

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

This paper was originally written, on April 13, 1979. For those who find mis-spellings and typos in these papers, it was at a time when individual computers were a rarity and spell-check had not yet invented. If you add to that fact that I've always been a bad speller, that the typing was done on mimeograph paper by someone else, that I was trying to raise 3 children, two dogs and a cat, take care of my husband and the house and that the church paper was being published once a week, you might understand the kind of pressure I was under when I rather boldly...and, perhaps, foolishly...addressed the Lord in an exasperated tone. In no uncertain terms, I told Him that if He wanted me to do this writing business, then He'd have to give me the papers on Fridays! Every other day was booked! At which point, I promptly forgot the whole business and went about my work.

Now, I do not in any way recommend the use of such impertinence when addressing the Almighty, but have included it to illustrate (1) that if God will speak to the likes of me, then He'll speak to anyone, (2) that God is very, very patient, and (3) that God does not forget (!), because on the following Friday (and for as many Fridays as the Epistle was printed on a weekly basis), I was suddenly surrounded by His Peace and Love...taken up and enfolded in His arms, in the same way that a baby is enfolded...and talked to...told stories...gently. The ideas are His, not mine--which is why I've never signed my name to these papers. The spelling, bad grammar, and typos are mostly mine. (I thought that after I retired in 1999, I'd have time to edit them—the thought now seems a bit amusing—and here I am, in 2012, just getting started on that project.)

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The "Child-Within"

Within each of us there is a "child"...hidden, sometimes, behind doors that are tightly shut...peeking, sometimes, shyly out again at the world...laughing, sometimes, and running barefoot through a sprinkler on a hot day.

Sometimes we catch a glimpse of this "child"...but it's usually a fleeting glimpse. And it's not the same as glimpsing childhood. That was happy, sometimes, or sad, sometimes...but it was always a part of the world. And, although we were happy or sad, the "child-with" was "apart"...able to take a happy moment and make it last forever...or a sad moment and see a prince come riding to the rescue.

But at some point in our growing up, this "child-within" was tucked away...safely kept. Perhaps because as we grew older, we were told more often to, "Grow up!" or to "put away our childish things."

And we did.

But it was safely kept because it was a precious thing...not of the world...but apart from the world.

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Here, in the "child-within," a windy day can leap with joy in your heart...without even a reason for blowing.

Here, in the "child-within," a castle can be built in a day...and, every day, rebuilt in the mind, without any doubt that it will be done...in the world as easily as it is in the mind.

I am reminded of the Lord's Prayer and how closely this resembles:

"Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" [Matt. 6:10]

and what Jesus said about the little children:

"For to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." [Matt.19:14]

It is the worldly things that we must put away, not the childish...and bring out into the open, again, the "child-within"...and, in a sense, to have that "child" re-born...

"...for unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3)

and

"...unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." [Matt.18:3]

If we "turn" and "become like children," we will have found more meaning in the words,

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"For unto you is born this day a child..." [Lk. 2:11]

And, in accepting our own "child," we can more readily accept the child born in the City of David...

And, as children of God, we can see the Prince of Peace come again in glory...and "riding to the rescue."

(Written, April 13, 1979. Edited, October 4, 2012.)