

OUT IN THE OPEN

Volume 5 of 8

(Featuring works written in 2006)

(108 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

Featuring a Compilation

of

The Complete Written Works

of

Francis William Bessler

From 1963-2011

Compiled in June, 2011

**Featuring
Original essays, stories & songs
In
Chronological order.**

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Laramie, Wyoming
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OUT IN THE OPEN

By Francis William Bessler

Written 4/8/2011

Refrain 1:

Out in the open – it’s the best way to find God.

Out in the open – truth does not depend upon applause.

Out in the open – no devil can exist.

Out in the open – there’s no room for sin.

Well, my friends, I’m no guru,
but I don’t think I need to be.
When I simply look at life,
it’s all I need to be free.
Let others read lots of books
if they believe that will help;
but I think that if that’s all they know,
what they know will be more like Hell. **Refrain 1.**

I’m told I should fear Satan
and I say, why should I?
It’s clear Satan can’t exist
when I’m standing beneath a sky.
Just look out as far as you can see
and all devils disappear.
So just keep looking outward
and you’ll never need to fear. **Refrain 1.**

I learned long time ago,
back when I was a child,
That the only truth anyone needs
is found in the wild.
To the degree, I can be
one with the deer and antelope
is the same degree I can find peace
and that wonderful thing called hope. **Refrain 1.**

I think it's good to know
that we're all the same.
I don't need you and you don't need me
to share a common fate.
The truth we both need
is out there in the universe.
Just become one with the All –
and let that be what we rehearse. **Refrain 1.**

And when I die what will happen
to this thing I call my soul?
It will just continue on
on the merry path I know.
Wherever my souls goes,
it will stay among the stars.
Freedom's only belonging to All
whether that All is near or far. **Refrain 1.**

Refrain 2 (several times):

Out in the open – it's my favorite phrase.
Out in the open – it lets my nights look to day.
Out in the open – it's the way I want to go.
Out in the open – it's the best way to know.

Introduction

Welcome to my 5th volume (of 8) of my *OUT IN THE OPEN* writings series. I will be presenting works that I wrote in 2006 in this volume. It was quite a year for me – writings wise. I hope you enjoy at least some of it; though I would not expect anyone will enjoy all of it.

It's OK to pick and choose. I certainly do it – and have done it most of my life. Be a **discerning reader** – one that loves to disagree with some that seems implausible and loves to agree with that which seems more in tune with one's own thinking. If I had not been of the discerning type, I could never have paved the path I have in life. Being willing to disagree is absolutely essential, I think, to search for the truth.

And I do continue my own “**search for the truth**” in this volume. Again, **Jesus** is a principal focus. One of the main features of this volume is one I call **THE NON-JUDAIC JESUS**. Some may appreciate that effort; and some of you may not; but I will let each of you decide who is who. My main sources for my “non-Judaic” Jesus are two gospels banned by the Christianity of the times in the 4th Century. Those two gospels are *THE GOSPEL OF THOMAS* and *THE GOSPEL OF MARY (MAGDALENE)*. Many of you will agree with the Church of the 4th Century that those gospels deserved to be banned; and some of you will probably enjoy an alternate version of Jesus. Just be prepared for a different kind of ride.

In brief, that which I consider to be a “non-Judaic” Jesus is a Jesus that did not live to complete Judaism in particular, but to offer humanity in general a “new vision.” In my works in this volume, I will discuss that “new vision” Jesus – offering verses of banned gospels to define him. I think it is really good to keep in mind that just because an idea has been banned in the past does not mean it had – and has – no validity.

One of my favorite topics in life is the **Infinity of God**. Personally, more than any notion, that notion of the Infinity of God has set me free in this life. I consider it of the utmost importance. Look for me to offer my reasons for that in a couple of brief essays: one called **PONDERING THE INFINITE** and another called **IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY**. Hopefully, both little discussions will offer some food for thought.

Also, be prepared for a new look at the first book of the **BIBLE: Genesis**. In the final essay of this volume, I examine the Adam & Eve of that work – from a standpoint of reason, not from a standpoint of tradition. I call that one **STATE OF GRACE** and in it, I even offer a song about a “new Adam & Eve.” Just leave out the “new” – and you have the title of my song – **Adam & Eve**. Again, some of you may like my Adam & Eve; and some of you may find my vision quite unacceptable. Hooray for everyone! **Remember – I applaud disagreement. It is the very foundation of true research.**

And finally, in the aforementioned **STATE OF GRACE**, not only do I offer a “new **Adam & Eve**,” but I offer a discussion about “**theists**” too.

As you may have noticed if you have reviewed the previous volumes, on occasion, I have devised a new name for perhaps an old idea. The idea that God is **IN** Nature is not new, for instance, but my name – *Divine Naturist* - for one who believes in that idea is new. Likewise, the idea that we can know the spiritual by the physical is not new, but my

name for that approach - *Spiritual-Logical* - is new. New names for old ideas, I think, can be quite useful if they clarify the ideas they represent. Whether my names clarify the ideas they represent remains to be seen; but you can't say I have not tried. Can you?

Along the same line, in my essay I call **STATE OF GRACE**, I decided that a distinction among "**theists**" is really in order. Traditionally, one is either a "**theist**" or an "**atheist**," but I know of no one who has offered to distinguish between the main types of **theists**. An "**atheist**" is one who does not believe in God and a "**theist**" is one who does believe in God; however, I think there are really two kinds of "**believers in God.**" One believes that God is "**outside**" of Creation – and us; and one believes that God is "**inside**" of Creation – and us. I think that distinction is really critical in dealing with life. How we see God is extremely important. One who sees God as "**only external**" is bound to have a different perception of life than one who sees God as truly "**omnipresent**" or "**in**" all things.

Thus, in **STATE OF GRACE**, I discuss the issue and name the "**theist**" that believes that God is "**outside**" of us as an "**otheist**" and the one – like me – who believes that God is "**inside**" of us as an "**intheist.**" An "**atheist**," of course, remains as he or she was – one who does not believe in God at all. I find the distinction quite useful. Perhaps you will too. If you are a **theist**, which are you – **otheist** or *intheist*?

That's good for a glimpse of this volume. See the Index for a full list of contents. Enjoy my various "**little discussions**" as you wish. I am delighted to share them. Lots of song in this volume too, but I did not write any stories in this period, however, the next volume will contain one of those. Join me then for that, if you wish; and keep in mind, I pride myself on being a *speculator*. My ideas are only personal opinion. Please make nothing more of them than that. OK? I will begin with an offering of **MY WORLD**.

As Usual, Enjoy the ride, Everyone!

Gently,

Your "**Intheist**" "**non-Judaic Jesus**" guide,

Francis William Bessler

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June 4th, 2011

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MY WORLD

(4 Pages)

A Brief Essay by
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
Jan. 27th, 2006

I think it is safe to say that, in practice, there are as many different worlds in the world as there are people in the world. It really comes down to how I see the world as to how I treat those within it – including myself – especially myself.

Do I see the world in an inconsistent way? Do I see the world as part evil and part good, for instance? If I do, then I would have to go about treating some as evil and some as good. Many see the world as part evil and part good – and have a terrible time of it going about trying to decipher what is and what is not good. Preachers of all sort abound within this half good and half evil scenario and many of them spend all their lives trying to steer people away from what they think is evil and toward what they see as good.

I was brought up to believe that, in practice, there are some evil regions of existence and there are some good regions of existence. If I am good, then I will be delivered to a good region of existence when I die; and if I am bad, then I will be delivered to a bad region of existence when I die. It seems rather simple – this half good and half bad perspective of life. It makes judgment really easy. If I do good, presto, I am on my way to the good region of existence. If I am bad, presto, some one or ones that exist in the bad region of existence are just waiting to nab me and take me to their terribly dreary bad existence where I am supposed to suffer forever more.

Looking back, it was really funny that I ever swallowed such a tale. I was told that down below represents the bad region of existence – though it was never put quite that way. It was offered that bad is down and good is up; and one who is intent on going to the good region of existence must always look up, never down. I remember taking this up is good and bad is down scenario with me on my walks around the farm where I was raised. I was careful not to step too close to a crevice in the ground because I did not want to slip and fall, perhaps interminably, down, down, down, into that terrible evil region of existence.

As someone once said, when I was a child, I thought as a child – but now that I am all grown up, I no longer think as a child. Now that I have grown, it is not possible that someone can convince me that there is any such thing as a bad region of existence. Now that I have grown, I realize that the good that is down is also the good that is up – or the good that is up is also the same good that is down. There is no difference. It was all a very wrong tale. There is no diversity within regions of existence in terms of good and evil because there is only good existence; and there is only good existence because God, Being Infinite, must be everywhere – and thus, in everything, making everything Good.

People who thought the way I did as a child – and think that way – that there is bad and good - are wrong. There is only good region of existence. The same wonderful sand that exists here on Earth is the same wonderful sand that exists on Pluto. I do not have to go to Pluto to know sand – and the good of it. I have all that Pluto has right here at my

doorstep. And if Pluto does not have sand, but some form of gas? Hey, I have that here too. It's called air. Whatever it is that Pluto has, I have available to me – just in different degrees perhaps.

What does it matter what Pluto has or doesn't have? It only matters that if I am wise, I will realize that the same good that exists here exists on Pluto – and vice versa – and I won't lead my life thinking that there is some good existence somewhere else that has to be earned now to be enjoyed later. With all that nonsense of good and evil regions of existence behind me and out of my life and my thinking, I can get on with embracing the good that is everywhere – on Pluto and on Earth – in Heaven and in Hell.

I guess that is to say there is no Hell. That is really what I am saying. How can there be a region of existence some want to call Hell that offers some crazy thing called bad existence when there is only **GOOD EXISTENCE** in reality? I am glad I was told as a kid that bad is down and good is up because once I demonstrated to myself that such is not true, I was delivered of all sort of imagined morality that pretends to offer what it cannot deliver. No one need ever fear going to some region of bad existence if they disobey some arbitrary standard – because there is no bad existence. Only good exists.

I learned that lesson long ago. Perhaps it is because I am more observant than the average individual; but I am here to learn – perhaps much more than I am here to be taught. I was taught that bad is down and good is up; but I have learned that there is no difference between up and down, between Pluto and Earth, between Heaven and Hell, between life and death, between big and little, between powerful and weak, between erect and flaccid, between barren and fertile, between young and old, between male and female. But there is a big difference between rich and poor because now you are getting into the unnatural, not the natural.

Sadly, I think, many people fritter away their lives in the unnatural. They live completely thoughtless that the air on Pluto is the same as the air on Earth – value wise. They live thinking that there is value on Pluto that is not here on Earth. They live thinking there is value in fear of death or in killing. They live thinking there is more goodness in strong and fertile than in fragile and flaccid. They live in the unnatural; and they suffer there too. They live acting like there are good and evil regions of existence; and they fail to realize it is all the same.

I learned long time ago that the world has long been in ignorance. When I realized or learned that there is really no difference between what is up and what is down, I began to embrace what is and not worry a fettle about what may be. I became enamored with the life I have and became dedicated to loving what I am and not what I may someday become. I became enthralled with the prospect of never having to go across the street to find meaning and fulfillment that can be found where I am. I became convinced that nothing on Pluto – or anywhere - is any better than what I have here and now. So why waste away my life wanting something else when what I have is so wonderfully good?

Yes, I guess I live in what some may think of as a fairy tale existence. Wouldn't it be nice if all of you did the same? If you did, you would not be concerned about what Osama Bin Laden could do to you. You would not fall victim to living your life in fear because you would be too caught up with living your life in generosity, not with what you may lose if this happens or that happens. You would be too busy making Osama a friend to worry about him fleeing to the hills to find a way to kill you.

So what do you have now? Fear of Osama! And if it isn't Osama, it would be someone else. It would be a Saddam or a Hitler or a Stalin or a Bush or a Kerry or a Republican or a Democrat – or Satan. You see, Satan is only a name that represents Fear. It is not a who, but a what. Satan is not a person, but rather an irrational belief that there is better than here, that then is better than now, that now is better than then. Satan is that stronghold that controls most of the unnatural world – or those who have fallen prey to living outside of the natural and have fallen victim to tales of good and bad regions of existence.

My world is a world of only Good. My world is a world of believing that which I call **GOD** is in me here and now and in you here and now. My world is a world of having learned that there is no difference between up and down because what is in the up is also in the down – that same wonderful **GOODNESS** that I abbreviate as **GOD**. Wherever I go, I find Good and God – and wherever I am, I find Good and God. I love being Naked because I love being what I am. I love embracing the fullness of my being without insisting that I should be something or someway different.

I am glad I was taught wrong when I was a kid because when I learned otherwise, I learned that the same people who taught me that down is bad and good is up are the same people who taught me that God is in the Bible. If they were wrong about the down and up thing, then they are probably wrong about the God in the Bible thing too. When people tell me that they find God in the Bible or in any other so called book of scripture, I want to tell them to wake up and realize that so called scripture is opinion, not revelation from God; and if it's bad opinion, look out.

There is a word that can define any unnatural commitment – and that is Satan; and it seems to me that the Bible and the Koran and any other so called scripture is all about Satan, not about God, because it is all about committing to the unnatural as if the natural is not good in itself. It is about using fear to control behavior. It is about dividing up from down and assigning good regions and bad regions within existence. It is about dividing the spiritual from the corporeal in terms of offering that one is more Godly than the other. It is about dividing the chosen from the damned. It is about living now in some way so that you can live different in a later time. It is about failing to realize the virtue of life and pretending that evil exists. That is what Satanic is all about. Satan is not a person and not a region. It is a fear, an irrational fear; and it is what the world has long been about and is still about today.

My world is not Satanic. It is not based on fear. It is based on respect for the Goodness of All within an All Good. I have no time for Satan. **I have only room for God!**

Between us, I think that is what Jesus taught – and what I have learned. The Bible presents Jesus as a disciple of the good and bad scenario of life. If I am good, I will go to the region of good in which Jesus resides; and if I am bad, I will go into the region of bad in which Satan resides. That is how the Bible presents Jesus; but it is opinion, not revelation. The wise know the difference between opinion and revelation. The foolish do not.

In another opinion book about Jesus, that of the Apostle, Thomas, Jesus says that **if you know yourself, you will know you are the son of the Living God.** Contrariwise, of course, if you do not know yourself, you will think of yourself as the son of something else, perhaps the Satan most fear. Sadly, the world has been led to believe that Jesus

believed different than he did. It has been led to believe that Jesus believed in good and evil when – if I read the **Gospel of Thomas** right – he only believed in Good – or he believed in only Good.

In another verse of the **Gospel of Thomas**, Jesus says, *the Kingdom (of God) is within you and without you (or outside of you)*. Of course it is but my opinion, but I think that is the same as I believe. I believe there is only Goodness and Light, even where there seems to be dark. The foolish see evil in darkness because they really do not know goodness in the light.

In that same **Gospel of Thomas**, Jesus says quite simply – *where there is light, there is light and where there is darkness, there is dark*. That is only a way of saying, if one lives in the light, the light follows him or her. And, of course, if one lives in the dark, the dark follows him or her. It is to say – as you see life, you will conduct yourself.

In that same **Gospel of Thomas**, Jesus was asked when he would be known – as if his audience was waiting for him to tell him who he was. Jesus said: *when you take off your clothes and tromp on them as little children, then you will behold the son of the Living One and you will not fear*. Jesus knew nakedness like I know nakedness. Those who realize they are sons of the Living One or sons of Goodness can only embrace all they are because all they are is Good. Nakedness is not a threat for me or Jesus. It is the very gift of life because it is our given life; and we sons of the Living One know that.

So, **My World is a world of light and good**. I see only the light and I see only the good; and I do not go about pretending that there can be evil regions in the world. I do not go about pretending that evil kingdoms can exist; and in having no fear of evil regions that cannot exist, I embrace my own nakedness like it is the very nakedness of God – because it is. Me and Jesus! That is **OUR WORLD**. **Why not join us?**

Thanks for Listening!

MY WORLD

THE END

I'LL SING MY SONG

By Francis William Bessler

Written Feb. 5th, 2006

REFRAIN:

I'll sing my song in the evening.

I'll sing my song in the day.

I'll sing my song as I go along;

and as I sing, I'll find my way.

Now some look at life – like a battlefield,
but I look at life – like a song.
I do not see a battle – between good and evil;
rather a struggle – between right and wrong. **Refrain.**

Some look at life – like a warrior's place,
but I look at life – like a tune.
I do not see myself - as having to save face;
rather only finding – the truth to croon. **Refrain.**

Many look at life – like it must be what they say,
but I look at life – like a verse.
I do not see myself – as having to obey,
but only being true – to the self that's first. **Refrain.**

Others look at life – like it's less than ideal,
but I look at life – like a hymn.
I do not see myself – as having to deal,
but only being gracious – to stay away from sin. **Refrain (A few times).**

MY SONG OF JESUS

By Francis William Bessler

Written Feb. 12th, 2006

Note: Beyond the Refrain, the following song is intended to list the main lessons that I feel Jesus has taught me. Those lessons are really eight-fold:

1. Heaven is Now because God is Now,
2. Love of others follows true self-love,
3. Ideally, I should be grateful as a child free of imposition naturally is,
4. Heaven is Everywhere because God is Everywhere,
5. I should enjoy the current moment because it is fleeting,
6. To secure the future, conduct the present because as so conducted, it will be,
7. Revenge is useless for a soul in love with life,
8. The wise realize independent worth.

Notice no emphasis on forgiveness. That is because I think that a life well lived results in forgiveness because it is impossible to be grateful and to retain hurt. Forgiveness, for me, is a state of mind that reflects a lack of revenge. With revenge, there is no forgiveness; and with revenge – often confused as justice - neither is there focus on gratitude. All eight lessons can be extracted from the Gospels of the Bible; however, in some way, Gospels banned by Constantine and his Bishops in the 4th Century – like the Gospels of the Apostles, Thomas and Mary Magdalene – enhance the lessons considerably. I do not wish to suggest my eight lessons of Jesus are the only lessons he taught. Rather only, these eight really include all that may be missing. Notice, too, Thou Shalt Not is completely missing. All meaningful virtue is positive, not negative.

REFRAIN:

Let me tell you - of a man – who walked so long ago.

He still walks - in my heart – and peace from him I know.

1. Jesus said - look no more - Heaven is at hand.
That means - Heaven must be – right here where I stand.
2. Jesus said - love others – as I love myself.
That means – I must love me – then share that love that’s felt. **Refrain.**
3. Jesus said – it is best – I imitate a child.
That means – I should be grateful – for all that’s in my file.
4. Jesus said - the kingdom’s within – as well as from without.
That means – quite simply - that God is all about. **Refrain.**
5. Jesus said – my way – should not be one of sorrow.
That means – I should not waste – today to gain tomorrow.

6. Jesus said - the future – just extends how I am.
That means - I will be – what’s now in my command. ***Refrain.***
7. Jesus said – be kind to all – no more, an eye for an eye.
That means – revenge is useless – for a soul in love with life.
8. Jesus said - I should live – solitary on this Earth.
That means - I should realize – my independent worth. ***Refrain (2).***

WHY DON'T PEOPLE KNOW?

By Francis William Bessler
Written Feb. 20, 2006

REFRAIN:

*Why do people think – the way they do?
Why do people want – to keep on being blue?
Why don't people know – that God's in here?
Why do people want – to keep God out there?*

Even as a child – I wondered how it could be
that anything could exist – outside Divinity.
If God is all around - why do we moan and plead
for God to come – when He's already in, you see? **Refrain.**

When I was only ten – I'd strip down to my skin
so that God could see – all the wonder He was in.
I wanted God to know – I was so proud of Him
and that I didn't think – He made me out of sin. **Refrain.**

And now that I'm older – nothing much has changed.
I've grown a bit here and there – but I'm pretty much the same.
I'm still so proud of God – and the two of us still play.
God and me together – still naked without shame. **Refrain.**

I'm still in awe of life – cause I still think it's Divine.
The flesh is a wonder – though a passage of time.
It's a way for my soul to know – that all life is fine.
So I'll enjoy my life – to find a truth that's mine. **Refrain.**

And I think it will be – the same when I die.
My soul will depart – leave this grand body behind.
But God and me – we'll be – just another child
and we'll find another skin – and go naked all the while. **Refrain.**

So if you want to be – just the same as me.
And if you want to find – your own Divinity
And if you want to know – your soul to be free,
become friends with God – go Naturally like me. **Refrain.**

FINISH:

*Why don't people know – that God's in here?
Why do people want – to keep God out there?
Why don't people know – that God's in here?
Why do people want – to keep God out there?*

OPEN UP THE DOORS

By Francis William Bessler

Written March 8th, 2006

REFRAIN:

Open up the doors – and let the people in.

Open up the doors – and let the people in.

They've been shut out for far too long.

Open up the doors – and let them sing their song.

I wonder why it is – people tend to think
that God - is outside of them.
It'd make the average person – want to sink, not swim,
for feelings - of being lost in sin. **Refrain.**

I wonder how it is – people don't tend to think
that God - is inside of all.
It cannot be different – if He's Infinite
and belongs - to all, both short and tall. **Refrain.**

While you wonder – don't forget to thank
the Divinity - within you.
The mystery will continue – no matter the venue
Just beware – and you'll find the truth. **Refrain.**

Jesus said to Thomas – know what's in your sight
and what's hidden – will be light.
The truth's in the natural – open your eyes.
Embrace it – for it's all Divine. **Refrain (several times).**

PARADISE, PARADISE

By Francis William Bessler

Written March 31, 2006

REFRAIN:

Paradise, Paradise – it seems so right to me.

Paradise, Paradise – can you tell me what it would be?

It's easy, My Friend, to comprehend.

It's Innocence, Simplicity, and Integrity.

If God's outside, we must seek to please,
but if inside, we must be pleased.
It depends upon where we place our God
that determines how we will trod. **Refrain.**

Innocence means not to impose,
not just to not be imposed upon.
It's treating everyone like they're Divine
regardless of any wrong. **Refrain.**

Simplicity means I should act the same,
regardless of who is around.
It's regarding the Nature of which I'm a part,
like no shame in it can be found. **Refrain.**

Integrity means I'm Part of a Whole
that is Blessed completely throughout.
If the Whole is Holy, so is each Part,
and the Whole is filled with God now. **Refrain.**

So with these three wonderful qualities,
Paradise is given birth.
It shouldn't matter where I am.
So, why can't there be Paradise on Earth? **Refrain (3).**

KISS ME

By Francis William Bessler
Written April 14th, 2006

REFRAIN:

***Kiss me here and kiss me there.
Kiss me, kiss me – everywhere.
Kiss me where it pleases thee.
Kiss me and enjoy my Divinity.***

God said to Adam, go to sleep
and when he awoke, there was Eve.
Eve looked at Adam and winked at him
and said come here, Honey - there is no sin. ***Refrain.***

The way I see it, it's this way.
God's in All, be it night or day.
When you touch me, you touch God.
So come to me – for my applause. ***Refrain.***

I think many souls have it wrong
who think that God's not in this song.
If God is Infinite, it has to be
that Dear One must be in me. ***Refrain.***

If it's true, God is in my flesh
then my soul should be refreshed.
Soul and body are so Divine
It's just like grapes turning into wine. ***Refrain.***

So come and sip my wine with me.
Taste, Sweetheart, my Divinity.
Put your lips where you want to go
and you will find what you want to know. ***Refrain.***

But, gentle, gentle – don't be harsh.
You're not sloggin through some marsh.
There's no need for whips and chains.
Just kiss me, kiss me, and kiss me again. ***Refrain.***

THE HEART IS THE EYE (A Poem in 14 verses)

By Francis William Bessler

Written April 23rd, 2006; Modified slightly Aug. 2nd, 2009

The heart is the eye
 because it controls how I look.
Is it fantasy of mind that I seek
 or reality – as in a brook?
Do I want to know
 the wonder of that which is?
Or do I prefer to concentrate
 on division and on sin?

Do I choose to clothe myself
 with fashion and deceit?
Or do I choose to confide
 in the creature that is me?
But the creature that I am
 is an expression of the Divine.
In knowing me, I'm knowing God
 and knowing you and all of life.

I have long believed
 that judgment is in my soul.
It's the vision of my soul
 that determines how I will go.
It's not up to anyone else
 to define my vision.
It's strictly up to me
 to make my own decisions.

Of course, it's to each his own,
 but this is what I choose.
I choose to see God in all
 and that determines how I do.
I do not go about
 splitting life into good and evil
and therefore have to decide
 about what belongs to a devil.

The heart is the eye
 because it determines what I see.
And because I see God in all,
 I can only see Divinity.

I think it's really sad
that others choose a different sight
because confusion can only lead
to hardship and to strife.

People talk about peace
like it's something that can be won
when it's only believing
that everything is one.
We are all one
in whatever life's composed.
Peace is only
thinking and acting like that is so.

And it's not only between the two of us,
but between everything that is.
Because God is in all,
in nothing can be sin.
If we sin, it's only thinking
and acting like God is absent.
To be a saint is only to realize
that in all, God is present.

I think those who believe in war
do not know the truth
and choose to divide life
into those who win or lose.
It's truly sad to see
so many die for a lie
And it's even worse to see
people maimed for all of life.

Many religious soldiers act
like God can be a reward
and promise themselves that sacrifice
will please a given Lord.
But God is not something
that can be won or lost
and can't be gained or pleased
with some act or applause.

I wonder when it will be
that man comes to realize
that God is often not the reason
they seek to divide.

It's in the heart of some
to use any excuse
and God is often an alibi
and only a tool to use.

Yes, the heart is the eye
because it determines how I act.
If I agree to go to war,
then division is my pact.
But if I choose to agree with war,
then peace I'll forsake
because my choice will reveal
that I believe in hate.

Hate is only another word
for a right to insist
that life should be divided
and some can be dismissed.
For one at peace,
hate has no place
because such a one is strong in heart
and cannot be disgraced.

I have long determined
that the best I can be
is only to relax
and accept the being that is me.
My heart is my eye
and my soul is my fate.
But it's the same for all
because it is that way.

It's the way we all must go -
for the heart is our lead.
We can claim otherwise,
but the heart can't be deceived.
It's all in the heart – or soul –
and nowhere else –
and only there can we decide
for Heaven or for Hell.

ANGER – MY VIEW

(8 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

April 28th, 2006

Several years ago, there was a movie. It was called **Network**, I think. I did not see it, but every now and then, I see some clip of it – generally to approve of anger. It is to say that sometimes anger is justified. Some TV network reporter scowls at us and rants – **I am angry as hell and I am not going to take it anymore** – or something like that.

In my view, intentional anger is never justified. In other words, I should never intend it and pretend that it is sometimes good. In my view, anger is never good. Why? Because it is too destructive for my soul due to the possibility of it becoming a habit. **If you start a habit, you have to continue it; and anger is one hell of a habit to start.**

I have been angry in my life – many times. Yes, I have been there; but where I differ from so many is that I try to analyze my anger. I am not nearly as much interested in your anger as in my own. I know I do not like anger or feeling angry – and so I have tried to calm my anger and even resolve it. I do not like where anger takes me; and knowing where it takes me and where it might take me, I know how terribly dangerous it might be or become. It can be so terribly destructive. Can't it?

Think about it! Is not anger the source of all intended violence? Is not calm the source of none? **If you like being a destructive person, be angry; but if you dislike being destructive, be calm.**

I might wake up angry. Maybe I had a bad dream or something. Some would take their initial anger and fling it out at the world, perhaps not understanding it – and then watch out – anyone in path's way could get trounced. That is the way it is with anger. It may not hurt only me, but if I don't stop it in its tracks, it may well hurt another too. Amazingly, many people in this world actually want that. They want to control others; and so they hold onto anger in order to do it. **Anger is a requirement for power. Isn't it?** Have you ever known anyone who has power who does not cherish some anger about something?

But let me get back to me. That one is my expertise. I can tell about all anger by dealing with it in me. Hey – that rhymes! Being somewhat introspective as I try to be, I will ask myself when I am angry – ***Hey, Fellow, why are you angry?*** Of course, it helps to be looking in the mirror when I ask me that. Mirrors are great because they allow me to deal with me like I am some other fellow; and I must say, that really helps.

So again, I ask that ***other fellow – why are you angry?*** Almost always, the answer is the same. The fellow in the mirror is too ugly or his nose is too small or his penis is too small or his belly is too big. It is always the same thing – **I am almost always angry when I start out being unhappy with me.**

Now it really helps for the man in the mirror to be naked when assessing all his dislikes. Otherwise, he has to imagine or speculate them into being. But I have such an advantage; I sleep naked most of the time; and so when I get up angry, I get to look at a

naked person. No beating 'round the bush there. I can get right to the middle of the issue of some dislike and deal with it.

But deal with it I do. I do not like leaving my house for a walk not having dealt with some dislike. Most of the time – rather all the time – I find I have no reason to be discontent. Putting things into perspective, I realize it does not really matter if my nose is too small or my penis is too small or my belly is too big. Just being honest with myself and putting all things into perspective, my discontent melts away like butter on a hot griddle.

I look at me and tell myself – *Hey, Bud, be thankful for all you have because it is all bonus. Who are you to be complaining about a gift?* Well, taken that way, I always have to respond – *I sorry!* Then knowing that every little thing about me is really bonus stuff, I smile and stretch and bang my chest like some giant gorilla and presto, no anger, no more. *It's all gone because I replaced it with Gratitude.* **Ah, what a wonder Gratitude is!** It simply leaves no room for discontent - and anger because anger always follows discontent. No discontent – no anger! It is as simple as that!

Then I can go out and proudly deal with the world. Everyone I meet is a *best friend* because I made out with my real *best friend* before I left the house - *me*. No anger, no hatred, no reason to punish anyone for my having failed myself – just bliss. Believe me, it works!

But there have been times when I have left the house being discontented with something about myself – and then watch out. I yell at some kid to get out of the way or I scowl at some cat daring enough to cross paths with me. Being honest, though, if I yell at a kid or scowl at a cat, it is always preceded by discontent with myself. Thus, like I say, for me, anger always starts with self-dislike. It does not end with me, but it always starts with me. I really like that because all I have to do to resolve it is deal with me. Leave the pest of a kid or the rancorous cat out of it. I do not have to yell at the kid or kick at the cat if I am happy with myself.

Perhaps I am being too simplistic, but I do believe it is the same with everyone. I think **all angry people** are only **unhappy with themselves**. Angry people are almost literally hell to live with. I know I am hard to live with when I am angry; and if I have to deal with an angry person, he or she will be hell in shoes – provided he or she is wearing shoes.

In truth, if an angry person is about and is wearing shoes, he or she ought to retrace his or her steps and go back to square one and take off those shoes and take a good long look at the feet in order to make them friends. Remember! Not even bare feet are deserved. They are among the many items of *body bonus stuff*; and Gratitude for them should always be the response. Then he or she ought to remove the pants and become familiar and friendly with the remaining lower part. Then he or she ought to remove the shirt or blouse and become friends with the remaining upper part.

For such a simple way to resolve anger, imagine how it would be if Pope Benedict or President George started out his day that way. Can you imagine either Benedict or George standing naked in front of a mirror and saying – *Hello, Friend!* Ah, but if they did, think of how the world would be different. **No sin for Benedict and no issues for George.** It would be darn right dull, wouldn't it? The problem is, however, Benedict wants sin so he can claim power over a sinner and George wants issues so he can appear powerful to deal with them – or at least, they think they do; but if the truth be known, I

am willing to bet that both Benedict and George really want nothing to do with power. They were both nominated to represent it and both probably really resent it, knowing how much of a drag it really is.

I think of power like one of those whirl pools. The closer I get to it, the further away I get from myself. The greater one's power, the closer to a whirl pool he or she becomes; and the more the power, the less the independence. You see, the less power I have over you, the greater my liberty to dwell on me and practice Gratitude for me.

People with power have no time for themselves. I am sure that both Benedict and George are at least subconsciously aware of that; but the greater their power, the closer they get to the center of that damn whirl pool and the less vision they have to remove themselves from it. In that light, then, power becomes a drug and once lost within it, vision of the individual and individual independent liberty and gratitude gets lost within it. Without being fully aware of it, then, power gets like Benedict and George probably get lost within it and see themselves only in terms of power and no longer freedom. Like the old proverb says – *be careful what you ask for* because you may get it and become lost within it.

So, Benedict probably sleeps in a white night robe and more than likely, George sleeps in pajamas – and when they awake, they have no idea with whom they are dealing; but they are very aware of having to dislike themselves in order to be powerful in the world. Thus, Benedict proceeds to dress in his scarlet robe – to cover what he must not like - and goes out and blesses the world from his balcony and urges it to hold onto hope and know that, in time, God will come and be with us all; and George yells down to Laura that he is really glad Saddam is in prison so Saddam can't be free to beat up on his Dad. And Laura responds, *Yes, Dear – Now go play in your whirl pool!*

And there it is. Benedict stays angry to keep control of sinners and George stays angry so that he can better deal with insurgents in Iraq and those pesky environmentalists at home. *And Francis?* Well, he just goes on his merry way, being angry at no one, staying away from whirl pools, loving neither sin nor power to deal with insurgency; but if he were asked to deal with it, he would. He might not succeed where George failed because he would be dealing with a very angry world; but at least, he will not have become angry with it in the process – having analyzed it so thoroughly beforehand. Or at least, I hope he would not.

I am sure some are thinking that one can be angry at another while also being contented with oneself. I don't think so. I think I can be disappointed in another while being contented with myself, but not angry with that other person. Why? Because self-contentment is so overwhelming that it completely obliterates any other vision. You may irritate me a bit, but as long as I am intent on being content with myself, that will override anything you can do. **Thus, I cannot be content with myself and angry with you.** Nice, huh?

Boy, did I receive a wake up call on this one in March of 2003! I was so upset with our country's decision to invade Iraq that I lost track of my own principle of self-contentment. Talk about angry! I was so upset that I think I put my health in considerable danger. In allowing myself to ignore my principle of self-contentment, I became almost totally drowned in an anger against our invasion and allowed myself to slip into pneumonia from a bad chest cold. I went from anger about our invasion of Iraq to perhaps a near death experience. So, I know full well what anger can do.

Then I realized what I was doing and turned myself around. It was certainly a lesson and a half for me about the destructive power of anger in terms of health alone; but once I became aware of my stupidity in letting something that someone else was doing upset me, I was able to get back on track. I reverted to my previous practice of going naked in the morning and managed to overcome both my pneumonia and my anger with our country.

Amazingly, I found myself dressing in the morning and bypassing my normal love of life when my concern about our invasion completely overwhelmed me. It was almost like I felt I needed to dress in order to somehow protect myself. I suppose most people think they have to dress to protect themselves on an ordinary basis, but it was distraction for me – not regular behavior. The more I became obsessed with my anger, the less I went naked; and the less I went naked, the more vulnerable I became. Wow! What a lesson!

Like I say, however, eventually I realized what I was doing. It is truly amazing how one can get sidetracked and not even know it; but once I realized I had been sidetracked, it was back to regular routine. Clothes stayed off in the morning – and my health returned; but what a scare that was! It taught me a truly precious lesson. **As long as I am totally focused on self-contentment, nothing anyone can do can upset me.**

I would be the first one to allow anger if I thought it would help anyone or anything; but it has been my experience that anger only destroys. There is no peace with it. It destroys self-confidence and distracts one from being grateful for life. Only hatred, I think, is more destructive to the soul; and anger will lead to hatred if left unchecked. First, one must be angry before one can hate because hate is only choosing to remove an object of anger. **Hate is anger plus action – either willful or actual – to negate an object of anger. Accordingly, anger unchecked could very well lead to hate.**

I will admit, however, that one may not have to go naked to be able to concentrate on self-contentment. It is my way, and I highly recommend it for knowing it so well, but I do not wish to imply self-contentment can only be had through embracing one's nakedness. Personally, I know no other way. I am so used to using my nakedness to effect self-contentment because it makes so much sense to me that I may well be blind to any other way. I guess all that is important is that in whatever way one chooses to effect self-contentment – or produce it in oneself – one should conduct that practice. **In whatever way it is achieved, I think, self-contentment should be the prime consideration of any soul in order to best secure that soul within peace and avoid anger and its successor – hate - entirely.**

At least, that is this one's opinion.

Thanks for listening!
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
April 28th, 2006

My song about anger follows. After that, another ditty to wash away the anger.

The Story of Anger

by

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

April 26th, 2006

REFRAIN:

What is the story of anger?

Why has it so much control?

What is the story of anger?

Why does it hold on to us so?

I met a lady earlier this week
and she said she was angry as hell.
I said, why are you angry, My Friend?
She said, I don't know, I just can't tell.

Then she told me, everyone is angry,
that is, everyone she knows as a friend.
She said, if that anger keeps on as it is,
then soon, this world will end. **Refrain.**

I told her the reason we're angry
is that we know that war is not right.
When people go against the tide of truth,
then it always results in fright.

I told her that I think we are angry
because we lack confidence in our lives.
Anger is only a way to pretend
that others are the cause of our plight. **Refrain.**

She looked at me like I'm crazy.
She said it can't be as easy as that.
People can be rightfully angry, she said
for feeling the pain of impact.

Then she told me it would be wrong
to let Saddam continue to plunder.
We had to get in there and stop him
so he couldn't kill more with his thunder. **Refrain.**

Then I said, it could do no good
to do others as he did to them.
That which happens when we do that
is we become like them in the end.

When we react with anger to anger,
we only give it more control.
Now you should know the story of anger
and why it holds onto us so. ***Refrain.***

I would have liked to have gone to Saddam
and have looked him in the eye
and told him he could put a knife in me,
but if he did, it would be him who would die.

Our leaders should have said to Saddam,
let us begin to work together.
There is no reason we should carry on
like in truth, we are not brothers.

Instead, we chose to act enraged
and we claim we had the right
when we were only pretending
others are the cause of our plight. ***Refrain.***

The world can get over its anger
if it stops blaming and takes control.
One by one, we can overcome
and share the peace that we know. ***Refrain.***

FINAL REFRAIN:

***And that's the story of anger
and why it has so much control.
That's the story of anger
and why we should let it go.***

**(And now a bright new song to flush all that anger down the drain.)
- Sing it out, Everyone! -**

Great Day In The Morning!

by
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
April 28th, 2006

REFRAIN:

Ah, Great day in the morning!

'Tis a wonder that I see.

Ah, Great day in the morning!

To see the likes of me.

I'm no different than anyone else,
but I'm as fine as anyone.
My God has blessed me with so much.
How can I not be one of fun?
I look at myself and I say, Wow!
What a wonderful sight!
A smile appears across my face
and my heart leaps in delight. ***Refrain.***

I stand in front of a mirror and look
at the miracle looking back.
And I say, My God, I love you so.
Thanks for all of that!
I think the key to loving life
is not to lord, but to accept.
I should be thankful for my life
and say thank you for the gift. ***Refrain.***

I take delight in thinking that
I am just the same as you.
So you are with me if I love me
and between us, love does bloom.
So, My Friend, here's my pledge:
here's looking delightfully at me.
If I get me right, it's your gain.
and no better gift can there be. ***Refrain.***

Yes, the greatest gift I can give
is to love in me, my flame.
Then you will see, God's in you
because we're just the same. ***Refrain.***

*FINAL REFRAIN (3 Times):
Ah, Great day in the morning!
Our love is shining through.
Ah, Great day in the morning!
To like the likes of you.*

ANGER – MY VIEW

THE END

FREEDOM LIVES AS FREEDOM LOVES

By Francis William Bessler

Written May 5th, 2006

I want to be free – like the Moon above,
 holding on to the Earth - like a kid with a baseball glove.
I want to be free – like a spotted fawn
 finding the milk it needs - in its mother at the break of dawn.

REFRAIN:

*Freedom lives as freedom loves
 but no one's free who doesn't need.
I am free only because
 that which I need is liberty.
I must be free to love my life
 to find in Nature all that's right -
to know for sure that all that's true
 is bound together in me and you.
Yes, it's found together in me and you.*

I want to be free – like a little child,
 clinging to its Momma's hand - with a yearning to be wild.
I want to be free – like a little kid,
 bouncing on its Daddy's knee - with no yearning to be hid. ***Refrain.***

I want to be free – like a flowing stream
 finding its gentle way - over rocks and things.
I want to be free – like a kite in air
 gliding in the sky - without a hint of care. ***Refrain.***

I want to be free – like the God I love,
 inspiring all - and sharing its Blessed trust.
I want to be free – like an eagle's wings
 swooping through the sky - giving me this song to sing. ***Refrain.***

I want to be free – and this is my final verse -
 knowing I am fine – for in God I proudly thirst.
I want to be free – to find the love in you -
 sharing all we are - bonding together and finding truth. ***Refrain.***

WHEN COMPETITION IS KING

(9 Pages)

An essay by

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

May 7th, 2006

Maybe Just a Difference in Morality

I was chatting with some friends at MacDonald's the other day and the three of us wondered how anyone could be so selfish as to demand some exorbitant retirement at the expense of the general populace? That is really the intention of this article – to speculate on that. A case in point is that the CEO of Exxon is retiring and for that retirement, he is getting \$400 million in one lump sum, plus a good deal of Exxon stock – and probably some annual pension as well. That does seem to be quite exorbitant to me and to my two friends at MacDonald's and probably to you.

Why do some people in this world think that the world owes them a living – or an exorbitant profit? I think it is because those who choose to participate in the world of exorbitant profits maintain a totally different morality than most of us common folk do. In having a different morality, they are only meeting that morality and fulfilling it. They are really at ease for doing what they do because their morality is not the morality of the common folk.

This is not to condemn that morality in general terms. It is only to argue that it exists. I have often wondered how so many rich people can do what they do without any compunction whatever about whom they run over in life; and I think the answer is that they have a different morality than I do. Within their sense of morality – which I would at least sub-label, an Industrial Morality – the whole purpose of life is to compete with others and to excel in that competition. Some of us, however, do not live to compete with others and try mostly to enjoy life itself – not the trappings of civilization – including competition within it. Thus, we do not need to compete with anyone to be happy; but the folks who choose an Industrial Morality need to excel and need to do better than anyone else. Theirs is a **Competition Morality**.

Thus, breaking morality into two camps in this light, there is a **Competition Morality** and a **Non-Competition Morality**. Those people who think the aim of life is to compete with others, in general, fall into the camp of Competition Morality. Accordingly, since competition between CEOs is really the name of the game in the Exxon story, that is how the CEO could smile at the cameras of the world at large and accept \$400 million in retirement pay & pay without batting an eye. In his world and within his sense of morality, he earned it.

Truthfully, however, in all earnestness, he did no more earn that exorbitant income than I am earning my rather paltry Social Security – of which I must offer I am extremely grateful. Is the Exxon fellow really more valuable as a human than I am? Of course not; but for every hour he puts in that requires no more talent than I have in me to be typing

these words, his hour is somehow worth thousands more than mine. I find that – not so much insulting – as totally untrue. The CEO of Exxon has no different body than mine – and certainly no different kind of soul; though I am willing to admit that he probably is a whole lot smarter than I am; but should being smarter earn him a greater salary? At any rate, smarter or not, the biggest difference between us is not in terms of talent, but in terms of morality. Mr. CEO simply goes by a totally different morality than I do while actually claiming to abide within the same morality as me – probably in order to not be discovered.

Does Competition Morality Rule?

In truth, I think, Competition Morality rules the world. Those who choose that morality are not in it for any fairness to the common folk of the world. They are only in it for themselves and their kind. There may exist some degree of fairness in competition among their own, but outside any given world of competition, fans and clients exist only to demonstrate that a particular competitor is better than his or her fellow competitors.

What am I trying to say anyway? I think it is that things are probably not as they seem. Exxon is not even participating in what most folks think they are participating in – a common morality. In truth, however, the rules of the game are different and there is no such thing as a common morality.

That's OK. I am not arguing that there should be a common morality; but I think it is most advantageous for souls in the world to realize there is no common morality. I think everyone considers him or herself to be moral, but according to varying terms. As we go forward in this world, I think it is very useful to realize that. I should not judge you by my morality; and you cannot judge me by yours. That is the way it should be, but of course within the very broad world of Competition Morality, many think it is their obligation to prevail. That is part of their Competitive Spirit. To fail to prevail is to fall short within their chosen morality; and that is why so many assume that they have the right to impose some totally arbitrary standards upon all. Losing, for them, is the equivalent of being immoral. It is strictly a matter of competition; though within the general camp of Competition Morality, probably most within it do not have any sense of relating only to competition. They use the argument of a necessary common morality to impose on others, but in reality, there is no such thing.

I have often wondered how alleged Christians could take the counsel of Jesus of needing to practice kindness to all and pay no attention to it – and yet claim to be loyal Christians. I think I know the answer to that very perplexing question now. They may seem like loyal Christians, and they may actually think they are, but their bottom line is a need to overcome others to show some semblance of superiority – as in Jesus being superior to all, not equal to all. Thus, if Jesus is better than me and you are aligned with Jesus, then you are better than me. I think that is how they think; but in that, they are not at all loyal Christians – in terms of attending to the actual counsel of Jesus. Their lord is not really Jesus, though they may think it is, but rather their lord is **Lord Competition**. Their use of Jesus is not to listen to his teachings of the equal worth of every soul, but to use Jesus to overcome or override the competition. It is a “my god is better than your god” type thing.”

How many people have I heard argue that they are giving their lives to their Lord Jesus? It is common place among Christians; that is, traditional Christians. I am a Christian, but not a traditional one in terms of my not recognizing any spiritual authority of any person over me. Anyway, for many traditional Christians, once they have proclaimed they have given their lives to Jesus, they leave the building and climb into a luxury car and drive off – showing, they think, that it is better to be for Jesus than not for Jesus. In other words, it is only a matter of competition; and they use Jesus to demonstrate that they are the best; and of course, the best among competitors always deserve to be rewarded.

Again, I think it is OK. I just wish people would realize the truth because they may be participating in a morality they would not otherwise choose. People should not fool themselves that they are acting for the Lord when, in truth, they are only using the Lord within their chosen world of Competition Morality.

What Was The Morality of Jesus?

Personally, I do not think Jesus was competitive oriented at all. I think he made it clear that he was for uniform value among people. That is what Jesus stood for, I think. Yet, I think people become part of a **Competition Morality** within the churches by establishing hierarchies of varying authority and fail to realize they have fallen out of accord with what could be called an *Equal Worth Morality* – for which I think Jesus stood. You tell me. How is a hierarchy within a church possibly expressive of Equal Worth? It is truly an odd way of saying that you believe in equal worth and then establish an office that claims authority over me. In truth, equal worth means equal authority – which means no authority at all. Right?

In truth, even within the churches, there is not one morality – but two. There is a morality for those in authority – and another for those under authority. There is no such thing as a common morality – even within the churches. There could be a common morality only if all obliged themselves to the same rule; but since the world is divided in its senses of morality, there is no such thing as a common morality.

I think it is good to be aware of this. Then when we pick up the paper and read that some CEO considers himself to be worth more than his peers – and of course, the common folk – we can appreciate why he might consider himself more worthy than the rest of us. It is within his right within his own chosen Competition Morality to be acknowledged the king of his jungle. Since true kings are compensated more than the subjects, presto, the king of the jungle can consider one hour of his worth more than that of all his subjects. Thus, a person who has actually chosen for himself a Competition Morality can be totally at ease with the overall poverty of the world because, in fact, that poverty is totally irrelevant to him and his own world of morality.

But Conflict is Inevitable

But conflict will arise between the common folk and those who assume some right of superiority. It is also good to realize that and not allow ourselves to be controlled by a different morality than that which we choose for ourselves. Competition Morality can

turn very ugly because if a given competitor senses he might be undone, you can bet he or she will do his or her best to undermine any objection and by so doing offer a different reason for conflict than a real reason because it would not be in his or her best interests to show his or her true hand. That is often the nature of competition. If honesty becomes detrimental to being able to compete and win, it's simple – Lie!

Our invasion of Iraq may well be an example. Why did we go into Iraq? To whose advantage was it? It may well have been Exxon and their fellow competitors sensing a challenge to their turf. It may have far more to do with not wanting to lose in competition by chancing interruption of their oil empire than any ideal of democracy. As long as we realize things may not be what they seem, we can better judge true reasons and true motivation and act accordingly; but if we allow ourselves to be herded into supporting an action as for the sake of democracy when, in truth, it is for the sake of industry, then our fate may not at all be what we expect. Our fate may become abandonment of *Equal Worth Morality* in favor of a **Competition Morality** we would never choose if we knew what we were doing.

And, again, it is OK to choose Competition Morality if that is what we want. In general, I do not think it right to claim one morality better than another in absolute terms – only different. It is just fine to embrace competition as the ideal of life; but it is also fine to embrace non-competition and equal worth as the ideal of life too.

No Traditional Hell – Only Judgment!

I have long ago rejected any notion of the traditional Hell in terms of someplace another can send me if I do not do what they say; but that is not to say I have rejected the notion of Justice – or Judgment. I reject the traditional notion of Hell because that sense of Hell is caught up with being alienated from God. I do not believe I could possibly be alienated from God because God is in me – not outside of me – given that God is Infinite – which in real terms only means everywhere. If God is everywhere because God must be Infinite, then that clearly says that God must be in me because I am part of everywhere. **Alienation from God, then, is really impossible because I have no power to dismiss or counter God. Thus, the traditional notion of Hell is implausible.** I can be sent no place where God is lacking because there can be no place where God is lacking. And just like that, the traditional sense of Hell in terms of being a place where God is not is flushed away like garbage down a sink.

But that is not to say that Judgment in general is implausible. It is only to say Judgment from God is implausible. *Judgment is really only inheriting one's own conduct or attitude.* If I choose to commit myself to a Competition Morality, then that is what I will get. I will inherit that attitude – both in this life and in the next one. Judgment is only having to continue what I begin. Thus if I want to belong to the world of competition and see no meaning outside of it, fine; but if my better judgment is that competition should have no bearing on my value as a being, then I would be much better served to abandon competition as much as possible and try to commit myself to non-competitiveness. That which I begin, I will have to continue until I choose to change my conduct. As long as I know that, I can proceed in this world and make the best of things.

The Real World

I think it is really good, however, to be aware of the real world – and real reasons why things happen as they do. There are many in this world who have little love for competition and are much more caught up with how we are all alike. I am among them. My value as a person has no bearing on trying to do something better than you. *My value as a person is only related to my value as a common creature among equal creatures.* I take but little delight in competition – not because I lack in self-confidence to compete, but because I see little value in it.

In my opinion, the mess in Iraq is very much caught up with conflict between or among many Competition Morality camps. Many in Iraq feel that Americans have chosen to overwhelm their general territory – the Mid East - with the industry of oil in terms of allowing some to profit and not all. Oil is a resource that belongs to the Earth and should belong to all on Earth equally. But many within the camps of Competition Morality have chosen to disregard any notion of common ownership and have acted to overrule any other decision. We call it Capitalism. Thus, we are involved now with trying to resolve that conflict; though it is probably essentially a struggle between Competition Morality camps and not a struggle between Competition Morality and Equal Worth Morality. Both sides of the struggle believe themselves to be superior to the opposition; and that is not an Equal Worth Morality expression. Is it? So, it is likely a war between varying Competition Morality camps – that of Capitalism which prefers unregulated freedom to industrialize and that of Islam which prefers a communization of industry. To say the least, that represents quite a conflict.

One of the main problems in this whole matter, however, is main participants in this mess are not being honest about their real reason for doing what they are doing. On behalf of Capitalism, in all likelihood, it was never about replacing Saddam as it was about making the way safe for industry. When it became apparent that Saddam was not going to cooperate with the oil kings and allow the oil fields in Iraq to be processed within Capitalism - that rewards companies and not nations - then Saddam as unwilling agent had to go. Capitalism and the determination to pursue it is at the base of the conflict in Iraq – not a lack in democracy. At least, I think so. I think that if Saddam had been a willing agent in cooperating with Capitalism, he would not only have been kept in power - he would have been regaled in Washington as a hero; but Saddam would not cooperate and American Competition Morality sought to remove him by inciting the world to denounce him for his atrocities.

Indeed, Saddam should have been denounced for his atrocities; but if other leaders in other countries – like perhaps Sudan – assume the right to be cruel, and murder ten times as many as Saddam murdered, how is it that Saddam is singled out for his atrocities and America does comparatively nothing to try and correct much more severe injustices than that conducted by Saddam? The answer is clear, I think. It was not really for his atrocities he was removed, but for his being in the wrong place at the wrong time and not cooperating with the exercise of Free Enterprise – or Capitalism. Failure to cooperate within Capitalism was Saddam's big crime, not unjustly putting down insurrections in his country – or having some unacceptable weapons of mass destruction.

And maybe failure to cooperate within Capitalism is justification for removal if we think that oil and the freedom to process it is the most important aspect of the Mid East; but it is most unwise, I think, to go on blindly thinking things are different than they are. The oil kings of the world are probably responsible for deciding on an invasion of Iraq – including, perhaps, the top ranks of American government. We should ask ourselves, is the life of a single soldier worth it to keep Exxon and its CEOs in abundance? If not, then perhaps we should choose the morality that Jesus recommended and not be regarded as tokens of barter for the oil kings of the world – or for any industrial king. If the oil kings of the world insist on plundering forward as they seem to love to do without regard to many who disagree with them, then let that story be told and not the false story of championing Democracy when it is a matter of Capitalism, not Democracy.

Jesus – Committed to Complacency

Perhaps it is worth noting that within its own morality standards, non-competitive conduct is easy within that which I call *Equal Worth Morality*, which could be sub-labeled *Complacent Morality* because it is a morality that finds life pleasing as it is. That is what complacent means. It means to be pleased with. In the way Jesus may have said it, The Kingdom of God is within. That is only to say that life is holy as is. It is that holiness of life – or a belief in the holiness of life – that makes one complacent. Those who commit to this morality and attend to it are complacent without having to be competitive. On the other hand, those who are not complacent tend to be competitive because if one is not satisfied with life as it is, then one tends to try and find some additional interest in life to make life interesting. Enter Competition. **Competition is the main way that non-complacent souls try to make life interesting.**

My take on Jesus is that he taught the need to treat everyone alike – regardless of who they are and what they may have done because all are holy and should be treated accordingly. There is no value in doing anything different within an Equal Worth Morality. *Holiness is not something one attains. It is something one is.* When one believes that all are holy because of what everyone is – one with God – then the emphasis is on equal worth, not distinction. It is the insistence on distinction that causes most conflict and is, in truth, the very basis of Competition Morality.

Without distinguishing among people, regardless what they may have done, within Equal Worth Morality, all conflict becomes a non issue because in reality, it just does not happen. Jesus told us to be kind to everyone, even those we may consider enemies. That is easy to do within Equal Worth Morality because there is no emphasis on having to be better than another. A lack of having to distinguish among people really results in no conflict. Thus, in reality, within a true Equal Worth Morality, there are no enemies. That is to say, then, that within Equal Worth Morality, there are only friends; and it is not hard to see that being nice to a friend can only be easy – not hard.

Jesus does not work, however, within that which I call Competition Morality. Distinction among people is an actual requirement within that morality; and accordingly, so called justice becomes a necessity within Competition Morality. If all are unequal according to what might be considered a law of Competition Morality, then competition itself must resolve all issues. Being fair or kind to another just goes out the window if

being better than another is the standard; and that is why Jesus – and Complacency – does not work within a Competition Morality.

Thus, if someone violates another within Competition Morality, it is only a matter of more competition that will settle that the weaker of a set of two will become the subject of the stronger one. That is just the way it works with competition; and crime can be defined within that scenario as well as non criminal behavior. In the end, those must win who are stronger. If I am caught and condemned within the justice of a Competition Morality, then it is only a matter of my captors out competing me. That is all that so called justice amounts to within a scenario of Competition Morality. The strong win. The weak lose; and it matters not if it is legal or illegal.

A problem may ensue, however, for one committed to Equal Worth Morality if he or she is condemned within Competition Morality. One can lose one's commitment and membership to a morality by actually participating in the other. Thus, if Jesus had become violent to avoid the violence done to him, he would have left one morality camp for the other. That he could not do and still remain committed to his chosen morality. Accordingly, he accepted crucifixion rather than fight his accusers. He was crucified, but he held onto his commitment to the camp of Equal Worth Morality – and Complacency; and that is all anyone of us within an Equal Worth Morality could do if faced with the same dilemma.

Anyway, when people tell me that Jesus could not have meant we should be kind to everyone, my response is that within Equal Worth Morality, kindness to all is the only sensible standard. It is only difficult within Competition Morality. I guess it could be said that if someone does not see how being kind to all is really practical advice, then that person has simply chosen Competition Morality in the first place. Within Competition Morality, kindness to all makes no sense because it implies equality – which Competition Morality by definition must reject; but within Equal Worth Morality, kindness to all, friend or enemy, makes all the sense in the world.

Competition Morality Right for Many

Some might think that I am arguing against competition. Not at all. I suppose competition is an essential part of the big picture. I would not now be typing on this wonderful PC if Bill Gates had not been competitive and found a way to develop a micro-chip for storing data so that ordinary folk like me could write and store articles like this one. I enjoy sitting down and watching TV and find watching a baseball or football or basketball game of competition quite delightful. I do enjoy competition; and I am not arguing against it. I only wish to suggest that maybe we should not let competition, per se, be our basis of morality. Without knowing it, I think that is what we have done. We have made competition king. While respect for that order has its place, personally I think tremendous poverty and injustice is allowed in this world for considering competition far more important than it should be.

Why should a CEO of any company consider his services more important than any other occupation in the world? It just does not make sense when by so doing, poverty and disease goes unheeded in this world.

Perhaps comparatively speaking, we humans are far less than what we could be because we accent the wrong thing. We love competition too much and make idols of

our heroes within it. It is a form of idolatry to spend excessive time praising the Lovely Julia Roberts – of whom I am a big fan. I think it is just fine that Julia entertains me, but I do wonder if she deserves millions to do so.

I think our world is simply out of whack; and I think the biggest reason it is so is because there are so few who truly love Equal Worth Morality and try to live by it. There is much too much emphasis placed on competition and the right of competitors to earn what they want and not near enough emphasis placed on dealing with poverty and disease in more countries than are rich in this world. The poor countries far outnumber the rich because poverty is not an issue for wealth. I just think it would be far better to find a way to provide clean water and housing to the many poor in this world than provide a CEO with millions. In the end, we – the public – are paying the CEO to do what he does. He is not earning it near as much as he thinks he is. We are only paying him far more than any one man deserves – and by so doing, ignoring the many plights of man.

Just consider the possibility. Say that Exxon gave \$1 million to its retiring CEO and spent \$399 million to find ways to provide clean water to so many impoverished whose main source of disease is dirty water – instead of giving its CEO all \$400 million. That is just one example. In comparison, is it not a total waste to give a bonus to one who doesn't need it and ignore all who could have used it in the process? And what about the waste of war? **By the time it is over, we will have spent over a trillion dollars adding to existing chaos in Iraq when that very same trillion could have performed wonders elsewhere. WHAT A WASTE!**

War, I think, is nothing more than the fiercest of competition. It becomes allowable if non-war might interrupt some field of competition. Personally, I do not think competition should be regarded so highly as to live and die by it when life in itself is such a wonderful pleasure and gift.

Why do we love competition so much? Why can't we tone it down? Why does one of my favorite baseball players, Jim Thome, deserve more than a million dollars a month to swing a bat when it takes him no more effort to do that and perhaps entertain me than it does for me to type this so you can read it?

Indeed, there is tremendous good to come from competition. I enjoy it very much, but should it be allowed to literally wreck so many lives? I think we need to realize just what is happening with war and see it for what it is – competitive enterprise – and not righteous necessity. I think we need to realize that when we make competition itself the king as we have done, companies are formed to manufacture weapons for war – and then for those companies to survive, war becomes a necessity. I think we need to realize that when we make competition itself the king, crime as part of competition becomes industrial related because companies are formed to manage prisons – and then for those companies to survive and have something to manage, crime itself becomes a necessity.

Recently, I took a Greyhound Bus from Denver, Colorado to my home in Laramie, after visiting with my oldest daughter, Anita, in Aurora, Colorado. I sat next to a young gent who is in his twenties who confided in me that he is an ex-con. He had just been released from prison after spending over five years in some prison in North Carolina. He was on his way home to his family in Utah. What did he do to deserve incarceration? He dealt in methamphetamines as a young teenager in terms of providing them for his fellow youth. For that, society chose to put him away to punish him; but people were paid to punish him.

To a great degree, that is why my young friend was punished – to provide a job for punishers. That is what happens when competition becomes the king we have made it. We come to insist on crime so that prison companies can do their thing. Without inmates, they would have no industry. So, instead of finding a way to resolve crime, we build more and better prisons and compensate more prison companies. In the end, there are more criminals because the more the better for prison management companies. Now, that is competition totally out of whack.

And it is all justified within **Competition Morality**. It has no place in **Equal Worth Morality**, but oh how it survives **WHEN COMPETITION IS KING**. Again, personally, I enjoy lots of competition, **BUT SHOULD IT BE THE KING WE HAVE MADE IT?**

Thanks for listening!
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.
May 7th, 2006

WHEN COMPETITION IS KING

THE END

LESSONS OF THE WIND

(5 Pages)

An essay by
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
May 9th, 2006

Preface

Hello, Everyone,

As I write this preface, it is July 7th, 2006 – though I wrote the accompanying essay below on May 9th, 2006. It is somewhat of a personal holiday for me - and my family. We lost our father, Leo, to an auto accident 40 years ago today - July 7th, 1966. I think the thoughts below would have somewhat pleased Dad - not completely - but somewhat. It is about the wind - and Dad was very much caught up with the natural. That is why I say my current article may have somewhat pleased him.

I recall a time when I was in my mid teens. There was a fierce thunderstorm going on outside - with the threat of hail. We were farmers outside of Powell, Wyoming and had several of our meager fields in beans. It was August – or maybe September - and the beans had been cut and gathered into rows for harvesting. The pods were brittle as harvest time pods are and that meant that a hail storm could have destroyed our crops by shattering the bean pods and scattering all the beans on the ground - making it impossible to harvest our crops.

I was very concerned, watching from a front room window of our home as lightning seemed to be striking every other second. Not really, of course, but it seemed that way to me. The fiercely dark clouds threatened a pounding rain – if not hail. I will never forget my Dad and his reaction to the storm. A hail storm could have ruined us that year, but Dad told me that I should not fret about any possible damage. He told me that I should watch the beautiful works of Nature going about in the sky and be glad for those works. *"Come, Sonny,"* he said, *"and watch the wonderful works of God. Tomorrow, it may be sunny and you will not have such an opportunity."* I was known as "Sonny" by all of my family,

I guess there is a lot of my Dad in me, then, in that I love to be grateful for what Nature is providing. In the article at hand, it is the wind. I hope

you find my offering somewhat pleasing - as I think Dad would. Dad loved Nature and really believed that God is in all of Nature. Perhaps a lot of his personal belief rubbed off or into me.

With that, let me leave you to my pondering about the wind. I even wrote a song about it that I call ***ODE TO THE WIND***. You will find it at the end. I hope you like it.

Gently,

Will (Frank) Bessler

Pondering The Wind

Written May 9th, 2006

I am perched on a mountain overlooking the Laramie Valley in Wyoming as I write this. The city of Laramie of some 27,000 is below me. I can see it in the distance. It is early May – and it is still cool here. I do not suppose it is any warmer where I stand than 45 degrees or so; and the wind is blowing at perhaps 30 mph. It seems like the wind in this area is always blowing.

I do not understand the wind. Do you? Maybe meteorologists understand it, but I am not one of them. I suspect, though, that the wind is a mystery to all, even meteorologists. I owe a lot to the wind – as we all do. Understanding it no more than I do, I know that clouds are pushed by the wind. Clouds may even be caused by the wind. I don't know about that, but I am sure clouds owe their movement to the wind. Without wind, clouds would stand still and shady areas would never see the sun – as sunny areas would never see the shade – given any clouds at all. If it weren't for the wind, no life could exist on this grand ole Earth because it would be too hot for life where clouds could not provide shade and moisture and too cold for life where the sun never shines. I guess that's to say that all life on Earth owes its existence to the wind. I think that is quite a notion.

So, I guess when I become irritated with the wind – as I am accustomed to do – and wish it would stop blowing – I should stop and say a prayer of thanksgiving instead and tell the wind that I am mighty grateful for my life.

I may be wrong, but I suspect that God is probably like the wind. I can't understand God anymore than I can the wind, but if it were not for God – in terms of some Infinite Reality that must encompass all that is – even the wind could not be. Or maybe God is the Wind – or the Wind is God.

The wind can be destructive, but I don't suppose the wind knows that. I don't suppose the wind knows where it blows – or even how it blows. It just blows; and sometimes it blows so hard as to cause tornadoes and hurricanes and typhoons and such; but I bet it doesn't know it is blowing tornadoes and hurricanes and typhoons. It just

blows; and tornadoes and hurricanes and typhoons are generated like children. Call them *children of the wind*.

I suspect God is like the wind. I'll bet God generates children too, but may not be aware of the details. The wind can blow a gentle breeze, too. It is not always harsh; and when it does blow a gentle breeze, it probably doesn't realize it is being gentle. I suppose it is the same with God. Let us call God an It for this article. It can create gentle as well as fierce – but gentle or fierce are equally Its children – just like tornadoes and gentle breezes are equally children of the wind.

I am impressed by the wind for being what it is, but I am also impressed with it for teaching me about God – and like I say, maybe God and the Wind are One. I have no reason to believe they are not. So, I think it is smart to believe they are the same – or at least treat them like they are. Whatever the wind is and whatever God is, I owe my source and my movement to both of them. Shouldn't that make them one as far as I am concerned? To be grateful for one is to be grateful for the other.

I am a child of the wind – or because of the wind, I am a child. I am a child of God – or because of God, I am a child. Both are true, I think; but I am probably a child of God just like I am a child of the wind. I mean I am no better or worse than any child of God, but I am just as much a child as any child. My existence is merely to be. Thus, I might as well enjoy me and not fret about things I can't understand. Don't you think?

I don't suppose tornadoes are very nice to experience, but they are not evil in and of themselves. They are just too much of a good thing. People are like that too. They can become too much and too forceful too; but that doesn't make them evil in and of themselves either. Too much of anything does not make the basis or nature of that thing evil. It's just too much of what it is. I think it is really good to know that and just deal with things that become too much as easily as I can.

Anyway, if God is like the wind – and does not know what It does – and does not consider me separate from It – that means I should not look to God to know me on a one to one basis – or help me or deal with me as an individual. All God's children are individuals. So even if God could know me as an individual, why should I think that God could take my side over another of Its children?

I know that somewhat keeps me dangling out there – if I can't depend upon God to help me – person to person – when I ask It for help; but helping individuals, person to person, is not God's function if God is like the wind; and I think there is a good chance it is so.

The wind cannot assist a gentle breeze and protect it from a tornado. Both a gentle breeze and a tornado are equally children of the wind; and both myself as quiet one and a forceful one are equally children of God. The wind can't protect a gentle breeze from a tornado; and I suppose it is not likely that God can protect a gentle child from a harsh one.

If I can't depend upon God to protect me, person to person, from another of Its equal children, I guess it's best to just relax and enjoy me for the being and child I am as much as possible. I don't suppose it does any good for a gentle breeze to become angry at a tornado – lest it become a tornado in the process by the fury it would generate. Experience shows me that tornadoes come, but do not stay. They move on. I suppose some gentle breezes are taken away by tornadoes and become part of tornadoes; but after a tornado, there is always calm after the storm. Experience tells me that too.

Perhaps the lesson of that is that I can ride out a tornado if I just stay calm and do not let a tornado make me like it. Getting angry at a tornado is probably of no worth. It would not do any good; and my anger might turn me into a tornado. I suppose if I want to be like a tornado, that's OK; but if I want to stay a gentle breeze, then I best not get angry at my windy brother – a tornado – or one of its siblings, a hurricane or typhoon.

So, the wind can tell me lots about God and Life if I let it. I like to think that I listen to the wind – and hear God – or the lessons of God. Let me not curse the wind, but smile when it comes – even when it comes too much. If it weren't for the wind, at least on this Earth, I would not be. I am dependent upon the wind for my existence; and if there is God – and I think there is – I can feel confident that God is like the wind. The wind and God can lift me up and let me down without knowing what they do; and I can be secure in what they do.

And if I have a soul that is a separate child from my body – and I think I do – it must be just another child of the wind – or another child of something like the wind. Like my body, if my soul is separate from my body, it must also be a child of God – and as such, can expect no special blessing or protection against other children souls. My soul, too, must depend upon itself for its attitude – and allow no other child of the wind or child of something like the wind make it different than what it wants to be.

Though I do not understand my conception or my being as a soul in this world, if indeed I am a soul, be it from the wind or from something like the wind – and God – I believe my eternity is in my hands in terms of my being able to manage or control my attitude. So, wind, keep on blowing; and I will tag along.

Thanks for listening!
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.
May 9th, 2006

My ode to the wind follows.

Ode to The Wind

By
Francis William Bessler
May 9th, 2006

REFRAIN:

Clouds are in my eyes.
The wind is in my face.
The birds are flying high.
They seem so full of grace.
The wind is my friend.
It blows the clouds around.
I'm wondering as I stand
where tomorrow I'll be found.

Oh, what is the mystery of life?
Won't you tell me what it is?
They tell me the secrets of the night
are found just blowing in the wind.

I'm wondering as I stand upon this hill
what are the secrets of my soul?
I think I'll keep going on until
the wind tells me what I want to know. *Refrain.*

As I stand here beneath the stars above,
my mind just keeps on asking why.
I know that the answers I can love
are found in the wind and the sky.

I'm hoping as the wind blows so free,
it will tell me what I want to know.
And I think that it's telling me
my friend, just be grateful for the show. *Refrain.*

I ask my friend, the wind, where is God;
and it tells me to look all around.
It tells me to look there because
there's no place where God can't be found. *Refrain (2).*

LESSONS OF THE WIND

THE END

PONDERING THE INFINITE

(3 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

May 11th, 2006

Have you ever pondered The Infinite? I have; and I must say, such thoughts are truly satisfying to me. In a way, thoughts about The Infinite are quite easy. One could say, there's nothing to it. It is amazing what we can know about The Infinite without really knowing much at all. I don't suppose anything in terms of essence can be known about The Infinite, but where it counts, so much can be known. If you accept the philosophical definition of The Infinite as being **something without limits**, it is to say that whatever The Infinite is, It is Everywhere. Thus, a working definition of **The Infinite** could be – **something that is everywhere**. That is why I say, there's nothing to it.

I love to ponder The Infinite because by pondering it, my soul is liberated. No one can put anything over on me because I know my own working definition. All I have to do is compare what others are saying about The Infinite with my own working definition of it – and presto, it is easy to judge the correctness or incorrectness of what others might be thinking and offering.

For instance, if someone were to say to me that The Infinite is a Person, I would say, I don't think so. Why? Because it is unfathomable to me how something that is present in everything can possibly be a person outside of things. It seems to me that a person has to be something that is completely distinct from another being. Maybe that is not a good definition of person, but it is my definition. **A person is an intelligent being that can be separated from all other beings**. Can The Infinite be separated from all other beings? Not if It is Everywhere like my working definition says. Accordingly, God can't be a Person – given that I am calling my Infinity, God.

Very interesting, huh? Let's speculate on another possibility. Say, you tell me that The Infinite is a Power that can command obedience. Let us compare that with our working definition of The Infinite. **Is it reasonable to assume that something that is everywhere and in everything can be a power outside another in order to be able to command obedience from it?** Of course not. Obedience to another requires separation from that other. So, how is it reasonable to see God – or The Infinite – as a power to command obedience when God is not separate from that which would supposedly have to obey Him – or It?

Alright, so we have speculated quite well on what The Infinite can't be. Related to ourselves, what can it be? That is probably far more important than knowing what it can't be. I find it rather amusing to see within the very term infinite a most amazing expression of what The Infinite can be - related to ourselves. We are finite inasmuch as each of us is limited and none of us can be everywhere as God – or The Infinite – must be; but what is God but something that is in the finite. Thus our working definition of God related to us is that Presence that is everywhere that is ***in the finite***. As far as we are concerned, then, since we are part of the vast world of the finite, God is something that is

in us – *in (the) finite*. God is not a god that is external to us; but a Presence that is Internal – as well as External.

This is a very liberating idea because **by realizing that God is within us or in us, Judgment by God is pretty much eliminated**. That means that no one can use the Judgment of God as leverage to command obedience. If obedience is requested or required, it is not by God. That is really good to know. Then if I choose to obey some finite source – for some assumed reward – I can go forward with my eyes wide open. I certainly see no reason why some finite source can't claim authority; and it may be a good thing; but at least I can know it is not God who is requesting something and it will not be God who will be rewarding obedience.

What does it mean to be filled with The Infinite? For me, it translates to mystery. I do not know what it means to be filled with The Infinite; but I can certainly be caught up with the mystery of me, knowing, in effect, that I am somewhat of The Infinite. Like a verse in my song that follows says, I can laugh, knowing that when I do, I am really laughing with The Infinite because The Infinite is in me – and to the degree that The Infinite is filling my space, I am The Infinite. I think that is a really encouraging notion – to know I am one with The Infinite.

My flesh, then, is Divine if it is filled with God. My soul, then, is Divine if it is filled with God. The wonder about this speculation is that I can know that because The Infinite is really Infinite Presence, there is no place where there can be more of God than another. There is no reason, then, to think that someplace else is more Divine than the place of a current setting. **How can there be more of The Infinite one place than another?** I cannot imagine it. Can you? All things are Divine because God – or The Infinite – is in all things; and all places are Divine because no matter where we go, there is also The Infinite.

As a kid, I used to ponder God – or The Infinite; and I would try to imagine an end of the world. I would imagine some kind of line specifying the end – and then I would imagine an extension of the end line because imagining a real end with nothing beyond that end is really impossible. If you do not believe me, just try it.

Try imagining a room with a wall. Then try imagining that there is nothing beyond the wall. If nothing else, there is more wall and beyond that, more wall and beyond that, more wall. Right? Can you imagine an end with nothing beyond that end? I can't; and because I can't imagine a wall with nothing beyond it, I am certain that The Infinite exists. That Infinity must go on and on and on and on. It is perhaps because I cannot imagine there can be an end border that I have become comfortable with the notion of endlessness; and since I cannot imagine an end, I can't imagine a God outside an end. **How can you have a God outside an end if there is no end?** Thus, if God can't be a being that is beyond some end border, **God must be All of the Contents of that which is Endlessness.**

Again, there is nothing to it. It is really easy to abandon myself within Infinity and be secure in the notion that whatever life is, it is filled with The Infinite; and that being so, all that is must be Divine; and that, of course, includes you and me. Doesn't it?

Thanks for listening!
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.

LAUGHING WITH THE INFINITE

By
Francis William Bessler
Written May 11th, 2006

REFRAIN:

*I'm laughing with The Infinite
because The Infinite is me.
I'm crying with The Infinite
because The Infinite's in me.
I'm wondering about The Infinite
as I am wondering about you.
And I'm hoping that you're wondering
about The Infinite too.*

It's easy to be intimate – with something inside of you.
It's easy to be intimate – with that that's loving you. **Refrain.**

It's hard to be distant – with something inside of you.
It's hard to be a stranger – with that that's loving you. **Refrain.**

It's nice to be a friend – with something a friend to you.
It's nice to be wed – with something that is true. **Refrain.**

The Infinite is a mystery – but quite easy to understand.
If it's everywhere – it must be where I stand. **Refrain.**

So, come along with me – and let's share the mystery
and find that we're sharing – that which we call Divinity. **Refrain.**

Yes, it's easy to be intimate – with something inside of you.
It's easy to be intimate – with that that's loving you. **Refrain (3).**

PONDERING THE INFINITE

THE END

IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY

(4 Pages)

By
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
May 12th, 2006

What Is Divinity?

Yesterday, I wrote an essay I called: *PONDERING THE INFINITE*. Considering The Infinite as something physical, **The Infinite** could be likened to *Endless Existence*. I did not call it that in my essay, but it could be called that. It could also be called: *Divinity*. Why? Because the Godly is often understood as The Divine. Since our Endless Existence is really another expression for The Infinite, Endless Existence could also be equated to The Divine – or God. So, what is Divinity? In essence, it is Endless Existence. Since The Infinite is everywhere, **Everywhere is Divine**; and, of course, **Everything is Divine**.

Where Am I?

I find this idea almost magical. Where am I, related to **The Infinite** or **Endless Existence** or **The Divine**? *Right smack in the middle!* Each of us is in the middle of **The Infinite**, related to ourselves. You are in the middle of your world. I am in the middle of my world; and I suppose if the two of us are really one, *we* are in the middle of *our* world – a real *Adam & Eve*.

Now, if Existence was not endless and there were some boundaries to existence, then the middle of that existence could be charted. If so, if the actual middle is far off from my particular point of existence, then I might not be in the middle; however, since *Endless Existence* really has no boundaries, everything is in the middle, related to other things. How could it be otherwise?

So what? What does this say? Perhaps nothing, perhaps everything. I guess it depends upon your point of view. The idea of being the center of my world – or universe – thrills me; but it may not you. I am thrilled with the idea because I am confirmed in my belief that each person must make his or her own decisions and chart his or her own destiny. Being in the middle somehow makes that clear to me. I love being responsible for my own fate; and so the idea that I am in the middle of my world says volumes about how I should relate in this life.

Being in the middle implies to me that I am like the hub of my world, but comparing that hub to the hub of a wheel, I am not the spokes of my world. Spokes go out from me,

but they are not me. I find that very satisfying. I like the idea that what I do may influence or affect – or even effect – others – though I would not like it at all if my influence or affect is a negative one. I am not only responsible for my life, but in a real way, I am responsible for yours as well – related to my world – not to some general world. I am the hub of my world – not of your world – or of the world in general.

A Liberated Hub

I think many people act like they are not only the hub of their world, but the hub of the world in general. I do not see my life in that fashion. Being the center of my life does not mean being the center of the world. I have no such desire; and I can't imagine how preposterous such a life would be. To think that the world in general somehow depended upon me to act for it would be far too heavy for me. I am much too philosophical for that. I enjoy being the center of my world, but I would not enjoy having to be the center of yours because it is just not true. No one is the center of any world but their own; and those who act like their lives are supposed to be for the benefit and direction of all have a terribly exaggerated opinion of their own worth, I think.

When I think of my being the center of my world with **The Divine** encompassing me and even saturating me, I am left with a wonderful sense of liberation and completion. It is like I have to go nowhere to find satisfaction. It is like I have all I need in me; and in a *Divine sense*, it is true, too. If **The Infinite** is truly where I am, then there is no place I need to go to find **The Infinite**. Of course, that would be true even if I am not the center of my world. Being the center of my world does not offer me more Infinity than I would have if I were not the center of my world; but in some way, being the center merely emphasizes my worth – which is no more or less than your own.

And it is really real, too. It is not just playing tricks on the mind. It is literally true that each soul is the center of their own world because there is as much Infinity to the left of the center as there is to the right of it. Just think about it. How could it not be so? That which is unimaginable is the actual Infinity part of it. Our finite minds cannot fathom that; but our finite minds can very well fathom that given an Infinity, each person must be the center of that Infinity, relating to him or herself.

Now, take that idea and live it! No one is more important than you in your world. Take that idea and run with it, knowing that it is literally true. Your world is yours to mold and love as my world is mine to mold and love. It is a wonderful existence that we have – though none of us can explain it. It need not be explained. It only needs to be enjoyed and lived. Each person has equal worth related to themselves and to the general world of Infinity. Let not a single one of us think otherwise – regardless of what others may think.

Little Me – Little Thee

It is also good, however, to take that idea and share it! Yes, I am the center of my world, but that does not mean I can't reach out to you in your center – if our centers are compatible. If you have some exaggerated notion of worth and think that God is blessing you with some direction and worth that I am lacking, chances are, you and I will not be able to relate and share centers; but if you are aware of your equal worth and act like it,

be my guest – **come and share my world with me** – and *let me share your world with you!*

I see myself as *little*. I take enormous pride in that – not because there is any intrinsic value in being little, but because there is enormous philosophical value in being little and acting accordingly. Given that **philosophical** is really *spiritual*, there is also tremendous *spiritual* value in loving the little and not insisting on any exaggerated sense of worth.

The way I look at it – **all life is bounty**. That is to say that the littlest part of the bounty is as great as life in general. It is like the littlest part has the same **Infinity** as any larger part. **It is really recognizing the equal worth of each part that makes little so great.** When two *little people* come together, then that may be the ultimate. I think of it as the second greatest ideal of life – the first being one person recognizing his or her own worth and living satisfied because of it.

Adam & Eve! Not just Adam. Not just Eve – ***But Adam & Eve!*** It is truly an inspiration and aspiration worthy of pursuit – and achievement. And it's just two *little people*, knowing of their worth and knowing that **The Infinite** occupies their space and provides them their worth. **Any two can be an Adam & Eve, I think – two standing as one IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY!**

Thanks for listening!

*Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
May 12th, 2006*

A song about wondering about Divinity and other things follows.

I'M WONDERING

By
Francis William Bessler
Written May 13th, 2006

REFRAIN:

*I'm wondering about the world.
I'm wondering about time.
I'm wondering about God –
How it makes us all Divine.
I'm wondering about life.
I'm caught up in its mystery.
I'm wondering about myself –
and little ole thee.*

I want to be small – not have to reach so high.
I believe I'm in God – in the middle of the Divine.

I think we're all the same. We're all swimming in Divinity.
Let us all be bold – embrace our wonderful mystery. *Refrain.*

No one is alone – because we're all one in God.
Let us celebrate – our mystery with our applause.

It's fine to wonder – but let's not stop believing
that all life is grand – worthy of embracing. *Refrain.*

So, come, my friend – and realize your worth.
Let's share what's Divine – on this great planet, Earth.

Yes, I want to be small – not have to reach so high.
I believe I'm in God – in the middle of the Divine. *Refrain.*

FINISH:

*I'm wondering about myself –
and little ole thee.*

*Yes, I'm wondering about myself –
and little ole thee.*

IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY

THE END

THE NON-JUDAIC JESUS

(30 Pages)

By
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
May 16th, 2006

Introduction

This is an attempt to challenge an age old tradition. It is a Christian tradition that has long believed that Jesus was a messiah for the Jews. It is my opinion that Jesus could not have been a messiah for the Jews because he did not believe in their cause. How is it possible that one who does not believe in a cause can be a legitimate champion of that tradition? In this work, I will attempt to demonstrate that Jesus did not believe in the Jewish traditions and in all likelihood, did not want any part of Jewish law.

How did he become a champion of Judaism if, in fact, he lived to challenge it? Call it a stroke of history, perhaps. Call it circumstance. Call it luck; but if we are smart, we will eventually call it wrong. Personally, I think the main culprit was a man named Peter. That seems to be where the evidence leads. I think Peter got Jesus wrong; but because few of his contemporaries knew a different Jesus, Peter won out. So, it seems.

But there were a few opposing voices. Among those voices were quite likely two known as **Thomas** and **Mary**. We will get to them shortly; but because of these two, I think a challenge to the **Supremacy of Peter** can be mounted. I do not like where Peter has taken Christianity because I don't think it is what Jesus taught. I think that Jesus taught *a need for shamelessness*, but Peter had no feel for such a vision – even as he probably did like Jesus tremendously. So, when Jesus died, Peter decided to take up the cause of Jesus. Unfortunately since Peter did not understand Jesus, that which Peter would teach and has taught through the Church he founded has been largely wrong.

I think the very center of the real teaching of Christ focused on shamelessness. I will try to demonstrate that notion with this work; but since Peter did not have any feel for shamelessness, he directed the Church of Christ he probably founded in another direction. Consequently, the Jesus who lived has been ignored and the Jesus who did not live has been in command for all these many years. At least, I think so; and that will be the argument I will try to make with this essay.

So hang on! As Bette Davis said in one of her movies – or as the character she played said: **we could be in for a bumpy ride.**

THE ALTERATION OF JESUS

Prior to writing this essay, I wrote an essay I called **IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY**. In that effort, I argued that all are really Divine – though few of us realize it. In being Divine, we are also sinless – in terms of inheriting any blemishes. We can sin, but we have no sin in us. That is perhaps the distinction I would make; but we will get into that later. I believe that Jesus could have written **IN THE MIDDLE OF DIVINITY** because I think he believed in the main notion I advance that all are **swimming in Divinity**. Unfortunately, most of us are swimming with our eyes closed and we are unaware of the clear waters in which we are really swimming. We have become convinced that our waters are filthy; and though they are not filthy, but clean, they might as well be filthy because it is our belief we are swimming in filthy waters. I think one of the main reasons – if not the main reason – that we have such an impression is **Peter**.

It is my considered opinion that a man named Peter probably altered history more than any other single man in that Peter changed Jesus from one who believed and taught that all are Divine to one who believed and taught that Divinity is illusive to all except those who accept Jesus as a Divine Savior. If it had not been for Peter, Jesus would probably be known much differently today than he is. If it had not been for Peter, Christianity would not be known today for a religion that teaches salvation from sin, but rather for a religion that teaches no inherited sin – and therefore no need to be saved from such. Again, I am not arguing all sin is folly. Only that inherited sin is folly.

But Peter changed it all. I do not know if he knew otherwise and used Jesus as a fountain of power for himself – or if he was sincerely ignorant; but I suspect that Peter and his fellow believers delivered a phony Jesus to the world. Perhaps much of what Peter and his writers offered about Jesus is correct – in terms of the urgings of Jesus that we be kind to everyone – **but where Peter corrupted the true story of Jesus is that he framed Jesus within Judaism and as such, offered a phony Jesus to the world.**

Keep in mind that Peter was a Jew – as was the other apostle of greatest influence regarding Jesus – the one we know as Paul. Peter and Paul were both Jews and both believed in their tradition. They can not be blamed for that; but I think they can be blamed for insisting on fitting Jesus within their tradition and making it look like Jesus and his teaching was only relevant within Judaism. It almost hurts too much to even suggest it and it is really tempting to let the legend continue while letting the real story of Jesus stay dead, but I do not think it wise to do so. Thus, I will do my best to present an alternate story of Jesus – a story that I believe fits the truth much better than the legend that Peter and his boys fomented and impressed upon the world.

Why am I doing this? Because I do not think the legend is working. If the legend was working and souls were acting Jesus-like in spite of an incorrect legend, then I would let my story and vision of Jesus stay hidden; however, because people are not acting Jesus-like – in my opinion, of course – I think someone ought to take it upon him or herself to try and correct the story of Jesus so that in the future we may start to conduct

ourselves in a much more Jesus-way than we have in the past. I think that Jesus stood for the Divinity of life – all life – and not just some of life. **The major alteration of Jesus by Peter – and perhaps Paul – was their presentation of Jesus as being solely Divine with no allowance for the equal Divinity of us all.** It is this alteration of Jesus that has allowed for a significantly different presentation of Jesus than that of the real Jesus.

I do not claim to know the real drama of Jesus. I was not there. I do not know how he really related to Judaism and how he dealt with Judaism. Some would say that I am a fool, then, to be offering a different story than the legendary story of Jesus completing Judaism if I do not know a different story. That might be so. I may be a fool for challenging history and traditional thought without having any historical proof of my claims, but, in truth, I would be a bigger fool to claim to know a history that I do not. I cannot begin to present a story of Jesus that is historically oriented because I am without any history to do so. I can only use some non-traditional sources to bolster my arguments since it is tradition and traditional viewpoints that I am challenging. Call it *Circumstantial Evidence*, if you wish. For whatever it is worth, then, let me proceed.

Was Jesus a Jew?

If you asked that question of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, or Paul – the answer to that question would be a definite yes. After all, they were trying to present Jesus within the framework of Judaism. So, how could they not have presented Jesus as a Jew?

As I see it, these **main six** are not the only ones who wrote about Jesus. Others who wrote about Jesus may not have been so committed to Judaism as these six may have been – and so they may answer this question differently.

Though I do not know the true history of the proceedings, I am fully aware that in the 4th Century, many **Jesus oriented writings** were banned by the Church that came to power. I do not wish to get into the story of the emerging Church of Christ in the 4th Century. It had to do with Constantine and his desire to establish a state religion and choosing the **power form** of Christianity to do it; but I do not know enough about that to even want to make that part of my argument. It is not for me to offer why some **Jesus oriented writings** were banned – only that they were – or probably were – based on our having some writings today that strongly suggest that such writings did exist and probably were banned.

Enter & Sign In, Please – Thomas & Mary!

For instance, we have today a remarkable vision of Jesus as offered in something we could call *THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS*. This Thomas writes about Jesus and does not seem to focus on any Judaism of Jesus. That is probably sufficient to suggest that Thomas may not have considered Jesus a Jew – in terms of Jesus having to complete some Judaic history or tradition. **Keep in mind that I am trying to argue that Jesus was misrepresented by Peter and his boys as being one necessarily framed within Judaism when his message was not Judaic at all.** It is my opinion and

argument that Jesus did not exist to satisfy some Jewish proclamations looking for a Jewish savior and messiah; but rather he was mostly non-Jewish in his scope and his teachings. He may well have been a Jew, but a rebel Jew – not a traditional Jew.

It is speculated by many that the Thomas who is the author of ***THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS*** may well have been the same Thomas that is spoken of in the regular gospels of the ***BIBLE*** as one of the twelve apostles of Jesus. I do not wish to argue about that one way or the other in this opinion writing. Suffice it to say that it may be so. It may be so that the Thomas who claims to be the witness of Jesus offered in ***THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS*** is, in fact, one of the claimed apostles of Jesus; but that is not an essential item of my argument. I only wish to argue that someone named ***Thomas*** is claimed to have authored a different vision of Jesus – one not necessarily framed within Judaism.

Another source I will use to make my argument that Jesus may not have been properly represented for what he truly was is something we can call ***THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARY***. Some think the Mary of authorship is Mary Magdalene – implied to be a sinner and maybe even prostitute within the regular stories of Jesus as offered in the ***BIBLE***. Who knows the real story of Mary – as author of this alternative story of Jesus? I do not. My only desire here is to present that there was a different story of Jesus presented in this work – that like that of Thomas – seems to offer a different Jesus – ***a shameless Jesus who taught shamelessness as an ideal to all or for all.***

As I write this, there is a movie about to be released that is called ***THE DAVINCI CODE*** – which is based on a book by Dan Brown called the same. In the book at least, it is offered that Jesus and Mary Magdalene married. I do not know about that. Perhaps they did, and perhaps they didn't; but my argument is not based on any ***theoretical history*** of Jesus, but rather on visions of Jesus as I see them depicted in the two alternate gospels of mention: that of ***THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS*** and that which could be called ***THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARY***. Never mind if Thomas and Mary are true witnesses of Jesus. Suffice it to say, that someone named Thomas and someone named Mary seem to offer contradictory visions of Jesus – that is contradictory to the vision of Jesus as necessary redeemer and promised messiah of Judaism.

The ***Gospel of Thomas*** I will be using derives from a translation of an ancient script discovered only in 1945 in a cave above the Nile River in Egypt. There may be other translations – and are other translations – but the one I will be using is a product of a translation team headed by fellow named A. Guillaumont. I believe it to be one of the earliest translations of the source discovered in 1945 – that was written in Coptic – an ancient Egyptian language. Though I have misplaced my original copy, as memory serves me, Mr. Guillaumont and his team produced their translation from Coptic to English in 1959, published by Harper & Row – though it may have been 1979 because that is the year I think I discovered it – or was given it by a friend. Other translations have ensued since then; but I will be referring to the Guillaumont source. I will repeat verbatim the verses of Thomas as presented in Mr. Guillaumont's work. He did not explain any of the special characters that accompany some of the verses – implying perhaps some confusion about some of the verses. Thus, I will not explain any of those characters either and you can judge for yourself what they might mean.

It should be noted that the **Gospel of Thomas** is not a narrative. It does not offer a history of Jesus in terms of what he did. It only offers a guide as to what he believed and what he taught. All 114 verses that are found in it are *Jesus said* verses, not **Jesus did** reports. It is surmised that this gospel was really written by a protégé of Thomas in the early part of the 2nd Century. That may be so, though I suspect it is not. I suspect that the Gospel of Thomas may have been taken down in notes over a period of time during the life of Jesus by Thomas. Those notes may have later become some original Gospel of Thomas – most likely written in Greek since Thomas is reported to have been Greek in one of the regular gospels of the **BIBLE**. Then later, that Greek work was probably translated into Coptic because it is in that form it was hidden – probably in the 4th Century following Constantine’s edict of making Christianity the state religion. The original Greek may have been burned or trashed at the hands of the bishops of the day who may have seen the work of Thomas much too challenging to authority. In time, as we review some of the verses, you will see why such a threat could have been seen.

It may be generally assumed that the Gospel of Thomas was intentionally hidden in a cave in Egypt around the 4th Century after the emerging Church of the day declared many alternate stories of Jesus as heretical and banned them. To save some of the banned works from total destruction, it may be assumed that someone hid copies away. The Gospel of Thomas was not the only work discovered in that cave off the Nile River near Nag Hammadi in 1945 – by an ignorant peasant no less – but it is the only work of the works found there of interest to me for this essay.

Some argue that the Gospel of Thomas is a product of **Gnosticism** – an early strain of Christianity that held that knowledge is the basis of wisdom and virtue – as opposed perhaps to faith in the assumed messianic character of Jesus. If that is the definition of **Gnosticism**, I am a **Gnostic** myself because it is precisely that in which I believe; but some say that **Gnosticism** featured some kind of dualism in creation where some good god created some things and some bad god created other things – and that our lives on Earth represent a struggle between the good god and the bad god. In no way am I a **Gnostic** if that is the interpretation of **Gnosticism**; and neither do I think the Gospel of Thomas could be considered **Gnostic** if some dualistic notion of creation is assumed. I see absolutely no evidence of any dualistic creation in the Gospel of Thomas; and cannot imagine how anyone could possibly read such an interpretation into it.

I must admit to some degree of bewilderment with the strain of Christianity called **Gnosticism**, however. Perhaps there was not just one school of it and one school featured a story of creation by different gods and another school gave no attention to any dualistic notions. I do not really know; but for this effort, I don’t suppose I have to know more. I will not refer to the term again and will deal only with the verses as they seem to me – of real **Gnostic** origin or otherwise.

The Gospel of Mary I will be using derives from a work by a Marvin Meyer that is included within a work he calls **THE GOSPELS OF MARY**. Mr. Meyer offers a section called **THE GOSPEL OF MARY** within his general work. His work was copyrighted in 2004. I think it is Mr. Meyer’s opinion that the Mary of authorship is Mary Magdalene, but once again, her actual identity is not important to me. All that is important is that there is another source about Jesus that is offering a different vision of Jesus. It matters not to me if the author is Mary Magdalene or Mary Smith – anymore

that it matters if the Gospel of Thomas was written by Thomas – the claimed apostle of Jesus – or Thomas Smith. OK?

My approach to the study of some claimed wisdom is to ask: **does it make sense to me?** My embrace of the **Gospels of Thomas and Mary** is in that light. I come to the table with an earlier determination that **all life is Divine**. If one can call that a prejudice, then so be it. It is a prejudice with which I approach any article that claims to be true. Does it seem to be true to me – related to my own prejudices?

In truth, I think everyone approaches any work of speculated wisdom in that way. We all have our prejudices. My basic prejudice is that the **OLD TESTAMENT** seems as folly to me because it features a god and not what I think of as God. My God is not only outside of me, but also inside of me. **The god of the OLD TESTAMENT is not an everywhere God, but a god who can be here and not there – for this one and against that one. That makes no sense to me.**

Thus, I come to the table of Jesus having already discounted the validity of the **OLD TESTAMENT** and its corresponding **framework of law**. My attraction to the **Gospels of Thomas and Mary** is greatly due to seeing the Jesus of them challenge the **OLD LAWS** of the Jewish god, Jehovah. Again, I cannot relate to the god, Jehovah, as equal to that which I call God because the god, Jehovah is like a pagan god that operated on behalf of the Jews and against non-Jews like the Egyptians. **My God can not operate in some pro and con fashion – for this people and against that people. It makes no sense to me.**

I am not sure of the journey of the **Gospel of Mary**. Mr. Meyer was not very clear on that matter in his work; but I believe this gospel has been in some degree of circulation since the late 1800s – having been secured in Cairo, Egypt prior to that. By itself, it probably offers little of a challenge to traditional claims about Jesus; but perhaps bonded together with the Gospel of Thomas, some new light may come to bear.

The **Gospel of Thomas** contains 114 verses. The **Gospel of Mary** contains but 5. Both gospels are lacking in some verses that were either missing or too hard to translate due to a state of corruption of some original source – as papyrus sheets that may have decayed too much to be explored. I have no intention of citing all the verses in my argument to follow – just some of the verses that seem to offer a **non-Judaic oriented Jesus**. History may well ignore this meager attempt to **correct a faulty vision of Jesus**; but I think I should try because the longer we ignore reality and perhaps the real Jesus, the longer we will continue to miss achieving the ideals I think the real Jesus recommended – **mainly shamelessness**.

As we lurch ahead on this **mission**, I would like to make it clear that I do not wish to assume that Peter knew he had Jesus wrong. He may have known it – and then again, he may have been sincerely ignorant. My argument is not to judge Peter on his sincerity, but to judge him on his accuracy; and, as they say, **let the chips fall where they may**.

Keep in mind, too, that I am arguing that Jesus should not be framed within Judaism. That is to say that his counsel was not Jewish oriented, but in general, his counsel or advice is that which could be called **General Counsel** – that is, applicable to all souls regardless of heritage. Jews believed that which could be called **The Kingdom** had to be derived through Judaism; but I doubt that Jesus did. **General Counsel** really infers that a given counsel could have been issued to a Chinese and would have contained the same ideal as it should have to a Jew. **In my opinion, we lose Jesus by tying him to Judaic**

roots. Peter chose to tie Jesus to Judaism – probably because without such a tie, his claim of power as successor to Jesus would have been baseless. Peter had to make Jesus a Jew to retain power over Christians because initially Christians were only **completed Jews**; but in doing so, the *General Counsel* of Jesus has largely been lost.

Ok, Peter – Let’s Have a Look! (What did you do to Jesus!!!!)

From *The Gospel According to Thomas*:

Verse 3: *Jesus said: If those who lead you say to you: “See, the Kingdom is in heaven,” then the birds of the heaven will precede you. If they say to you: “It is in the sea,” then the fish will precede you. But the Kingdom is within you and it is without you. If you (will) know yourselves, then you will be known and you will know that you are the sons of the Living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you are in poverty and you are poverty.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

The Kingdom (of Peace) is within us, Jesus says here – as well as outside of us; but it has nothing to do with Judaism or any ism. It is only knowing that we are all equally **sons of the Living Father**. If a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don’t think so. Do you?

Only the third entry in the Gospel of Thomas, however, suggests a completely different idea of Heaven than normally understood by most Jews and Christians. Most of these have a sense of some Heaven far off or some Heaven of later happening; but Jesus tells us here that which could be called **Heaven** or the **Kingdom** is already here. It is **within you and without you** – or in you and out of you – or all about. It is **everywhere**; and all we need to know to realize it is to know of our being **sons of the Living Father**. If we do not know that and are unaware of our status as **sons of the Living Father**, Jesus says that we are **in poverty and are poverty**.

Where is the Jewish in all of that? Where is having to bow down to Jehovah in all of that? Where is having to pray at some temple in all of that? Where is there having to obey two hundred statutes given by Jehovah to Moses in all of that? Where was Peter when Jesus said this? Why did he not listen? Why did Peter take Christianity in a completely different route than that seemingly being offered by Jesus here? Why did Peter make Christianity a **group experience** when it is clear to me that Jesus was telling us that it is really a **membership of one** in terms of it only takes myself to realize that I am worthy as a **son of the Living Father**.

But it's not Judaic or Christian, is it? I believe it because it makes sense to me. It makes sense to me because I see God as being Infinite and therefore **in all of us**. That is what Jesus seems to be saying here – **The Kingdom is here, there, and everywhere because the Living Father is here, there, and everywhere. It is because that is so that God must be in me; and that is why I should not have to look anywhere but where I am to find Heaven.**

In just this third verse, Jesus is warning us about looking for Heaven elsewhere. The promise of Heaven elsewhere or at some other time is the **Great Promise** that so many use to gain attention and to gain obedience to a given set of laws. If you do this for me, then I will give you Heaven. If you do this for Jesus, then later Jesus will give you Heaven. But Jesus warns us of that approach. He says, ***If those who lead you say to you: "See, the Kingdom is in heaven," then the birds of the heaven will precede you. If they say to you: "It is in the sea," then the fish will precede you. But the Kingdom is within you and it is without you.*** In other words, look about you and know that **Heaven is here and now.**

When I read such as this, I bow my head in sorrow because it offers such a simple truth – and I can't help but ask – **Oh, Peter, why did you not hear it?**

Verse 5: Jesus said: Know what is in thy sight, and what is hidden from thee will be revealed to thee. For there is nothing hidden that will not be manifest.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

This I believe! This is about as **General Counsel** as you can get. It has nothing to do with Judaism. It merely says that the key to virtue is knowledge – but not just any knowledge – but knowledge that is derived by observing on your own. All I need to know is right in front of me. Why? Because all that is not in front of me is represented by that which is in front of me. Thus, all I need to know is what is in my sight – and presto – all that is hidden from my sight will be known to me. You can fill an entire lifetime of documenting the truths before your eyes and applying those truths to that which you can't see.

It is certainly not traditionally Jewish – or Christian – though, is it? Revelation by another is the foundation of those faiths. The typical traditional Christian would have taken this advice by Jesus in Thomas and changed it to read like this: **Jesus said: Know what has been revealed to you and trust that it is true; for your heavenly father would not tell you what is not true** – or something like that. If I have to know something more than what I have in life, that would be necessary; but it is my firm belief that all life is the same in that all life is filled with God; and so by knowing what I am and the truths immediately surrounding me, I can know all I need to know. Can't I?

Verse 6: His disciples asked Him, they said to Him: Wouldst thou that we fast, and how should we pray, (and) should we give alms, and what diet should we observe: Jesus said: Do not lie and do not do what you hate, for all things are manifest before

Heaven. For there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed and there is nothing covered that shall remain without being uncovered.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

For Jews, fasting and praying and giving alms was necessary to appease God; but Jesus knew that trying to appease God is useless. Why? Because God is inside of us. Therefore, no appeasement is useful. Jesus offers only general counsel to be true to oneself and not worry about pleasing someone else. If one fasts or prays to try to influence God, it is all for naught because God is not outside of us to hear us and be influenced. Does it make any sense that something that is everywhere can be addressed as if it is only “over there” to be heard? If God is not “over there” to hear, then all of your fasting and praying to influence that God is for naught. Isn’t it? All that is really useful is being truthful (or not lying) and doing only what is pleasing to the soul (or not hating). All else is really sham. If a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don’t think so. Do you?

Verse 13: Jesus said to His disciples: Make a comparison to me and tell me whom I am like. Simon Peter said to Him: Thou art like a righteous angel. Matthew said to Him: Thou art like a wise man of understanding. Thomas said to Him: Master, my mouth will not at all be capable of saying whom Thou art like. Jesus said: I am not thy Master because thou has drunk, thou has become drunk from the bubbling spring which I have measured out. And He took him, he withdrew, he spoke three words to him. Now when Thomas came to his companions, they asked him: What did Jesus say to thee? Thomas said to them: If I tell you one of the words which He said to me, you will take up stones and throw at me; and the fire will come from the stones and burn you up.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

When Jesus asked his disciples – including our man, Peter – to describe him, Peter offers that Jesus is *like a righteous angel*. Matthew offers that Jesus is like a *wise man of understanding*. Thomas calls Jesus, *Master*, and says he could not tell him what he is like. Jesus directs his answer to Thomas – not Peter – and tells Thomas that he, Jesus, is *not Thy Master* because Thomas had *drunk from the bubbling spring which I have measured out* and was therefore, his own master. Clearly, Jesus is offering here that virtue is not having another as your master – such as would be the case if Jesus were really a messiah – but in knowing and embracing the ideals of Jesus and therefore becoming like Jesus. The false practice of traditional Christianity contradicts this counsel

in terms of claiming that Jesus himself – not just the truth of Jesus – is necessary for salvation.

In the latter part of the verse, Jesus takes Thomas apart from the others – including our man, Peter, and tells Thomas some secret thing. When asked by Peter and Matthew what Jesus said to Thomas, Thomas offers that if he told them, they would get angry. It is really neither here nor there, but it does imply that Peter may not have had the respect he claims in the other gospels. If Jesus could not confide in Peter and chose to confide in Thomas, then maybe it was Thomas and not Peter in which he could trust. Anyway, if a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don't think so. Do you?

Verse 14: Jesus said to them: If you fast, you will beget sin for yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned, and if you give alms, you will do evil to your spirits. And if you go into any land and wander in the regions, if they receive you, eat what they set before you, heal the sick among them. For what goes into your mouth will not defile you, but what comes out of your mouth, that is what will defile you.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Once again, this Jesus is offering that fasting and praying can be harmful to the soul. Why? Because if done to appeal to God as if God is only outside of us to monitor that appeal, we would be wasting our time and therefore harming ourselves. **True virtue is not appeal oriented.** I am not virtuous because I appeal to another outside of me, but I am only truly virtuous if I recognize my worth as a *son of the Living Father*. Peter would have us believe that virtue is acclaiming another as our savior. If that is not thinking you have to “appeal to another,” what is?

Later in the verse, Jesus says we should wander about and offer his ideals to whom we might meet, but he warns that some we meet may offer contrary views. Listening to the views of others is not that which will defile us. It is only that which we speak or believe that will defile us. Again, if a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don't think so. Do you?

Verse 21: Mary said to Jesus: Whom are thy disciples like? He said: They are like little children who have installed themselves in a field which is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, they will say: “Release to us our field.” They take off their clothes before them to release it (the field) to them and to give back their field to them. Therefore I say: If the lord of the house knows that the thief is coming, he will stay awake before he comes and will not let him dig through into his house of his kingdom to carry away his goods. You then must watch for the world, gird up your loins with great strength lest the brigands

find a way to come to you, because they will find the advantage which you expect. Let there be among you a man of understanding; when the fruit ripened, he came quickly with his sickle in his hand, he reaped it. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Some one called Mary asks Jesus to describe his disciples – probably including our man, Peter. Jesus says ***they are like little children who have installed themselves in a field which is not theirs.*** I think this is to at least imply that he who wrote this – the real apostle, Thomas, or another – was of the opinion that Jesus sensed his followers were not paying proper attention to his counsel. They were trying to make of him what he was not, for instance, a “master” of others – rather than one who sought only to teach “mastery.” Eventually, however, those “false” disciples will have to release their ill begotten field and will have to take off their clothes to do so. That is only to offer that the protection they think they are counting on will not be there in the end. They will be as naked – or unprotected - when the truth finally comes out.

The latter part of the verse merely warns those who might arrogantly assume and teach the wrong things in his name – or in the name of some “lord of truth” – that time will terminate without warning. **None of us knows the hour of our departure. So we should attend to the truth at all times and always be ready for our departure or death when it comes.** If a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don’t think so. Do you?

Verse 22: Jesus saw children who were being suckled. He said to his disciples: These children who are being suckled are like those who enter the Kingdom. They said to Him: Shall we then, being children, enter the Kingdom? Jesus said to them: When you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outer, and the outer as the inner, and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female (not) be female, when you make eyes in the place of an eye, and the hand in the place of a hand, and a foot in the place of a foot, (and) an image in the place of an image, then shall you enter the Kingdom.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Jesus offers that The Kingdom is ***like these children who are being suckled.*** That is to totally contradict the notion that only adults who know of the law and attend to it can enter The Kingdom (of Peace). If ever there is a complete challenge to the notion that only Jews could be saved, it is this verse. **Jesus is saying here that membership in The Kingdom has nothing to do with attention to any tradition.** A child has no knowledge

of tradition. If attending to some tradition is necessary for salvation, then one would have to become an adult who knows such tradition to be saved. Clearly, Jesus is challenging such a notion here.

Later in the verse, he is asked what he means that only children can enter The Kingdom. He answers that *when you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outer, and the outer as the inner, and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one*, etc *then shall you enter the Kingdom*. That is only to say we should not complicate things. All things have equal value. A Jewish cup is of no less value than a Chinese cup – or vice versa. The inside of a cup is of the same value as the outside of a cup. A female is of no less value than a male. Jesus was teaching here that to be as a child, one should not attend to the adopted “prejudices” of adulthood. A child has no such prejudices and is therefore in The Kingdom (of Peace). If a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don’t think so. Do you?

Of course, it is almost impossible to live without prejudice. I certainly have my prejudices, but I think they are well founded. I think my prejudices are really believing as a child might before indoctrination to the contrary that all life is good. The prejudices that Jesus is discounting here are not simple prejudices like mine that do not depend upon any traditional tale for authenticity, but prejudices that arise because of traditional tales that really counter the truth.

There is tremendous wisdom in seeing the inner as the outer and the outer as the inner and the above as the below and male as female and female as male because it is only to say that everything is equally holy because everything has God equally in it. Think of the bloodshed of history that ensued because someone or ones believed that one spot on Earth is holier than another. Think of the Crusades of the Middle Ages and witness how completely tragic it is to see the inner different than the outer or the above of different holiness than the below. Soldiers gave their lives to protect what they thought was some land holier than that from which they originated. See how stupid it all is – and how terribly against the wisdom of Jesus in this verse.

Even today, we talk of Israel in terms of **The Holy Land**, implying, of course, that it is holier than where we are. Men die for *the honor of protecting The Holy Land* from this infidel or that one. This temple or that temple is holier than the church down the street. It seems like Jesus was completely ignored when he lived; and it seems we still believe the same folly that he tried to challenge. Don’t you think?

Verse 28: *Jesus said: I took my stand in the midst of the world and in flesh I appeared to them; I found them all drunk, I found none among them athirst. And my soul was afflicted for the sons of men because they are blind in their heart and do not see that empty they have come into the world (and that) empty they seek to go out of the world again. But now they are drunk. When they have shaken off their wine, then will they repent.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

I believe this implies that Jesus believed in reincarnation. We come into the world with some preconceived notions – and many of us die with those same preconceived notions – or attitudes. Jesus said he *was afflicted for the sons of men because they are blind in their heart and do not see that empty they have come into the world (and that) empty they seek to out of the world again.* If a Chinese was hearing this, would he have had to become a Jew to attend to the lesson? I don't think so. Do you?

Verse 36: Jesus said: Take no thought from morning until evening and from evening until morning what you shall put on.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Was Jesus a nudist? I suspect he was because anyone who is of the mind that he is sacred would have no reason to cover up what is sacred. I am a nudist for that very reason; and I suspect that because Jesus believed in the general sacredness of life, he was probably a nudist too. In this verse, he says, *take no thought from morning until evening and from evening until morning what you shall put on.* That is not because of some antagonism with clothes. **It is for acceptance of life.**

But traditional Christianity would have us believe that Jesus believed we should cover the sin that is us. I see no evidence whatever that Jesus believed in sin in the Gospel of Thomas; and because I believe he believed in the sacredness of life, I think this counsel is offered. Those who are caught up with majesty of life as it is have no reason whatever – unless bad weather warrants otherwise protection – *to take any thought from morning until evening and from evening until morning what they put on – or leave off.*

Verse 37: His disciples said: When wilt Thou be revealed to us and when will we see Thee? Jesus said: When you take off your clothing without being ashamed, and take your clothes and put them under your feet as the little children and tread on them, then [shall you behold] the Son of the Living (One) and you shall not fear.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

This is only addressing the issue of shame, I think. One who believes that life is sacred – as I think did Jesus – realizes that shame has no place in the life of one who loves his or her own holiness. When asked by his disciples about when they would come to know who he was, he answered in a very unpredictable way. He said: *When you take off your clothing without being ashamed, and take your clothes and put them under your feet as the little children and tread on them, then [shall you behold] the Son of the Living (One) and you shall not fear.* In other words, it takes one to know one. It takes a shameless person to know another shameless person. Shame belongs only to those who have no sense about the sacred state of life; and if one is shameless, then nakedness cannot be considered to be unacceptable conduct.

I would be very surprised if Peter could have taken off his clothes and put them under his feet as the little children; and that is probably why Peter never really understood Jesus. It makes complete sense to me, but that is because it has been my way of life. I have lived my life trying to act shameless or proud of my nature and gift of life. So, I can understand why Jesus would have said that only those who could imitate him in his shamelessness could recognize him as a fellow *son of the Living One*. But this shamelessness that Jesus recommended could have been recommended to a Chinese as well as a Jew. Shamelessness is or should be applicable to any who want to live holy as ideally as possible. Thus, it could not be not restricted to Judaism. Could it?

Verse 43: *His disciples said to Him: Who are Thou that Thou should say these things to us? <Jesus said to them>: From what I say to you, you do not know who I am, but you have become as the Jews, for they love the tree, they hate its fruit, and they love the fruit, they hate the tree.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

Jesus was criticizing those he called *Jews* here in their general perspective that a tree can bear bad fruit or bad fruit can come from a good tree. I think Jesus believed that all are created by a Good God and that anything created by a Good God has to also be good. The Jews were – as most current Christians are – caught within a web of confusion that claims that God creates life, but that somehow that life is still evil. How can that be? We are created good, but we are still born with original sin. What a contradiction! Jesus is offering here, I think, that we should not be like the Jews who believe this way.

Within a modern text, it would be like this: **you have become as the Christians, for they love the tree, they hate its fruit, and they love the fruit, they hate the tree.** But Jesus is chiding the Jews and Judaism here – hardly an endorsement of the tradition of which Peter will claim that Jesus approved. If Jesus indeed intended to start a church, it would not have been one that continues the blindness of the one he opposed. By this verse, it should be clear that Jesus would not approve of claiming that life born of God can be tainted. **One cannot claim to love God and then hate a child of God. It is not consistent with true virtue; but it reflects a *General* ethic, not an isolated Jewish ethic.**

Verse 46: *Jesus said: From Adam until John the Baptist, there is among those born of women none higher than John the Baptist, so that his eyes will not be broken. But I have said that whoever among you becomes as a child shall know the Kingdom, and he shall become higher than John.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

My take on this is that John the Baptist was considered to be like the quintessential Jew. Yet that “quintessential Jew” is lower than a child in the world of virtue. Once again, this is somewhat of a stinging criticism of Judaism that is being represented here by one of their notables – John the Baptist. Keep in mind that my general theory is that

Jesus had no intention of being considered a spokesman for Judaism. John the Baptist could have been considered a spokesman for Judaism, but in this verse, Jesus is claiming that **the highest Jew is lower than a child in The Kingdom (of Peace)**. Why? Because Jews and Judaism loved confusion and separating good from good as in accusing the fruit of God – man – to be somehow evil. **This contradiction must have been excruciating for Jesus; and yet that same contradiction became the very basis of the Christianity that Peter would teach.** I hope you are beginning to see the possibility I am trying to suggest.

Who knows what is meant by the phrase, *so that his eyes will not be broken*? It may refer to how John the Baptist saw himself, though something seems to have been lost in the translation from Coptic to English. I suspect the original meaning was that in John's eyes, he saw himself as **the greatest Jew since Adam**. Jesus may only be offering that even if he agreed with John that he was the greatest Jew since Adam, as great as that is – or isn't – an innocent child is higher in the realm of peace than John.

From what I know about the Baptist, from the regular gospels of the **BIBLE**, I would not associate the idea of peace with him at all. He was one who was into ranting and raving about the wickedness of man; and that is hardly an expression of peace. Is it? It is said that John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins. I have no reason to believe they were not; but I doubt that they were **kissing cousins**. It seems that the Baptist and Jesus saw Judaism completely differently. In this verse, I think Jesus is expressing that difference. Jesus believed **the Kingdom is here** – and John believed in the traditional kingdom to come for which a messiah was needed. Very different indeed.

Verse 52: His disciples said to Him: Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel and they all spoke about (lit:in) Thee. He said to them: You have dismissed the Living (One) who is before you and you have spoken about the dead.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Once again, Jesus is trying to disassociate himself with Judaism here. His disciples are of the opinion that he has been sent by the god of their tradition and religion as a prophet of that tradition and religion; and Jesus flat out disclaims the notion. ***Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel and they all spoke about Thee*** the disciples offer. And Jesus says: ***You have dismissed the Living One who is before you and you have spoken about the dead.*** That is to say, I think, that Jesus does not want to be included within the circle of the dead prophets of Israel. Jesus did not seem to have much regard for these prophets of which he was supposed to be another. **In effect, he says, please do not see me as one of those because if you do, you will be ignoring my *General Counsel* by trying to link me with others of bad counsel.**

So, what did Peter do? He assumed leadership of a church he claimed that Jesus founded that embraced all the old prophets for which the Jesus of Thomas claims no association. The greatest sin of Peter is also the greatest sin of traditional Christianity – **tying personal virtue to tradition.** The counsel of Jesus does not depend upon Judaism or Christianity as traditions. **The counsel of Jesus is *Independent Truth* and has absolutely no dependence on any who may proclaim it.**

The Kingdom (of Peace) of which Jesus constantly talked is not a club in nature; though because many may adhere to its principles, it may seem as a club. **It is false, however, to make membership of some tradition a requirement for personal virtue.** It is such requirement that Jesus steadfastly opposed; and yet it is that exact requirement that Peter demanded and Paul preached. They might address it as: **Outside the church, there is no salvation** – implying a society of membership. **True virtue is not membership oriented, though membership may be a result if more than one practices the same rule.**

Verse 53: His disciples said to Him: Is circumcision profitable or not? He said to them: If it were profitable, their father would beget them circumcised from their mother. But the true circumcision in Spirit has become profitable in every way.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Once again, Jesus is disclaiming a Jewish tradition. The practice of circumcision of boys was anointed as the “law of Jehovah” by previous prophets of Israel; yet Thomas has Jesus disclaiming the usefulness of such a ritual. If it were useful, he says, ***their father would beget them circumcised from their mother.*** This is not a simple distancing from Jewish ritual. It is a flat out disclaimer that it was ever useful or really meaningful. **How could any practice be at one time valid ritual and then later become invalid – if the same god commanded the original practice that disclaimed its validity later?**

But once again, the important lesson to draw from this is that Jesus tried again and again to disassociate himself with Judaism; and yet Peter would later claim he was a champion of it. Peter had to claim that because if he did not, a necessary precedent for power would not have been established. If Jesus was not the **completion of the Jews**, then Peter would have had no way of becoming **the beginning of the Christians**. Why? Because Peter’s claim of power had to be rooted in a tradition – not personal virtue. All persons of power are aware of that. **No one can have any power over another if personal virtue is not subject to some traditional format.** So, those who want power – like Peter – merely assume leadership of a tradition in order to be recognized as a legitimate authority. But that didn’t make Peter right in his claims. Did it? Do you see Jesus being tied to any tradition or set of rules? I don’t; and I suspect neither did the author of the Gospel of Thomas.

Jesus added something, however, once he disclaimed the value of actual circumcision. He said: ***But the true circumcision in Spirit has become profitable in every way.*** Why would he say that? Because circumcision was a ritual signifying **commitment** to Judaism. One could commit without ritual, I think Jesus is saying. We should certainly be careful of our commitments, but we can make commitments without ritual. I think that is what Jesus is saying here.

Verse 70: Jesus said: If you bring forth that within yourselves, that which you have will save you. If you do not have that within yourselves, that which you do not have within you will kill you.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

What has this counsel to do strictly with Judaism? Not a thing. It matters not if you are Jew or otherwise. **Virtue is the same thing for all. It is recognizing your own worth and knowing of your own esteem.** Jesus might say that each of us should recognize our own worth because we are *sons of the Living Father* as he states in Verse 3 – which we covered earlier. **If we bring forth from ourselves our worth – knowing we are the fruit of a good tree – then that will save us; but if we do not recognize our own worth and insist we have no worth of ourselves, then that which we do not have will kill us** – as Jesus might say here. Traditional Christianity acts the exact opposite. It claims that none of us are born with the right stuff and that we must depend upon something outside ourselves to be saved – namely Jesus. **Once again, another indication of how Peter took the probable counsel of Jesus and formed a church that would demand the exact opposite – we must depend upon the grace of another to be saved.** How truly contradictory to the claims of this verse.

It is good to keep in mind that those who preached that Jesus preached salvation in him personally – and not just in what Jesus taught – were most likely fervent Jews. They still believed in the Judaism of their pre-Jesus experience. They were only trying to hang on to that Judaism with all its useless commands and connect it to Jesus. They may well have not seen Jesus except as one who believed in Moses and believed in the god of Moses, Jehovah. They probably felt totally justified only in the law of their youth – the law of Moses – or the many, many, many laws of Moses. They did not want to chance disassociation with Moses for fear of the god of Moses, Jehovah; and so they let Moses absorb Jesus; or perhaps better put – they allowed Jesus to be absorbed within the tradition of Moses. **We might not be able to see that this is what might have happened without alternative gospels like that of Thomas and Mary; but with alternative visions of Jesus like presented in these gospels, it becomes quite clear that the Jesus that has survived may not be the Jesus who lived.**

Verse 78: Jesus said: Why did you come out into the desert? To see a reed shaken by the wind? And to see a man clothed in soft garments? [See, your] kings and your great ones are those who are clothed in soft [garments] and they [shall] not be able to know the truth.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

As we have seen from previous verses, Jesus was not likely a believer of social virtue in any way. Kings and great ones are ones who depend upon some social worth – and social conventions like clothes. In this verse, it may well be speculated that Thomas found Jesus naked in the desert and was surprised to find him in that fashion. A man of independent virtue knows that his or her value does not come with the trappings of civilization. Each person is born of worth by virtue of being the good fruit from the good

tree – the good soul from the good God. **No wise person can tie worth to accomplishment; but that is exactly what kings and great ones do.** In a very real way, once again, we have Jesus distancing himself from authority; but this time it is not specifically Jewish authority from which he is distancing himself – in terms of worth. He is distancing himself – in terms of worth – from all authority. There is an implication, however, that he is suggesting that we should all follow his example.

What is that example? Find our own meaning in our own worth. No one needs the trappings of another to do that; and **those who think they do need the trappings of some social expression – like clothes to cover a sacred vessel of God – will never realize personal virtue.** You cannot tie personal virtue to personal accomplishment because if you do, it is merely an indication that you have no realization of worth. I am born worthy. I do not become worthy. Why? Because I am born of God Who or Which is worthy.

But once again, we have Jesus living outside the law. Maybe Moses would not have been meditating on the worth of the individual in this scene, but I see Jesus very much meditating on individual worth – and why would he be doing it in any way but naked? Moses probably would not have been meditating about personal worth at all. If it had been Moses whom Thomas found in the desert, Thomas would have probably been met with a tablet of laws and commands on what he must do to “achieve worth” in the eyes of Jehovah; but in this instance, Jesus did not offer a single law. He only offered comment on why he was not clothed when Thomas found it surprising.

Why did you come out into the desert? To see a reed shaken by the wind? And to see a man clothed in soft garments? he asked Thomas. Then he says, *[See, your] kings and your great ones are those who are clothed in soft [garments] and they [shall] not be able to know the truth.* They cannot know the truth while still insisting on accomplishment for worth – as all social achievers do – and clothes is a way of distinguishing accomplishment and authority from the lack thereof. Importantly, however, this Jesus is outside of Jewish tradition – not within it. It would not have mattered in the least if he were talking to a Jew or a Chinese. Would it have?

Verse 81: Jesus said: Let him who has become rich become king, and let him who has power renounce (it).

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Again, should it matter if the audience is Jewish or Chinese? I don't think so. I think Jesus is only offering general comment here that wealth is the same as royalty. If you rule over me for whatever reason, should it matter? If you are a royal king and rule over me, is that any different than being a wealthy person and somehow demanding my service? That is all that Jesus is offering here. **Let him who has become rich realize that it is the same as being of royal authority because the results are the same;** but it is *General Counsel*, not some particular Jewish counsel only.

The second part of this verse is quite interesting. Why would Jesus say *let him who has power renounce it?* My take on it is that it is the same as the counsel about not needing the trappings of civilization to realize one's own worth. We are talking social power here – or power of one over another – not self power. **Ideally, no one should think that he needs another – or power over another – to realize self-worth.**

Accordingly, if one does need power over another, it is indication that one does not have sufficient impression of self-worth. Such a one should be encouraged to realize the truth of self-worth and give up power over others in the process. ***Let him who has power renounce it*** is only to say – **give up what you do not need.**

But how would this little directive play out with Peter? I doubt that Peter would have understood it. As I see Peter, he was most likely very much impressed with having power. People who have power almost have to give it up to know how useless it is; but not being convinced it is a good thing, most power people would never take the chance. It seems almost inviting of threat and perhaps defeat – to give up power.

Indeed, **power over others is 99 % of the rule of government.** Unless you understand the true invalidity of power, if you have it, you probably see no benefit of turning it over to another; but that is just it. By giving it up, you are not turning it over to another. Rather, **you are only releasing a terrible burden and freeing your soul.** Jesus knew this, but most of traditional authority do not.

Verse 82: Jesus said: *Whoever is near to me is near to the fire, and whoever is far from me is far from the Kingdom.*

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

It was not a Jewish kingdom about which Jesus is commenting here. It is simply the **Kingdom of Peace.** How can being near to Jesus – who represents peace – be also being near to the fire, as Jesus is claiming here? It need not be so, but Jesus was a realist; and most often, it is so. **Souls who thrive on personal virtue and do not commend themselves to some social ritual or regimen are quite often treated harshly.** People in authority see those who do not need it as a threat to their roles. Thus, probably sincerely, they often make it hard for those who have no need for authority. Like I say, maybe some day that will change; but in the days of Jesus – and even still today – personal virtue independent of social commitment is of no value to society. If one chooses it, chances are great those in authority will not look kindly upon it; but this is true of any society. It has no specific restriction to Judaism. Does it?

Then Jesus says, ***whoever is far from me is far from the Kingdom.*** We can know of which Kingdom he is referring because of his earlier pronouncements about our needing to go within to find peace. **The Kingdom is really finding peace in ourselves because of a recognition of our sacred worth.** Realistically, then, anyone who thinks they need the grace of another – like the traditional Jesus – for self-worth must be ***far from the Kingdom.*** How could it be otherwise? **If the Kingdom is based on independent self-worth and my life is based on something else, how could I be close to the Kingdom?** And if I am not close, then more than likely, I am far away.

Peter, I think, was one who was far away from the Kingdom. He knew authority, not peace from within. Thus, in all likelihood, the leader of Christianity was far from the Kingdom of Peace. And that is why that within Christianity as it has come down through the ages, there has been little peace within it. If Peter – the initial leader – got it wrong, then it should be clear that it is quite reasonable that all who have accepted Peter as authority when Jesus lived to denounce it are merely following the blind.

Verse 90: Jesus said: *Come to Me, for easy is My yoke and My lordship is gentle, and you shall find repose for yourselves.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

The yoke of finding meaning in self-worth is easy, not hard. Jesus says those who find his yoke easy and his lordship gentle will find repose of soul. That should be quite obvious by now. If I am a man or soul of peace, how could I not be a person of repose? It has nothing specifically to do with Judaism, though. It is a **General Rule** and a **General Counsel**.

Verse 99: *The disciples said to Him: Thy brethren and Thy mother are standing outside. He said to them: Those here who do the will of My Father, they are My brethren and My mother; these are they who shall enter the Kingdom of My Father.*

Question: *Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?*

More of the same established counsel. **Belonging to the Kingdom (of Peace) is not tied to any tradition or family relations.** I suppose Jews were high on family. Family meant a lot to them. It had to mean a lot because tradition and custom meant a lot to them; and family is only a vehicle for tradition and custom. **Thy brethren and Thy mother are standing outside** Jesus is told, implying that Jesus should attend to his family because family is very important within Judaism; but Jesus comments: ***Those here who do the will of My Father, they are My brethren and My mother.***

Once again, Jesus is distancing himself from tradition. Family is not important to one who is caught up with one's own self-worth. In effect, that is what Jesus is saying. My worth is not dependent upon my father or my mother or my brother or sister. My worth is solely within me because of the Infinite present in me. They who know that, Jesus is saying, are those who shall enter the Kingdom of His Father.

We could not have a clear idea of what the Kingdom of His Father is – except that Jesus defined it earlier. In Verse 22, he stated that belonging to his Kingdom is to be like a child. And when asked what that means, he stated that when we make the inner as the outer, the above as the below, male as female – in terms of equal worth – then we shall enter the Kingdom. **Kingdom is only a metaphor for being at peace because “kingdom” implies security.** It may not be a place at all; and then again, there may be a place where the peaceful eventually go. Who knows about that? I don't think place is of any importance whatever, however, in terms of how Jesus tried to define it. **He was trying to say that, in effect, when we do not confuse things by dividing things into good and evil, then we will have peace.** And it works that way. That is why I know what I do. It has worked for me.

Once you divest yourself of earlier thoughts that bad can come from good, then you cease seeing any bad. It is not that bad does not exist in terms of unwanted oppression. It's just that those who oppress are not bad. **No one is evil by nature. We only do evil – as we will discover later in our review of the Gospel of Mary – when we act without**

discretion. A virtuous person, however, can deal with such evil by not letting it overwhelm him or her and realizing **it is not a bad person who is acting but a good person who is acting badly.** The nature of being is not altered, however, by what we do. I could never make you evil by doing evil things to you; but neither can I make you good by doing good things to you. Your good is completely independent of anything I can do to you – be it of pleasant or unpleasant variety.

In all of this, however, **this wisdom is not tied in any way to Judaism.** All of this is true, regardless of audience. Again, it matters not if the student is Jewish or Chinese. That, of course, is the argument I am trying to make. Jesus should never have been tied to Judaism because his was a *General Counsel* that is applicable to all souls – regardless of family, nation, or religion; and by tying Jesus to Judaism to gain power for Peter and his successors, we have lost the Christian Counsel that Jesus advised.

Verse 106: Jesus said: When you make the two one, you shall become sons of Man, and when you say: "Mountain, be moved," it will be moved.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Back to the empowerment of being a child again. When asked what being a child is like in Verse 22, Jesus offered in part that when *we make the two one*, we satisfy that condition. He is only adding to that here in terms of offering that two together who see themselves as one can do wonders. **Moving a mountain** is only metaphor for **accomplishing wonders.** When two act as one, then much more can be accomplished than if only one acts alone. Nothing necessarily Jewish here, though. Of what bearing does it have to Judaism alone? None – and that is just my point.

Verse 108: Jesus said: Whoever drinks from My mouth shall become as I am and I myself will become he, and the hidden things shall be revealed to him.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

By virtue of Verse 13, we can know that Jesus did not want Thomas to consider Jesus his master; but to consider himself his own master by **drinking from the bubbling spring** which Jesus measured out. **In other words, by knowing the wisdom of Jesus, I become like Jesus; but it is not becoming like Jesus that is important – but becoming wise.** This is true with the passage of any wisdom, however. It is not to say anything necessarily Jewish – but only that which is generally true.

Verse 113: His disciples said to Him: When will the Kingdom come? <Jesus said>: It will not come by expectation; they will not say: "See, here," or "See, there." But the Kingdom of the Father is spread upon the earth and men do not see it.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

This is only to say that the Kingdom is not Jewish or Roman or Chinese or of any particular nation or sect. **The Kingdom is everywhere.** It is not something to come – as the Jews were expecting – but something that is. Such truth is just as true today as it was then; but still, like the Jews of old insisted on doing, many traditional Christians still insist on doing today. We love putting the Kingdom off till tomorrow. It is something to which we can aspire to enjoy later, but not something we can experience today.

Of course, that is wrong. **Peace is possible now. Why? Because the same thing that would make for peace later is here today – and that is the Presence of God.** Some peace exists all over the Earth in pockets wherever there is an attitude of equality and sense of mutual esteem among individuals. Jesus says in this verse that we should beware of those who promise the Kingdom over here or over there. ***It will not come by expectation,*** he says. Why? **Because it is already here.** All we have to do is open our minds and see it; but there is nothing that is missing here that is required for the Kingdom. It has always been so, however; and it has nothing to do with Moses or his Jehovah or all of his hundreds of restrictive laws.

If there is anything clear from the Gospel of Thomas, it is that Jesus was not about law. Doing the will of the Father is not about going four steps forward and then three steps to the left and then backing up two steps and saying – Ya Ya! It is not about finding the healthiest animal of your herd and offering it up to Jehovah. It is not about building a tabernacle that is four feet wide and five feet deep and being subject to death if you should make it five feet wide and four feet deep. That is rule by law; and it is totally opposed to anything for which Jesus stood. The Jews once stood for these things and saw disobedience to law as grounds for being stoned to death; but in no way is Jesus to be tied to all of that. And that is the argument of this effort. We have begun to make the argument – with only one remaining verse to cover from the Gospel of Thomas before checking in with the Gospel of Mary. I do hope you are finding the journey useful.

Verse 114: Simon Peter said to them: Let Mary go out from among us, because women are not worthy of the Life. Jesus said: See, I shall lead her, so that I will make her male, that she too may become a living spirit, resembling you males. For every woman who makes herself male will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

It seems that Peter was not listening when Jesus spoke in Verse 22. I suppose it is possible that Peter wasn't present for the meeting in that verse when Jesus was asked about what being a child is like. He offered in part that we should not divide male and female, but rather see them as a single one. Why, then, does Peter insist in this verse that Mary go out from among them because she is not worthy of the Life?

I think the answer is that Peter was a good Jew. Jews in general did not see females as equal to males. Peter was only being a good Jew here; but once again, we see Jesus distancing himself from Jewish tradition by telling Peter that, ***See, I shall lead her, so***

that I will make her male, that she too may become a living spirit, resembling you males. For every woman who makes herself male will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

At first glance – and it was my first glance and my first interpretation before I realized differently – it would seem like Jesus is claiming some special power to make Mary male that no other person has; but once you take the previous verses in review, you know that he means no such thing. **In Verse 22, when he was asked about what being a child means, he offered in part once again that when we equate male with female so that the male will not be male and female not be female – then we shall enter into the Kingdom.** Importantly, this is something we all can do, then, and it is not something restricted to Jesus.

Thus when Jesus says here that he can make Mary male resembling the spirit of other males, he is only doing what he directed us all to do in Verse 22 – **make male and female equal.** If Mary became equal to Peter, then, in effect, she was “becoming male.” **Jesus did not literally change her from female to male – or claim the power to do so – but he only did what he said we all should do – become as children and cease to divide good from evil, source from child, and male from female.** If we all have God equally in us – as must be so if The Kingdom is within us and without us as specified in Verse 3 – then we are all equal in that Kingdom.

But what does it have to do with Judaism on a specific basis? Not a single thing. If that is not seen, then Jesus will be understood in a completely different light than he probably intended; and we will continue to divide good and evil, source and child, and male and female all in the name of Jesus. Peter had a lot to do with starting the confusion – or probably did because we can know from the regular gospels of the *BIBLE* that he tied all sense of Jesus to the traditions of Judaism. At least that is the picture one gets.

In some of the gospels of the *BIBLE*, attempts to establish family lineage back to the House of David is very detailed. I need not repeat it here – and do not want to for its total lack of import; but suffice it to say, some of the gospel writers bent over backward to tie Jesus to Judaism like a saddle to a horse. There is no mistaking that. **They took great pains to attend to Jesus as basically fulfillment of Jewish prophecy.** They had to do that to retain any kind of power at all because without lineage to the House of David, the Jesus of Peter could not have been used to establish authority. **It is my argument that the real Jesus was not in any way about authority because he was about each individual recognizing his or her worth without dependence on any family, religious, or national ties.** The Jesus I think really lived is far from the kingdom of Peter; and by insisting on authority, Peter was far from the Kingdom of Jesus.

From *The Gospel According to Mary*:

Note: Though there are five verses in this gospel, I will only deal with the first. Verses two through five offer speculation about Jesus by Mary and the other disciples after the passing of Jesus. For my purpose of attempting to demonstrate that Jesus should not be tied to Judaism for his meaning and direction, I will cite only the first verse and comment on some parts of that as applicable to this discussion.

1. THE DISCIPLES DIALOGUE WITH THE SAVIOR

“Will matter be destroyed or not?”

The savior replied, “All natures, all formed things, all creatures exist in and with each other, and they will dissolve into their own root. The nature of matter is dissolved into the root of its nature. Whoever has ears to hear should hear.”

Peter said to him, “You have explained everything to us. Tell us also, what is the sin of the world?”

The savior replied, “There is no such thing as sin, but you create sin when you mingle as in adultery, and this is called sin. For this reason the good came among you, to those of every nature, in order to restore nature to its root.”

He continued, “That is why you become sick and die, for [you love] what [deceives you]. Whoever has a mind should understand.

“Matter gave birth to passion that is without form, because it comes from what is contrary to nature, and then confusion arose in the whole body. That is why I told you, be of good courage. And if you are discouraged, be encouraged in the presence of the diversity of forms in nature. Whoever has ears to hear should hear.”

When the blessed one said this, he greeted all of them and said, “Peace be with you. Receive my peace. Be careful that no one leads you astray by saying, ‘Look here’ or ‘Look there.’ The child of humanity is within you. Follow that. Those who seek it will find it. Go and preach the good news of the kingdom. Do not lay down any rules other than what I have given you, and do not establish law, as the lawgiver did, or you will be bound by it.”

When he said this, he left them.

Question: Is it Jewish – or General - Counsel?

Let me cite a few examples of how Jesus seems to be challenging Judaic doctrine in this **Gospel of Mary**. That should suffice to demonstrate that Jesus should not be tied to Judaic tradition and should be considered for his wisdom as a person and not for his alleged completion of Judaism as a messiah for Judaism.

When asked by Peter to explain about the sin of the world, Jesus tells Peter, ***There is no such thing as sin, but you create sin when you mingle as in adultery, and this is called sin.*** Important for this discussion is the idea that there is no such thing as inherited sin. This idea seems to me to be a direct challenge to Judaic doctrine that holds that Adam and Eve sinned as our first parents and that everyone since Adam and Eve have inherited their sin or failure. A Jewish messiah was only needed in order to **restore** mankind to God because the sin of Adam and Eve separated mankind from God. How likely is it that someone who does not even believe that we have inherited some failure of Adam and Eve could possibly be a messiah to correct said failure? Jesus says, ***There is no such thing as sin, but you create sin when you mingle as in adultery, and this is called sin.*** If there is no such thing as inherited sin, then it is quite preposterous to argue that any messiah was needed to fix a problem that, in fact, doesn't exist.

But there is such thing as sin. It is just not of the inherited type. **We create sin, or can create sin, by improper behavior – such as adultery;** but that is a far cry from insisting that all men are born in sin as Judaism and traditional Christianity claims. Just because we can create sin by some improper behavior does not mean we have to create sin. Importantly, however, this should illustrate that Jesus was challenging existing Judaic tradition and beliefs, not serving as the completion of it. This business about sin could just as well have been offered to a Chinese as a Jew. It is a matter of general wisdom, not Judaic philosophy or doctrine; and it is, as a matter of fact, a challenge to existing belief – not a support of it.

Later, just prior to Jesus making some final departure from Mary and the other disciples, Jesus comments on what he calls ***the good news of the kingdom.*** He warns his disciples not to be fooled if someone comes and offers that the kingdom is here or there. He says, ***Peace be with you. Receive my peace. Be careful that no one leads you astray by saying, 'Look here' or 'Look there.' The child of humanity is within you. Follow that. Those who seek it will find it. Go and preach the good news of the kingdom. Do not lay down any rules other than what I have given you, and do not establish law, as the lawgiver did, or you will be bound by it.***

We should look to the ***child of humanity within us,*** he says. That is ***the good news of the kingdom.*** How does that seem to fare within Judaic tradition that is looking for a physical type kingdom of law and order? It seems to challenge that traditional expectation. Doesn't it? Jesus says the kingdom is within us that we might be seeking elsewhere. Much like what Jesus says in the Gospel of Thomas (Verse 3) that ***the Kingdom is within you and it is without you,*** Jesus seems to be challenging the traditional expectation of a physical kingdom – which is what the Jews expect a messiah will deliver. The Kingdom that seems to interest Jesus, however, is not a physical kingdom outside of us, but a ***spiritual kingdom*** within. **How is it likely that one who is challenging Jewish expectations could possibly be considered as its savior or messiah?**

What is the *child of humanity* that Jesus urges us to find within? That is certainly a matter of conjecture, but whatever it is, it is something we all can reach. Jesus would not have encouraged us to look for something we can not find. At least, I don't think so. **It is the notion that whatever we need is already in us that is important in this declaration – and that is a flat out challenge to traditional Jewish and Christian doctrine that we can not access holiness on our own.** In fact, everyone is already holy. It is not a matter of achieving that which we already have, but recognizing that we already have what we think we lack. That is my reading of Jesus in this **Gospel of Mary** as it is also my reading of the Jesus of the **Gospel of Thomas**.

What do I think the *child of humanity* is that Jesus recommended we find? I would change the expression a bit to say **child that is human**. The emphasis should be on child; and since we are human, then the specific child we should seek is the human child in us. What is that? As Jesus of Thomas made it clear as stated in Verse 22 of the Gospel of Thomas: ***When you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outer, and the outer as the inner, and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female (not) be female, when you make eyes in the place of an eye, and the hand in the place of a hand, and a foot in the place of a foot, (and) an image in the place of an image, then shall you enter the Kingdom.*** That is the answer that Jesus gave when asked what it is like to be a child after he recommended that we become as children to enter the Kingdom.

That happens to be my interpretation of *child of humanity*, but even if that is not correct, whatever is correct can be found in me. It is not something that another – a messiah or a lord – needs to offer me. In fact, only I can find it in myself. No one can give it to me. I must find it for myself. That is my reading of the Jesus of Mary – and of Thomas.

Then Jesus concluded his testimony by urging that we should ***not lay down any rules other than what I have given you, and do not establish law, as the lawgiver did, or you will be bound by it.***

Does it seem to you that having said something like this that he would **offer the Keys of the Kingdom to Peter** as Peter will claim in the gospels of the **BIBLE**? No way! The keys to the Kingdom is a Key, not a set of keys, and that one Key is a notion that I can find the *child of humanity* within me that I need to establish peace in my life. Jesus says, ***if you seek it, you will find it*** – but it is not something anyone can give to me – not anyone, be that one Peter or even Jesus himself.

What did Jesus mean when he said: ***Do not lay down any rules other than what I have given you, and do not establish law, as the lawgiver did, or you will be bound by it.*** It should be clear. We only need one rule – and that is look for and find the *child of humanity within us*. Jesus already told us what his one rule is. There should be no confusion about what it is now. But then he added, ***and do not establish law, as the lawgiver did, or you will be bound by it.*** How could he have said anything else when he had just told us that only one rule is needed – the rule of **finding the child of humanity within us**? Specifically, however, he warns that if we do go ahead and establish some kind of additional law, then we will be bound by it.

And that is the way it works too. Jesus knew that. If you make law and believe in that law, then you have to obey it. It does not matter what the law is. If you make it and believe in it, you are bound by it. This is very sad commentary because it reflects what humans have done all through their history. In the case of the Jews, they made all sort of idiotic law that they respected as legitimate for thinking it was from God; and even though it was not legitimate in that it was not from God, they were still obliged to obey it.

Importantly, however, let this be a final testimony about Jesus – and my argument that he should not be tied to Judaism for his counsel and if we do tie Jesus to Judaism for his counsel, we will lose his counsel because we will emphasize that which has no meaning or no purpose – **obligation to tradition**. It seems to me that Jesus was about as **anti-traditional** as he could have been; and yet it has been declared by many writers included in the *NEW TESTAMENT* of the *BIBLE* that Jesus has meaning only within the very tradition that he constantly chided and refused. Now, does that make any sense to you?

CONCLUSION: TWO WHO DID OBJECT

As they say, **I rest my case**. I do not know about Peter and his sincerity in this drama; but I am quite certain that via all sort of testimony in the **Gospels of Thomas and Mary** and even works within the accepted *NEW TESTAMENT* of the *BIBLE*, it constantly seems as if Peter just did not get it; and yet somehow he was the first **Commander-In-Chief** of Christianity after Jesus departed the scene – probably through a crucifixion as offered in the gospels of the *BIBLE*.

How could it be? How could someone so seemingly opposed to the simplicity of Jesus be chosen to lead the new sect of Christian Jews? I strongly suspect that Peter chose himself; and since the others did not know the simplicity of Jesus anymore than did Peter, they all fell in line – all except a few like Thomas and Mary. At least, this is the impression with which I am left – having Gospels of Thomas and Mary at hand.

Having those gospels at hand – with advice that seems right on the mark, for the most part – at least a challenge to Peter can be mounted. Not everyone probably accepted him as leader of the new sect. *It would seem that two who objected were Thomas and Mary.* With their objections available, Peter can finally be challenged. It only remains to be seen if he will be challenged by any of the Churches of Christ. If no challenges are forthcoming, then that probably writes an epitaph of continued failure to know and respect the true Jesus Christ.

I do not think any of us Christians living today ever expected that Jesus may have been almost the exact opposite of what he is claimed to be within the *BIBLE*. I know I have been mighty surprised to follow the evidence as I see it now and realize that the Jesus of my youth in terms of dreams is almost a complete facsimile of the Jesus offered in the Gospels of Thomas and Mary.

I have believed all my life that shame makes no sense; and now I find a testimony that a real Jesus may not have believed in it either. **So, because of the discovery of the Gospels of Thomas and Mary, that seem to almost forbid shame, I am now left with a Jesus that makes sense to me.** How could I not want that Jesus who is saying just what I believe and what I have believed all my life? It is because the Jesus of Thomas

and Mary seems to match my own vision of life that I am as convinced as I am that these recently rediscovered gospels are legitimate. **It is the sense they make to me that verifies their validity.**

Of course, it is possible that I am wrong. It is possible that I should be ashamed of myself – as I have been told so much in life. It is possible that I am lacking what I need to grow and mature as a soul – this shame that so many traditionalists love as much as they love the food they eat. **But it is not likely I am wrong. It is not likely that shame is any kind of ideal by which to live; and if shame is not right, then neither can Peter be right because Peter believed in shame.** How can that be known? By the Church he left behind. We can know that Peter believed in shame because the Church we have inherited from him believes in it today. It is very unlikely that there is no connection. It is very unlikely that Peter really taught no shame, yet the Church he led and left behind challenged his teachings and adopted shame in spite of objections from Peter.

No! It is very likely that Peter believed in and taught shame because that is the state of things today. I am probably only one of a very few Christians who do not believe in shame and refuse to live by it. **Most Christians have not arrived yet.** They still embrace their shame like it is some kind of entry way to Heaven. They expect they will lose their shame when they enter Heaven; but somehow that shame is a necessary prelude to the Heaven of shamelessness they expect.

What can we do as Christians to right our ship? I think we need to take command and realize the truth and start acting according to that truth. I don't think our ship can ever be righted until we have done that – and that means giving up something we have loved previously – shame. Like Jesus says in the Gospel of Mary, *if we seek it, we will find it* – that wonderful *child of humanity within us* that will override the shame we have loved till now.

All we have to do is start including the **Gospels of Thomas and Mary** in our services. None of us who have been without them are responsible for our not having them before. We need not focus on the failure of the past to ignore *the child of humanity within us*. We can turn a new leaf and admit that history may have chosen incorrectly by denying the Jesus of the Gospels of Thomas and Mary; and we can start to give them some of our time and attention. For all our failure to recognize the truth in the past, we need not continue to fail. We can right our ship as Christians and ignore the cries of Peter as he shouts – **SHAME!** We can ask silence from Peter and let Thomas and Mary speak because in Thomas and Mary, there is tremendous promise. At least, I think so.

If you agree, Welcome Aboard!

Thanks for listening!

*Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.
May 16th, 2006*

A final poem follows.

Was Jesus a Messiah?

A poem – or freelance song

By

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

May 17th, 2006

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Did we give him all his power – to avoid being free?
Is Heaven another place – or is it just knowing God inside?
Is Hell only insisting – on following the blind?

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Have we turned away from the truth – of our mutual Divinity?
Did Jesus really tell us – that the Kingdom is within?
Did he really say – there is no such thing as sin?

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Have we known Jesus all along – or have we been deceived?
Did Jesus really tell us – that we should all be as a child?
Does that only mean – we should be equal all the while?

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Did he really tell us – to find our child of humanity?
Is life nothing more – than endless mystery?
Is worth only knowing – of our shared Divinity?

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Was he only more aware – of what allows us to be free?
Is it really true – that to be a part of his family,
all I have to do – is live my life shamelessly?

Was Jesus a messiah – or was he just like you and me?
Did he only realize – God is in all equally?
Did he really say – we should take off our clothes
because we should have no shame – for the life God's bestowed?

Is Jesus a messiah – or is he just like you and me?
Is he smiling now – because the truth is finally free?
Is virtue only knowing – that we are all the same –
and that we need no messiah – when we live without shame?

**THE
NON-JUDAIC
JESUS**



THE END

HADITHA & BAHGDAD

(2 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

June 2nd, 2006

This is a brief article commenting on two separate incidents that I find mostly the same. One was conducted via what could be called **controlled rage** and the other was conducted via what could be called **uncontrolled rage** - but the results for many innocent non combatants was the same - death for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In March of 2003, our country decided that it had the right to bomb Baghdad and take the chance of killing great numbers of non-combatants. It was after Saddam Hussein - and it was decided that to get Saddam, it was OK to bomb any area where Saddam might be found. This was a matter of "controlled rage." We Americans claimed the right to bomb Baghdad and chance killing many non-combatants if the end result was to either kill or capture Saddam. It was like agreeing to throw a bomb in a school yard to get the Principal in charge while chancing the murder of all in the school yard.

But it was OK then because we were acting out of "controlled rage." We were acting on behalf of a country which considered the 9-11-2001 attacks on New York and Washington cites as unacceptable and requiring of a response. So, even though there was no direct evidence that Saddam was responsible, this country chose to act like Saddam was responsible and went after him. Though there were probably ulterior motives for our invasion of Iraq, the argument most advanced and believed was that we had to respond to the atrocities of 9-11.

As I remember it, however, our furor was not near as much about some alleged weapons of mass destruction as it was about "revenging 9-11." How often did our Commander-In-Chief refer to the attacks of 9-11 as being the justification of our invading Iraq? 9-11 was used as a kind of battering ram that justified our rage and any actions we might take. It was not near as much about alleged weapons of mass destruction - as claimed by officials - as revenge for 9-11. I think that is how we Americans saw our bombing of Baghdad - as revenge for 9-11.

So, based on a need of "controlled rage," we went after Saddam as if he were personally responsible for the atrocities of 9-11. I remember my TV being lit up during that period with an unbelievable show of bombs going off - all because of our "controlled rage" that something had to be done about 9-11. Somebody had to pay; and since it was a wonderful opportunity to plant the evidence on Saddam, we thought nothing of it. Saddam was responsible and he was going to get it. So, we bombed Baghdad to get Saddam while knowingly killing myriads of non-combatants in the process.

Now, fast forward to November of 2005. At least, I think that is when the Haditha incident occurred. Some American soldiers were the victims of an ambush at Haditha, Iraq - somewhat akin to some Americans being victims of the 9-11 ambushes of 2001 in New York and Washington. As it is bound to happen, if someone strikes a friend of mine, it is like he has struck at me. Out of my rage at seeing my friend go down, my anger drives me to kill a lot of innocent bystanders. The only difference as I see it

between what happened at Haditha and what happened in Baghdad is that one was "politically correct" and the other was not. Outside of that, there is no difference.

Did this country have any more right to control its rage and plan an attack that it knew would kill myriads of non-combatants than did the soldiers who did not plan an attack, but killed in spite of a lack of a plan? What is the difference? If non-combatants die in either case, why is one case acceptable and the other not?

It seems to me that this country has been acting out of a sense of rage for the last five years. I think that acting out of rage - any kind of rage - is as irrational as it gets. Human beings with minds ought not to be acting like they are mindless. And yet we do. Mindless controlled rage seems to be OK, but mindless uncontrolled rage seems to be unacceptable; and yet how is one any different than the other in terms of consequences to victims?

In fact, it could be argued that controlled rage is far less acceptable than uncontrolled rage. At least in the case of uncontrolled rage, mindlessness is somewhat explicable for lack of an interim to alter it; but in the case of controlled rage, mindlessness should not only be inexplicable, but also totally unacceptable because in the case of controlled rage, time allows for mindlessness to become mindfulness in the process of an interim. There may be some excuse for uncontrolled rage for lack of an interim to alter behavior, but there should be no excuse for controlled rage.

If the soldiers who killed out of rage from losing one of their own in Haditha in November of 2005 are court marshaled, then so should our Commander-In-Chief who presented his case as one of justifiable rage in response to an earlier ambush on America. If one is court marshaled, then so should the other.

As any of you who have ever read any of my opinions know, I have been outraged at how this country responded to the mindless attacks of 9-11. I consider the Haditha incident where numbers were killed to revenge an earlier fatality just as outrageous as the Baghdad incident of March of 2003 - and almost constantly after that. Both of these incidents meet with my disapproval for their mindlessness. I am sure that those who think that our invasion of Iraq was justifiable will not see any comparison between what was allowed upon Baghdad and what happened at Haditha; but it is like drawing a very narrow line in the sand for me. One side of that line is just as reprehensible as the other side; and the line in the middle changes nothing.

At least, for what it's worth, that is my opinion.

Thanks for listening!

Gently,

*In Laramie, Wyoming,
Will (Frank) Bessler
June 2nd, 2006*

JUDGMENT DAY

(6 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

June/July, 2006

Preface

July 22nd, 2006

Hello, Everyone,

My, what difference a life time makes! I think I have always been somewhat comfortable with whatever judgment might come after death, but my ideas about it have changed a good bit as life has pressed on. I suppose that is true with almost everyone. I bet anyone over 21 has changed his or her mind about the notion of judgment and just exactly what it might mean after death.

I suppose it is safe to say that growing up as a Catholic Christian, I believed that judgment is strictly a matter of God deciding if you pass or fail some final exam. There was something about that idea that I still love - because I think I would do alright if such was the case. I mean how could I fail a test of God when all my life I have loved God's creation? Boy, if God were in the judgment seat, I think this Laramie Lad would do alright. I might even be asked to serve at **Daddy God's** right hand.

Oh, if it were true! But I don't think it is. As I offer in my essay below, I do not see God as a **separate Person** outside of me anymore. I see God as **an Infinity** that is **In everyone and everything**. Accordingly, God cannot be outside of me to judge me. Thus, there goes my childhood fantasy of receiving oodles of attaboys from God. Oh, well! I guess the fantasy did no harm.

Realistically, however, if **Daddy God** is not likely to be there to hand me some after death final exam when I die, what will happen? That is what my essay below is about. Keep in mind, it is all speculation. None of us who are reading this have died to not return - at least not in this lifetime. So not a single one of us really knows for sure just what is in store for us when we do die. But I think it is worth while to speculate intelligently about it; and that is all I am doing in my essay below.

Hope you can somewhat enjoy my speculation about **Judgment Day**. I even offer a kind of *funeral song* at the end.

What Happens After Death?

Written June 1st, 2006

I am reading a fine book now by a Danielle Steel that is called **FINE THINGS**. It's about a guy by the name of Bernie Fine. I am on about page 200 of a 415 page book; and I think that Bernie is about to lose his wife of several years to cancer. Liz Fine has bone cancer; and I am almost sure that Danielle Steel is going to have her die of that cancer. Of course, it is a touching tale. Earlier this morning, I sat in Burger King reviewing her predicament and chose to cower in my booth to avoid being seen, mildly weeping. I do not want Liz to die; but, of course, she will – if not by page 250, probably shortly after that. I suppose the book is about Bernie and how he will deal with life once Liz has left the scene. He will have to raise their two kids – Jane, age of 8, and Alex, age of 1.

So, let us assume that Liz dies. It is all speculation, of course, but what do you suppose happens to Liz – or to the soul of Liz – upon her leaving her body? Lots of folks live in dread of what will happen when they die; but personally, I don't think Liz or any of us should worry much about it.

Realistically, given that Liz has a soul that is occupying her cancerous body, what is likely to happen when she dies? Whatever happens to Liz probably happens to us all. I suspect that her soul will lift out or lift up from her body – leaving her body and Bernie and the kids, Jane and Alex, behind. I suspect that if Liz is greeted by any fellow souls, it will be by kindred souls – souls who share in whatever compassion level Liz lived. I might be wrong about that; but as I see it, Liz should have nothing to fear in terms of encountering souls who do not share her compassion or kindness level.

Some might think that even if Liz were kind in her life within a body, she might be met by a bunch of mean souls. Let's call them devils. Perhaps, but I really doubt it. It is said that likes attract; and my guess is that is especially so with souls free of bodies. Of course, I have no way of proving my suspicion is true; but it just seems like it would be true to me – based on my experiences during life. I just cannot see myself having to encounter a bunch of mean souls once I have lifted from my body because I do not believe in mean and try to deal in life without meanness. It is really a stretch for me to imagine that when I die, my soul will encounter souls that are not like me.

I don't think anything really happens different than what we know when we die. I will just continue with the same temperament with which I lived – that is, if I really have a soul. If I do not have a soul and I completely disappear when I die, then I don't suppose it will matter at all how I lived; but given that I do have a soul and that part of me continues on, I suspect it will be almost like I never died. I will just keep on being me.

My guess is that a lot of folks do not agree with this scenario. I think many – if not most – think that Judgment amounts to being judged by someone or something after death. Most conjecture that the someone of Judgment is God; but I have passed that notion a long time ago.

As I see it, God must be Infinite. That means, in practice, that God is everywhere and in everything. How can it be different if God is Infinite – or without bounds? If God is in me – even after I die – that pretty much leaves out the possibility of being judged by

God when I die. Doesn't it? **How can something judge me that is inside of me?** I cannot imagine it. So, I do not much consider Judgment by God at all likely.

Then there is the Terrible Judgment of Jesus or Jehovah or Mohammed or Allah that some fear. I am not much familiar with Jehovah or Mohammed or Allah, but the Jesus that I know was not into judgment during his life. So I cannot imagine that he would be into judgment later. It is not consistent to think it could be otherwise. I do not think that Jesus much cared in life about judging me – just counseling me as a friend. If I meet with Jesus after I die, the chance is not good at all that I will encounter someone out to judge me. So, Judgment by Jesus is almost as far fetched as Judgment by God is.

When Liz dies on page 240 or on whatever page she dies, my guess is she will just keep on keeping on – given she has a soul that survives death. Will she meet with Jesus? Perhaps, but I suspect there will be no chance of that if she did not live like Jesus when she lived. Will I meet with Jesus when I die? Perhaps, but I suspect there will be no chance of that if I did not live like Jesus when I lived; and, of course, the same goes for you and everyone. If it's so that likes attract, I suspect that only those will encounter Jesus when they die who lived like Jesus when they lived.

Of course, I could be wrong. Maybe I will encounter some mean souls when I die; and those mean souls might want to take me wherever it is that mean souls go. That is a possibility; but as I see it, it is definitely not a probability because it has not been my experience in life.

Maybe I live a sheltered life, but in life I do not seek out mean souls and refuse to deal with them when I meet them. I just walk away from meanness and try not to become mean myself – by advertently or inadvertently becoming mean to avenge another's meanness. I do not think that becoming mean to avenge meanness is the path of a wise soul.

Be that as it may, I live my life determined not to be mean – for any reason. Thus, in life I cannot be mean to attract other mean souls. Why should it be different upon death? I doubt I will be met by any mean souls when I die, but if I am, I will just do the same as I have done in life – I will just walk away from them – or if I am an angel, maybe I will fly away from them.

If I were to rate the possibility of my having to encounter mean souls when I die, I would rate the possibility as being no more than 1 of 10 – based upon my experience during life. Maybe that is just wishful thinking, but I would rate the probability of my not encountering mean souls when I die – since I have not lived mean – as being more like 9 of 10. The probability of my having to encounter souls who are not like me is almost **zilch**. Likewise, the probability of my encountering only fellow kind souls is almost **zenith**.

So, for me, what is **JUDGMENT DAY!** It is only continuing with the same temperament that I had before I died. That makes it really simple. All I have to do to assure a wonderful Judgment Day when I die is to live like everyday is Judgment Day.

If I think that being revenge minded is so ideal, then I will probably encounter other revenge minded souls when I die – maybe even those that I may have maimed or murdered – or executed – or allowed to be executed. If I think that being justice minded is so ideal, then I will probably encounter other justice minded souls when I die. If I

insist that I should treat others mercilessly who may have transgressed decency during life, then it is likely I will continue with my judgment of mercilessness after I die; but I should keep in mind, those with whom I will be companions will probably also be merciless. The choice is mine in terms of the companions I may have. If I think that life is sordid and insist on believing so when I live, then I can almost be assured that when I die, I will be met by fellow sinners. The choice is mine.

If I sin during life, then sinning will be my way after I die; but if I do not sin in life, then sinning will not be my way after I die. If you seek to be mean, then you will likely have mean companions. If you seek to be mild, then you will likely have mild companions. **Pretty simple, huh?**

I think that Judgment is only having to continue as I am. That is probably all it is. I like Liz a lot. She is a real sweetie. I try to be too. So maybe when I die, I won't be met by the devil, Lucifer. Maybe I will be met by the angel, Liz. Suppose? If souls do survive death, then it is likely that my soul will be met by some other soul when I die – or community of souls; but if so, it will probably be only one or ones like me.

I guess that would be to say that if I want to be joined by kind companions when I die, then I better be kind while I live. Why should I expect to be met by kind companions upon my own little **JUDGMENT DAY** if I did not live kind during life? Of course, if life in the hereafter does not follow my scheme of likes attract to each other, then it might happen that I will fall in with kind companions even though I lived mean; but as I see it, that is not at all probable. Yes, it might happen, but how smart is it to live my life hoping it will happen? Perhaps it is the non-gambler in me, but personally I think it is much wiser to live my life according to what is probable – not just possible.

Given, then, that I have a soul that will survive my body when it dies, the absolute best way to prepare for my own **JUDGMENT DAY** is to live my life according to the kind of companions I most prefer. If I love the justice type, then that is all I have to be. If I love the merciless type, then that is all I have to be. If I love the gentle type, then that is all I have to be, etc.

According to the way I am, I will be; and as I am and will be – so, too, will be my companions on my own JUDGMENT DAY! At least, it would seem so to me.

So, what's to fear? Right? Let me now – this day and this day forward – choose my future companions to likely appear with me on my own **JUDGMENT DAY** by conducting myself as I might want my companions to conduct themselves – and Presto, it will probably happen.

Thanks for listening!

*Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming,
June 1st, 2006*

A kind of “funeral song” follows.

OH, DEATH!

A Funeral Song

By

Francis William Bessler

July 19th, 2006

Oh, Death, take me by the hand.
Oh, Death, help me to understand.
Oh, Death, I know through your open door
I will be free to be me forever more.

Oh, Life, I see you in the trees.
Oh, Life, each Spring, your trees turn green.
Oh, Life, is there such a thing as death –
for when we die, we find another breath.

Oh, Love, my choice of you decides.
Oh, Love, by you, I will abide.
Oh, Love, with you I am one
with what I choose to be as I continue on.

Oh, Fate, I have you in my control.
Oh, Fate, you cannot depress my soul.
Oh, Fate, I know I cannot be
different than I am when life returns in me.

Oh, Time, I thank you for this chance.
Oh, Time, with you, my soul will dance.
Oh, Time, you are such a friend to me –
and when you're done, my virtue will succeed.

Oh, God, my heart goes out to You.
Oh, God, my love for You is true.
Oh, God, I see You in everything –
and that's what makes this soul want to sing.

Oh, Death, take me by the hand.
Oh, Death, help me to understand.
Oh, Death, I know through your open door
I will be free to be me forever more.
Yes, I will be free to be me forever more.
So, don't weep for me – for I am free – forever more.

JUDGMENT DAY

THE END

Francis & Mary

(5 Pages)

By

Francis William Bessler

Laramie, Wyoming

June 7th, 2006

When I was a kid, I had a toy gun. I loved that toy gun because it gave me something to do. It helped me to pass the time as a form of entertainment. What a fearless little marshal I was. I would strap on my little holster and stick my gun inside and then dare my siblings to outdraw me. I was **Wild Bill Hickock** and I had a really beautiful lady friend named **Calamity Jane**. Indeed, **Wild Bill & Calamity** were just about the most daring couple who ever lived on one hand and the most romantic duo who ever lived on the other.

Of course, I was only five years old at first. I suppose all kids need a toy; but by the time I reached fourteen or so, I had outgrown my need for toys. By then, my obsession had turned to rocks. I took off my gun and holster and went out looking for rocks. What fun I had with that practice. **Wild Bill** went away and I guess **Calamity** disappeared with him; and **Rocky** took their place.

What was **Rocky** looking for in those rocks? It started out that he was only interested in the various colors inside of those rocks. **Rocky** and his best friend, **Donnie**, spent a lot of time cracking open rocks they found in the hills and investigating them for their fantastic designs and color patterns. **Rocky & Donnie** were gamblers too. One would bet the other that his drab gray rock had more color inside of it than the other's rock did; and so they would crash their rocks upon other rocks so they could break them and look inside both rocks and determine the winner.

Then **Rocky** went away; and the first born, **Francis**, took his place. When did that occur? When **Francis** realized that he – and all people – are just as fascinating as rocks.

My first name, of course, is **Francis**. Substitute your name for mine and your story should be the same as mine; but, I think, most people live their entire lives never knowing who or what they are. Many never outgrow the **Wild Bill** or **Calamity Jane** stage. They never really become acquainted with the real person. Accordingly, they never outgrow their need for toys. **A toy is only something apart or separate from yourself that you can use to entertain yourself.** Some people never outgrow a need for toys. They never exceed the **Wild Bill** or **Calamity Jane** in them.

The problem is the many who insist on retaining only the **Wild Bill** or **Calamity Jane** in them pass laws that outlaw the truth. Perhaps they do not know they are outlawing the truth by insisting that all must continue the game of pretense, but that is precisely what happens. They outlaw the truth – and make it a requirement that all within what is loosely called **society** must obey the law of pretense. Only **Wild Bills** and **Calamity Janes** are allowed. **Francis** – or whoever you are – is forbidden.

Who is **Francis**? It is whatever is in the rock.

What is a real gun – but a toy? It is certainly a very dangerous toy – but still just a toy. If I think I need something beyond myself to satisfy myself, then whatever that item is, it is a toy. Many pretenders exchange guns that shoot only imaginary bullets for guns that shoot real bullets; but the guns they use to kill others are just as much toys as the fake guns I used as a child when I pretended to be **Wild Bill Hickock**.

That is clear to me because I have tried to put aside the need for toys – having come to realize that when I needed a toy it was to help me pass the time. I have come to realize, however, that the wonderful gray rock that is *Francis* is equal to any gray rock in the world. Thus, in finding myself as equal to anything that is, I no longer need toys – for the most part – to help me to appreciate life.

People who are not content with themselves require toys, however; and a toy could be nothing more than a blouse to cover the real person because a blouse may very well satisfy the definition of a toy - **something apart or separate from myself that I can use to entertain myself**. When was the last time you looked in the mirror and were not entertained by what you are wearing? I know I love to entertain myself with clothes; but I think I am just aware that to a large extent, that is the real use for clothes. They serve as forms of entertainment and are toys for that reason.

The real person is the actual entity, however, the actual *Francis*, not some manufactured image that is engaged to override the real entity. But so many do not want the real thing. They do not want to have to pass by the **Wild Bill** or **Calamity** in them. So, they outlaw *Francis* because to allow him would be to force them to have to look at themselves since they are the same as *Francis*. But they do not want themselves. They want a Wal-Mart toy that lets them pretend they are not what they are.

Having found the *Francis* that is me, I have found it to be the easiest thing I have ever done. It is really easy to be *Francis* – as it would be to be *Mary* or any other real person; but that which is easy is also illegal because the many who must have toys rule the world. They do not know what the real person is and have no way of finding the real person because they are so committed to pretense. But they do not think of their need for toys and clothes as pretense. They think of it as reality – or perhaps, necessary industry.

But what is reality? It is the naked me, the natural me, the one that is. Unfortunately, the one that is represents the one which is not wanted; and thus, *Francis & Mary* are outlawed. With Pretense as King, toys – be they harmless or dangerous – remain the main object of life. Few come to know who they are and pretend it is ideal that it is so. Reality is classified as sinful; and the real God inside that reality is cast outside of reality to fight a mirage of evil that is allowed to replace the God within everything. That mirage is given a name, **Satan**, so that **Will Bill** and **Calamity** can have a “real foe” to fight; but it’s all pretense in terms of notions matching reality.

It’s pretense – or at least, fiction - in that God is not the person outside of reality that so many assume. *God is not a person that is somewhere, but rather a Presence that is Everywhere*. There can be no **Satan** if by **Satan** is understood a person or force that can oppose God. How can anything be opposed that cannot be disposed? If God cannot be expelled from reality – which apparently so many think can happen – then God cannot be opposed. Thus, **Satan** as imagined opposition to God must be pure myth.

For *Francis & Mary*, evil doesn't exist. For **Wild Bill & Calamity**, evil must exist. Evil must exist because there can be no identity without it. When people are not content with themselves as they are, they seek for contentment elsewhere because the desire for contentment is as steady as the need to eat. People must have contentment. So if they cannot find it in themselves, they must find it in other ways and in other things. Thus **gods** and **Wild Bills** are formed that can help them overcome the evil that must exist because without evil, they would have to be content with themselves. *Evil, then, assumes a surreal identity all by itself as if it had real substance when it only exists in the minds of men.*

Why doesn't evil exist for *Francis & Mary*? Because they are content – like the rocks of **Rocky & Donnie**. Why are they content? Because they realize that the mystery that is rock is the same mystery that is them; and they are content to be mysterious. They are content to be what they are and have no need for toys – both harmless and dangerous – to pass the time.

But contentment is illegal on Planet Earth. Thus *Francis & Mary* are forced by the non-content to practice their contentment only when alone. When in public, then, *Francis & Mary* have to live a lie. The pretenders do not have to live that lie because they do not know it is a lie. A lie is a known falsity; but the pretenders who have not progressed beyond falsehood have no way of knowing their belief in other-contentment is very destructive. They do not see it as destructive because they know not the constructive of self-contentment. They are unaware that they should be content with themselves; and so, in their lack of awareness, they do not live a lie.

If someone were to ask me, what is the sorriest thing you have had to experience in life, I would answer that the law has forced me to live a lie. I have been *Francis* most of my life, but I have not been free to be *Francis* in public. The law of the pretenders and the law of pretense – in its ignorance of what it forbids – has made reality illegal. For one who has come to love reality so much because of its Divinity and Mystery, I feel sorry for the world that does not know what it is missing.

The world has forced me to live a lie – not on my own because it cannot force a lie in private – but in public. It has been quite sad to know the truth of the Goodness of Everything and have to pretend that it is not so when in the company of others. I can't help but wonder how much more constructive I could have been in life if the constructive in me had been allowed to operate. In having to live the lie that no one should be content unto him or herself in public, I have been handicapped in what I could have done.

It requires a commitment, though, to be content. By living in a world that does not approve of self-contentment, that commitment can be compromised – simply by mingling among the discontent. Their standards can become my own – if I am without diligence. Their toys can become my own – or the need for their toys can become my own need. It is not near as easy to live a lie as it is to live the truth; but within the difficulty of **compulsory discontentment**, one can stray from the truth of solitary worth into the vast land of self-doubt and self-deprecation – which for the general populace is necessary for the common good.

Still, it should be recommended that the ideal is *Francis & Mary* – naked unto themselves because of the Divine worth of every individual. It is the pretenders in this

world who use sex primarily for recreation rather than procreation and set the stage for untold miseries that happen when contentment is sacrificed. It is not the contented naked who cause problems in the world by insisting that one is not good enough. It is the pretenders who cannot see the miracle of their own mystery who go forward to rape for lack of self-contentment – not the contented naked. It is the pretenders who have no regard for individual worth who assume authority over others and command obedience – not the contented naked.

The world has nothing to fear from *Francis & Mary*; but as long as they are forced by law to live the lie that life is not satisfactory in itself without aid of toy or supplement, then the world will little know what could have been.

What is now – is war. It is inevitable when people do not realize their commonality; but it is far from inevitable when people do realize their commonality. *Francis & Mary* are not about being the same sexually, but being the same, Divinity-wise. They are about being equally Divine, making their differences as nothing. *Francis & Mary* cannot war because they are too caught up with their mutual and equal Divinity. When people war, it is mostly due to a perception that one is different than the other in a way other than naturally. **Take away the bad perception that any two people are really different – and you remove the greatest motive of war – to survive being different.** At least, I think so.

War is one hell of an option and allowance for every one of us. It solves nothing and only explodes conflict. It should not be for any single person, regardless of what another may do or not do. **War is between two in combat – or combat between two; but if only one insists on fighting, then war cannot exist between those two.** You may kill me, but you cannot war with me – unless I allow it. Single murder is not war; but mutual combat is. **When each of us – as single individuals – commit ourselves to never engage in combat – even if another has struck – then war will be no more.** There can be no war with one. Can there?

I leave you with that thought – for what it’s worth.

Thanks so much for listening!

*Francis William Bessler,
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.,
June 8th, 2006*

A song about life and war follows.

BETTER THAN WAR

By
Francis William Bessler
June 5th, 2006

REFRAIN:

*I'll meet you in the park.
I'll meet you in the street.
I'll meet you in my yard.
I'll meet you where you be.
We will have a wondrous time
just being what we are
and find that life has always
been better than war.*

I'll go with you on a walk - and leave my clothes behind
so that you can see - we're two of a kind.
I'll meet you in my home. I'll meet you in yours.
I'll meet you just as I am - and never more be bored. **Refrain.**

We'll let the kids be themselves. We'll let them take a look.
We'll let them find for themselves - they're as wondrous as a book.
I think it's time that we stopped - acting like we're not the same
or that being different - should be grounds for shame. **Refrain.**

War is really only - combat between two -
where neither one is content - and neither loves the truth.
The truth is really only - that God's in Everything.
You cannot hurt a brother - of equal Divinity. **Refrain.**

So, let me be your friend - knowing you are Divine;
and if you'd like - be a friend of mine. **Refrain.**

FINISH (2 times):

*We will have a wondrous time
just being what we are
and find that life will be
better than war.*

Francis & Mary

The End

STATE OF GRACE

(10 Pages)

By
Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming
July 31st, 2006

Preface – Can You Curse the Ground?

A long, long time ago, some one person made a decision. That decision was that it is possible that something sacred – of God – can be altered so that it is no longer sacred. That decision has impacted the human race far greater than any decision ever made by any man or woman. It has caused a tremendous loss of blood in sacrifice and untold suffering on the part of all who have decided to obey that decision. How can you obey a decision? By acting in accord with it.

Who made that decision? Amazingly, no one knows. Amazingly, we humans have decided to keep in step with a decision whose authorship is unknown. Let me cite a perspective that offers that something that man can do can alter something sacred: **Genesis: 3:17 - And He (God) said to the man. “You listened to your wife and ate the fruit which I told you not to eat. Because of what you have done, the ground will be under a curse.”**

And therein lies the most outrageous decision ever made by any human being – to claim that man has the ability to curse the world by his actions; and yet we have not only believed it, we have dedicated ourselves to it. By the decision of one anonymous author, the human race has been condemned because the human race has believed it.

But do we really believe it? When was the last time that you went outside and looked at the dirt and felt that it is cursed? No one really believes that; and yet the whole world has fallen for the aftermath of the decision that followed. Not only has the ground been under a false curse, but all from the ground has been under a false curse – as if something that man could do can alter the sacred status of his environment.

Realistically, is there anything you could do that could curse the ground upon which you stand? Of course not; and there is nothing that Adam or Eve or any single human being could do that could alter the sacred status of soil and turn it from something good into something less good – and maybe even evil. The terribly sad thing about that decision that was made by a single man is that mankind has been living under the cloud of a fictional curse ever since; and even though, the foundation of the curse is fiction, it has been as if the curse was real.

And what can we do about it today? We can come to terms with it and make another decision and go forward with that other decision and no longer be subject to the original decision. We can decide that the original decision was wrong. We can decide that all life is sacred and all ground is sacred because all life and all ground is of God; and there is nothing that man can do to alter the sacred status of anything. And we can become **new Adams** and **new Eves**, throw away the false curse, bend down and kiss the un-cursed ground beneath us – **and proudly march back into Eden!**

I think that if we ever realize that the loss of Eden is a fiction, we can recover and return to Eden - now, in this life, and for all lives to come. I think I live in a personal Eden now. It is nice; but it is really tragic that almost everyone around me is unaware we are living in Eden.

Can I change any of that terrible perspective? I don't know. My Dad and I talked about that in our last visit together in December of 1965 – prior to his passing in July of 1966. Dad told me: **Francis, I don't think you can change anything, but if it means anything at all to you, you have my blessing to try.** In truth, that blessing has meant a lot to me. Perhaps without it, I would not have been inspired to challenge the **Myth of the Curse of Adam & Eve.**

Introducing Two New Terms: *Otheism & Intheism*

Following the Wrong Adam & Eve

As a kid, I fell in love with the story of Adam and Eve as is depicted in **Genesis**. Why was I so enamored with that story? Because it told of a story of love between God and man. I did not pay much attention to the disobedience of man as offered in the story. I only loved the story of Adam and Eve as being wonderful creations of God. Willingly, I admit I was mesmerized by that story of love.

Unfortunately, most who find the story of Adam and Eve appealing do not concentrate on the love story between God and man. That love story is given minor importance compared to the major theme of the story. What is that major theme? Man was commanded he could eat of every tree of Paradise except one – and if he ate of that one forbidden fruit – he would die; and, of course, predictably, he did eat of it – and he does die.

I hate that part of the story; but almost every minister who talks about sin loves it. Most – though not all - ministers skip right by the story of creation to hurry into the tale of man's disobedience and the subsequent claim that God has a right to punish mankind for disobeying Him. That is their emphasis – that God has a right to punish man because man disobeyed God.

Why do most ministers love that part of the story? Because as God's ministers, it gives them the right to stand in for God and call for the punishment of those who do wrong. Punish, Punish, Punish! That is what most ministers take from the alleged story of Adam and Eve; and from that, man is extremely willing to punish man on behalf of

God. Thus, wars, personal and otherwise, are justified – all because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and deserved punishment for it.

What minister stops with the love between Adam and Eve? I have never heard the tale of Adam and Eve ever told that stops with the initial love of Adam and Eve. Have you? It's like every minister or soldier – and pseudo minister or soldier – in the world is most anxious to get by that trivial aspect of the story. Give me the guts of the thing, they lead on. Tell me what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed. Tell me that because I can take that and use it to command you to obey me because as a willing minister of the God of Adam and Eve, God is giving me the right to sit in judgment of you.

And me? I get lost in the story of love between God and mankind. The tale of disobedience has no lure for me. Whereas most who believe in the story of Adam and Eve as offered in **Genesis** pay almost no attention to the part that has God and man in love, I pay attention to only that part. Am I right to stop with the tale of love between God and man? Is it possible I am wrong in doing that and ending up a fool because I refuse to accept reality? Perhaps, but let us ponder it a bit.

Can It Be?

It is claimed by the author of **Genesis** that man has the power to violate God. That is what disobedience of God is all about. By disobeying God, I can violate Him; and thus, as a delegate of God, you can judge me and punish me because I am disobeying you – or, rather, your superior, God. The story of **Genesis** gives you the right to judge me and punish me as you see fit because you are a delegate of God.

But you can only have such a right if it is true that God can be violated. If God cannot be violated – by Adam or anyone else – then God has no use for delegates – and you, sir, or madam, have no authority over me. So, you should be able to see just how much is hanging on the story of Adam and Eve – as offered in **Genesis**.

How can I violate God? There is only one way. I can violate another only if I can take away something from that other. I can violate you because you can lose something. I can take something away from you – including your virginity or your life. Thus, I can violate you.

But can I violate God? Can I take something away from God? If so, I would have to be able to diminish the Infinity of God because that is the only way I can take away something from God. My God is Infinite. That means my God is boundless and without limitation. How can I take something away from something that encompasses everything? I can't. Thus, the tale of **Genesis** that offers that man could violate God and thereby deserves punishment is null and void. ***It is pure fantasy.*** It is totally untrue. It is completely without basis; and it is the very false foundation of practically every minister – chosen and otherwise – who claims the right to sit in judgment of another human being.

Who told the story of Adam and Eve? I do not know, but, in general, be it Moses or someone else, it was someone looking for authority. Who believes the story of Adam and Eve? Anybody who is looking for authority. The one thing that bonds both the teller of the story and a believer in the story is authority. Even those who do not seek it but want it as subjects of it have need for authority. It is like the only lesson that comes from the story of Adam and Eve is the notion and acceptance of Authority.

What is the basis of the current war in Iraq? It is one side claiming authority as the rightful punishers of the evil doers of the other side. And the other side claims authority as the rightful punishers of the other evil doers. There they are – battling one another under the guise that each one has the authority to punish the other. And what does it all come down to? The wonderful little tale of Adam and Eve as told in **Genesis**.

Just ask George Bush why he has the right to do what he is doing. He may measure his words to not sound like an idiot, but it will always be – **the evil doers of the world must be punished. It says so right there in that story of Adam and Eve. God commanded man and man disobeyed God and God has a right to demand the punishment of the disobedient. Now, I am only the dutiful servant of God. Thus, as God's rightful delegate, it is right that I punish those who would oppose me.**

Signed: G.W.B.

And on the other side, there is no disagreement about the story of Adam and Eve. **That story is definitely 100 % correct as told. It is only that the wrong people claimed to be the rightful delegates of God. It was not Isaac that was given the authority to rule on behalf of God. It was Ishmael. There is nothing wrong with the story of Adam and Eve. He who told that one was right. The quarrel is not with the story of Adam and Eve. It is with that nonsensical story of Isaac as being preferred by God over Ishmael – the rightful first born of Abraham. Signed: Osama bin Laden.**

The Real Culprit – Genesis

But there is something wrong with the story of Adam and Eve. It could not have happened as offered. God could not have dismissed Adam and Eve from His presence after the alleged disobedience because nothing can be dismissed from God. Oh, yes! There is something terribly wrong about the story of Adam and Eve. It is nonsense from the story of creation on. God could not have dismissed man and woman from His Presence or cast them out of the Garden of Eden where He resides because to do that He would have had to cast them outside of Infinity. How can that be? Beside that, man has no power to violate God because no one can take anything away from God.

Accordingly, all authority based on the tale of Adam and Eve is baseless.

It Could Have Been Told Different

Remember me? I said I would have ended the story of Adam and Eve with the bond of love between man and God. In fact, I do end the story of Adam and Eve with that bond. For me, the story of Isaac (and Israel) and Ishmael (and Islam) never had a chance to be told because for me, there was no failure on the part of Adam and Eve; and I am not just wishful thinking. How can one fail God who cannot violate God? Thus, my tale of Adam and Eve is probably the only rightful tale; and the one who claimed he told the story right is mistaken.

For me, **Adam** means *first man*. **Eve** means *first woman*. Beyond being first, however, there is no difference between Adam and me. Adam could not have violated God; and I cannot violate God. Adam had no such power; and neither do I. And if you

are woman, there is no difference between you and Eve. Eve had no power to violate God; and neither do you. This story that I tell is the rightful one; and the one told by the false authority of **Genesis** is the incorrect one.

My Adam & Eve

Last month, I had the wonderful experience of seeing something I had never seen before – man and woman as they are. A young friend of mine, Annie, and I traveled to Denver, Colorado from our homes in Laramie, Wyoming to see a fantastic exhibit. It is called **Body World**. It features real bodies of real men and women whose bodies have been plasticized since their death. The process “freezes” the body and the organs of the body as they were. For some reason, the skin must not be subject to the process because none of the “models” have any skin. Other than that, there it is – a human being as a human being is – with all his or her muscles just as is normal for any human being.

I could see a real human heart, a real human liver, a real human kidney, a real human penis, a real human vagina, a real human face, a real skeleton, a real back, a real front, a real arm, a real leg, a real mouth, a real everything. For me, the human body is unbelievable, but no more or less unbelievable than anything else in Nature. For me, anything that has ever been or ever will be deserves the moniker, **awesome**.

I have a tremendous advantage over the author of **Genesis**, however, in that time has elapsed to allow me to see a real human. I doubt that the author of **Genesis** had any sense of how a human heart operates or how a human lung operates or how a human kidney operates. Everything was a mystery to him, but not in the same way as everything is a mystery to me. I find the human body astonishingly wonderful because I am in love with humanity. In all fairness, the author of **Genesis** was probably not in love with humanity and thus, in his ignorance of the wonder of life, he told his stories as he did, having man and woman that he could not understand be somehow disgraceful rather than the graceful entities that I see.

I think that word *graceful* is the operative word here. I see life as graceful whereas, in all likelihood, the author of Genesis saw life as **disgraceful**. I see life as full as it is. I see it as full of grace for being full of God. The author of **Genesis** wanted life to be more than it is. He wanted more out of life than it offers and thus he did not see life as “*full of grace*.” Thus, he had man and woman cover their disgraceful selves once he had them disobey God. He told his story to have man and woman become disgraceful after initially being full of grace, but that was probably only a ruse. He wanted to tell a tale that man could be better than he is and return to being as he was – full of grace – **pending obedience to authority**. But his vision of grace was only a promise of what can be – not what is. My vision of Adam and Eve and you and me is that we are all full of grace because we are all full of God. What can be or might be is a nice thought for me; but what is drives me because what is - is perfect.

Is Life Really Full of Grace?

Life was not perfect for the author of **Genesis**, though, was it? Thus, he wrote his story as he did as a slave of his perception. Did he have the right perception? Or is my

perception more correct? Is life really full of grace because it is full of God – or does it lack God as the author of **Genesis** believed? Which one of us is right? If either?

When I was a kid, growing up as Catholic, I enjoyed a sacrament of our faith called **Confession (Penance)**. After confessing my sins to a priest, that priest would absolve me of my sins, pending my doing some penance in good faith. I guess it was that part about doing penance in good faith that refused me absolution if I should fail that part of it. My being absolved of sin depended upon my doing some penance – like saying three **Our Fathers** or three **Hail Marys** – or three of each. But I always felt like a king after fulfilling the penance I was commanded because my soul had once again achieved a **state of grace** because, at least for a little time, all sin in it had been removed. My God was a wonderful Father in that He wanted me to always stay in a state of grace – which meant that He was always with me. But he couldn't be with me if I chose to be with something or someone else who opposed Him. That someone was called **Satan** and Satan was always struggling to take a loved one of God away from God. You may be aware of the story. My! Do preachers love that story! It never gets stale because opposition to God always has to be a possibility for them to manage their stories of authority.

I still love the thought about needing to be in a **state of grace**. Nothing has changed in that regard; but the way to a state of grace has changed. I no longer feel that I need to confess my sins to attain a state of grace because I have no sins to confess – related to God, that is. I might sin against a brother or sister by violating one or the other, but now I know I can't sin against God. Thus, though maybe still being a sinner of some sort, **I am always in a state of grace. Why? Because God is in me and it is that presence that defines my being in a state of grace. Confession does not attain that state for me. Mere existence does.**

Following the Right Adam & Eve

I started this essay with a section called: **Following the Wrong Adam & Eve**. It is only right, then, to finish with a section urging the right Adam and Eve. The wrong Adam and Eve were those – and are those – who insist that Paradise is lost, who insist that mankind has the capability of rebuking God, who insist that there is always a greater heaven someplace else than right where we stand, who insist that rivalry and conflict are as naturally human as breathing air and drinking water.

Who is the right Adam? I am. Who is the right Eve? You are – if you throw off the insisted conflicts of civilization – not humanity – and embrace yourself as perfect as you are – warts and all.

Perfection is not perfect symmetry because there is probably no such thing. Nature is not about perfect symmetry. It is about perfect growth; and perfect growth is simply taking the course of particular design.

How did I come to be? How did my body come to be? By following some course of perfect symmetry? Of course not. If that were the case, I would be the spitting image of Mom and Dad – or at least one of them. I am not the spitting image of Mom or Dad. Like all perfect beings, I have taken my own course, having adopted many of the general traits of my parents; but I am not my parents – anymore than a child of mine is me. I argue this only to point out that perfect symmetry is not natural. All things are mutations

of other things – not perfect reflections of their origins. **This is to say that with mutations embraced as the “natural thing” and of the “natural order,” all things are perfect unto themselves as they are – as the individuals they are – be they so called “standard” or otherwise.**

I am Adam – an *Intheist*

I am Adam in terms of I have an opportunity in my life to get me right – just as Adam did 40,000 years ago or so. The Adam of 40,000 years ago did not have the tremendous advantages I do today, however. Perhaps he had no way of getting it right because of his ignorance about the wonder and the miraculous and perfect of life; but I do have a way of getting it right because I have so many advantages the original Adam did not have.

Perhaps my biggest advantage is my having advanced from the original Adam to think about Infinity. I doubt that the original Adam had any idea about such a concept; but then it seems that most walking the face of the Earth today pay it no mind either. In that light, the current clans of humans have not progressed at all over the originals.

If Adam or Eve had any thought about God some 40,000 years or so ago, he or she would have likely considered him or herself an **otheist** in that each would have placed God outside of them – just like billions of **Modern Otheists** do today. In that light, mankind seems to be marching on – backwards – holding onto the same infantile thoughts about God as may have our ancestors.

If you are wondering about the term, **otheist**, it is not in the dictionary. Call it a new word that describes one who sees or believes God to be **outside** of self. Most people are otheists, I think. They believe in God – or a God – but they do not believe that God is really Infinite or Everywhere. Thus, they are theists who place God outside of themselves and can properly be called **otheistic**. Are you an **otheist**? I am not. I guess you could call me an **Intheist** in terms of I believe that God is in all things – including me.

How does the right Adam see God? As an **Intheist** - as in every single entity, not outside of each to make wars between entities inevitable. How does the right Eve see God? As an **Intheist** - as the very basis of herself, but as the basis of every other thing as well. The right Adam and the right Eve do not perceive differences to be imperfections; but instead know that all life is just as it should be – according to an individual in question.

That is not to say that I should embrace all perfections as if they have to be. It is only to say that I should embrace everything as perfect and not call anything imperfect because it is different than something else. Should I encounter a virus that mutates my body from one perfect expression into another, that is not to say that I should embrace my sick condition. It is only to say that my sick condition is not an expression of imperfection. No one likes to be sick; and the ideal is that no one is sick – or gets sick – but the right Adam and the right Eve will not look at a sick one and say that one is imperfect.

Does Illness Start in The Mind?

I think that much illness in life is due to people not being comfortable with their perfections and seeing this or that about them as an expression of imperfection. The body often obeys the mind and if the mind sees an aspect of a body as imperfect, it may, indeed, become imperfect according to the will of the master – and real sickness may develop. Sickness may not develop in the particular member of imperfection, but due to the uneasiness of an entire body, disease may develop anywhere in the body.

I am not claiming, however, that all disease originates from the mind, directing the body to accept dictation and become imperfect according to the master of a body. That is not so at all. Some disease is not of the mind to start. Much disease is not of the mind to start; but much does start in the mind, I think; and for the most part, that which does originates because the master of a body considers his or her body imperfect.

As I sit here today, naked as I often am, a left testicle is larger than a right testicle – or is it the other way around? It does not matter which it is, but if I see the condition of one testicle being different than the other as an expression of imperfection, then I am likely to develop some malady of mind that may result in a malady of body. My uneasiness with my condition may cause a disease of mind – which may well result down the road in a diseased body. So to avoid much physical illness and disease, it would stand to reason that I should be at home with my body in my mind.

Amazingly, I think, lots of people recognize this as a probability. Many realize there is often a direct correlation between health of mind and health of body; but the way many handle that situation is to declare nudity undesirable for its exposure of perceived imperfection. If they do not go naked, all perceived imperfections would not be visible. Thus, to avoid having to deal with their perceived imperfections, they refuse to go naked so that their imperfections are not obvious.

But staying hidden changes nothing – disease wise. Hidden or otherwise, the body may accept the dictations of the mind; and if I believe I am imperfect, my body may well obey – and real sickness may become a reality. Again, this is not to say that all sickness originates in this way. I do not wish to imply or express any such thing; but I do wish to offer that much sickness probably originates in this way.

Who knows? At least some cancer may have such an explanation. Some cancer may be a development of imperfection in one or more organs of my body due to the command of my mind. I do not know this to be so, but there is lots I do not know. I only point it out to offer it as a possibility.

I Can Get It Right

In any case, I can get it right – even though many before me have not. I do not have to retain the accusations of imperfection that those who have preceded me have dictated. I can get it right. As one individual among billions, I can get it right. As one individual among billions, I can become a new Adam in terms of from this day forward, I can set a new table, a new course, a new direction. I do not have to insist on conflict in my life as

an expression of the natural order. I do not have to sin because my parents or grandparents or great grandparents did. I can get it right.

And we can get it right too. We do not have to deny nakedness because it may show imperfections we would rather keep hidden. We can stand straight as only a new Adam and a new Eve can do. We can face the sun, naked and perfect, and follow the dictation of a new will that follows a new mind that says that all things are perfect – including ourselves. We can fall asleep at night, knowing that in the night, all perfections are at rest – just waiting for the light of day to be known.

Adam & Eve

(A Song)

By

Francis William Bessler

July 24th, 2006

REFRAIN:

***Let me tell you a story of Adam and Eve,
the way it was never told.***

***Listen to my story and then proceed
to live your life as graceful and bold.***

God said to Adam, look around, my friend.
Can you see her, standing there?
Well, Adam did as he was bid
and found Eve blushing so fair.
Eve looked at Adam and said to him:
Hey, I am so glad you came.
Then God pushed Adam He made so slim
and told him to go on and play. ***Refrain.***

God said to Eve, you're the mother of all.
From you, all will come.
I made Adam for you not to fall
but to give you many daughters and sons.
Eve looked at God and smiled bright
and told Him, thanks for my grace.
Then she took Adam and held him tight
and kissed him all over his face. ***Refrain.***

Adam said to God, this is really nice.
Wow! What an awesome home!
I am so glad you made me from your sight.
I thank you for my flesh and bones.
Then Adam said to Eve, I love you so.
It's so nice to be in your arms.
With all my life, I intend to show
just how much I enjoy your charms. *Refrain.*

Well, my friend, that's how it was.
No other tale should be believed.
We should love our lives only because
We are blessed just as Adam and Eve. *Refrain (2).*

So, what are you – **atheist**, **otheist**, or *intheist*? An **atheist** does not believe in God at all. An **otheist** believes in God, but places that God “**outside**” of individual beings, requiring those individual beings to “**earn**” access to Him or Her or It. An *intheist* believes in God, but places that God “*inside*” of individual beings, as well as “outside” of them – and most importantly, believes God to be a Presence or Force or Energy from which all things come – and in which all things reside. For an *intheist*, **God cannot be earned because God is already in everything**. One can only “**earn**” that which one does not already have. *If all things already have God, then nothing needs to “earn” what it already has. Does it?*

So, let the debate begin. Are you **atheist**, **otheist**, or *intheist*?

It is for each to choose the kind of “theist” he or she is. I am an *Intheist*. How about you?

Thanks for Listening!

*Francis William Bessler
Laramie, Wyoming, U.S.A.
July 31st, 2006*

STATE OF GRACE

THE END

EPILOG: GENESIS NOW!

Well, Folks, how did you like my “redefinition” of **Genesis**? What do you think of “**my**” **Adam & Eve**? It is extremely important, however, that I not impose my Adam & Eve on you anymore than you should be allowed to impose your Adam & Eve on me. Essentially, however, it should be up to me to define my own **Genesis** – and it should be up to you to define your **Genesis**. Neither of us should allow another to do that for us.

It took me a good long time in life to realize that “**Genesis**” only stands for “**Beginning**.” That really means that any chosen “**beginning**” can be considered a “**genesis**.” Every day can represent a “**new genesis**” if we wish it so. Life has taught me that I can choose to retain old values or I can let old values slip by; but I should be free to make whatever choice I make. I may very well want to retain old standards – and then again, I may choose to see old standards as irrelevant and lacking in ideal.

In my case, I have come to see the overall vision offered in the **Genesis** of the **BIBLE** as impossible. What vision is that? **It is the overall vision that offers that God can expel anything from His or Her or Its Presence.** That vision that allows expulsion by God is not my vision of life. My vision is that God is Infinite – and therefore everywhere, making everything Divine. How can something that is everywhere expel anything from its presence?

The original author of the **Genesis** of the **BIBLE**, however, did not have a view of an “**infinite God**.” His God was one that can be located in one place and not another. His God was one that could invite into his presence and expel from his presence at will. His God was one that could declare that an Eden cannot exist everywhere. His God was one who could choose one over another. When his **Adam & Eve** were created, they were established in some kind of **LIMITED “home of God”** he called “**Eden**” and when his Adam & Eve earned banishment from that home, they were expelled from Eden.

That is an easy vision to have if your God is not infinite. You can devise a God who can expel you from his presence because that God is not everywhere, but if your vision of God is that God must be everywhere and in everything, there can be no room for expulsion.

The original author of the **Genesis** of the **BIBLE** had a right, though, to offer an idea of one he considered to be God. I think his ignorance of the idea of infinity doomed his thinking to failure, but I do think he had a right to think within the limits of his own capacity of the time. Likewise, each of us has a right to think within the limits of our own capacity. **Where we have gone so wrong in the human race is that we have allowed one steeped in relative ignorance to define life for all of us.**

In all fairness to the original author of **Genesis**, however, he may not have intended his tale to be used to create dogma. The original author may have written a few pages offering a bit of a tale of creation – though erroneous – and did not expect that tale to go beyond a certain limited circle. Who knows about that? None of us know how the book we now know as **Genesis** evolved. None of us know who added his own story to an original story.

But let me get back on track. A story – be it an original complete one or an evolved one over time – should never be allowed to dictate a common vision. No writer has that right – or group of writers. Each of us should take the responsibility in life to think for ourselves. In that, each of us has a right to decide our own **Genesis**. Why? Because **Genesis** only represents a “beginning.” Every day can be a new beginning. Thus, every day can represent a “new genesis.”

Think of yourself as Adam – if you are a man. Put yourself in his place and ask yourself what you would do if you were he. **Then go out and do it.** I think I have long realized that such is the case. **I am really Adam** – and I have the same right that some so called original Adam may have had. **I have a right to choose** – just like the original Adam; but that says in itself that I do not have to choose as the original Adam did. **I can choose anew!**

Think of yourself as Eve – if you are a lady. Put yourself in her place and ask yourself what you would do if you were she. **Then go out and do it. You are really Eve** and you have the same right that some original Eve may have had. **You have a right to choose** – just like the original Eve; but again, that says in itself that you do not have to choose as the original Eve did. **You can choose anew!**

Well, Friends, that will do it for another volume of my **OUT IN THE OPEN** writings series. As I so often say, I write to learn – not to dictate. In that, when I read something I have written, I am like my own student. I am “relearning” in some cases, but also “realizing” error in other cases. I must admit, though, that if some writing is really bad upon review, it goes in the waste basket. I used to fill a lot of waste baskets, but not so much anymore. Still, the right to fill a waste basket is a very precious right indeed – while I find my way as **my own Adam**, maybe looking for a **new Eve**, but knowing that it is all **Eden** – from here in Laramie, Wyoming to out there among the stars! **Wherever I am, Eden is – because my God cannot expel me!**

See you next time!

Francis William Bessler
June 3rd, 2011

OUT IN THE OPEN

Volume 5 of 8

(Featuring works written in 2006)



THE END