

In Memory of Dennis Jacobsen

his story from the book

Reflections

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Reflections

The Workers, the Gospel and the Nameless House Sect

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Chapter Twenty–seven

Dennis Jacobsen

Asked to write a letter to be compiled with the experiences of others, I gave the request a great deal of consideration. My conclusion is this: if reading my account might somehow help another over the same depression as I faced, caused by a “religious experience,” it is worth any criticism I might face from anyone for giving it!

Once I was, perhaps like you are yet, a fully dedicated and fully persuaded believer of a fellowship group which I knew only as “the Truth” since birth. As such, I thought the system, method, fellowship was of Divine, rather than human, origin, and therefore “perfect.” You have the testimonies of many claiming it is and works “perfect;” none dare say it is not your right to know how, when, and where others believe it has failed completely. In this collection of compositions, you will read of a number of such times and occurrences. Like others, my account is true and factual.

Wanting to be “right with GOD” (and man, I might add!) I “professed” as a lad of 11, was baptized at 15, was raised in what I understood to be a typical devout “believer” lifestyle. Beginning college with a burning desire to study Aero-Space Engineering and Dynamics, “workers” made me feel with subtle words, ways and means that I would not obtain approval with either GOD or them in fulfilling such ambitions. I was aware that most “older” workers opposed advanced education at the time, and I quickly became both fearful and resentful as a result. As a result of the conflict, I did poorly in my first experience with higher education at college.

Combined pressures resulted in rapidly increasing stresses. They grew from continued unexplainable restrictions, rules, and/or opinions, frequently inconsistent, and apparent ignorance or blindness to certain facts by the very ones I loved and trusted the most, (the “workers” and my parents.) They were those from

whom I wanted complete approval. I was then and remained for many years completely “co-dependent.” I wanted approval from GOD (embedded into me as given via both workers and parents). I wanted to pursue engineering and math skills I felt were given to me by GOD but which I felt were ridiculed and contradicted as being given from GOD by a number of workers. Wanting to apply myself, do well, and please my parents, I felt a strong conflict with workers, some of whom told me I was wasting my time.

One way which I could safely “grow up” and still experience some freedoms, as well as obtain day to day subsistence, was via the army draft experience. Knowing it lay ahead of me anyway, I “volunteered for the draft” as a means of escape, which none could fault nor intervene.

Many experiences came my way during those next two years, good ones, bad ones, necessary ones, and ridiculous ones! I obtained and lost my first boy-girl relationship during those years. More questions arose than I could find answers for in my mind and soul. While in the army, I grew to want my religious group’s approval (which I had been fully indoctrinated to believe as synonymous with GOD’s approval) more than anything else.

It is widely known amongst the group that such total and complete approval is restricted to dedicated “workers.” It is considered “THE Work,” not just, “one” of many. I offered for that work. Sometime later in the middle of my 23rd year of life, I was accepted, and went into that work, expecting true willingness for service (sacrifice?) would bring an end (if not answers) to all my internal questions, while helping others find “truth.”

During my years in that work, I both wanted (and sought) to “fit in” in every way possible. Each year I became more and more aware of inconsistencies, and previously unknown facts and found even more questions arose in my mind than answers to previous questions, all which required extensive rationalization, i.e., condemnation of Church buildings in the light of conventions, ridiculing/accusing others, where we ourselves might be guilty of the same, misuse of scripture, feigning unity, etc., etc.!

Finding myself with even more questions and doubts than ever, I felt perhaps it was because I remained unwilling to leave even homeland, friends and kindred for the LORD's sake and thus was not completely "submissive" to the will of GOD.

One statement used frequently was that someone was "too smart for their own good!" because they raised questions that caused discomfort or uneasiness in "older" companions which they could not or would not answer. Therefore, I chose to channel my own intellect into language study, and sought answers to my questions by prayer, meditation and the learning of the scriptures. In complete submission, I offered to work in other lands, amongst other customs and people.

It became my part, when not working on some project for conventions, to speak publicly of religious things to people in 11 states, and 4 countries outside of the United States. Gradually I became very aware GOD has people outside the group I had long assumed to contain the only ones saved. That awareness had begun in the army and grew the most by contact with religious people during my last years in that work.

Eventually I knew that I could not uphold myself as an example as I felt certain "older" workers did of themselves and expected me to do of myself. I felt I was awaited to follow after their examples, which I began to see was not safe to do. After physical injury while in the work abroad, and many disappointments; burdened by quantities of yet additional questions—always more questions than answers—I left the work after 6 years with far more sorrow in my heart and soul than I had upon entering it, for none of the nagging questions about the validity of "the work" (for me) had been answered positively.

In leaving the work, I had overseeing workers, in both my homeland and newly appointed country, beg me to reconsider and either stay or later ask me to return to the work. I knew I was unable physically, emotionally, and every other way to do so. I chose a year later to marry and settle down. Even then, prior to my marriage I had an overseer write, pleading with me not to

marry but to go ahead and complete an education, whereupon I would see that returning to the work was the only answer for my life!

It was impossible to follow such contradictory advice to that which I had received from others 10 years earlier. I married, and I immediately became aware of discrediting reports spread about me by certain workers, two of whom had previously first begged me to continue in it, and then only a short while before my marriage asked me to reconsider and return to that work.

I continued to have and ask questions, often which had no answers nor responses. (Since excommunication, questions go more unanswered!) Once I was told by an overseer to just accept that “workers” were given unexplainable understanding denied “saints” because they had better vision than “saints.”

While in the work, I had experienced that such was just not true, but I tried to accept and believe it anyway, thinking that it must have been because I was somehow wrong in my soul. From meetings, to home-life, to conventions, I let my light shine to the best of my ability, very conscious of it being limited by my own humanity. I continued to believe GOD to be one, yet consisting of three, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit as I understood Mabel Gibson to have taught when I was a child, both of the latter submitting to the Father. I continued to believe the Son, though one, consisted of two, 100% human, 100% Divine (GOD). I thought I believed as most other workers in these matters, and I have been very surprised since that others have been excommunicated for holding such a belief as this.

Thus even as a child I knew GOD to be one, but plural. Fire, Wind, Water, all examples of GOD. One but plural. A physical example to me of my Spiritual GOD is an egg: yoke, white, and shell, each different, each with a place to fill, but all egg. My GOD is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, All GOD, but each with an orderly place to fill in accordance with and subject to the FATHER's will.

I knew my gift of eternal life to be by GOD's grace, through the substitute sacrifice of Jesus Christ. I knew Jesus' righteous life was imputed to me when I accepted His sacrifice made for me. I knew my own works are what earn me eternal "reward" which is different from GOD's gift to me of eternal life, that is totally unearned, and undeserved by me.

To help people understand my faith and understanding regarding the gift of eternal life, I use an example. Picture a great magnet with a powerful draw passing over a pile of rusty metal shavings with minds and feet of their own! All are free to make a decision to run away to escape. Some think, "If I am drawn to this greater power, I will lose my individuality, and be unable to do my own thing," and run away. Others think "But I like being as I am, and don't want to leave this environment," and run away. Yet others, feeling the draw of this powerful magnet think, "I am so rusty, I must get polished up somehow first, then I can be acceptable," and run away. All shavings left, misshapen, rusty, are taken exactly as they are, drawn to the magnet, to be under the control of the magnet thereafter.

The Father (the Will of GOD) draws all. The devil tries to interfere using first our flesh, or the world, and then the concept that we need to do something in the matter! If we aren't deceived by anything else, he makes us think we have at least a need to "submit," and thus have a part in our own salvation. It is just not so. GOD saves all by His grace, His substitute sacrifice of part of Himself as also our kinsman redeemer, and imputed righteousness for all, who, though tempted to run away, reconsidered and did not make such unwise decisions.

We (my wife and I together!) attended every meeting possible, made every sacrifice possible to be in meetings and support the fellowship. We sought to support that work in every way possible, thinking perhaps our own children would one day make such a choice for their lives, with better results than I.

We invited as many as possible to meetings, seeing some converted to the group, supposing them to have final assurance

of salvation. One day in early 1987, thinking myself in the very center of the fellowship, I was falsely accused. I merely denied the false accusation by saying it was not so. I ought to have known better, but I naively thought all efforts made to live in a way as to gain eternal reward, could not be hid, that truth would be revealed, and that anything more than “Yea” or “Nay” to the accusations was unnecessary.

Instead false accusations grew, were distorted, and soon spread like wildfire. I offered to do (and did so as soon as possible!) whatever false accusers asked of me to make things right for them in their own eyes, both directly to them, and in front of certain workers as witnesses, and was told that with such intent I would be called “a brother.” However, I was immediately excommunicated, being called a drunkard, extortioner, liar, idolater, and every other label except fornicator (of which they said they were glad to be able to say they did not believe me guilty!) I was told that GOD and His people saw me as such things now, and that until I repented publicly of those things, I was too wicked to be allowed to attend any of the meetings or be amongst GOD’s people!

According to Jesus own teachings I knew myself to be nearer guilty of adultery, or fornication than any of those other things. I was hurt and shocked! I could not believe that such false judgment and accusations would be allowed to stand. I encouraged my wife and children to submit to all things and attend meetings. Gradually the insinuations, and soon outright statements, made to drive wedges between my own wife and children and myself became so obvious to even them that they could no longer claim such a group as their own. I have been repeatedly accused of poisoning them.

In the years since, lies about me and what happened have been made and spread by people (both within that work and without) and appear generally accepted as true by many. Gradually time has exposed some of them, one by one, as corrupt, and sadly, more will follow.

At first, in despair, I fasted for a week! I prayed and wept frequently for months. New questions arose! How could such things happen, and what would happen to even my own children? I tried writing letters, communicating, to make things right. Gradually and from a great depression, I became aware, “sometimes it is impossible to fix what you haven’t broken!”

Meanwhile, during this time, someone mailed me a copy of *The Secret Sect*, which at first I did not even desire to read. As time passed, I read every word, very thoroughly and carefully! I was shocked, but because of first hand knowledge, previous questions, and experiences, I immediately knew “the vast majority if not all of what was written there is true!”

Still I rationalized to excuse “The Truth!” More lies were spread worldwide about me and mine. I sought and found more information and undeniable documents. From the accumulated copies of articles from the *Impartial Reporter*, newspaper accounts from the first of the century to government documents, to other books (*The life and Ministry of Edward Cooney, Has the Truth Set You Free? The Church Without a Name.*). Others who knew of my experience and who had similar experiences began to contact me. I was shocked at first, then I began to understand, and before I was 50 years old, all the years of unanswered questions were answered!

If you, dear reader, have unanswered questions that you might wish to ask me, if I know their answers, or even where to find them, I will respond with no beating about the bush! I love all those who “we” (for now my wife and children are also free!) left behind (in what I now believe to be largely a cult of exclusive, pseudo-christianity) more than ever. We now know how bound many really are by legalism, private (human) interpretations of scripture, and traditions of men and feel only love and pity for everyone connected with it!

We have finally been set free from bondage and all the hurt and heartache. For some, ignorance will remain bliss—continuing to consider certain traditions of men as true standards of GOD’s righteousness, convinced their’s is the only true way—while

never having assurance of salvation or their own Christianity in their hearts and minds. Such people are only to be thought of with compassion. Even with their many questions, they want to find a contentment and a degree of peace in remaining ignorant.

However, from my own experience of once being in an almost identical condition, I firmly say it was not the “peace and contentment” from GOD and the “eager anticipation” which now is within me! For any as yet unaware of it, “eager anticipation” is the 1610 English meaning of the word “hope,” not today’s current concept of “wishful desire!”

In closing, if any reader recognizes one’s own religious condition as:

- filled with questions and lacking knowledge or answers;
- bothered by inconsistencies, gossip and/or deceptions;
- aware that their “hope” is only a “wishful desire” and is not an “eager anticipation!”;
- living with a “peace” born of submitting to a religious system and its ministry;
- thinking “safety” and “contentment” is in “fitting in” and not rocking the boat nor asking questions;
- feeling they must “obey” teachings not clearly understood to be saved;

from experience I can say, “you have not yet found the ‘Truth that sets you free!’” I feel compelled to also express to you, “don’t settle for anything less no matter who tells you otherwise!” Only those nearby Jeremiah heard what he said from the pit where supposedly “true believers” had cast him!

In His Love,

- **Dennis Jacobsen**
Castle Rock, Washington (United States)

June 8th, 1993.