistic invasion upon them—to make them good? Does it mean we minister to them by putting ourselves forward as exhibit A of the embodiment of saving power or as agent par excellence? No, it means that we enter into their very burdens, fears and struggles, and in their place, confess and petition as we would for ourselves. And together with them, point them to the God who has marvelously reconciled us all to himself.

How does God's love control us? God's love controls us when our alienation gives way to reconciliation, when our fractured relationships are made whole, and when God has given us the courage to tear away the layers of our cloak, confront our surrounding abyss, and venture across the bridges God in Christ has already built.

"Existence is fulfilled," Samuel Terrien wrote, "when man is aware, not of his ultimate concern but of becoming the concern of the Ultimate. The derelict knows himself to be accepted by the creator of the universe, the orphan discovers the heart of a father...." And we might add, "God's once-lonely sinner comes home with his friends."

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"All day long I walk the streets, but I see no place to sit down—no place, I mean, that looks inviting * * * We need to sit down somewhere, to rest, to contemplate, to know that we have a body—and a soul."

--Henry Miller
AN EXPERIENCE IN GROWTH

by Judy Boppell

Before me is a sea of little faces. They seem to be one big mess, merely a class of children. Yet there is already a feeling awakening within me. Behind each of those little masks there actually exists a dynamic and living force which makes up a unique, and potentially total, person. A person who somehow is living in a little world all his own, which completely excludes me. And yet, this same person is already taking the first halting steps to relate in some way to a far bigger world that not only includes me, but every other person in the room as well.

"Students, welcome to 7th grade English. I can see by the expressions on some of your faces that you do not count this course as one of your favorite subjects! You may be in for quite a surprise, for I happen to believe that English can be lots of fun as well as being quite useful. I'd be willing to bet that there isn't one of you in here that would care to give it up just now. Try and imagine with your mind what a normal day in your life would be like without the use of any English. It is a little ridiculous, isn't it? However, as important as English is for you to master, I hope we will learn something more together this year, for it seems to me that life is made up of more than just subject matter."

The uneasy feeling within me grows into a concrete fear as out of the sea of faces, individuals begin to emerge.

Bill, a boy whose mother has gone through five husbands. Bill is so very sensitive to the world around him, so sensitive that his only solid protection against it, it seems to him, is a wall of defiance and cynicism. How safe he feels as he strikes out through loud laughter and aggressive acts, yet how very miserable and divided he feels as the same time.

Jim, a pleasant looking boy, yet somehow the very smile that gives the "pleasant look" is passing a sentence of destruction on himself and the rest of the room. How he is able to do so much damage to himself and others so quietly and unnoticed is proof of the already known fact that Jim has a deep-rooted psychological problem. "Leave him alone," I am told. "Let him do what he wants, it is safer."

John, so very generous with all he owns, yet so little of what he has is his, for John is a boy who steals and then rationalizes to himself so completely that it is almost impossible not to believe what he himself wants to believe. "I do not steal!"

Each child so different, yet each child so alike as they all grasp for meaning and purpose and security. "Who am I, and why am I here?!"

The fear within me begins to search for some sort of expression.

"Oh, Lord, each one of these dear little lives desperately needs to experience the fact that someone really does love him alone, not as one of many, but as one person, an individual complete and infinitely important within himself. Father, I fear, because I myself have so much trouble fully grasping this"

JUDY BOPPELL received her B.A. in English from Whitworth College in 1961 and is a special student at F.T.S.
Father, I do not care enough for each of these little lives to be able to fulfill their needs. And yet, Father, as I say, I do not care enough; there is an image I cannot ignore that denies this very statement, for as I look at myself as I would like to be, I do care, Father, so very, very much! My fear is great, for my task far exceeds my capacity. I stand helplessly before you, Lord.

Something has happened that I do not understand. Bill has poured his heart out to me, revealing things sacred to himself. He has stated that for the first time in his life he has heard an answer that is worth considering. He thanks me for caring so much.

"Please Bill, don't say that. You hurt me as you speak, for I don't care enough, I don't understand your feelings!"

John has admitted taking things for the first time, not without a torrent of emotions and a barrage of words: "No one has ever cared for me, I don't want anyone to care for me, don't you dare care for me, Miss Boppell. Just leave me alone!!"

"What makes you think I care, John? I don't understand!"

Jim, somehow I can't leave you alone. You must know that someone cares enough to want you to behave. How do I dare to even say this?

"Jim, sit down at once!"
"Why?"
"Because you are disrupting the class."
"I won't!"
"Jim, you will sit down immediately!!"
"Why?"
"For no other reason than that I am your teacher and I have told you to sit down."

Minutes of silence and direct eye contact that last an eternity of time.

"Yes ma'am."

What did I really accomplish through this? Did he understand what I was trying to do? What was I trying to do?

"Miss Boppell?"
"Yes Jim."
"Miss Boppell, I just want you to know that you are the first person I've ever known that I knew would die for me!"

By the time I turn, he is far out of the room.

Dear Jim your words have broken me! I do not have half the love necessary to die for you, and yet, in the image of myself that nearly alludes me, I would care enough to die for you. The tension and guilt I feel is great, my Lord. I do not understand!

"Judy, you shall understand, more than you ever dreamt of understanding nor will dream of understanding. You are right when you say and know that you do not care enough. This is your salvation. You are also right in your image.
that cries out that you do care, for I have put the image within you. For Judy, I do care enough to die for Jim alone, or for you alone. It is my love that I give to you, Judy. It is my love that a person is drawn by. 'My strength is made perfect in your weakness.' Do not try to understand, Judy. You are the created, not the creator. Do not understand, but accept and give thanks, for your Lord is good."

"Thank you, my Lord and my God."

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IS GOD A REPUBLICAN?

by Emory A. Griffin

During my years at Fuller I have become increasingly troubled by an assumption which seems to be all too prevalent throughout the Seminary. I am referring to the basic idea that anyone who is truly conservative in his theological stance will automatically be conservative in his political and social outlook. It is my sincere conviction that there is no necessary correlation between the religious and political conservative positions.

It is a gross understatement to say that Republican views are dominant within our particular fellowship. After questioning over one hundred students in 1960, I found only one other individual who was considering voting for Kennedy. Nor were the results significantly different in the recent gubernatorial election where religion was not an issue. As one student put it, "If all of the Christians voted on election day, the Republicans would be sure to win."

Nor does it seem that this opinion is limited to the student body alone. During the last three years we have had a number of chapel speakers who have discussed political, economic and social issues. Yet the reader will be hard pressed to recall one whose viewpoint was to the left of the Militant Right. It is not the fact that most orthodox believers are political conservatives which I find galling. Rather, it is the fact that they consider this position normative—or even Scriptural—which disturbs me.

Let me be the first to admit that the Bible is not neutral on political and socio-economic matters. The freedom, integrity and personal responsibility of individual men are cardinal truths of Divine revelation. However, I do take issue with the assumption that these ends are necessarily served best within a politically conservative framework.

It has been said that we are victims as well as subjects, and anyone who spends a day in the inner city will recognize the limitations placed upon these people. Equality of opportunity is a joke to one who finds himself trapped in the vicious cycle of having to claw for existence itself. Real freedom and integrity for this individual are possible only when help comes from an external source. When a man is raised to a point where his very existence is no longer threatened, he is then free to choose and make decisions which can shape his life for good or ill. This at least opens the possibility for real freedom, integrity and responsibility.

Emory A. Griffin graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.A. in 1959 and is presently a senior at F.T.S.
Obviously, Senator Goldwater would not agree with this position. He believes that governmental aid to individuals takes away personal responsibility. He has said that any need for assistance should be met with funds from private sources and be administered by private organizations. But perhaps the Senator and his followers are forgetting one of the original tenets of conservative thought from Burke on down—the sinfulness of man. As long as sin is with us, we will never freely and adequately provide for others, and the only alternative is some sort of governmental program.

Because of the great changes we have seen in the last fifty years, I am also suspicious of the claim that politically conservative views are Scriptural. At the beginning of the century, conservatives were fighting anti-trust laws, income tax, open trade, social security, and regulatory agencies such as the I.C.C. and the S.E.C. Except for the lunatic fringe of the Right, all Republicans today accept these institutions as necessary and desirable. Thus it is difficult to sustain the dependency of everchanging politically conservative views on the unchangeable truths of Scripture.

What, then, am I urging? Am I asking that all evangelicals throw over their conservative beliefs and flock to the Democratic party? By no means! I am merely pleading for a mutual tolerance of political views. The Democrat is not necessarily a misguided or second-rate Christian. It is my desire that political liberalism become a legitimate option within the evangelical fellowship.

Worth Noting—

"A Catholic Looks At Protestantism" by Daniel Callahan in the November issue of Harper's should be of special interest to seminarians.

Send a Christmas Card to your friends with the name of the seminary on it.

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