



THE SEMINARIAN

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THE SALVATION OF MATTHEW LEE CHRISTIAN

He died in winter. A most frigid winter whose icy breath left those who attended his funeral shivering at his grave site and cursing the season that froze up their cars. "How would God do such a thing?" they mumbled to themselves as they scraped the ice from their windows. "Why do the good always die young?" they would complain, perplexed at the events that sent Matthew Lee Christian to a frosty grave. It seemed that Matthew was returning from a retreat in the mountains when an avalanche (the first ever to be recorded in the history of Catacomby County) buried him alive. When he was finally dug out from under the snow, blood frozen solid in his veins, it was clear that fate had removed his life from the earth.

Matthew found leaving his physical body most exciting and of course comfortable. For it was warm and new discoveries were to be made. He immediately set out in search of the pearly gates to find his place in the after-life. It did not take him long to find the gates, though the sight of them disappointed him. For they were not of pearl, as his mother had taught him, but merely clouds bollowing upward in an arch. In the center stood St. Peter holding the keys to the giant gate.

As he moved closer, a voice, low and distant as if it were climbing up out of a well, caught his ear.

"Matthew Lee Christian?!"

Matthew stopped. It was God.

"Yes Sir."

"What are you doing here?" The voice inquired.

"I've died, sir. Is this not heaven?"

"Heaven?"

"Yes sir. You know, pearly gates, eternal life and such?"

The voice sounded as if God was clearing his throat. "There are your pearly gates. But why eternal life?"

"Sir?" Matthew was confused. He had led a good life. Surely he would be allowed in.

"Why eternal life Matthew?"

"Well sir, I've lead a good life. I mean, I know I'm not perfect But there are worse."

"You have been a good man. Better than most anyway. But does any human deserve eternal life?"

"I don't understand. Deserve is not a factor if you love us."

"I truly do. However, Eternity is a very long time. Why would you want to live through it?"

"Because I love you." Matthew was growing perturbed. What was
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God up to? Had he missed something?

"Admirable. But what does that have to do with the matter? Many love me."

"Because I love you, I want to live forever with you."

"Now Matthew. You sound like an immature romantic newlywed."

"If you love me Lord, would you not feel the same?"

"Feel the same? Matthew, I love all my children equally. But I do not own them."

"If there is no eternal life, how do you expect people to live a good life. There is no reason to put up with the hurts and pains of life on earth..."

"Because you love Me."

"I don't understand." Matthew was frightened, as a child who had done something wrong before his father.

"Matthew, you do not live motivated by what might or might not be beyond life. You live for the love of life itself."

"That sounds like the immorality of the 60's talking. Not God."

"Perhaps. If one misconstrues the truth it becomes false."

Matthew sighed. "You mean there is not eternal life?"

"I did not say that. What I do say is simply this. Love is what makes life worth living, not what may or may not come after. True, there are many pains in life. There are pains that may hurt very deeply. But that very fact makes them joys of life. For if one were dead, one would not feel at all."

"Neither joy nor sorrow." Matthew realized.

"Yes. And without either, one cannot grow. It is those very feelings that provide life."

"But sir. The world is so unjust. Innocent people are starving or being killed."

"Who has made the world unjust, Matthew? Was it I? No. I created perfection."

"But it is still unjust."

"And therefore you figure I should balance the scales on this side of existence, if there is a this side."

"That seems fair."

"Does it? Are you not a responsible human being?"

"Yes."

"Then bring justice where you had before wrought injustice."

"But I don't always know what is just."

"Do you not learn by trying?"

"Yes."

"Then TRY!"

"I'm afraid it's a little late for that. I've died. I no longer exist. But yet I do exist. See, there is eternal life. I've proven it."

"No Matthew, you have not proven anything. You are not dead, you are merely asleep."

With that statement, the voice was gone and so were the pearly gates. Matthew set out in search of them but found nothing. Tired and confused he sat down in the darkness and waited to awaken again.

Michael Vaughan

To: The Seminarian

I would like to thank Neal Brown, Ron Parks, Kit Sabas and Robert Duke for their statement in the October 16th Communicator and their offer to help in building these Services.

Inclusive Worship Services are so very much appreciated. It is true that they involve some effort, careful planning and word changes in hymns, but what a significant degree of difference it makes for those of us whose consciousness has been raised.

While I'm writing I would also like to commend Patti Cargue and all those who turned out Wednesday or Friday to begin to seriously look at issues of racism, sexism and inclusiveness. These are significant and meaningful steps being taken here at Lancaster Theological Seminary and they are to be celebrated.

Sincerely,
Gail Mogel Tillotson

WIN BIG PRIZES

That's right folks you could receive a special telegram, addressed to you, informing you that you have a big prize. (Big depends on how big you are, it could be a small prize.) Many of you have been talking about the red t-shirts that a few people have, and wanting one of your own. Well, here is your chance. That's right you could be the proud owner of a L.T.S. t-shirt. Isn't that exciting? In answer to your prayers a t-shirt contest is here with announced. We, some students who like t-shirts, are looking to you, members of the L.T.S. community, to help design the New and Improved L.T.S. t-shirt. So get out your pen and thoughtful, bizarre or witty phrases and put them on paper. Submit your entry to me, Jeff Dick, by Nov. 4th (Election Day and my birthday). The winning entry will be chosen on Wed. the 5th of Nov. The winner will receive one t-shirt in their size, big or small. Enter now, be a winner.

THE PERFECT PASTOR

The Seminarian has received testimony from an alumnus of L.T.S. who has been in the parish fourteen years and has developed this model for the perfect pastor.

"I preach exactly fourteen minutes and then sit down, condemning sin but never hurting anyone's feelings. I work from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. in every type of endeavor from preaching to custodial service. Making sixty dollars a week, I drive a fine car, I wear good clothes, buy good books and I give thirty dollars a week to the church. I also stand ready to contribute to every good cause with which I am confronted.

At twenty-six years old, I had been preaching for thirty years. I am tall and thin yet heavyset, and very easy to look at with one blue eye and one brown eye. My hair is parted in the middle, the left side is dark and straight, right side, light and wavy. I have a burning desire to work with the young people and I spend all my time with the older folks. I smile all the time with a straight face because I have a sense of humor that keeps me seriously dedicated to my work.

Making fifteen calls a day on church members, I spend all my time evangelizing the unchurched, and I am always available in my office. What's more I give every organization and group in the church total leadership and never discourage the initiative of the lay people."

Adapted

REITERATION

The deadline for articles to be published in the Seminarian is Monday afternoon. Some people have asked why there was no paper last week. I did not receive any contributions until Wednesday.
DLM, editor

THE QUEEN'S ENGLISH

The lamp threw a warm glow over the chesspersons on the board. As the attractive person pondered her next move, the man glanced idly at her books on the end table--a new and adjusted edition of the poems of Walt Whitperson lying on top of Piers Plowperson. She did love poetry, he thought, as he noticed in the bookcase beyond, other new editions of Emily Dickindaughter and Henry Wadsworth Longperson, a novel; then Jane Austen's Person-field Park, followed by A Shropshire Young person by A.M. Houseperson.

Suddenly the person's hand moved and, as he had foreseen, her queen leaped forward to take his exposed rook. "Aha!" he murmured, taking the queen with his knight.

"Personna from heaven! Checkmate."

"Oh, help!" she exclaimed.

"Person the pumps, as that mid-shipperson from the Naval Academy always says." She swept the remaining chesspersons into the box and poured more sherry. "John," she said, "did I tell you, the court said okay to change my name? I'm Linda Stevensdaughter now. Bought this outfit to celebrate."

Religious Word Jumble

Unscramble the following religious words, using the circled letters to solve the riddle.

AHIFT

NARMSO

O-O--

OO---O

OSCLRRL

REGLYC

O-----

O-OO--

What the renegade K.K.K. member got caught in:

"A -----" RP

Saw it on the Personikin in a shop window and nearly fell into a personhole rushing over to buy it. Had my nails personicured, too."

"Elegant!" said John. "Makes you look to the personor born. Womanly too."

"No, no!" she said. "Wopersonly Woman is out. The new thing is woperson."

"Doesn't have quite the same ring," said the man. "Still, far be it from me to fight Wopersons' Lib. They're man-eaters who mangle--sorry! I mean person-eaters who personigle anyone who mentions, er, personitions disagreement. So unisexism forever! To change the subject, I was looking at all your adjusted editions of the poets. What happens inside? In Coleridge is it 'Woperson waiting for her demon lover' and 'The still sad music of hupersonity' in Wordsworth?" She nodded. "Of course," he said. "Sad music. And Donne--'Get with child a persongrove root'! But, Linda, I hate to say this, but have you persons really thought about person? It's sexist, you know."

"What on earth do you mean?" said the person crossly. "It's the word!" Everything is being changed to person. Over in London the Mansion house is the Personston House, and we're going to force the Smithsonian in DC to become the Smithpersonian."

"That's what I mean," said the man. "Per-son! Son! Very male, if you'll forgive my using the word. You got your name changed from Stevenson. What about person?"

"Oh, dear!" she said. "We'll just have to change person to perperson. I mean, perperperson... Perperperper..."

"Sounds like a cat," said John. "As the parson said--I mean, the parperson--that's not the way. And perdaughter won't do either, will it?"

"You're being sexist somehow," said Linda. "Stop it!"

"Horse personure!" said the man. "I'm unisexist to the bone. We

(cont. p. 5)

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Hello, let me introduce myself .
 I've seen you in passing a number
 of times.
 I'm glad this time we have a chance
 to talk.
 From what you say, it seems as
 though you know me.
 It seems that you've read the book
 of my life.
 We have many things in common.
 I like the things you like.
 I am interested in the same things
 that interest you.
 My memories are the same as yours.
 It seems as though you are an
 extension of me.
 When I see you I see myself.
 You are a mirror of me.
 But somehow, knowing you has
 changed me.
 My life is brighter now, enlightened.
 Through you I have come to know me.
 and now I can introduce myself.
 to all the other extensions of my
 life.
 Those people I meet who are dif-
 ferent than myself.
 Those who have different likes and
 dislikes,
 Other interests and values.
 Hello, let me introduce myself.
 Lou Ann Earnst

THE AUNTIE'S ENGLISH cont.

must go forward, men and persons
 hand in hand, to victory, Lord
 willing. The last man overboard!"
 "Lord!" she said. "Now you're
 saying God is male!"
 "Slip of the tongue," he said.
 "I always call the communion table
 the High-up Person's Table. And
 the High-up Person's Prayer: 'Our
 Parent which art in Heaven...thy
 Monarchdom come...' And I pray
 'In the name of the Parent, and of
 the Offspring, and...' Oh, that's
 it! Not Person--peroffspring! My
 own contribution to unisexism!"
 "I feel a little dizzy," said the
 peroffspring plaintively. "Maybe
 I'm getting my period--personstru-
 ation affects me like that."
 "No, no!" said the man. "It's

just the burden of your person-
 date to win this struggle for
 unisexist language for woper-
 sons--all hypersonkind really--
 even if we have to put gags and
 personacles on all the poets
 and lovers of the hypersonities.
 Right? Out of the ruins of the
 tongue that Shakespeare spake
 shall arise the epersoncipated
 unisexist woperson. And as the
 iron of English turns into the
 mush of English, Parent willing,
 you will be the spokesperson
 for all wopersonkind, old 'son'.

(This personuscript will be
 published in the Journal of
Plastic English for both RAW
 (National Association of Woper-
 sons) and RAV (Royal Association
 of Wopersons). Anyone who is
 able to say 'chairperson' with-
 out wanting to vomit may be an
 honorary member and will, upon
 application, receive a handsome
 tin ear.)

Sheldon Vanauken
 --an excerpt from
the Wittenberg Door submitted by
 Andrea McCaw

STILL, THE SHADOW....

Still, the shadow-
 a face, unforgotten-
 as the moon's haunting glow
 returning again.
 Still in my dreams
 the shadow walks.
 Innocently she beams
 a smile that stalks-
 still. In terror's chains
 I shiver inside.
 Have I dide in vain:
 my freedom denied?
 Oh for the time
 love's breath to know
 a new birth of mine.
 Still, the shadow....

Mike Vaughn

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