



## And These Three Remain

*And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

### A TIME OF NEW BEGINNINGS: EMERGING FROM CHAOS TO COMMUNITY

By Al Maxey

In his fourth *Inaugural Address*, delivered January 20, 1945 in Washington, DC, Franklin D. Roosevelt, our 32nd President of the United States, challenged the citizens of this great nation to "live as men, and not as ostriches, nor as dogs in the manger." Rather than hiding our heads in the sand in the many responsibilities our privileges call us to assume, or savagely assailing all who come too near our sacred shores, we must learn "to be citizens of the world, members of the human community."

In essence, FDR issued a call to rise above arrogant isolationism and vicious exclusivism, and develop a sense of community – a sense of oneness with our fellow man. It was a call to renewal as a nation (individually and collectively); a call to new beginnings. Throughout history great men have issued the challenge to abandon the chaos of the factional spirit, and to work together to achieve the joys of a united community – to begin anew with a godly purpose. James Madison, our 4th President of the United States, bemoaned this misguided "zeal for different opinions concerning religion ... as well as speculation of practice ... which has

divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with



**Unity will come through a relationship with the Son**

mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to cooperate for their common good." He described such men as "adverse ... to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community" (*The Federalist*, 1787).

It is time for the people of God to begin recognizing, as have countless secular leaders down through the ages, the importance of developing a sense of *Community*. Indeed, it is *we*, not they, who should have taken the lead in this call to a new beginning! On the night of His betrayal and arrest, Jesus went to His Father in

prayer on behalf of His disciples. In this High Priestly prayer our Lord asked that we might all be one, even as He and the Father are one; that we might be perfected in unity, and our joy made full (John 17). It was a plea for Christian community. "Brothers all, in honor, as in one community, scholars and gentlemen. Like harmony in music ... that reconciles discordant elements, making them cling together in one society" (William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, written 1799-1805).

The call to the disciples of Jesus Christ today is to lay aside the ostrich and dog-in-the-manger mentalities, which only foster factions, and begin anew promoting the precious peace of Christian community. It is only in developing *community* that we will ever truly realize the joys of the *oneness* for which our Lord prayed prior to the cross.

In this quest toward community we owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. M. Scott Peck, a noted psychiatrist, for the insights provided in his book *The Different Drum: Community-Making and Peace* (Simon & Schuster, 1987). The author enumer-

#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The stages to true unity
- New Book from Michael Stinsen!!
- A New Year a New Beginning!
- Listening to Jesus

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ates the various developmental stages a group must pass through before achieving a genuine sense of oneness: Pseudo Community, Chaos, Emptiness, and then Community. He also discusses the stages of our transformation from out of chaos into community: Antisocial (Chaotic), Institutional (Formal), Individual (Skeptic), and Communal (Mystic). By understanding these patterns and stages of transformation, we become better equipped to proclaim, promote, and proceed toward the goal of community, a reality I pray we each strive to achieve in this coming new year.

Most groups begin, observes Dr. Peck, as *Pseudo Community*. Their goal is to quickly achieve perfect unity and complete harmony with one another, however they find themselves unwilling to acknowledge their immediate failure to attain it. Thus, they fake it! "The members attempt to be an instant community by being extremely pleasant with one another and avoiding all disagreement." Anything which might be perceived

*If the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is to achieve its goal of Community, we must accept the freedom from form which is integral to the New Covenant.*

as controversial, anything new or challenging, any change, is to be avoided at all cost. The *appearance* of harmony and oneness must be maintained. It is a state of denial. Although a surface pleasantness may indeed be attained, it is at the sacrifice of intimacy and depth in the group's interpersonal relationships. Pseudo communities are shallow, they are built upon illusions, and they are destined to fail.

Many of God's people have never progressed beyond the "pleasantries" stage in their development toward community, and, thus, they have yet to arrive. A genuine oneness can only be achieved when relationships become intimate. However, there is a hidden reef in this voyage into the deep waters of intimacy: We begin to see one another as we really are. This is the developmental stage known as *Chaos*. As we move beyond the surface pleasantries into the deeper waters of intimacy, we quickly come to the realization "we are not all the same; we have differences." Such differences, or diversity among the members, are viewed as destructive by those in Pseudo Communities. Unity is perceived to be the result of absolute uniformity in all areas. To be different is to be divisive, and all deviations from the "norm" are to be dealt with decisively!

By promoting a "community" based upon uniformity to some accepted religious form or pattern or tradition, a group becomes fixated in a pseudo state which is far removed from the reality for which our Lord prayed. "This is the stage," observes Dr. Peck, "of the majority of churchgoers and believers." It is characterized as *Institutional* or *Formal*, and is evidenced by an "attachment to the *forms* (as opposed to the *essence*) of their religion." The apostle Paul spoke of those who "hold to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (2 Tim. 3:5). *Form* becomes so central to their belief system that they actually perceive it to be the *essence* of their spiritual experience. As a result, when any of the forms or the traditional "order of things" are altered or challenged, these religionists become aggressive, even contentious, contenders for their "faith."

"Stage Two people need simple, clear-cut

dogmatic structures and have little taste for the unknown." Those fixated in this stage need "a legalistic religion for their governance," and they view God primarily as *Punitive Power* who somehow finds satisfaction in the endless, merciless torture of any and all who dare to violate, knowingly or unknowingly, the tiniest tenet or tradition of their institutionalized religious system upon which they rely so heavily for salvation. This is where the concept of *Militant Ignorance* comes in. The more one lacks insight into what is truly essential to the development of genuine community, the more aggressive they seem to become in the binding of their misconceptions upon others. Paul, for a time, was a perfect example of those caught up in this religious militancy: "I was a violent aggressor ... and yet I acted



True Unity will only be achieved when we acknowledge and celebrate our differences instead of using them to divide us

ignorantly" (1 Tim. 1:13). Militant ignorance, and the enforced uniformity of the institutional mindset, are hurdles which God's people must clear before they can begin and/or continue their journey to the substantive joys of community.

The stage of *Emptiness* is the final developmental phase prior to the realization of true oneness in the Body of Christ. This is where the

members of a group empty themselves of all personal preferences, perceptions, practices, expectations, and traditions which bar the way to the achievement of community. These are characterized as "Stage Four" Christians: Those who have progressed far enough in the faith of our Lord Jesus, and who have matured enough spiritually, to "empty themselves of preconceived notions and prejudices;" who thus seek not to isolate, exclude, and divide over *forms*, but rather who have perceived the *essence* of their faith and promote unity based solely on that Truth. Their goal is to become a *community* of believers unified "in Christ," rather than an institution of religionists uniform "in form." "My way, or no way" is the philosophy of failure. For the community to live, self must die ... and we must each rise up, filled with His Spirit, and begin anew to be transformed into His image.

Stage Four believers are unafraid to reexamine their beliefs and practices in light of the Word – and, if necessary, embrace change! The Bereans (Acts 17) were stage four believers, whereas those of Thessalonica (in the same passage) were obviously fixated in a far less noble stage, and

thus were less "noble-minded." "Berean" disciples are will to embrace a new beginning in their walk with God; "Thessalonican" disciples are content to dwell in the past ... and to die there.

If the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is to achieve its goal of *Community*, we must accept the freedom from form which is integral to the New Covenant. We must forever shed the shackles of institutionalized religion, and embrace the true power of a Spirit-filled relationship with the Father through the Son. We must, further, develop deep interpersonal relationships, rejoice in our diversity, promote unity of purpose rather than uniformity of practice, and oppose all efforts to militantly impose a state of shallow stagnation upon the One Body.

May God help each of us to rise to the challenge issued by our Lord in His prayer on that night so many years ago: "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (John 17:21). Brethren, let us begin anew in 2011 to achieve that One Body our

<http://www.ourchurch.com/member/m/ministering>

## A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST

By Debra Hasty

Restoration comes by handling something with a slow process of perfection. Some people like to restore old furniture to make it look new again. They peel off all the old layers until they get to the bare frame. Step by step they build upon that frame until the whole of perfection and renewal is complete and they have a new creation of something that was old.

This is what Christ does with us as he peels away all the old layers of our past and renews our inner man by His Spirit as he perfects us into a new creation that has been made renewed by Gods righteousness and perfection as we surrender all that is in us and allow Gods Spirit to change whatever needs changing in us. This process is called Gods salvation of saving someone that others might deem unworthy, but God says all are worthy of his grace if they would just come boldly to his throne of grace and surrender all to him.

John 3:3-21 except a man be born again of water and Spirit he cannot enter into the

Kingdom of God. Vs.6 that which is born of the Flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Flesh cannot perceive the things of the Spirit and is enmity against God, Romans 8:6, 7.

We are all born with a sin nature because of sin being in-

troducted into the world through Satan's deceit when he told Eve to eat of the forbidden tree in Genesis 3:1-7. Our flesh will always sin because that is its nature and God cannot see our flesh because of our sins nor can he hear the prayers of a sinner, John 9:31.

Sin separates us from God because God is a spirit and can only recognize his own children by what spirit is living in their hearts. We have to renew, rebirth - born again, Gods Spirit within us in order to be called a child of God and see the kingdom of heaven. We now put off the old man (flesh) and put on the new man (Spirit), Colossians 3:1-17. We are renewed by the word of God and through the Holy Spirit teaching us of all things, John 14:26.

John 10:9 I am the door, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. Jesus was the word made flesh to dwell among us, John 1:14, to show us the way back to Gods grace. John 14:6 Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. Romans 10:9, 10 if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in his heart that God has raised him from the dead thou shall be saved. Vs.10 for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation

All we have to do is believe and confess that we are sinners and allow Gods righteousness to cleanse us and renew our

spirit man. Jesus wants us to come as we are and allow him to make the changes that need made in our hearts. People want to clean the fish before they catch them, but Jesus says come as you are I will clean you from the inside out.

*Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 2:8,9* it's not by our works or good deeds that save us, because we are all sinners, it is by Gods grace and mercy that forgives our sins and washes us clean by the atoning blood of the Lamb (Jesus).

*John 10:10* the thief (Satan) comes to kill, steal and destroy, but I came to give life abundantly. Satan is always there to try and steal the word of God from us and tempt us to sin and sometimes we will sin because we still live in this flesh, but now when we do sin we can be quick to repent of it and grace will forgive us every time, *Matthew 18:22*.

Grace does not give us a license to sin, but if you are sinning unknowingly then God will forgive you. *Romans 3:23* for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. If a person says they have never sinned then they are lying to you and their selves because God said all have sinned.

We now become as a newborn baby and our spirit needs nourishment from the word of God and the only way to get the nourishment we need is to get into the word and study it by allowing the Holy Spirit teach it to us for truth and understanding. Just pick out a verse at a time and read it and reread it until you gain understanding that produces knowledge through the Holy Spirit.

*Titus 2:11-15* for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Jesus came to show us how to overcome the sin nature of the world by teaching us how to live a moral life compatible with the word of God.

Jesus gave of himself for all of us and redeemed us from the curse of sin by taking all our sin becoming the final blood sacrifice for his love towards everyone. When we come to Jesus it is Gods grace that forgives our sins and remembers them no more. Sin will always be present with us because the flesh will always sin for that is its nature, but when we ask Jesus into our hearts we also receive at that same moment the gift of the Holy Spirit which teaches us how to separate ourselves from the ungodliness and lusts of this world. We may have to live in this world, but as a child of God we are not part of this world because our inner man, or heart, has now become renewed in the Spirit of God and sinless through the grace of God.

Man cannot save us or change us because man cannot see our hearts. We have got to get to that place where we say enough is enough I need help and when we cry out from the despairs of our hearts is where Jesus will meet us and come down to our level and speak to our hearts. When you do cry out to him be still and let him speak to you for Jesus will make himself known to all who ask with a sincere heart. *Jude vs. 17-23* Keep yourselves in the love of God always looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternity.

## CREATION AND ITS PARALLEL TO CHRIST

By Queenie Dorothy Jacob

I was sitting in a park, looking at the tall trees in the distance. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a large eagle alighted on a branch. Disturbed by something, it decided to leave very soon and spreading its wings, like large fans, it rose majestically into the sky and disappeared into the blue.

I watched this show transfixed- God's world is beautiful and perfect, indeed!

Genesis 1: 31- "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."

The first Creation account is found in Genesis, where we read that, at first, (Genesis 1: 2) "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

But God turned chaos to beauty because (Genesis 1: 2) "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

God was a master craftsman. He set about to make a wondrous world for us. He divided the light from the darkness and gave us day and night.

Genesis 1: 3-5-- "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night."

He made the firmament and separated the water under it, from the water that was above it. This firmament, God called the 'Sky'.

He made the water below the sky, to come together in one place, so that dry land would appear. He called the dry land 'Earth' and the water which had come together, He called 'Sea'.

Then God made the earth to produce plants- those that bear grain and those that bear fruit.

Then God made lights to appear in the sky, to separate day from night. He made the sun to rule the day and the moon to govern the night.

He made the seas to be filled with different kinds of living beings and the open firmament was filled with birds.

God made the earth to produce all kinds of animals- large and small, domestic and wild.

Psalm 104: 24-25 tells us-

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works!

In wisdom hast thou made them all:

The earth is full of thy riches.

So is this great and wide sea,

Wherein are things creeping innumerable,

Both small and great beasts."

Then God said, (Genesis 1:26) "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

Genesis 1: 27-28-- "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them."

God is the Potter and we are the clay in His hands, just as

we read-

"(Isaiah 64: 8)...O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

After creating this beautiful world and also man in His own image, God did not abandon His creation. He did not leave the world to itself. He began to love His Creation and became involved with it.

He, our loving Father, became not only the Creator, but also the Sustainer of this world.

We know that

"The Lord is good to all: And His tender mercies are over all His works."

Psalm 145:9

because in His "hand is the soul of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind."  
Job 12:10

How truly has it been written-  
"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,

The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?

And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, And hast crowned him with glory and honour."

Psalm 8: 3-5

In praise of God's creation, the Psalmist said-

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it:

Thou greatly enrichest it

With the river of God, which is full of water:

...And the little hills rejoice on every side.

The pastures are clothed with flocks;

The valleys also are covered over with corn;

They shout for joy, they also sing."

Psalm 65: 9, 12-13

God gifted a perfect earth to man, but man sinned and fell from Grace.

But God loved man and sent Jesus, His only begotten Son, as our redeemer, so that we may be cleansed with Jesus' blood and made new.

The Bible tells us a remarkable story about the Atonement by Christ, whereby He paid the penalty for our sins.

Man's deliverance from sin and damnation comes only through the blood of Jesus. This redemption of man, is a gift that has been given to us, by our Heavenly Father, because of His abundant love for us.

St. John 3: 16- "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

If we desire to become new and talk to God, without any fear, we have to accept Jesus and believe that He bought us back with His blood.

This was the divine price He paid to redeem us.

Romans 5: 1-3: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

It is comforting to know that, through Jesus, there is hope for mankind. Despite all our wrongdoings, the Redeemer is ready to save us.



This firmament, God called the 'Sky'.

Photo by Queenie Dorothy Jacob

If we accept Him, He will not cast us away, neither will He condemn us. (St. John 3: 17-18) "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Not only does the blood of Christ redeem a sinner, but it also erases the guilt and shame that accompany sin, it purges

the conscience for (Hebrews 9: 14) "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Jesus is our High Priest so (I John 1: 7) "if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

If we acknowledge Christ as the Lord of our lives and sprinkle the blood of His redemption, on the doorposts of our hearts, through prayer and obedience to God's Word, we will not only be forgiven for our sins, but also be cleansed and protected from the evil powers of Satan.

St. John 14: 6- 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.'

Pause for a moment and examine your heart. The Lord loves you and treasures you.

Accept Him into your life and He will redeem you with His blood.

He, who gave His blood for us, is the One who will give us new life and cleansing, for the Scriptures tell us that "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

II Corinthians 5: 17- "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

If we repent of all our sins and accept the blood of Christ, we can be brought to new life. This will be our testimony, of the power of Jesus' blood to save us.

St. John 1: 29- "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Thank Him for His precious blood, that He gave for you.



# One Body Press™



## Coming Soon!

*“Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”*

— 1 Timothy 6:12

As Christians we have all be called to service in the Army of the Lord. The Bible tells us that do battle with the forces of evil in the Heavenly Realms. This is not a normal battle waged with normal weapons, but rather a battle with spiritual armor and weapons that will tear town the strongholds of the enemy. “Fight the Good Fight” by Michael Stinsen describes the battle we face, explains the tools we have at our disposal and what to do when the battle is done. Finally, it describes the glorious victory we have in Christ Jesus.

“Fight the Good Fight” is a trade paperback, 5” x 8” and 172 pages. It will be available on 15 January. Retail price is \$11.95, however the book will be on sale for 15% off for a special introductory price of \$10.

**15% OFF**

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Also, for a limited time, buy “Fight the Good Fight” and “Father Make Them One” together and save 25%! Both books retail at \$11.95, but to celebrate the release of our second title, we are offering them together as a set for only \$18!

## A F R E S H S T A R T

By Maria Becky

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

We all have lives, what kind? That's the question.

So does that mean, we can't change?

Does that mean, we can't leave this darkness called -past?

Does that mean, we can't start again?

Yes, we can start again, we can bring light into our lives & always let it shine.

So if one wants to change one's life greatly- what should be done?

First, we must change our way of thinking. We must clear the emotional and mental blocks. This will enable us to look at the world and the way we behave with an open mind.

We must think about nice things, be positive, be happy about the good things happening in our lives.

Second, we must change our attitude, make it more positive. This positive attitude relieves some of our stress & helps us focus better on important issues. A positive attitude also helps in letting God work in our lives, for our better.

Third, we must organize our life in a better way.

Fourth, we must resolve the conflicts of the mind, such as fixed ideas, beliefs, emotional stress, upsets in our life, important decisions about our lives. If we can solve our

mental confusion, it could lead to better thinking.

We must also, be good. Do good to others, help in whatever way we can. We may be busy, but small errands, gestures of kindness help others, but also us. Helping others gives peace and comfort to the mind.

Now you will wonder, what role does God have, in helping us, start a new life?

People want an answer, don't they?

So here is the answer as to how God plays a role in helping us, start a new life.

Those who trust in him, He paves the way for us. He loves us, and so wants us to start again, leaving our past behind.

He forgives us & this helps to start anew.

Before we may even think, he has thought, for our good & wants to give it to us.

He understands our wants and needs and provides for us.

It is through God's grace and love that the celebration called life starts.

So let us rejoice, that we have God as a saviour and friend and lets start life absolutely new!!

"Do not be worried & upset,'.....I am going to prepare a place for you.....If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14; 1-14)

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

**LET'S START LIFE AGAIN & LET  
LIFE BLOSSOM LIKE A FLOWER.**

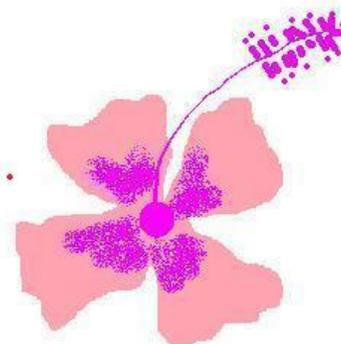


Illustration by Maria Becky



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**"WHEN JESUS SAYS THINGS LIKE THAT"**

During his sermons, my pastor often makes small, off the cuff remarks to inflict a little humor on what can be some weighty subjects. These little witticisms can be humorous, or attention grabbing. Either way, they keep the congregation engaged in what is being preached on.

On one particular sermon, his off handed remark actually made more of an impact than the actual lesson. It was a Christmas themed sermon on giving, and the pastor was speaking on Jesus feeding the 5,000 (Mark 6:30-44). In verse 36, Jesus' disciples are telling Jesus that they should send the people home so they can eat. In verse 37, Jesus responds, "You give them something to eat."

At this point the pastor imitated the disciples saying, "I hate it when Jesus says things

like that."

The congregation laughed and the rest of the sermon was good, but that one offhand remark really grabbed my attention. It started me thinking. How many times have I been like that? Like what Jesus' disciples may have whined about. "I hate it when Jesus says things like that." How many times have I responded like that? "Really, God? REALLY?? Man, I hate it when you say that...Really???"

I eagerly and sometimes desperately desire to serve our Father, but many times, when He actually directs me to do something I have that reaction. It is disheartening to admit, but while I desire to serve, I often question my Master on the manner in which He would have me do so.

Like Jesus' disciples, I often fail to see the underlying lesson the Lord is trying to teach me. Still, reluctance aside, I do carry my instructions and like Jesus' disciples, I am often better off. Has the Lord ever shown you something where you thought, "I hate it when He says things like that..."? I can guarantee, even if the instructions do not make sense to you, there is a lesson involved and you will be better off in the end. After all, the disciples collected twelve basketfuls of food when everyone had their fill (v. 42).

Was it a coincidence that there was one basketful for each disciple?

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