

FINDING SECURITY IN GOD

by Catherine Doherty

The following excerpt is taken from

The Gospel Without Compromise, first printed in 1976

The security to which most people cling is mere illusion. We are not secure walking big city streets. In planes we never know if we'll stay up or not. Wars flare up in almost every part of the world. So where is that security everybody is supposed to value so dearly? God doesn't give us this material security. Instead he offers faith... which begins, in a sense, where reason ends.

God's security begins when we start loving him with our whole heart, our whole mind, our whole soul -- and our neighbour as ourselves. I speak of this

so often, but it is the only message that can never be overstressed. We must clothe the skeletons of our lives with the flesh of his love, or we shall perish.

For this kind of loving we have the Holy Spirit in us. This is a tremendous risk, because we must also love our enemies. We have the power to change them into friends and beloved neighbours. To love one's neighbour is the ultimate risk, for it may even mean death for my brother or sister's sake if need be.

All this sounds idealistic and unobtainable, but Christ assures us it *is* attainable. Through little steps day after day, one slowly accepts the other as he or she is, and begins to love totally, tenderly, compassionately. Once begun, the involvement becomes deeper and deeper and deeper.

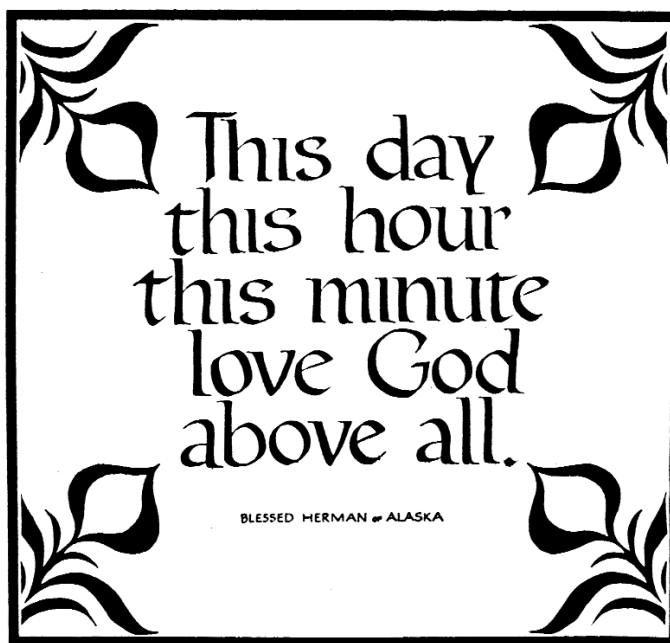
Christians are called to become icons of Christ, to reflect him. *Icon* is Greek for "image of God." We are called to incarnate him in our lives, to clothe our lives with him, so that men and women can see him in us, touch him in us, recognize him in us.

When we don't live the Gospel without compromise (or do not try to) we are skeletons. People do not care to deal with skeletons. The Gospel can be summed up by saying it is the tremendous, tender, compassionate, gentle, extraordinary, explosive, revolutionary law of Christ's love.

He calls us *directly* and there is no compromise in his call: "Whoever is not with me is against me... If you love me, keep my commandments."

We can find umpteen quotations in the Gospel that will vividly bring to our minds and hearts how simply and insistently he calls us to be like him, and to accept his law of love without compromise.

His call is revolutionary, one that would change the world in a few months if we implemented it. The Gospel is radical, and Christ indeed is the root from which springs all things. His commandments mean risk, great risk. They imply a lack of security, humanly speaking. Yes, God offers us risk, danger, and a strange insecurity that leads to perfect security.



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#30

Everywhere, all over the world, a new hunger has arisen. A hunger for God. Everywhere across the world, people try to satisfy this hunger. Yet, in some indefinable manner, the hunger persists. We see the extraordinary phenomenon of a stream of pilgrims moving back and forth across the breadth of the world.

How can this hunger be assuaged? The answer is simple: *by a love that is face to face, person to person.*

This is the moment, then, when we who call ourselves Christians must face one another, for the allaying of hunger begins by us facing one another, one-to-one. To begin to assuage this hunger, man must understand that he is loved, loved as a friend, loved as a brother or sister in Christ. It must be done person to person. It cannot be done *en masse*.

This is the time for stillness. Stand still and listen so that you can get perspective on your life according to God's plan. Now, over the whole world, whether we know it or not, the strange pall of sin falls like a dark fog, and we are walking through it. No wonder we are full of fears. The answer, again, is to stand still and listen, and God will blow the fog away if we let him. We

must all be convinced of what he has told us—that we must really love one another—this alone can bring about the salvation of the world.

Stand still and listen to what the heart says. As soon as we do that and realize that my brother is my joy, that my sister is my life, fear will fall away from us. We will meet each other again; the smog will have cleared away.

We stand on a very narrow edge today. Which way are we going to move? Along the edge of faith, hope and love? This is the path God gives us when we listen. On either side is an abyss. Which are we going to choose? It's up to us. This is the hour of choosing. May it be the hour of standing still, the hour of listening, the hour of prayer.

Catherine Doherty's book *The Gospel Without Compromise* is available from Madonna House Publications at 1-888-703-7110.

Catherine Doherty (1896-1985), born in Russia, was foundress of Madonna House and a prolific writer and teacher. Her passionate zeal impelled her to pass on her faith in God. She is now being considered for sainthood by the Catholic Church.