

What Humans Perceive in Reality Outside Themselves in Physical Reality is A Confirmation-Stream and Language-Stream From God: Christ's Atonement = The Creative Force of Reality

**Pastor Jeffrey Grupp, Church of the Nazarene, September 2,
2017, www.PraiseandLove.net**

Let me start of this article with three examples, which will help to illustrate what this article will address:

1. Last Sunday I delivered what I was told was a powerful message in church, many were complimentary, my wife glowing about it for days, and for the days that followed that sermon, I noticed, peculiarly, two verses that kept popping in front of me, whether it be in a devotional, in some reading I was doing, in conversation, and so on, the same two verses:

Luke 14:11 (NKJV)

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NKJV)

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

After about three days of this, I finally paused, amid the busyness of life, and thought to my self, "What is going on here? Why these same verses over and over?" Of course the answer is because I was being tempted with pride, the ultimate sin, and God was warning me.

2. In June I developed, mysteriously, an incredibly painful bump on my arm, seemingly overnight. Just came, seemingly out of nowhere (but later I found out there was far more to it than "chance"). That was a Monday. By Wednesday morning, it was so terrifically painful that it became seriously painful to move my arm or my body in any way without being in hunched-over terror and pain. Despite this, I managed to make it to Wednesday night church, where I listened to the message from our Lead Pastor. In a

strange aside, he very briefly talked about a time in his life when he had a boil. I found this somewhat out of character and peculiar, especially since he mentioned it where, he said, it was intended to relate to his message, but it only very loosely did so. I had been praying for an answer to this horrific sore on my arm, and only moments after our Lead Pastor mentioned the boil, I thought to myself, "what are the chances that he would just bring that up!? He's never brought up anything like that, ever. I bet that was God speaking through him, telling me what I need to know for healing." And sure enough, I went straight to my computer when I got home, the symptoms of boil were a stunning dead-match, and I had all the information i needed, including what do to for a cure.

3. This morning, my wife and I were reading Oswald Chambers' *Utmost* Bible study, and the study was focused on John 7:38. Tonight, my daughter was doing a coloring page from a book that had pictures with Bible verses on it, and she started talking about the verse, it was John 7:38.

Do you see where I am going here? Does any of this sound like what you see going on in your life total surrender to Christ? Does it start to seem that, in your life of surrender to Christ, that God is continually steering you by sending you messages, confirmations, signals, and so forth, through the world all around you?

When we fully, ceaselessly, deeply, broadly commit our lives to God, He directs our paths (Prov. 16.3). This requires joyous constant communion with the mighty Holy One, our God (Trinity) who is Light. If we do this, we will become aware of our unworthiness and thus of the supernatural *grace* of the Lord—something that we probably won't be able to truly grasp, in-full, until we are with Him in Heaven—if we even can understand even at *that* point. God's mighty, *sub contrario*, supernatural, trans-worldly grace saves us, gives us power, sustains us, and thus gives us *character* (*sub contrario* Christlike behavior—or, in other words, *physical behavior* in the world that is powered by Love and which will make us prone to persecution in the world—praise Him!). This character change also involves a deletion of the old self, and a replacement into a new self (2 Cor. 5.17), that is *Christ in me* (Gal. 2.20), by living as the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2.5). In this new life, we have wonder and restfulness, we have awe and peace, we are flooded with love and can only respond to the other person through the limitlessness of the Love of His holy touch. Those points are true as long as the Christian believer keeps their self humbled (Luke 14:11) and in a state of being

Crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20). In this life, the infinity of a snowflake is finally “comprehended” transcendentally, and is exponentially more profound than the profoundest human “wisdom.” This is because what is *sub contrario* in Christlikeness (that is, what is paradoxical to what might be commonsensically expected, and opposite of the assumed laws of the world) is always orders of magnitude more full of wisdom than what is commonsensical and of the world. And that is what this article is about, which can be simply summed up as follows:

For the fully surrendering Christian, who is actively in constant communion with the Creator/Trinity, Jesus will send a continual stream of confirmations, messages, answered prayers, and the like, to the believer to receive, to guide them, steer them, show them which way to go. This can become so ever-present in the watchful ceaselessly praying Christian's life that reality all-around them will start to function as a message-stream or language-apparatus of God sending messages to the believer/receiver. In simpler terms: God arranges reality before the eyes of the fully surrendering believer/receiver in a way that reality creates a sort of televisual language stream between God and believer/receiver.

In a stunning quote, John Wesley wrote:

By “means of grace” I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained by God, to be ordinary channels whereby he might convey to person's prevenient, justifying, or sanctifying grace... [Further,] all who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means that he has given.” (Cited in Leclerc 2010, 263)

The depth and piercing nature of this quote has to be meditated upon at length by all.

Consider Col. 4:2, given below in multiple translations:

Colossians 4:2 (NKJV)

Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;

Colossians 4:2 (NLT)

Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.

Colossians 4:2 (NIV)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Colossians 4:2(NASB)

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;

I think if we take all these translations, combined with Wesley's quote, altogether we come to the following conclusion:

We should not be on autopilot in our ceaseless prayer life, and instead we should be in a state of close empirical and experiential examination of our reality (our self, God, and physical reality—all simultaneously examined), wherein we will notice continual signals and confirmations through and in the world-all-around, direct messages from God, where God orders the world, orders and arranges reality, in a non-random, designed, non-chance, mathematical way (and not necessarily with a mathematics known by or studied by professional mathematicians), where a designed system and stream of events can be observed (if we are watchful in our ceaseless surrender/prayer), where this non-random/non-chance flow of events shows God's design and reveals *Him* and what He wants us to know about Him, serving as a sort of linguistic message-stream *to us, for us*.

In simpler terms, what we perceive around us in the physical plane is fully ordered by God (Rom. 8:28, Col. 1:17, Prov. 16:9, etc.), He wants us to be *alert* to grasp, absorb, and be catalyzed by the perpetual stream of signals, confirmations, and messages in all we perceive around us, and which He has ordered and/or allowed to exist. This offers a new empirical science of reality for us to be aware of and know reality through, which will be in many ways contrary to the less empirical, and more theoretical "science" that exists in professional academia. And it is a way of *seeing* (John Wesley called this the "spiritual senses") that is available to us in our state of lowly Christlike character, where we live in our *sub contrario* life *Imago Dei*.

It's utterly critical to understand that this language-stream, this communicative ordering of the physical plane for the fully surrendered believer/receiver into signs, signals, and confirmations, are

absolutely *not* the starting point of faith in Christ (perceiving them is the opposite of a starting point, they are the *consequence of faith*, not the source of faith), as Jesus discussed this in Matthew:

Matthew 16:1-4 (NKJV)

16 Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; 3 and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. 4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.

So, if we find ourselves seeking, hunting, for these signs, signals, confirmations, and so forth, in order to try to believe God is real, or to try to curb doubt, and so forth, we are completely going about things in a literally backward way, and we are therefore caught in a life of the hypocritical. The aforementioned language-stream from God simply cannot be seen until one surrenders to God fully (and is given what Wesley calls the "spiritual senses"), putting all trust *into* Him and denying self; this life of constant communication with God is the result of surrender, not the cause to surrender.

So, in essence, this perpetual language-stream from the Trinity is not something we can go and see, go and find; rather, it is something that God reveals to us in our restfulness in Him. In other words, the less we do (in the world), and the more we collapse into Him, the more likely we are to become aware of the ordering of reality all around us for communicative purposes that He is creating in order to have conversation with fully surrendered believer/receivers.

What do we look for, then, if we are not to try to look for this communicative language stream *from God to us*? What do we place our eyes on, then? The answer is, of course, nothing other than the Godhead:

Hebrews 12:2 (NASB)

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God..

So, the arrangement of reality around us into a language from God *is the result of* our faith, it is *the product of* our steadfast and ceaseless prayer, not a starting point we look for in order to worthlessly attempt to build our faith. Instead, we are to look to God, and be watchful in our prayerfulness, watching ever-presently for the *sub contrario* way the Lord will reveal Himself to us through the language of the ordering of physical reality.

If God is going to communicate with us, He needs various ways to do so, and the point of this article is to suggest that arranging the world around us, by the Christ, into confirmations, signals, and answered prayers seems to be something we should be vigilant of, especially in light of Col. 4:2, and also because of verses like these:

Numbers 14:21 (NKJV)

but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord—

Isaiah 6:3 (NKJV)

And one cried to another and said:
“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!”

And consider the following verse, in five translations, noticing the intricacies of its message:

Psalm 119:64 (NKJV)
The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.

Psalm 119:64 (NIV)
The earth is filled with your love, Lord;
teach me your decrees.

Psalm 119:64 (NRSV)
The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes.

Psalm 119:64 (ISV)

Lord, the earth overflows with your gracious love!
Teach me your statutes.

Psalm 119:64 (NLT)

O Lord, your unfailing love fills the earth;
teach me your decrees.

Culture is the domain of Satan's kingdom (2 Cor. 4:4), but *Creation* is good, is created by God, and is occasionalistically created (*ex nihilo*) at every instant as the result of God's infinite love and grace, so we should expect to see clues of His glory and love in the world all around, in the Heavens as well as in the physical plain, once we can see past and through its fallenness via our reckless surrender to Him.

Psalm 19:1 (NASB)

The heavens are telling of the glory of God;

And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

Living in constant communion with Christ will reveal a God communicating to us through reality all around that we see, and what results is a life of beauty, peace, and love, that the world cannot understand or see, but is seen (or, really, more appropriately put, is *felt*, in a sort of feeling-knowledge, or feeling-information--a feeling of power, probably related to what Paul writes about in 1 Cor. 4:20) in the infinity of the snowflake. Grace is like a force, for lack of better words, that is the Power behind Creation, the Power that sustains the physical plane—and since grace reaches its zenith in the atonement of Christ, then the atonement is the Power, the Force, behind Creation. In other words, the Atonement of Christ is the energy (again, for lack of better words) that builds us, constructs us, and sustains the physical plane, since the atonement (peak of grace) is what God really *is* (Trinity = atoning grace): Reality is created by, powered by, Love and Light, as shown in this equation:

(God is love, God is creator) => (Love creates all, Love is Grace)
=>

(Grace is atonement, atonement creates all) =>

God-atonement is the creative Force of Reality.

Wesley discusses three means of grace, one of which was the general means of grace. Church of the Nazarene theologian Diane Leclerc describes the general means of grace, and you can see hints of the aforementioned thesis about the world functioning as a language-stream from God to the fully surrendered believer/receiver in Leclerc's quote:

These include universal obedience and keeping the commandments, watching, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and exercising the presence of God... If we live in disobedience or continue to break the commandments of God, it is not as if God then withholds grace. Rather, we have blocked the channel through our own action. In this case, repentance is the means by which we open the channel again—open ourselves again to receive the grace we need... Watching is the intentional act of seeking God. It implies that we are looking for God's activity in the world [note the above discussion of Wesley's quote above in relation to Col. 4:2]. We are to have our eyes fixed on what is "unseen" to a greater degree than on what is "seen" (2 Cor. 4:18). But it is too easy to forget this activity of watching, and go through our day without purposefully looking for the hand of God in our lives, in the lives of those around us, indeed in the world... Exercising the presence of God is the practice of being conscious of God throughout the day. This is related to watching, but different. When watching, we are looking for the activity of the Holy Spirit around us. When practicing the presence of God, we are directly communing with God in all we do. This idea was made popular by a monk named Brother Lawrence. He attempted to be aware of God's presence in every minute of every day... If we affirm that it is the very presence of God in our lives that ... aides Christian growth, practicing that God is with us is just as important as trusting that God is with us. (Leclerc 2010, 265-66)

In our moment-to-moment surrender, we decrease and He increases (John 3:3), in accord with Galatians 2:20, where we are instructed to be crucified with Christ, and thus where our non-physical selfhood, our essence, our "me" or "I," is to literally die, be deleted, and be replaced by the Mind of Christ: He becomes greater, and we become less (again, John 3:30), joy replaced frustration, inner tension is replaced by deep and thorough inner peace, and the world being seen as undirected chance is replaced by the empirical verification of the world being a language-stream of ordered events between

Creator and and believer/receiver--from Trinity to surrendered Christian who is crucified with Christ.

-Pastor Jeffrey Grupp, Tecumseh Church of the Nazarene, Tecumseh, MI, September 2, 2017

Works Cited:

Leclerc, Diane, 2010, *Discovering Christian Holiness: The Heart of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*, Kansas City: Beacon Hill.