

**When it was evening, He reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, He said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." And they were very sorrowful and began to say to Him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born. Judas, who would betray him, answered, "Is it I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said so." Matt. 26:20-25**

Dear Ones,

The Lenten season will be with us by the time you receive this letter, and we who live in my part of the world can only hope that all the harbingers of springtime will be appearing in our gardens. Spring is a season greatly anticipated by those of us who live in the Chicago-Great Lakes area where temperatures and winds in Alaska are at times milder than ours! Just now, as I write, it is very cold, and a fresh snow has fallen, with more expected. But, *no matter* what the season brings with it, sunshine or rain, peace or war, joy or sorrow, we pray most earnestly that all of us enter into as meaningful a Lenten and Easter season as ever we've known. If so, we will be renewed, and through us God will shine more brightly, reviving the church as well.

Perhaps never has the church been in greater need of a period of repentance, one so profound that revival and restoration can in general become a reality. We are encouraged as cell groups everywhere are uniting in intercession for their churches, their countries, and the world. Now, as we gather regularly to intercede, we can sense this unity with others who are interceding worldwide, and we know that this means there is deep repentance going on in more and more sectors of the church. We are the light of the world (Matt. 5:14), as Christ says, but only as filled with the Holy Spirit, we reflect our Lord and emerge up and out of the sinful and irrational stupor that has fallen upon what was once called Christendom, the Western world.

## The Cup

**And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Matt. 26:26-28**

In December my eyes alit on a painting entitled *The Last Cup*, done by a young artist named Cesar Reyes. Startled by the unique perspective from which this scene in our Lord's life is depicted, I remained glued to it, drinking in meaning that to this very moment I am not capable of verbalizing. In this painting of the Lord's Supper, the faces of Christ's twelve disciples are reflected in the Communion cup just as He is proffering the bread, saying, "**Take, eat; this is my body.**"

The extraordinary perspective of the painting lies in the fact that we are seeing this moment as if we were ourselves within the Cup, looking up through the wine of the chalice, seeing the disciples' faces and the hand of Christ offering them the bread. Suddenly, while engrossed in the scene, I experienced myself as looking *up* while seeing, as it were, *down* through time, and the sands of time seemed to run together, to become one for a brief moment as the timelessness of Christ's sacrifice was *experienced* through the artist's inspiration. I don't know when, if ever, I've been more deeply impacted by a painting.

There is a teaching we never leave out of healing prayer conferences: that of learning to receive Holy Communion as the early disciples did--by first taking our places *in the Cup*. As I wrote in *The Healing Presence*:

*The early disciple raced to the Lord's Table to take once again his place "in the Cup." This was a symbolic action. But it was not merely a symbolic one, for in doing this he "died" once again with Christ to the sins of the world, his own included. He also rose with Christ once again in newness of life, forgiven and strengthened anew to do Christ's mighty works in the world. This is still what makes the Communion service the greatest healing service the Church has to offer, for when this action is rightly understood and experienced, forgiveness of sins, known and unknown, comes to us.<sup>1</sup>*

Holy Communion, of course, is a reenactment of our baptisms whereby we enter into the water as repentant sinners and then rise with Christ in newness of life. Understanding this facet of the symbolism restores to us the profound way in which communing in the Eucharistic Cup is not only a reenactment of our baptism, but an extension of it. It is, in fact, the way we continue to die to the old sinful nature and rise in the new.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Healing Presence* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), ch. 7, p. 91.

One of the several ongoing effects the painting had on me was that of, in the ordinary duties of the day, suddenly experiencing Christ proffering the bread as in the painting, only this time it was *to me*, and I could hardly hold back the tears. I remember once, when I was a child, my Aunt Maude telling me of such an experience. She attended a non-sacramental church; yet in awe she told me that as she was praying in the Sunday church service, the Lord had given her a “spiritual” communion. I sensed then how deeply moved she was by such an unexpected and precious thing.

Horror over the sinful state of Judas’s heart followed in the wake of these experiences of God’s grace connected with the painting. It came as a stark reminder of the deafening, blinding power of sin in the human heart. I scanned the painting, trying to decide which one was Judas but couldn’t; and in that, Cesar Reyes’s intuition was surely right. Traitors seldom, if ever, look the part, at least until the memory of their deed has taken its toll on their outer aspect. That Judas could receive the bread directly from Christ’s hand together with His words, “This is my body given for you,” and yet immediately go out and betray Him struck me anew with the awful fact that all of us, apart from faith in Christ’s atoning blood, are without remedy and *under the power of sin* [see Rom. 3:9]. Judas heard Christ’s words of warning spoken directly to him: “Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man had he not been born,” and yet he willfully refused to repent and turn from his sin. With the blessed bread and wine yet fresh in his mouth, Judas chose to be under the rule of sin. To take the bread and wine of Christ’s atoning presence unworthily, with no intention of turning from one’s sin, is a fearful thing to contemplate. Part of the grief in looking anew at Judas’s condition is the terrible knowledge that throughout much of the Western world today churches are packed out with sin-sick Christians *who hear little if anything at all about sin*, much less ever see it dealt with adequately.

We see in Judas the sin of the first murderer, Cain, and of all who prefer their own will and sin to the salvation God offers to all who will hear and *receive* forgiveness for the brokenness we are born into. To Adam’s son, Cain, the Lord God spoke, saying:

**“Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? [Hebrew: “will there not be a lifting up of your face?”] And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”**

The Lord God spoke directly to Cain, even as Christ spoke to Judas. Yet Cain, in his envy and willfulness, immediately “spoke to Abel,” his brother, and luring him out into the field, killed him. God again spoke to Cain, confronting him with the fact that his brother’s blood cried out to him from the ground, and Cain spoke back to God and *lied*. Cain *lied* to the One whom he knew to be an all-seeing God. In the service of sin, even the power to rationalize, much less the possession of the good of reason, slips far away from us.

The closer we draw to Christ, the more keenly we know that there is within all of us that which could betray Christ--that which we all must continually die to in our sinful natures--the Judas, the “rat,” that is within every one of us. With all our hearts we look to the atoning blood of Christ, crying out, “Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.” And we learn to ever and always take our places “in the Cup.”

In Advent and only a week or so before seeing the painting, I attended a Sunday Eucharistic (Holy Communion) service in a traditionally sacramental church. I had prepared for and felt a particular need of Holy Communion, and had gone in greatest anticipation of the Advent sermon; for Advent, like Lent, provides special opportunities for cleansing and repentance. I was totally stunned in the opening moments to hear that the sermon and the Eucharist were dispensed with, and that instead there would be the singing of Christmas hymns with choir, orchestra and Scripture readings. If someone had punched me right in the midriff, the effects upon my spirit, soul and body would not have been greater. Grieved beyond words, hemmed in by others who had come to worship, I couldn’t run, the one thing I wanted to do.

Why do I tell this story? It is to say that the knowledge of *sacramental reality* is often found wanting even in fine, traditionally sacramental churches today, those where the Gospel is yet faithfully preached by priests and pastors who yearn to see people set free from sin and brought into wholeness. To lose that reality is to lose at the very least a large measure of *incarnational reality*, together with the power God gives us to see lives changed. The sacraments are not just part of a calcified tradition that can be jettisoned in order to be relevant to a media-soaked populace, one containing “seekers” expecting rather than worship a performance. I was feeling very bad about the strong, strong reaction I had had, and wondering over my almost desperate need to flee the service when Cesar Reyes’s painting came before my view. Thank you, Cesar, for your *intuition of the real, for your seeing*, and for your attempts to transpose onto canvas at least some of what you saw. And for my readers, I am happy to report to you that in the next week or two,

the Lord willing, I will have a museum-quality reproduction of this painting in my home.

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**You have wearied the Lord with your words. But you say, “How have we wearied him?” By saying, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delights in them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God of justice?”** Mal. 3:1

Years ago we watched and cried out against the “cheap grace” gospel as it flooded into the great renewal movements of the Episcopal, Catholic and old-line churches, bringing to an end a very great revival. The false teachings came in on the wings of Jungian psychology, the New Age monism that holds “all is one”; sin and righteousness, good and evil end in reconciliation. Now for some time we’ve seen these teachings innundating the evangelical world and have continued to cry out against that as well. We are greatly indebted to Andy Comiskey<sup>2</sup> for the following article that illustrates this matter, **“The Danger of Grace Without Truth.”** It may shock some of you and frighten others. But as we in the healing ministry know, Andy, in defense of the Gospel and the saving of souls, has only exposed the tip of the iceberg in regard to what we see and experience of the ruin brought upon all sectors of the church through what amounts to not just “cheap grace” at this point, but to an antinomianism many in the church are taking in as valid for themselves today.

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<sup>2</sup> Founder and president of Desert Stream Ministries located in Anaheim, California, Andy needs little introduction to our readers. Author and minister, tireless in the healing ministry, Andy has, in the power and strength of the Lord, accomplished the “impossible” in his lifetime (and he is yet a young man!). We look forward very much to his upcoming book entitled *Strength in Weakness*.

*The Danger of Grace Without Truth*  
Andy Comiskey

The speaker, Brennan Manning, was impressive. I had read his books on grace and healing, and attended his meetings that my church had sponsored. Still, I felt uneasy. *So much love*, I thought. *But what about the clear word to lay aside childish things, to take hold of the greater, truer aspects of one's identity in Christ?* Agreed—God embraces us in our weakness. But in our wickedness? I wondered about his take on sexual purity, especially on homosexuality....

I met with Manning for lunch to pursue these questions. He appeared genuinely offended when I expressed my concerns over his ambiguous references to homosexuality in his writings. During our uneasy meal, he advocated for committed gay couples; he also challenged my commitment to a biblical sexual ethic--no sex with either gender outside of the heterosexual marital covenant—as narrow and uninformed. I shared with him about Desert Stream's commitment to providing safe and powerful opportunities in the church for the transformation of the homosexual. My assistant Mark Pertuit and I both shared about our own healing journeys. Manning dismissed our offering on the grounds that I was not enough of a moral theologian to be taken seriously on the issue.

Obviously, Manning and I have a different take on moral authority. Mine is derived from a conservative take on Scripture; his base of authority is unclear to me. But out of that lack of clarity emerges from him (and, sad to say, many like him) a dreadful sentimentalizing of homosexuality. Strangely, those bound by same-sex tendencies become the "sacred cows" of healers like Manning. Instead of embracing confused men and women with truth and grace, these ones dance around the struggler, granting him or her an almost heroic status. The result is a false compassion that can encourage one to identify and act on one's homosexuality.

Grace without the clear and authoritative truth of Scripture is deadly. The goalposts change. We lose the revelation of God's will for our humanity. We are left instead to construct an identity based upon our experience of reality. "I feel gay; therefore, I am gay; therefore, God blesses my gayness." This strips the cross of its meaning. Jesus died to offer us the way back to the garden; He rose to raise us up according to the Father's will for our humanity. If that truth is lost, then grace becomes meaningless; its life-transforming current becomes diffused, powerless. The truth of Scripture guides the current of grace. Without truth, grace loses its essential, dynamic power to transform lives.

For many healers of influence, grace embraces the same-sex struggler, but is apparently unable to transform him. Certain ones have empowered this deception--like Mel White, a former Fuller professor and evangelical pastor, who now heads up Soulforce, a gay advocacy group. In his biography *Stranger at the*

*Gate*, White portrays himself as a somewhat tragic figure whose gay impulses compelled him to form multiple partnerships before and after his marriage dissolved.

Friends of his, like the late ethicist Lewis Smedes of Fuller Seminary, took up White's journey into gay liberation as nearly authoritative. As a result, Dr. Smedes became profoundly distrustful of students like myself who dared to advocate for the healing of the homosexual. I would pass Smedes in the hallway; he would look me straight in the eye and ask, "How long before you fall back [into homosexuality]?"

Far more subtle is the influence of White upon Philip Yancey. The prolific writer featured White in his book *What's So Amazing About Grace?*, showcasing White and his friendship with him as a powerful example of God's grace. Though the author does not embrace all of White's choices, Yancey highlights a man who has become the most influential gay Christian of our day. Inadvertently, the author provides an ungodly bridge between a false prophet (White) and thousands of readers seeking clarity in the area of homosexuality. Perhaps Yancey's inclusion of White in his book is an example of one who has "secretly slipped in among" us in order to "change the grace of our God into a license for immorality" (Jude 4).

Grace without truth is deadly. It plays upon our sentiments. "I want to be a nice guy. I do not want to give a hurting person any more trouble. Didn't Jesus include the outcasts?" Our desire to be merciful is understandable but uninformed. Sentimentalism distorts the essence of the homosexual conflict; it promotes a dramatic view of the self, which only distances the struggler from his cure.

And it distances one from the real good news of the Gospel. To be sure, Jesus first called the religious hypocrites to repentance. But He then called His followers to deal forthrightly with their sin (Luke 7:36-50; John 8:1-12). To ignore the latter is to scramble the witness of Christ and to set up vulnerable ones for deception.

Men and women facing profound same-sex vulnerabilities require the fullness of grace and truth. Without that fullness, we can readily mislead God's people into powerful deception. What if I had gone to a Manning or a White at the onset of my healing journey? Perhaps we as Christians are far too naïve in what and who we take in.

Our Christian world affords us a range of broad influences. We must ask ourselves: What is this leader's basis for authority? Is grace harmonized with biblical truth? Ask God for discernment; then act on it. Be prepared to ask the hard questions. Increasingly, we will face well-respected Christian leaders who are deceived and deceiving others in the areas of sexuality and homosexuality. We must speak the truth in love to them. We do so for their sakes, and for those who would otherwise be led astray by them.

Amid the battles you will face in such truth-telling, share joyfully and generously about the healing of the homosexual. If you are being transformed in this area of your life, make it known. If you know of others who are being set free, make it known. Nothing conveys more powerfully the fullness of grace and truth than the transformation of the same-sex struggler! What God raises up in the yielded, resolute one is nothing less than His glorious image, all through the liberating power of grace. True grace. What a message for our day! What a great and glorious God we serve. What a privilege to make Him known through the testimony of changed lives.

“Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ...” (Phil. 3:18). “For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error” (2 Pet. 2:18).

“Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders...will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

***Tolkien's Ordinary Virtues: Exploring the Spiritual Themes of The Lord of the Rings***, by Mark Eddy Smith. IVP, ISBN 0-83082-312-3

The one word that comes to my mind in describing this small (141 page) book is simply *precious*. Thanks to the imaginative genius of Tolkien, these ordinary virtues, which in the end are the making of any man or woman (hobbit, elf or dwarf!), take on mythic proportions in our own imaginations and thereby become all the clearer to us. In mining, as Mark Eddy Smith has (a feat I hardly thought *possible*), the simple, ordinary virtues that are at the heart of *The Lord of the Rings*, the author has turned up pure gold for us to see and bless and exclaim over. Weep over too. In Mark Smith's love of goodness, the wisdom that is part and parcel of Tolkien's great masterwork appears to have entered his own heart, and happily, his insights and writing skills are fully up to the task of passing on to us not only Tolkien's but his own wisdom!--and both in turn mined from the same source: Holy Writ.

***Hero for Humanity: A Biography of William Wilberforce***, by Kevin Belmonte. NavPress, ISBN 1-57683-354-2

To see what one man, wholly committed to God and to suffering humanity, can do, this is the book. Is there in history a mortal through whom the power and beauty of truth--with its extraordinary power to change people and nations for good--flowed to greater effect than through this man? I only regret that this is the first history I've read of him, and am thankful that it is so comprehensive and readable. William Wilberforce was full of the love and wisdom of God, and a righteousness from the very heart of God flowed through his oratory and actions. May God in His mercy raise up such as he in this our day.

***The Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ***, by Dallas Willard. NavPress, ISBN 1-57683-296-1

This is a book on spiritual formation, *the real thing*, and as such it is an extraordinarily potent antidote to all the bad books written on spiritual formation and spiritual direction that flood the Christian marketplace today. As Dr. Carla Waterman states, "*Willard's biblically grounded, philosophically informed thought blows the dust off any muddled thinking about what it really means to be formed in the image of Christ and offers a well-trod, accessible path for those who are serious about fully cooperating with the Lord in the transformation of every area of life.*"

To rush through this book would be a mistake. Most will read it more than once, and then refer back to it from time to time. It is packed with information regarding such important matters as just *what* the heart is, just what the spirit, the soul, the feeling being, and *et cetera is*--together

with all their motions. His unique teaching on the body proved to be of extraordinary importance to a friend and colleague of mine. Having suffered polio as a child, she can hardly get past that section. Teachers in schools concerned with putting forward a fully Judeo-Christian view of man will find this book a very great aid indeed, as will all who counsel and pray for the cure of souls and the healing of bodies.

***Let's Roll***, by Lisa Beamer. Many of you have read this bestseller, but for those of you who have not, know that this is a book you will be all the richer for having read; you simply won't want to miss it. For weeks after I read it, the blessing from it lingered with me. Courage is one of "the ordinary virtues" Mark Eddy Smith catalogues in the lives of hobbits (see above); there is absolutely nothing "ordinary" in seeing courage in action in Tolkien's *Ring* or in Lisa and Todd's life.

***In This Mountain***, the latest in the series of best-selling Mitford novels by Jan Karon. For sheerest relaxation and joy in reading of "the ordinary virtues" as well as the all-too-ordinary foibles and outright sins of the citizens of Mitford, both Christian and pagan alike, we heartily recommend *all* of the Mitford series.

TAPES/CD: *Mind Games in a World of Images* and *The New Age: A Foreign Bird with a Local Walk* by Ravi Zacharias. The agonizing burden of Ravi's "Mind Games" message is the fact that "*The ability for abstract reasoning is diminishing in our time.*" That, of course, is why monism and gnosticism, the *isms* out of which "cheap grace" and the acceptance of sexual perversion and license derive (all thriving under the umbrella of New Age doctrine today), find it so easy to infiltrate the church. For them, "all is one"--thus good and evil are reconciled. Order through [www.RZIM.org](http://www.RZIM.org) or phone 770 449 6766; fax 770 729 1729.

## SENTIMENTALITY AND ITS RELATION TO “CHEAP GRACE”

The sentimentality we see in connection with “cheap grace” is that which always, feeling itself to be loving and “nice,” manages to reconcile good and evil. It does so by ignoring the evil in a thing, by refusing to name and renounce it. Rather, it focuses on the good that is within the person, ideology, or circumstance. In our fallen world, evil rarely, if ever, comes in its unmitigated state but always together with a good, and with much that *seems* good as well. Evil comes with “niceness” attached.

In our time, because the scriptural moral good has been denied and replaced by (of all things) political correctness, the church, inundated with the culture, is largely given over to this kind of “niceness,” and it replaces the work of the Holy Spirit; it replaces real love; it replaces the idealism that has within it the wisdom and knowledge of God’s will and way.

Mark Jefferson’s essay *What Is Wrong with Sentimentality?*<sup>3</sup> is helpful in terms of closely defining sentimentality, and I strongly recommend it to those in search of a short but scholarly presentation (8 pages in its entirety). The following, shown in italics, are quotes from his article:

*A sentimentalist is **one** kind of person who warps reality for the sake of feelings--namely, one who “misrepresents the world in order to feel unconditionally warm-hearted about bits of it.” [Jefferson’s quote is from Mary Midgley’s essay entitled “Brutality and Sentimentality.”] ...It is a dishonest distortion of reality.... Indulgence of one’s feelings are secured by misrepresenting reality.... What gives sentimentality its claim to be properly formed is the peculiar nature of the misrepresentation it involves; and this is also what makes it more objectionable than many other sorts of emotional indulgence.*

*Each indulgence requires the projection upon the world of a different kind of unreality.... Sentimentality is objectionable because of its sustaining fantasy and not simply because it must employ one. It is a sort of emotional indulgence that involves misrepresenting the world.... Sentimentality involves attachment to a distorted series of beliefs... this is not something that simply befalls people.*

*What distinguishes the fictions that sustain sentimentality from those that occur in other forms of emotional indulgence? Well, chiefly it is their emphasis upon such things as the sweetness, dearness, littleness, blamelessness, and vulnerability of the emotions’ objects. The qualities*

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<sup>3</sup> *The Virtues: Contemporary Essays on Moral Character*, edited by Robert B. Kruschwitz and Robert C. Roberts (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1987).

*that sentimentality imposes on its objects are the qualities of innocence. But this almost inevitably involves a gross simplification of the nature of the object. And it is a simplification of an overtly moral significance. The simplistic appraisal necessary to sentimentality is also a direct impairment to the moral vision taken of its objects. This may in itself be harmless. Often enough it is. Though the sentimentalists in the poodle parlors may have a morally warped view of their little darlings no one need be too alarmed by it. But sentimentality does have its moral dangers and these are rather more apparent when its objects are people or countries.*

Using E. M. Forster's classic novel, *A Passage to India*, as an example, Jefferson then goes on to show the brutality and evil that comes about when *sentimentality corrupts one's moral vision of its objects and of how this corruption naturally extends itself*. That literary classic is built around the horror that sentimentality as *a fiction of innocence* is capable of bringing about on a national and global scale. The novel *enables us to see emotion generally and sentimentality in particular as something integral to the moral self*. Moral choice is involved.

Church leaders are often asked to dialogue with those who hold and propagate fictions of innocence. From time to time, I am asked to do such. In other words, we are asked to sit at table with unreality and reason with it. An impossibility. There are many who work tenaciously toward this end. They may even think of this activity as being rooted in a valid idealism. For example, one person dedicated to this kind of dialogue told me that it came out of his idealism and implored me to be part of such. I had to tell this very sincere man that what he thought of as idealism was not idealism at all, that it was sentimentality.

A valid idealism (from the standpoint of pointing to truth) has a goal other than that of the monistic ideal of bringing all things into one, reconciling good and evil. It is in great dialogue, that is true, that we *become persons*--principally through dialogue with God, then with others. But we do not dialogue with darkness, with untruth, with unreality. We reprove it. We denounce it. It is said that he who sups with the devil needs a long spoon. A very long spoon indeed. In fact, there is not one long enough in the created universe. Eve in dialogue with the serpent got us where we are. Dialogue with such was the effective method used to break down orthodoxy and destroy the old-line churches in America. Dialogue with darkness never works for good, for it can only be endless. That is the method. It never stops. There is no stopping place. The motives behind the "cheap grace" that we see today go back to one thing: the determination of the enemy to introduce homosexuality and sexual perversion and permissiveness into the church. The aim of the enemy is to reinstitute the worship of Ahab and Jezebel. The "cheap grace" we see today, even and especially that of the

most clever, subtle sort, has behind it, as stated earlier, the old antinomian heresy.

*“When God defines love, He always does it in connection with the forgiveness of sin.... Forgiveness of sin is central to Christianity; it is central to a relationship with Jesus...”* Pastor Duane S. Feldmann

The Lord willing, we will very soon be meeting with about 700 of you dear ones in Belgium, and with all of our hearts, we look forward to being there. We rejoice to think of the invocation of Christ's saving, healing presence in our midst. As the Apostle John proclaimed, *“Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”* (1:17), and we simply never cease to be amazed at what God does (for ourselves as well as for others!) as humbly we come together in Jesus' name, repenting our sins and the sins of our nations. Jesus is the Fountainhead of all grace, and that grace continuously flows toward all who earnestly trust in Him. The great old hymns in praise of Christ's atonement for our sin keep coming to mind. One of William Wilberforce's friends and a favorite poet of his, William Cowper (1731-1800), wrote the following, so greatly blessed of the Spirit to many:

There is fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may I, though vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed Church of God  
Be saved, to sin no more

E'er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.

When this poor lispings, stammering tongue  
Lies silent in the grave,  
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,  
I'll sing Thy power to save. Amen

Catholics may not be so familiar with the above, or with other evangelical favorites such as “There is Power in the Blood,” but since the early 1300s, praying before the Blessed Sacrament, they have sung the exquisitely beautiful Latin motet in praise of the same reality: the “Ave Verum Corpus”

*Ave verum Corpus, natum de Maria Virgine:  
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine:  
Cuius latus perforatum unda fluxit sanguine:  
Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.  
O dulcis, O pie, O Jesus Fili Mariae,  
Miserere mei. Amen*

(All hail, O true Body, of the blessed Virgin born,  
Which in anguish to redeem us did'st suffer upon the cross;  
From whose side, when pierced by spear,  
there came forth both water and blood;  
Be to us at our last hour the source of consolation.  
O loving, O holy, O Jesu, thou Son of Mary,  
O have mercy on me. Amen)

We thank God for your ongoing support of this ministry. We think you surely must have “upped” your intercessions for us, for God has greatly strengthened and nurtured us. We are deeply grateful to you, and to the Lord for the ministry entrusted to us.

Most sincerely,

Leanne Payne