

Folio Eleven

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Discipline: Disciple-ing Ourselves to Jesus ¹

*Abba is eternally horrified
At the pain and death of Jesus
– By the ultimate snuffing out of Life!
– By the death of His own Beloved:
... ‘The Beautiful Living Expression’
Of His own love,
DEAD!
Indeed, IN Christ,
ALL our hurts, isolation, disconnection,
The death of any life,
Is abhorrent to Abba!*

*God hates all such,
Eternally,
Desiring its total removal.
The pain inflicted on us, by nature,
Results, partially, from the disjointedness
Of our communal lives.
The pain originating from people,
Does so, more profoundly, and more often.
So, to these varying extents,
We ARE RESPONSIBLE.
For OUR contributions
To this accumulative matrix of disjointedness.*

*However,
Just being hard on yourself, and supposedly ‘in God’s name’
... Making others suffer ‘for God’s sake’,
Or, even worse, liking pain itself,
Is abhorrent
To the God who fathers us
With the tenderest compassion and affection.
What GOD wants
Is a disciple’s love,
And the discipline that is only ever an expression
Of the love of a DISCIPLE of Jesus.*

¹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

*Indeed, discipline is only ever healthy, and thus, holy,
If one 'disciplines oneself' to the Beloved
... Himself, the one loving Disciple of Abba!
To thus discipline oneself for Christ
– Even as suffering reveals its unwelcome face –
Is to 'do-the-disciple-thing':
To sacrifice oneself in the manner of Jesus.
Thus, being-a-disciple, and discipline,
Are twin faces of the one love.*

*Thus, we discipline ourselves
Only in the Presence of the love who cautions us –
'Do not let your hearts be troubled',²
'Do not look gloomy',³
For it is He who reassures us
'My yoke is EASY, and my burden LIGHT',⁴
While challenging us –
'Learn from me'⁵
And 'Take up your cross and follow me.'⁶
Clearly, Jesus is saying,
If suffering comes, and pain happens,
Accept it as a disciple's OPPORTUNITY
– For redemptive discipline
... To supply what is 'lacking'⁷
In The Disciple's suffering,
'On behalf of His Body'.*

² Jn 14: 27

³ Mt 6:16

⁴ Mt 11: 30

⁵ Mt 11: 29

⁶ Mt 16: 34

⁷ Col 1: 24

What Could Be More Natural? ⁸

*The 'miraculous' is all part of life, not beyond it.
What makes people attend to the 'miraculous' ⁹
Is the element of the unexpected, of wonder.
The religious person spontaneously sees
In utterly natural events,
The hand of the God of surprises and of wonder!
He wonders, anew, at God's infinitely creative Presence!*

*For the Evangelists, everything about God
Is a marvel and a revelation.
Jesus' changing water to wine, causes them to wonder
At God's providential care WITHIN the order of nature
... And not as something beyond nature's supposed limits.
For them, God eternally acts WITHIN nature,
And their miracle stories are NOT evidence
Of God 'breaking into' our world
– For God has never been absent from this world.
Rather, the wonders Jesus works,
Are revelatory SIGNS of His Presence!*

*Jesus' own guidance is our model here:
He asks us not to wonder, IMPERSONALLY,
But to wonder at God's Presence within life
– Cautioning those who look for 'signs and wonders' only: ¹⁰
Place God first, in life, and everything else will follow
... NATURALLY.
For Jesus, only sin, and death-for-humans
Are outside of what is truly natural.
Indeed, sin disorders the nature of life itself.*

*For Jesus, in His childlike simplicity and trust,
The FRUITS of disordered nature
– Disease, fear, suffering, disabilities, unfaithfulness, death –
Give way to Abba's love ...
A love Jesus offers good naturedly, to ALL .*

⁸ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

⁹ The word 'miracle' comes from the Latin 'to wonder'

¹⁰ Mt 13: 22 NAB

*Bathed in Abba's love,
A wounded untrusting, human race
Is being restored to health and wholeness
– What could be more NATURAL?*

*Slowly some begin to share Jesus' childlike reasoning :
Jesus believes that He works wonders
Because He is a trustful human being in Abba's Presence,
And that any other – all others – who trust in Abba's Presence,
Could work such wonders.
And Jesus presumes, quite NATURALLY,
That His disciples would work wonders
'Greater than' His own. . . .*

*Thus, we disciples need to accept
This belief of Jesus,
And that there are not two worlds
– One miraculous, and one ordinary –
But ONE LOVE-FILLED world:
His Abba-God is forever present at the heart of it,
Offering WHOLENESS to us
... And unending opportunities to marvel at His wonders!
Even our Abba-God's every inner whisper to us
Is to be wondered at, marvelled at!*

*However, the wonder surpassing all others
Is the entry of the Risen and Ascended Jesus
Into our world, within our lives.
Abba, who draws the Paschal Jesus to Himself
Draws ALL of nature, to wholeness,
In His Beloved, history's new-born offspring
– The ultimate expression of our nature,
And of that wider nature,
Co-extensive with ours – and His!*

*In this New Age of Jesus Ascended,
Sin and death themselves
Are stripped of their power over us
– The power to de-humanize, and to de-naturalize our lives.
Freeing us, Abba draws us, in Jesus Ascended, to Himself:*

*Thus ENPEOPLED, Jesus, the 'new MAN',¹¹
of humanity's new era,*

*Visibly walked among us, again,¹²
In His, our, regenerated nature*

*– Initiating here, as well, the re-configuring
Of wider nature to His own Person.*

*In Him, we become 'a new creation',¹³
Re-natured in our humanity,
Through the Divinity of Jesus*

*– Both natures in Him, forming 'one seamless garment'¹⁴
... The garment, also, of OUR adoption!*

*In Jesus Ascended, all our relationships ...
To God, to people, and to wider nature,
Are TRANSFORMED!*

*To be drawn into Christ,
Is to participate in Jesus' divinized humanity
– Gifted, like Jesus, with 'the Spirit without reserve'.¹⁵
Faith alone enables this.*

*Lack of faith restricts us, blocking the Gift!
Only those deeply disciplined to Jesus
Can fulfil their nature's full potential
... By sharing in Jesus' RE-NATURED identity and destiny.*

*This new identity and destiny emboldens us to believe
That what is natural for Jesus, as the perfected human being,
Is, now, also natural for us, at home in Him.*

*And, wondrously,
What is natural for Jesus, as the Ascended Son of God,
Becomes natural for us!*

... To share in God's own Fellowship!¹⁶

*And more wondrously still ...
As the Ascended Jesus' giving us His Spirit
Is natural to Him, now, as a human being,
So it becomes natural for us,
– That loving community of disciples IN HIM –
To give His Spirit to others!
This is the wonder beyond all wonders!*

¹¹ For 'enpeopled' see note on Poem 168

¹² The 'walked' refers to the time after the (theological) Ascension on Easter Sunday, Jn 20:17, but before the public Ascension forty days on

¹³ 2 Cor 5: 17

¹⁴ Jn 19: 23

¹⁵ Jn 3: 34

¹⁶ See note on Poem 94

Humanity's True Creative Spaces ¹⁷

*To truly educate
Is to create a space –
Where truth is evident,
Goodness obvious,
And love, experienced.
One of education's goals
Is altruism
... Consciously serving others' needs first,
Thus enhancing their self-worth.
This results
When truth is LOVED INTO ready hearts
– Hearts,
Which are humanity's TRUE creative spaces.*

The Kinship of God ¹⁸

*For Jesus,
The kinship of God
Is the experience
Of living out
– Under Abba’s gaze –
What it means
To be TRULY human
... To be the fully human offspring
Of a Divine Father.*

*As such,
Jesus lights up for us
The way of authentic human living,
In the grace of ‘here’ and ‘now’.
Thus, He becomes for us,
The revelatory Light
Of our humanity,
And the nutritious Bread
For all our relationships!*

*For us,
Our CO-EXPERIENCING
Jesus’ kinship with God
Is living
... As a community of adoptees,
... Gathered as a family,
... En-Spirited
IN Christ
– The fully human sons and daughters
Of a Divine Father.*

Holding a People in His Heart ¹⁹

Abba's love for us abides ... endures
... For it is everlasting.
This ever-faithful love is, essentially,
Abba's COVENANTED love
– The love by which He contracts Himself
To hold a people in His heart
ETERNALLY
– Embracing us AS His Son!

¹⁹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

God's Glory²⁰

*God's Glory IS the Holy Spirit,
Radiating Abba's Empowering Presence
In Christ.*

*The Spirit's glorification of Jesus' humanity,
In Jesus Ascended,
Enables us to become
Wondrously human
— DIVINELY human
... To the Glory of God!*

Fired by Grace²¹

*Human goodness
When fired by grace,
Always has us embracing life
... Not shrinking from it.
It elevates our minds to discern
The more DIVINELY human ...
Way-to-relate,
So that our transformed hearts
Always give birth
To love!*

²¹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

Original Grace²²

*Grace is more original than sin:
Thus our FOCUS
In contemplating our humanity
Ought to be on ORIGINAL GRACE first,
And then only,
In the light of this grace
– To thank God for Christ's victory
Over original sin.*

His to Give²³

*O what a sweet sacrifice – to surrender ALL to Christ!
The gifts of my sexuality and affection are now HIS.
The wholesomeness I sense, is HIS to give.
Touch, now, becomes my special gift –
A sacrament ... of His Spirit,
Making whole,
Uniting.*

A Basic Choice ²⁴

*Directing one's life
Godward
Is
A life-orienting
Humanizing choice,
Integrating one's life.*

*The sin that is ...
Death to the Spirit within,
Is
A life dis-orienting
De-humanizing choice,
Disintegrating one's life.*

Loving Creation ²⁵

*To love Creation,
Is to value every creature,
And to glorify the Mystery of Jesus' Cosmic Person
– To hold in deepest awe,
Jesus Ascended
... Who forever transcends the universe
Of which He is the fountain and goal!*

Alive with Life! ²⁶

Jesus, our brother
– Alive with Life –
Calls us forth from the dark prison
Of all that is life-diminishing,
Freeing us ...
FOR all that is life-enhancing,
And life-fulfilling
– So we, too,
May sing with life!

Human Heartbeats, Like Mine ²⁷

*O Jesus,
Whose eternal love for Abba,
Is NOW measured
In human heartbeats
... Like mine ...
Draw me to serve Abba,
With a heart whose focus is singular
... Like Yours ...
Whose beat is one with the rhythm
Of Your Spirit
... Of breathing the Spirit in, and of breathing the Spirit out,
... Of receiving Divine Equality with God!
... And of sharing this Divine Equality!*

Without Reserve ²⁸

Let us pass Jesus' Spirit to each other

... 'Without reserve' ... ²⁹

The richer in the giving,

The richer in the receiving,

The poorer in the keeping!

– Breathing OUT, breathing IN, savouring God's Breath!

²⁸ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

²⁹ Jn 3: 34

Firing Each Other ³⁰

*Fire speaks to all LOVING hearts :
The warmth that bursts forth for the other,
The light that illuminates and enlightens those
 It falls upon,
The slow consuming of the giver
 ... Bequeathing the ashes of self
For the glow of new life in the other,
 Even setting the other afire!
And best of all, lighting us up together, with the radiant flame of UNION!*

Passing Shadows ³¹

*Everything on earth, in this life,
– Even the deepest insights into God –
Have only the empty impacts
Of passing shadows
... Unless wedded
To Eternal Love.*

To Revere Grace ³²

*Jesus calls SOME disciples
To a prophetic consecrated stance –
To witness more intensely,
To live gospel values single-heartedly,
To become a light on the hill,
... Through being consumed
As the fire of sacrifice.
Such disciples
Call us ALL
To revere GRACE
... To accept that ALL is gift.*

Humbly To Sow Seeds ³³

*The Church's mission,
Like grace, builds on nature.
Thus it is fitting, that this mission
Does not seek to transplant
Europeanized religion to Africa,
But, humbly, to sow seeds,
– So that Africans
Can Africanize the Church.*

Sustained by Abba's Love ³⁴

*Jesus, let the Spirit's Presence
Transform us into You –
Standing poor before Abba,
A child-man in Spirit,
Open, vulnerable,
Sustained by Abba's Love.*

The Gift of Each ³⁵

*Jesus, let us welcome
Each person in our life
As a gift
— A new brother, a new sister —
Coming, in You, to us.
Enable us
To return each, constantly,
To You
As gift
... To Abba's Glory!*

