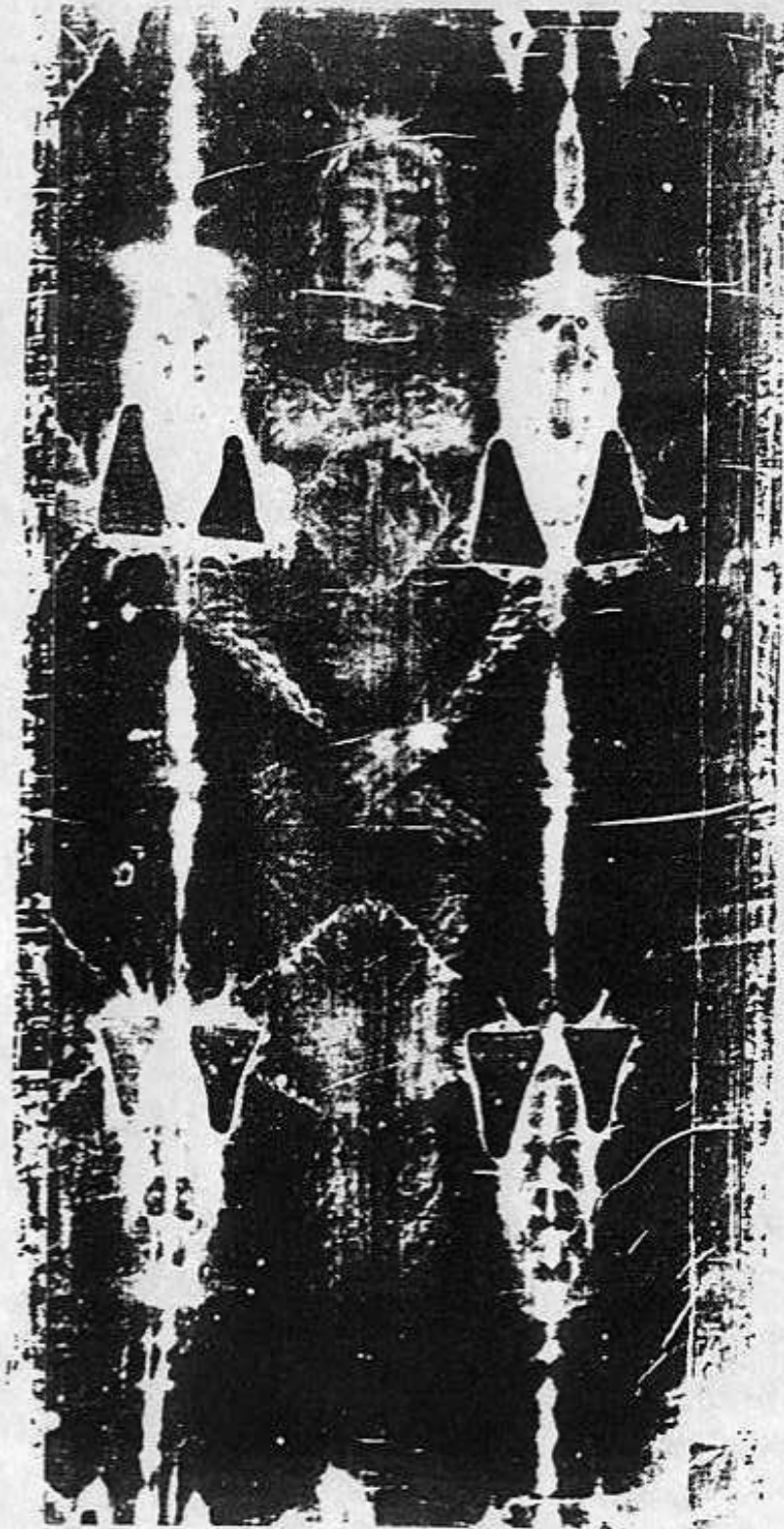


THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE



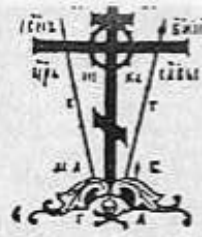
DEATH TO THE WORLD
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DEATH TO THE WORLD

The Last True Rebellion



What do we mean by: DEATH TO THE WORLD

"The world is the general name for all the passions. When we wish to call the passions by a common name, we call them the world. But when we wish to distinguish them by their special names, we call them passions. The passions are the following: love of riches, desire for possessions, bodily pleasure from which comes sexual passion, love of honor which gives rise to envy, lust for power, arrogance and pride of position, the craving to adorn oneself with luxurious clothes and vain ornaments, the itch for human glory which is a source of rancor and resentment, and physical fear. Where these passions cease to be active, there the world is dead.... Someone has said of the saints that while alive they were dead; for though living in the flesh, they did not live for the flesh. See for which of these passions you are alive. Then you will know how far you are alive to the world, and how far you are dead to it."

St. Isaac of Syria (6th century)

DEATH TO THE WORLD

is a zine to inspire Truth-seeking and soul searching amidst the modern age of nihilism and despair, promoting the ancient principles of the last true rebellion: to be dead to this world and alive to the otherworld. Correspondence is encouraged and articles for submission are welcomed. Each article printed herein is true to life and has been written out of pain of heart for love of truth.

DEATH TO THE WORLD

7777 Martinelli Rd
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DEATH TO THE WORLD

The last true rebellion is death to the world. To be crucified to the world and the world to us.

With the seed of dissatisfaction deeply planted in the heart of today's society, rebellion has been a small key to unlock the doors of change. But the rebellion that the world has known is not a fullness of true rebellion.

Since our times have come to a point where things can't get much worse, the few remaining lovers of truth must search deeper into themselves and deeper into the truth itself -- but to get to this point a revolution must take place. A revolution in the hearts of these lovers of truth. A revolution that annihilates all earthly and worldly thinking and that nurtures a way of thinking that is not of this world. Because that which is of the flesh is of the flesh and that which is of the spirit is of the spirit.

There is a grave necessity for this internal revolution, for only by this can progress be made. For how can one help a world with festering wounds until one mends one's own wounds. After this spiritual surgery has taken place, true rebellion is an ideal that is attainable.

In this age of confusion and destruction, the necessary distinction between good vs. evil has been deathly confused. The result of this is nihilism. The philosophy of nothingness, that no ultimate truth exists. In nihilism, there is neither love or hatred, good or bad, life or death. The result of this is the soul destroying idea that even God does not exist.

The natural reaction to all of this is an internal rebellion of the soul, for the soul cannot deny its own existence. At this point an all-out unseen war is fully engaged. In the case of the lover of truth, the rebellion manifests itself externally in a rebellion against this corrupt world. This is good, but there are too many people who just stop at this point. Without searching any further, how can one expect to uncover the answers? True rebellion will stop at nothing in the fight for the good of the world, for the good of others, and for the good itself in whatever way it manifests itself. It is necessary to wage a revolution in the heart in order to conquer evil with good so as to have a rebellion in truth. This is the kind of rebellion that must take place or else it isn't rebellion at all.

There once was a counter-culture with the sole purpose of rebelling against the world. This counter-culture was wise in the sense that its philosophy was based on recognizing the corruption of the world. In this lies half of the truth. It represents more truth than the world would ever dare to acknowledge. But this counter-culture must not stop at this, but must seek unto death the ultimate in truth if it is to accomplish that which it first set out to do: to care for and tend the world's wounds.

This counter-culture of Punx is something that a handful of truth-seekers can easily identify with, for it is very clear that the world is coming to a close. To be a true punk is to have nothing to do with that element which kills, hurts and causes pain, but to cauterize wounds. To be in the world but not of the world.

In actuality the true ideals of Punk have yet to be introduced to the Punx themselves, as does the fullness of their rebellion. These ideals and this philosophy are the world's best kept secret. A secret that has been in the souls of those few lovers of truth ever since the beginning of time. The philosophy of punk has been around for centuries in the hearts and souls of the true Punx ... The Monks.

Monks are those who for thousands of years have rebelled against the corruption of this world by severing all chains binding themselves to the world. They have fled this vain world to live in caves, in holes in the ground, and to dwell in deserts. To eat maybe once a day or even once a week, to wear the same clothes until they completely fall apart, and to rarely sleep because the cause is more important than the pleasures of this world. In these deprivations and sufferings they would realize one thing: There is no real suffering at all than to not know God.

This is the last true rebellion: To forsake the world and to embrace God alone.

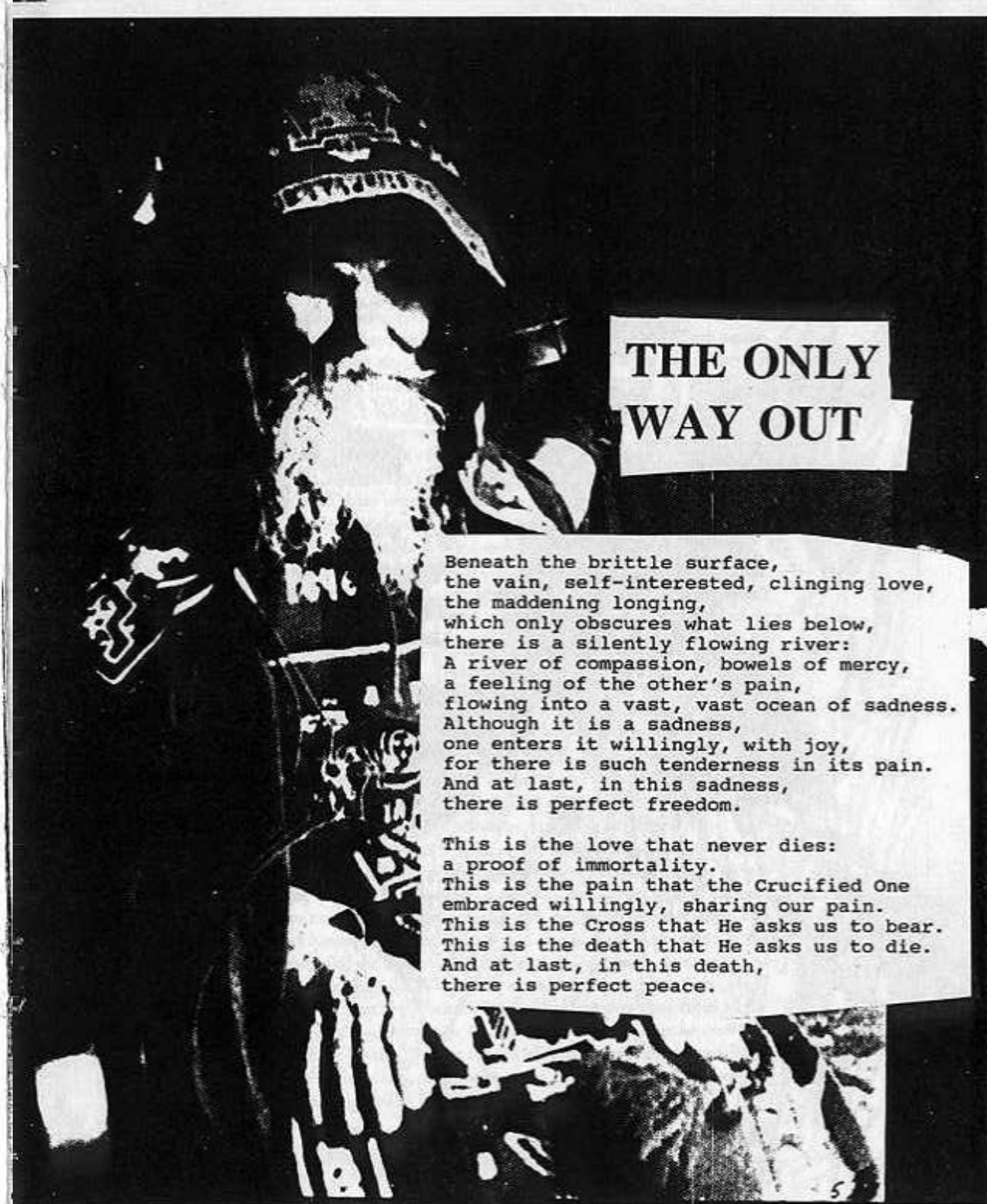
-- Monk Justin Martyr

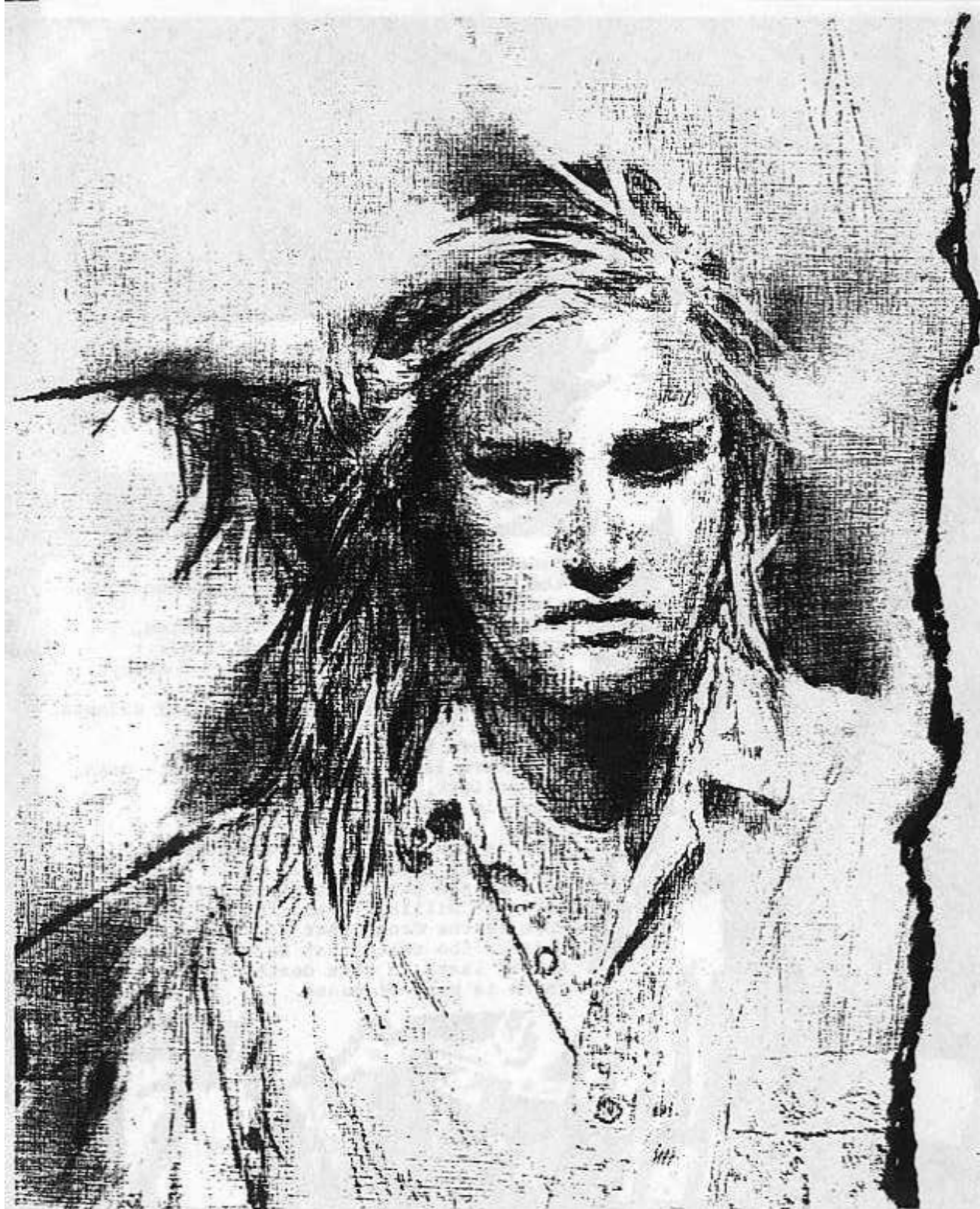


THE ONLY WAY OUT

Beneath the brittle surface,
the vain, self-interested, clinging love,
the maddening longing,
which only obscures what lies below,
there is a silently flowing river:
A river of compassion, bowels of mercy,
a feeling of the other's pain,
flowing into a vast, vast ocean of sadness.
Although it is a sadness,
one enters it willingly, with joy,
for there is such tenderness in its pain.
And at last, in this sadness,
there is perfect freedom.

This is the love that never dies:
a proof of immortality.
This is the pain that the Crucified One
embraced willingly, sharing our pain.
This is the Cross that He asks us to bear.
This is the death that He asks us to die.
And at last, in this death,
there is perfect peace.





PERFECTION IN PAIN

"I was so young - I didn't know what it meant to be hurt and then to hurt." - Rites of Spring

AT THE TIME of acute self-consciousness at the birth of adulthood, when the soul is still innocent and open, has not been hardened, and the world is a big apple with possibilities that are seemingly limitless, and relationships can seem to be so perfect and so easily perfect, and the soul has been just awakened to the intense sense of personhood, self-hood, and asks (for the first and sometimes only time in one's life) the question of who he is and why he's here, the soul is wide open and seeks to go beyond itself. The person feels deeply and intensely, having not yet learned to block and hide these feelings which later prove too painful, and he longs to share this feeling, this self-awareness, this intensity, this pain with others, and to feel what others feel, especially those who are going through the same thing. Everything is poured out freely, sometimes too freely, and there is no attempt to guard one's inner world from being trampled on. The child who has never been hit by a car, if he is not told of the dangers, will have no fear of walking into a busy street.

However, when the person gets older, as time passes, the perfect "soul-mate" relationships which began so intensely, like a wondrous blossoming flower, become disappointing because there was nothing higher to hold them together; and the seemingly limitless possibilities which present themselves in youth become smaller, one possibility closing itself off after another once one goes further on a certain path (for each person can only take one path at a time). And then occurs what has formerly been feared and rejected—a layer forms on top of the raw person, a protective coating; and it cannot be helped, for pure vulnerability is too painful.

All this explains why youth of today fear so much to get old, why they will do anything to prevent it. Many young people, even if they have exposed themselves to rottenness in their search for reality and intensity, if they get out of it in time, are still good, innocent kids, because in a backwards and self-contradictory way, they have been striving to preserve innocence.

This also explains why the lyrics of many contemporary musicians, when they are young and first start out, are so poignant and direct, while the later lyrics of the same people become increasingly obscure, to the point that those listeners who have practically lived on the earlier songs can get less and less from the later ones.

(ATTEMPT AT AN ANSWER)

AT THE TIME of acute self-consciousness and the awareness of the eternal question "Why," the person must be able to direct that self-awareness and painful yearning to something higher than himself—to God, Who became flesh and suffered as we do. It is not enough to pour this painful yearning out to another person—that may help for a time, but it is not enough for eternity. The human soul seeks perfection, and there is nothing perfect except God. Other human beings, even if they seem perfect at first, *always* turn out to be imperfect, and that can be a great source of disillusionment to idealistic youth. A human being can be a *vehicle* to reach the end (God), and almost always such a human being is needed, but that person cannot be seen as an end in himself. However, in our post-modern age, when youth have been denied a knowledge of God, the perfection is usually at first sought in one or (usually) several human beings, or in unworthy lesser vehicles such as wealth, beauty or fame. Again, one must turn one's painful feelings of self-knowledge and longing to go outside oneself—to God, for only He has the infinite love to meet them. *We know God through this very pain.* "Remembrance of God is pain of heart endured in the spirit of devotion, but he who forgets God becomes self-indulgent and insensitive."—Mark the Ascetic. "No one achieved anything without pain of heart."—Elders Barsanuphius and John.



The inward pain and intensity experienced in adolescence is not only good, but is even vital for the future development of the soul, its drawing closer to God. It is a *moment of truth*, and that is why it is so important that these strong feelings—that "all or nothing," "I won't settle for second-best" feeling of God-given youthful idealism—be quickly channeled to Him who is *not* "second-best," who is the Ultimate. If this would happen, more youth of today would turn to monasticism—which is the "all or nothing" life, not settling for second best, but giving up everything for a higher end: the Kingdom *not of this world*. But there must be strength and backbone in young people to keep alive the flame of their idealistic yearning when all kinds of worldly tares attempt to choke out the newly sprouted seeds.

If one channels one's pain, self-awareness, etc., upwards, there is possibility for endless growth in the spirit. However, if one keeps it flowing on a horizontal level it will lead to stagnation, despair, or selling out. Even if one *can* keep it going, always trying to be intense and real, if there is nothing else than that he will just keep going around and around in circles, not getting anywhere. Life cannot be imbued with meaning simply by the attempt to live it intensely. Being intense and "having a real emotion" is not the ultimate answer—it is a partial answer, for it is only a means and not an end. The answer—the Truth—is God Who was nailed to the Cross, to whom may the youth of today turn in their pain of heart—so that they will grow up not just into boring worldly adults but into Saints, growing into the likeness of God, and will continue growing not just into middle or old age, but throughout eternity, all the while *still* preserving their innocence and childlikeness.

All popular attempts not to sell out to the jaded "adult" world have failed, because they are still part of the one big sell-out: the sell-out of man to this world, and the abandonment of the radically otherworldly revelation of the Crucified God for the sake of worldly Christianity, false spiritual paths, materialism, hedonism, or overt nihilism.

In the words of Monk Seraphim Rose, a misfit in the modern world who went through years of living hell before finding the way out: "Christ is the only exit from this world. All other exits—sexual rapture, political utopia, economic independence—are but blind alleys in which rot the corpses of the many who have tried them...."

— Monk Damascene Christensen



The Burning Beast

We recently received the following story about a living martyr named Monk Gabriel, who lives today in Georgia, a country near the Black Sea which until not long ago had been under the yoke of Communism. Last year one member of our Brotherhood went to Georgia and met this man, and confirmed the truth of this account.

"Thirty five years ago, in the year that Stalin died⁹ (Stalin died in March and it all happened during the May Day demonstration), Fr. Gabriel was a very young hieromonk....

"Do you know the central square in Tbilisi? During the demonstration, the government speakers and the speaker's rostrum stood there. Behind them, on the building of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, there always hung portraits of the party leaders in full figure, two floors in height. At the peak of the demonstration, when the entire square was packed with people and while a member of the government was delivering a speech, suddenly the gigantic portrait of Stalin burst into flames. Fr. Gabriel had gained entrance into the upper floor of the Executive Committee building, opened a window and poured kerosene on the back of the portraits and then set them on fire."

"Perhaps this is a legend?"

"Some things, of course, have been enshrouded by legend. But he burned the portraits. Lenin's portrait burned immediately, too. Horror came over the square, they all froze from fear and everything became still. While the pictures

of the leaders were in flames, from the second floor window Fr. Gabriel gave a sermon: 'The Lord said, *Thou shalt not make unto thee idols or any graven images.... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them for I am the Lord your God.... Thou shalt have no other gods!* (Exodus 20:3-5). People, come to your senses! The Georgians have always been Christians. So why are you bowing down before idols? Jesus Christ died and on the third day rose again.... But your cast idols will never be resurrected. Even during their life they were dead...."

"It is impossible to imagine.... How could they have let him utter another phrase!?"

"Evidently he also said another phrase, and perhaps more. The doors of the Executive Committee building had been locked; he had entered the attic earlier and sat there until the demonstration began. They brought him down, it is true, quick enough: they brought in some fire engines and raised ladders...."

"But when they brought him down, the crowd fell upon him, breaking through all the barricades.... They kicked him, hit him with rifle butts, flailed him with fire hoses. They screamed: 'Let me finish off that louse!' Each person wanted to trample the enemy of the people underfoot with their shoes, to express their zeal. The firemen dragged him away."

"How is it that he was not shot?"

"The reason they didn't shoot him is that they carried him off almost like a corpse. His face couldn't be made out; he was one bloody mess. His skull was fractured and there were seventeen fractured bones in his body. He lay almost unconscious for a month. But he was treated carefully so that investigations could be conducted.... It seemed that they were going to arrange a show trial—but they couldn't even get the condemned man onto a stretcher. He didn't respond to the treatment at all; the entire time he was at death's door but he didn't die. This is what I was told, I had only just been born at the time. Beyond that I don't know anything with certitude, Fr. Gabriel won't speak with anyone about it. Either it dragged on until the Khrushchev amnesties, or they tried for a long time to uncover a conspiracy, to get out of him the names of the conspirators. Then, either he was certified as psychologically not responsible for his actions, or they helped him, or it became too

unpleasant to the authorities. When within several years they released him, he was suspended from priestly ministry. Not only in the Church, but for ten years time they wouldn't hire him anywhere. It is fortunate for him that there was a house, that he had a mother—the old woman who opened the gate for you. Both of them lived on his pension: since he was a certified lunatic he was allotted by the State seventeen rubles a month. No one would let him into their house to earn a little money on the side; everywhere people knew and were afraid of him. Neither he nor his mother could appear outside in the daylight; if they did, the neighbors would let their dogs loose on them.... At first he wandered among the villages and was hired to guard the vineyards or to tend the fire in churches. Then his mother became paralyzed from all the trauma and he could no longer go anywhere. For several years he could be found sitting at the portico of some church with an outstretched hand. Even priests threw him out. Only people who did not know him would give him anything—his acquaintances turned away from him or derided him."

LOVERS OF TRUTH

For it was my sin, that not in Him, but in His creatures--myself and others--I sought for pleasures, sublimities, truths, and so fell headlong into sorrows, confusions, errors.... I wandered, O my God, too much astray from Thee my stay, in these days of my youth, and I became to myself a barren land.

-- Confessions of Blessed Augustine

Silence is the mystery of the future age, while words are mere implements of this world.

-- St. Isaac the Syrian

Spiritual life is a realm into which the wisdom of this world does not penetrate.

-- St. Theophan the Recluse

Repudiate the world and all that is in it; close the innermost part of your soul to everyone; crucify your flesh together with passions and lust and, finding yourself in incessant prayer, select a narrow path which leads to eternal life.

-- St. Theophil of the Kiev Caves

He who loves the world cannot but sorrow. But he who disdains the world is always joyful.

-- St. Seraphim of Sarov

Give blood and receive the spirit.

-- St. Peter Damascene



The Cross

When you are granted the ultimate privilege of hanging on the Cross, and the tears of joyful, liberating pain flood your eyes, and you taste the sweetness and the perfect freedom of dying to this life, then you no longer feel anger or rage, and you know what it means to forgive everyone →

and everything. You see how He, when nailed to the Cross, could have forgiven everyone who has ever lived and ever will live.

In a sense, nothing has changed with you. All the good in you remains, all the evil in you remains, all the passions remain, and the struggle goes on. But now you know, you know that there is nothing more sublime, beautiful and profound than the Cross. Now you know what it means that He spilt His blood for you in an agony of pain which even He was afraid and sorrowful to endure. And when He asks you to drink His Blood and eat His flesh, you are ready to shed your blood, too, to take up your cross and follow Him, to share in what He is, in His Ultimate, Liberating Love. A love that is a pain, but a pain that is a peace, and a peace that passes all understanding.

And you see other human beings around you, and you still see their weaknesses. But now you feel such compassion and forgiveness for their failings, as if they were small children. And you yourself feel like a child.

And so you go on, still as the same person; you fall and get up again. But now all the transient things in life are seen as secondary, and you know that they are not everything that your soul truly desires for eternity. And above them stands that transcendent love, the ultimate act of love that the universe had never known before and will never know again: God become flesh, mocked, spat upon, tortured and crucified - by the creatures whom He Himself formed from the dust of the ground. And He suffered it all for their sake.

