

Dear All:

EASTER - 15 Apr 79

I know, I said my 1978 Easter letter was my last. I lied. Parenting never ends. I told mother I would venture one more effort. She said, "Fine, but be brief! So, I'll try.

The theme of the Old Testament is not irrelevant today. It elaborates the quintessential model of all human life. Each of us, in turn, is born into a vast desert, in which we wander much of our life. That is what life is: a wandering search. We sense a need to be useful, to be recognized and valued in our individual uniqueness. The worker eventually finds that career is NOT the answer. The parent eventually finds that children are NOT the answer. Still, we all relentlessly seek fulfillment.

The secret of fulfillment is the realization that it lies beyond self, and beyond this world. To those who have tried everything, only to come up restless and unsatisfied, jaded and unchallenged, let me suggest that you may have been too this-world oriented. Consider the ultimate challenge levied by Christ: "Love one another as I have loved you." What does this really mean? Well, consider that He added, "Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you." Anyone who feels he has outgrown Christ might try outgrowing that! You seek challenge? You want to feel fulfilled? Try that!

Aye, but there's a rub. He also said, "No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father." And maybe some of you just don't feel drawn. After all, faith IS a pure GIFT from God. Why do some get it and some not? It seems as though salvation lies outside yourself - and, indeed, it does. It lies with Christ. And our job, simply, is to submit our will to His. SUBMISSION is the KEY! Why do we hold back? Even the great Paul concedes that without Christ he finds himself "doing the very things I hate!" Beyond that, Christ tells us "The Son can do nothing BY HIMSELF." Think of that! Staggering! Still, we persist in the peculiar American notion, "Please, Mommy, I want to do it myself."

So, we best dispose ourselves to be drawn to the Father by first opting to submit our will to the Father. (I have always thought that a loving marriage affords a help in this direction so gigantic that it almost seems like cheating. In the loving mutual submission of husband and wife to each other is born genuine Christian charity. A habit is acquired that makes submission to a God - "Whom we cannot see" - vastly easier.)

So, "This is THE message...we are to love one another....This is THE commandment...~~USE~~ live a life of love!" And it all begins with a resolve to submit our will to the will of our Creator - sometimes via a COMMITMENT to others, be it spouse or religious superior. As Christ demonstrated, gift of self is our greatest capacity to love. Never hesitate to yield! Then the "yoke is easy," and the "burden light," and with M.L. King you see "The other side of the mountain, and you're free at last." Thank God Almighty! Love and Godbless, PAPA