



www.livingwisdom.co.nz
David J Riddell, Nelson, NZ



www.livingwisdom.com.au
Joan Koskela, Brisbane, Aust.

Partial notes for free download

OUR VULNERABLE GOD: THE LOST 'HUMANITY' OF THE RISEN LORD.

For love to be love, it must first be vulnerable to the possibility of rejection. For desire to be desire, there must first be a need. To be 'in love' automatically means to be in a vulnerable position.

THE DIVINE PARADOX; AN OMNIPOTENT GOD WHO YET STANDS POWERLESS.

What does the word 'vulnerable' mean to you? Does it remind you of anyone? And what is its opposite? Aloof? Distant? Dogmatic? This study is about the vulnerability of 'unrequited love' in the heart of God, and you may be about to hear something you've never heard of before.

Can I ask you, did you ever experience the pain of yearning for some-ones love - someone whom you knew didn't really care whether you lived or died? A great sense of powerlessness and frustration wasn't it.

YES, 'JESUS IS LORD' BUT....

To speak of Jesus as Lord is of course revealed truth, but if taken in isolation of his humanity, it becomes heresy. And as human, Jesus also expresses a vulnerable part of the nature of God, almost forgotten to the fundamentalists, Pentecostals and evangelical branch of the church. Without this truth, Christ again becomes distanced in the same manner as 'Yahweh' (the Jews 'Master of the Universe'), and takes on the attributes of an impervious and unmoved God - one who is neither vulnerable nor in need of anything, least of all us. (In this way, the religious mind attempts to re-sew the temple veil to keep the distance intact.) Yet it is precisely this one truth that defines and characterises the Christian God from every other - it is the Evangelical's God alone *that can suffer*. It is the Christian God alone who reveals Himself as hungrily yearning for our company.....

PARADIGM SHIFT NEEDED

You have probably heard the famous Augustinian quote "You have made us for yourself oh Lord, and our hearts remain restless until they find their rest in thee". Now let me turn that paradigm around and reason it from out of the mind and heart of God - that His heart remains restless until you give him your love and attention and meet that need in His life that only you can meet. Check out Ephesians Three and Jesus' cry to Jerusalem again.....

"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often have I longed..."

YOU ARE UNIQUE.

And this is your uniqueness; that you and you alone are able to meet a desire in the heart of God *that no other person can meet*. And if you choose to ignore Him in your daily life, there is no other person who can meet it - it must go forever lost to Him - He cannot simply 'xerox' off another to replace you. This indeed is the God who doesn't just love you the patronising way you might love a puppy, a budgie or a kitten. Nor is it attempting to say that God depends on you for His existence. But this God submits Himself to your

‘SELF-WORTH’ BEST GROUNDED IN THIS ‘DIVINE DESIRE’.

As a psychologist I must exclaim ‘what a foundation for your life, your self-worth that this reveals’. Some fundamentalists argue that it was the shed blood of Christ alone that makes us acceptable. Yes of course, but what incredible yearning motivated it’s shedding *in the first place*? What a wonderful knowledge upon which to build your sense of who you are.

AN ANGRY GOD MUST FIRST BE A VULNERABLE GOD.

Yes there is a place of fierce and eternal regret, where “the anger of God is revealed against all ungodliness”, but remember that the primary reason for anger is a sense of threat, or real disappointment, as experienced when ones hope is let down. Remember also the outraged reaction of the Landlord to the actions of the unprofitable

IT’S YOUR MOVE NOW.

So how will you respond to the knowledge that He, like a lover, *is in love with you*, and as such, surprisingly, incredibly, vulnerable to your delegated sovereign power to spurn him in your desire for entertainment or sleep; your preoccupation with the tinsel and trinkets of life in a material world. Let me ask you, ‘are you repeating the mistake of so many native peoples, by trading what is of absolute worth (the jealous yearning of God for your heart) for what is really nothing but more and more glass beads and mirrors? It’s your choice now and only you can choose what you will call ‘your priority’ in life. Meanwhile, *because He knows that the use of force can never prevent rejection from His own, He continues to wait*. May He not have to wait much longer, for the pleasure of your friendship and loyalty. *The reality is that if He is lonely for you in **this** life, you may be forever lonely for Him in the next.*

And one last one from me. The uniqueness of the Christian God is not difficult to grasp. He is the non-staunch God who is hanging out, to hang out with you.”