attitude of reality, authenticity, warmth, and unvarnished personal projection. Proving oneself to one’s neighbor is no longer a need. You are acceptable. Now you want to be real, to be honest with your fellow man, because your fellow man is no longer unacceptable or a “filthy rag” but as acceptable as you are acceptable. God’s Grace gives you a taste of true reality. Between you and him there is no false piety or superficial religiosity. You communicate about things as they are. You find yourself saying: “I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” For in every man there is a lot of both belief and unbelief, courage and fear, hope and hopelessness. You no longer feel a need to deny such conflicts. You say to God: “Let’s work on these ambiguities together. Let the Christ so live in me that I might become as real as he is, as loving as he is. I no longer have a need to evade my feelings, because you have accepted all of me.”

What a sense of freedom it offers! What a possibility of excitement it gives! You are free from the “old man” and find a new life, a “new man.” You shake off the “old Adam!”

So God, by his Grace, gives us a glimpse of eternity. It is an “eternal now!” It is not something that begins out there. It is being free from that which would destroy our hope of seeing reality and life!

Let me interject a thought about the word “search.” God’s intervention into man’s experience through Grace cannot be summed up in a little package or by some treatise. Search is always the Christian adventure—not with an end to prove or to gain esteem, but for the pure joy of discovering more. All through the party given in his honor, I am sure the Prodigal Son kept saying something like, “Boy! What a surprise, I did not expect this! What does this mean for my life? How can I find the deeper aspects of its reality, its love, its meaning?” His experience of Grace must have encouraged him to search.

In the terminology of Transactional Analysis, the “Parent Ego State” gives the definition of one’s perception of God. Normally, the “Parent” writes the script and sends messages to the “Child” as to how his life is to be lived. They are demanding and nurturing messages. The Child receives them and adapts and reacts in either submissive or rebellious ways.

Salvation is being accepted without any “ifs,” “shoulds,” or “oughts.” For years our Child Ego State has had to submit to these “oughts.” Now God, through his Son, grants Grace. It is the Child that feels this blessing and freedom because it is the Child who experienced the inner restlessness, false hopes, and uselessness of life.

Paul Tillich once wrote:

It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage [when we tire of submitting to the Parent Messages]. A wave of light breaks into