

---

# I BELIEVE

---



Roy Key

---

# **INTRODUCTION**

**Here is a bit of what I believe. It is the most summary sort of state-ment. Nor has it been given in argumentative form, but in the shape of one person's struggle with the evidence as he sees it and the meaning that has broken through to embrace him.**

**I can but covet that rich experience for you.**

**- Roy Key  
1201 Timber Top Dr.  
Rogers, AR 72756  
1997**

# CONTENTS

## I BELIEVE:

<b>1. GOD IS COSMIC ARTIST AND LOVER .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. JESUS CHRIST IS THE FINAL REVELATION OF GOD .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. EVIL IS ENTRENCHED POWER OPPOSING GOD .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. HISTORY IS GOD'S DRAMATIC LOVE STORY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. THE BIBLE IS THE BOOK THAT CONTAINS THE LOVE STORY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6. THE CHURCH IS THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST'S CREATIVE CARE .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7. WORK IS CREATIVE AND JOYOUS PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8. GOD'S DREAM WILL COME TRUE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>9. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>17</b>

# 1

## I BELIEVE GOD IS COSMIC ARTIST AND LOVER

Every reflective person recognizes that our world is sustained and pushed along by some kind of "basic reality," "evolutionary urge," or "life force." Our ultimate question becomes, "What is its nature, and how are we related to it?"

A philosopher commented, "If I had one question I could ask the Sphinx, it would be, 'Is the universe friendly?'" The issue at bottom is: "Is life 'a tale told by an idiot...?' or does it have meaning? and, are there dependable clues in the universe?"

The very fact that we call it "universe," rather than "chaos," reveals that we have already found sufficient order and meaning to make possible a philosophical world view allowing the emergence of "science." Without such dependability, science would be an impossibility. It rests on an ultimate faith in the dependability and order of nature.

Order does not necessitate a "friendly" universe, much less a Christian view of God. It points to purpose-in-process. That process, ultimate reality, or life force, however, creates beauty as well as order, mind as well as matter, heroism as well as cowardice, love as well as hate. Since a result necessitates an adequate cause, one can postulate certain characteristics of God from observing the creation.

The philosopher Immanuel Kant said, "Two things fill me with increasing awe and wonder, the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."

While he pointed to the inadequacy of the widely-employed philosophical "proofs" of the existence of God, he, pointed, also, to the reality of the moral categorical imperative within the heart.

## 1

Rationally, as the clock demands a clock-maker, so the world demands a world-maker. But, it is the moral law within that most convincingly testifies to the moral Source beyond. The arguments are much more technical, but they remain just that --- "arguments," never "proofs." In the end there are no mathematical "proofs" of either God's reality or ours.

"We walk by faith and not by sight" in all areas of life. We cannot prove that the sun will rise tomorrow or that a ball thrown in the air will come down. As Kant pointed out, we have practical certainty, not theoretical. A mathematical formula is theoretically certain just because it is an abstraction. As soon as it is filled with reality, the theoretical certainty vanishes.

I believe in God, a God of order and morality, a God who creates not only "things," but "selves." Consequently, I believe in a God that in some sense is or contains "Self"hood. The world development points to some sort of purposeful process. It has, in fact, produced sentient beings endowed with purpose, disclosing a fundamental factor in the nature of the process itself.

I cannot go much farther than this on the evidence in the world about me, but will point later to other factors that lead me to view this purposing "Self" as Creative Love--Cosmic Artist and Lover.

## 2

### I BELIEVE EVIL IS ENTRENCHED POWER OPPOSING GOD

I believe that in the world God is not unopposed. There are forces which war against creation, depersonalize people, and destroy love. Some thinkers see such destructive powers as the result of our ignorance, others as "the evolutionary lag." Still others deny Evil's reality altogether, labeling it "the dark hues in the painting of life."

If ever we could accept so cavalier a view, we are sadly wiser after the Holocaust, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Stalin's slaughter, Vietnam's tragedy, Ethiopia's starvation, the rape of Kuwait, and the white death of a narcotics empire that threatens civilization. The Evil we know today is more than the sum total of our stupidity. It is highly structured and ingeniously efficient.

The breadth and depth and height of Evil have led some to conclude that there are two Gods (Light and Darkness, as in Zoroastrianism) battling for control of the Cosmos. One can conclude that the outcome is unsure, or that history shows Good no match for Evil, Love no match for Hate, and that the end of all things is the global jungle after the beasts have devoured one another.

I believe that Evil cannot create; it can only destroy. It is the result of creation bent and twisted, flowing from freedom within to say "Yes" or "No" to Life. As over the centuries we have chosen to say "No," the consequences have piled up not only in our minds, but in our bodies, in our genes, in our social orders and institutions, even the ecological orders of nature.

The biblical response pictures God's free creation in revolt, a trusted leader enlisting rebels (by no means inconceivable) and leading the rebellion against God. While "Satan" does not explain the origin of Evil, it does symbolize its reality, its incredible genius and brilliant strategy.

Regardless of Evil's origin, I do not believe that it is eternal. I do not believe that Darkness swallows Light, but that Light dispels the Dark, that when the Light reveals the nature of Evil, it begins to lose its power. Its true nature is disclosed in its furious attack on Love.

## I BELIEVE JESUS CHRIST IS THE FINAL REVELATION OF GOD

There is in nature sufficient evidence to say much about God, but not that God is sovereign, unqualified, and unconditional Love. Such a Revelation, if it ever comes, must come from beyond and yet within nature and history. The Christian is one who sees in Jesus Christ just such Revelation.

Jesus Christ is not explainable in terms of His physical nature or His racial, cultural, and religious heritage. His appearance, then, is viewed in terms of wonder and mystery. Whatever else stories of the virgin birth suggest, they suggest the action of God in nature and history to disclose Godself personally, which the natural and historical process alone could not do.

Jesus' birth is of no concern apart from His life and death. In His unconditional, self-giving sacrifice we see the answer to our question about the nature of Ultimate Reality. At its highest height and deepest depth it is that selfgiving, other regarding, unconditional love.

There are corollary reasons that I believe in Jesus Christ as the ultimate Revelation of the nature and purpose of God. Many put them first, especially the historical records of His miracles, particularly of healing. Finally, though, the case for Jesus must stand or fall on this fact or fiction -- His Resurrection.

Here our faith needs stronger evidence than for His historical existence. Indeed, there is much more evidence for the historicity of Jesus than for that of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, or many others whose existence is unquestioned. But, there is no claim that they rose from the dead.

For some no amount of evidence is adequate, as with Hume. To pile up evidence, then, becomes useless. Argument failed to convince Paul, as it had failed to convince Thomas. That does not mean that it

had no effect, but it was not enough. It took an encounter with the living Lord!

4

Evidence is important. Eye-witness accounts are important. Paul used them. In *1 Cor. 15* he cites those to whom Christ appeared following His resurrection. Then, he says that on one occasion He appeared to some 500, over half of whom "are still alive." Of course, that meant whoever chose to do so could check him out and see if his testimony was true.

A massive piece of evidence is the great number of disciples willing to die for their witness. It is conceivable that all the witnesses lied, that they did not see Him whom they claimed to see following His death. What becomes inconceivable is to think that when they were seized by the authorities and offered life if they would recant, they chose to die for the lie.

In the final analysis we believe whatever makes the most sense to us, whatever makes life and the world more understandable and livable. The clinching argument to me is what may be called "the logic of Love." I believe that unconditional Love ought to be the final truth about Reality. I do not believe that self-centered souls could concoct the story of Jesus. And, I do not believe that unconditional Love could abandon Him. Nor do I believe that It can and will abandon us.

If God is "Unconditional Love," and both Jesus and we are unconditionally loved, then God cannot and will not allow death to be the last word. Therefore, the Resurrection!

Of course, God is not bound up in the conclusion of some syllogism. Logic is never Love, but it can help clear the ground of rational objections that cloud our vision. The validating evidence to anyone is in personal experience. Many call it "the witness of the Holy Spirit." As one ponders the Story, centers in on that Love streaming from Calvary, and opens her/his mind and soul, there comes the rich assurance.

To some it appears to be a personal encounter. They seem aware of the living Lord Himself and need nothing more. To others less mystical it is the overwhelming conviction that the Story is true, that

they are loved and unconditionally accepted. They need no further evidence, either. Such reality can be more real to them than the room or the people about them.

## 5

The skeptic can brand it all illusion or delusion. However it is this "delusion" that makes its holders more truthful, more loving, more serving, more full of life and joy, more daring and heroic, more humble and open to whatever truth is available. I know it is that way with me, and I cannot believe that a lie is so much better than the truth, that the world is lovelier and more loving because of an ancient, gargantuan falsehood.

I believe in Jesus, because He is God's "Hound of Heaven" that followed hard until He set me at bay and in my freedom I joyfully let Him take His captive prey.

## 4

### I BELIEVE HISTORY IS GOD'S DRAMATIC LOVE STORY

History does not compel us to see it in a certain way. It offers choices, and we pick our perspective. Most religions and philosophies have viewed it as cyclical. The squirrel cage or merry-go-round view does not take history seriously. Consequently, I find it unacceptable. Only two prominent views take seriously the historical process: Hebrew-Christian faith and Marxism.

I cannot embrace the view that history is the flux of blind chance, nor that it is the inflexible determinism of either an arbitrary God (as in the predestination of Islam or orthodox Calvinism) or the inevitable outcome of natural forces around and within us. I cannot regard our sense of freedom as a psychological trick or illusion.

The most fruitful understanding of history for me has been to view it as the Creative Drama taking place on one tiny bit of the cosmic stage, the divine human encounter on earth, the ongoing conversation or interaction between God and "Adam" (Humanity).

All history is a carrier of meaning, but every moment is not equally meaningful. Each drama has a moment in which its depth becomes

6

visible. So does the Drama of Creation. In one Act it all becomes transparent, and the meaning shines through. In that Act I catch the pivotal part of the dialogue between God and "Adam," "Adam's" headlong flight from the unwearied, relentless pursuit of Love.

Simply to see the characters moving across the stage is to be without a clue to the meaning of the unfolding drama. We may conclude that the action is meaningless, as Existentialism does. We can see it predestined, as both religious and secular determinists do. We can settle for a mystery that has no denouement.

I see a Drama whose unveiling comes in the midst of history, rather than at the end. It points to the Dramatist who in an act of Self-disclosure shows history to be a Love Story undetermined and unfinished.

5

## I BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE BOOK THAT CONTAINS THE LOVE STORY

I believe the Bible is a collection of historical documents telling the Story of God's various attempts at Self-disclosure, and God's unwearying effort to woo us Home. It was written over a period of about 1,000 years by numerous authors, some of them unknown. In time the writings were gathered and preserved as the history of a particular people convinced that God had called them, not to a spot of special privilege, but to a place of special responsibility.

It is in Israel's history (in Abraham, according to the Story) that there came the disclosure of God's universal purpose, that God's Grace-gifts were meant not for a clan or nation, not even theirs, but for all humankind. Such a universal perspective was necessary, if the world would ever recognize the appearance of the limitless Love of God.

7

There is no accounting for the People of Israel except on the grounds of their testimony to the origin of this firmly held faith. This nation is the greatest miracle of the Old Testament. In their growth and development there was disclosed through the 8th century prophets the moral nature of God, God's justice that meant judgment on whatever depersonalized and destroyed the vulnerable among them---particularly the poor, widows, orphans, and aliens.

Historically Israel was necessary to the appearance of Jesus as the "Christ."

"Christ" is the Bearer of God's Unconditional Love. For that Love to appear personally in nature and history, God had to select a particular time and place and people with whom to begin. This "scandal of particularity" is offensive to those philosophical minds that conceive of truth only in terms of "universals," but particularity is part and parcel of the human condition, where we are both caught in and yet able in thought and spirit to transcend our condition.

In our kind of world God respects our freedom and still works through the limitations of our cultural condition to get through to us. That means that God does not turn people into robots, not even when they bear witness to Him. That's true verbally and literarily. God uses us where we are, at our stage of intellectual, moral, religious development.

The revelation is not, as claimed for the Koran, dropped complete from heaven. It is not simply a body of truths, principles, or laws conveyed miraculously to passive scribes. The revelation is made in historical action the meaning of which prophetic spirits discern and share in the community of faith. It is this Story that is preserved first orally and then literarily, and so becomes part of the revelation itself. In the ultimate sense, however, the Revelation is not in words, but in the

**Word-made-flesh. Yet, by means of, or through the words of the Story, God speaks Godself.**

**The miracle of personal encounter is comparable to that which happens between or among us. We observe one another's action. We listen to one another's words. Initially they are verbal gestures, sounds hurled**

**8**

**back and forth through the air, beating on our eardrums to be interpreted by our brains.**

**Then it happens! This thing I call "the miracle of the word." We are no longer hurling verbal gestures, but are communicating "selves." It is only at this point that true revelation occurs. Previously we were disclosing information about ourselves. The relationship remained objective, at arm's length. We were but familiar strangers. Then the gulf is crossed, and the relationship becomes personal. We are lovers or friends.**

**Why do I accept the Bible, rather than other great literature as that which helps shape, explicate, and nurture faith? I do not accept the Bible alone. God who is Truth, as well as Love, does not shut me up to one tradition for light and help. There may be portions of literature outside the Bible that are more helpful to me at times than some portions within in. In the love, freedom, and light of Jesus Christ I am heir to all things.**

**Nevertheless, it is only in the Bible that I find the Love Story of God-in-Christ. It is only in the Bible that I see such Love as Ultimate Reality, unconditional, unlimited, unwearying. It is that history and none other that brings the final Revelation of the nature and purpose of God. I may find help elsewhere; but I find "Christ" only here.**

**Consequently, the Bible can never be replaced. It can never be placed along side every other good book. It is tied historically and uniquely to God's action in Jesus Christ. God's final Revelation is not merely true information; it is God-self. Only here do we truly see the Answer to life's riddle.**

I need to respond directly to the question, "On what grounds, though, do you accept the Bible as authority?" First, I respond that its authority is always a derived authority. Ultimate authority is God. For the Christian it is God-in-Christ. The Bible is authoritative for me, as I indicated above, because it is the carrier or cradle of Christ.

Fundamentalists "prove" the authority of Scripture by pointing to its prophecies fulfilled hundreds of years after they were made, and

9

miracles which point to God's power present in and validating the work of Jesus and His followers. A strong case can be made on such grounds. Yet, in my judgment these are in the main arguments to support a faith rooted elsewhere.

Rational "proof" may create rational faith or credence. Personal relations reach beyond credibility to commitment-in-trust. Christian faith is far from a QED at the end of "that which was to be proved." It is not the conclusion to a problem in logic. It is a decision about the meaning of our lives and where we shall hurl them. More than being convinced that a prospective bride or groom exists and could be somebody we'd like to know, it is our spiritual commitment-in-marriage, the leap at the altar.

Cowper once said, "I believe the Bible, because when I read it, it finds me." That's the way it is with those who struggle with the Biblical Story and are startled to discover that it's not merely a tale about phantom folk with weird names and strange faces from an age long dead. That's my face in the mirror, my condition laid bare, the call of my name to report for duty!

I may assent to its authority, but until in the Bible God speaks to me, that authority is rational, objective, but never dynamic. "The word of God" for me is not a "thing," though the "thing" may be its carrier. Therefore, I cannot join the Fundamentalist cry, "The Bible is God's infallible, inerrant Word!" divinely preserved from all historical contingency.

For the Bible to be *understood* in every age its primary message must be ageless. Yet, for it to be intelligible *at the time of its writing*, it

must be carried in thought forms of that day. That means that if today we are to understand, we cannot just flip it open and read the verse on which our finger falls. It must be understood in its historical context. People cannot escape their own categories of thought. So, God ever places His "treasure in earthen vessels." That is not evidence of God's willingness to compromise truth, but of a passion to reach us without violation of our personhood.

The Fundamentalist charges, "Unless you view the Bible as inerrant, even in matters of science, you surrender it in toto. You have no

10

standard as to what to accept and what to reject." We, in fact, do not have to reject the account as a truthful record of God's dealings with His people in their limited knowledge and maturity. Its different levels of spirituality and morality attest to that limit.

Our Standard of evaluation, however, for all of life, including the Bible, is Jesus Christ Himself. How does it measure up or point to Him? Certainly, Joshua was not "a Christian." How could he be? It is unfair to insist that he ought to be. Yet, God used him, along with others, at their own level of development to move toward His end of universal Love in community.

The Bible shows how God, refusing to override human freedom, works with us at all stages of cultural, intellectual, moral, spiritual, development to provide for, nurture, enlighten, and disclose Godself to us as fully as God at such time can. We should, therefore, expect to see evidence of those different levels in different eras of national and world history.

I will not turn to Genesis to learn creation's method, but its Source. For information on astrophysics or biochemical medicine I will turn to the best experts of the day, limited as they are to future correction and supplementation. But, for knowledge of God (not objectively present in nature, but subjectively present in Person) I will not turn to the most brilliant scientists. I will turn to the Story of Him who is among us as Unconditional Love.

The Story Book should be subjected to the same critical study (textual, literary, historical) as other documents. It has, in fact, been subjected to far more intensive critical examination than any other body of literature. Our Lord demands full love of truth. Nor is God well served by a fear of any light or a reluctance to know any truth about ourselves or our world.

I believe in the Bible because great minds whom I respect believe in it, just as, without personal knowledge, I believe much that is printed in text books and encyclopedias all over the world. I believe in the Bible because of those whose faith has transformed and made them into what I

11

yearn to be. I believe in the Bible because it unmask, disarms and then lifts me to my feet with its message of triumph.

I believe in the Bible because it tells me a Story that seems truer than any other story I have ever heard, a Story that comes alive on my little stage and sweeps me up in the Drama whose Author and Director is God. I really believe in the Bible because through it I have been laid hold on by "Christ," embraced, accepted, assured, given meaning about this world and a mission for which I can gladly live and willingly die.

## 6

### I BELIEVE THE CHURCH IS THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST'S CREATIVE CARE

Sociologically the Church is one institution among many with the faults of such institutions as family, school, village, city and nation-state. It is the contemporary sign that God still works with us as we are, at whatever level of cultural, intellectual, moral, spiritual maturity we possess.

Like the Bible, the Church exists to tell the Story and for the world's sake live out the Story's implications -- a "show and tell" venture. It is the only institution that for membership requires a confession that one is totally unworthy of the Love streaming from the Story.

Many move into the Church dragging all the old outside culture along. They know neither the nature nor mission of the Church. They know simply that they need whatever light they can find, whatever non-physical resources are available, and that they want those whom they love to find them, too. Like its Lord, the Church does not want to turn any away.

At the same time the Church has the task of helping its members discover who they are. They are called to be carriers of the Love they

12

have received to the end of the world. Not only the geographical, but the vocational world. Not simply the private, but the public world where the decisions of life and death are made.

The Church is called to a global mission, and if some day we're no longer tied to this tiny planet, to a cosmic mission. As in Abraham God began a universal Family, so in Christ God completes that eternal purpose. In fact, Paul's vision of the end is one in which all creation is radiant with the Spirit of Jesus and moves into its original creative intent.

The Church is pioneer scout in that Creative Adventure. As full of sin as it is, within it is, also, a judgment on that sin together with the vision of life made whole, all wounds healed and all creation united in a psalm of praise. Its work in the world is not only to bind up wounds, but to evidence the healing, uniting transforming Love of God at every break and tear in the human, societal and ecological fabric.

Standing always under judgment for its failure, the Church's stance is ever one of penitent gratitude and hope. Here is its lure, its judgment and its glory. God's creative intention is one grown-up

**Family in a brand-new world with everybody Home for Thanksgiving, the Cosmic Com-munity of Unconditional Love.**

**I need to be part of that Global Family. I believe that there is built into us all a hunger for the Great Belonging, to be members of a Family in which we are accepted and loved, at Home where we feel secure, with a task that gives our lives meaning. My understanding of the Church is that it is to be just this.**

**First, though, it has to learn, grow, come to see the dream and acquire both the passion and the skills to help be its real self. Consequently, the Church is first God's nursery, God's kindergarten, God's academy, where we train and mature. Still, all the time it is God's Family. I want to belong to the Community of Christ's Incredible Care. I want to grow up in that Family, to become mature enough to hurl my life into the Cause, to give myself to Him who lived, loved, died, rose, and ever lives to make it real. I want to vote for, work for, and be in on the joyous**

**13**

**triumph of God's Unconditional Love .... I really believe that God waits on us to help complete the Venture.**

**I believe in the Church, not because of what in itself it is, but because of what God, refusing to quit, intends to do with and through it.**

## **7**

### **I BELIEVE WORK IS CREATIVE AND JOYOUS PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD**

**In the Biblical Story God appears as Artist and Lover: Artist because He creates. Lover because He creates not only order, wonder and beauty, but counter-parts -- little artist/lovers, who can grow up and share the great Creative Adventure.**

So, God creates "Adam" and turns over to him "the Garden" and its care. Work is not a consequence of sin, but of creation-for-creative-companionship. There's no way for us to be truly "Human," but to share in the Creative Venture. It is nothing less than partnership with God.

I believe that work is an inescapable part of our highest calling and deepest need, and that our work is to be turned into worship. All week long we work and then on Sunday come to offer it up to God in thankful praise. It is our service on behalf of the neighbor, our contribution to the human family, our gift for the common weal, which we perform in Christ's name and in His Spirit lift up to God. It is God's work on behalf of God's human creation done in and through us.

If what I am doing is no part of God's provision for the neighbor and creation of the Global Family, then I need to change my work. If it is, and I view it as "the rat race" and "the grind," I need to change my attitude. I need a sense of "vocation" or "calling," Without it most of my

#### 14

life is cut off from God and the Creative Venture. Whatever my partner-ship, it's not with God. My work is "secular," rather than "sacred," labor rather than love, drudgery instead of delight, worry instead of worship.

I have had to work as a field hand in cotton, corn, and cane. I have had to work as a file clerk in a railway hospital. I have mowed grass and sold shoes, fired furnaces and cleaned toilets, not at home, but in the work place. I have swept floors, moved furniture, licked stamps, cut stencils, turned mimeograph handles, and run errands as a minister. It's drudgery till the Spirit fires imagination and turns it all into service and thankful prayer.

Paul's insight as he counsels slaves (*Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-24*) has been a light in the dark for me. It transformed my attitude toward work. Now it is done for my Lord. I will do my best and gladly hand it

to my Father. However, much it lacks, I am confident that He will smile, accept it, and in due time help me do it better.

I want to listen till I hear Him say, "Come, we'll do it together." That will be bliss. That will be rest. It will be fulfillment. It will be praise for acceptance into joyous partnership with God.

15

**8**

## **I BELIEVE GOD'S DREAM WILL COME TRUE**

I know God's timetable is not mine. I am impatient, and God is long-suffering. As "The Hound of Heaven" the All-loving still pursues His last lost child ...and I am really glad. It could be one I love more than my life, and it could be me.

My joyous hope is that the Family Circle will be complete, that the glad Thanksgiving will be more than we ever imagined, that the Creative Venture will be celebrated with new understanding, in happy

fulfillment without being completed, and that as fresh graduates we will receive new calls to wider fields of creative care.

Though I but dimly guess what such a call can mean, I am confident that it is a continuation of what we have begun here. If our work now has no significance for the work there, it is a waste of life and unworthy of that Unconditional Love radiant in Jesus. Whatever it may be, it will challenge all that we have become as in the image of God we continue to go on and grow up as artists/lovers.

## CONCLUSION

I know no final proof that the universe is friendly ...I know no final proof that God is Unconditional Love ...I know no final proof that Jesus Christ is the ultimate Revelation of that unwearying, incredible Care ...I know no final proof that the Bible is the Love Story that makes it all real and plain... I know no final proof but that which each soul finds in the experimental test.

We respond to the call Jesus made to His disciples when He said, "Come and see."

16  
(Appendix)

### I BELIEVE GOD HEALS US AND OUR WORLD THROUGH HIS JUDGMENT-GRACE

He comes where we are and refuses either to leave us or compromise with us. Against our lovelessness comes His "No!" as inflexible as it is tender. Because He will not let us down, He cannot let us off. Because "God is love," we are made for love and cannot get away with anything less. Since in Godself Community dwells, we cannot live alone. Aloneness is the "hell" we choose against His will, and at the

breaking of His heart. Into our desolation He comes where we are and wraps Himself in our pain. Into our hostility He comes to take upon Himself our anger and guilt, He kneels beside us, reaching for our wounded hands. Into His own He folds them, wound against wound, and by His wounds we are healed. As we say "Yes " to His "No!," on our selflessness comes His "Yes!" as tender as it is in-

inflexible. A second time He breathes His breath upon us, and we become living spirits, our faces each so different, yet all so strangely like His own. Folded in His embrace, we find our littleness lost in His greatness and our weakness in His strength. For a moment we rest, and then together as His Family turn to embrace the World He loves, for which He died, and over which, now risen, He reigns, its everliving  
`LORD!