A Balanced Faith, a Balanced Life: Another Key to Happiness

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ABSTRACT

The starting point of this article is that a balanced faith life is the foundation to happiness in the Christian sense. This article considers this suggestion from a historical perspective, i.e., by a survey of three reformations that occurred within the last five hundred years. Specifically, these are Luther's challenge to orthodoxy, the Pietist movement in the seventeenth, and the Social Gospel and Missionary Movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The article specifies what each of these reformations contributed to the development of an understanding of faith as a balance of *notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*. To shed light on these dimensions, the article will look at three key concepts that characterize these reformations; orthodoxy, orthopathy, and orthopraxy. Biblical references will be used to illustrate each point.

KEYWORDS: happiness; orthodoxy; orthopathy; and orthopraxy

The question of how one may attain happiness is one that continues to interest society. The plethora of self-help books and lifestyle guides attests to that interest. In the United States, the self-help industry amounts to an

astounding 10 billion dollars per year.[1] The Catholic Church is trying also to edge its way into this genre. Jonathan Morris's book *God Wants Us Happy, from Self-help to God-help* is just one example among others that seeks to root the question of happiness in the Catholic faith. Thus the question remains: what, if any, does the Christian faith in a wider historical perspective have to add to the matter?

In 2014, *Time* reported that researchers at the University College London were able to arrive at a formula that accurately predicts the level of human happiness:[2]

$$\text{Happiness}(t) = w_0 + w_1 \sum_{j=1}^{t} \gamma^{t-j} CR_j + w_2 \sum_{j=1}^{t} \gamma^{t-j} EV_j + w_3 \sum_{j=1}^{t} \gamma^{t-j} RPE_j,$$

In a nutshell, rewards [R] and expectations [E] influence one's happiness. While low expectations prevent disappointment, positive expectations, just like rewards, give rise to happiness. Alongside such a rational view concerning happiness, there exists a large body of practical guides to happiness, suggesting that this universal pursuit of the human person can be approached and successfully answered on a purely analytical level.

Another view on human happiness, however, often associated with established religion, is that happiness in this life can never be truly found. To use the language of St. Augustine, in this world, the *earthly city*, happiness is no more than the state of relative peace; it can be truly attained only in the presence of God in the *heavenly city*. Oscillating between the hope of realizing happiness and resignation in face of its illusiveness, happiness, as G. K. Chesterton surmises, is "a mystery, like religion, that never should be rationalized."[3] If Chesterton is right, can the vantage point of the Christian faith indeed help us to pursue and find happiness here and now?

Rather than doctrinal truths or a philosophy of religion, it is the study of the historical development of the Christian faith that will shed light on the question of happiness. Happiness in the Christian sense, however, is not simply happiness on an emotional or material level. Biblical examples suggest that it is manifested by a sense of inner peace and joy in encountering the divine: It is the joy that Zachariah felt when God's promise became true (Lk

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[1] Melanie Lindner, "What People Are Still Willing to Pay For," *Forbes.com*, http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/15/self-help-industry-ent-sales-cx_ml_0115selfhelp.html.

[2] Alexandra Sifferlin, "This Is the Key to Happiness," *Time*, August 4, 2014, http://time.com/3079902/this-is-the-equation-for-happiness.

[3] G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics* (New York, John Lane Company, 1919), 63.

1:14) and which makes John leap in Elizabeth's womb in the presence of Mary (Lk 1:44). It is the joy in the hearts of those who saw the star of Bethlehem (Mt 2:10) or those who found the hidden treasure of the kingdom of God (Mt 13:44) and heard Christ's words (Jn 15:11).

This paper presumes that the balance of the three dimensions of the living faith—*notitia*, "truly understanding the content of the Christian faith," *assensus*, the "assent of the intellect to the truth of the propositions of faith," and *fiducia*, "trust"—constitutes the foundation of happiness in the Christian sense. This balance, however, is fragile, is often lost, and is in constant need of "reformation." Such reformation takes place in the individual, as well as in the community of believers, that is, the church.

Historically, the reformations are three: toward orthodoxy, orthopathy, and orthopraxy. Orthodoxy, as understood in this paper, is correct belief based on the personal encounter with the sources of revelation. Orthopathy is the response of the heart to the revealed truths. Orthopraxy is a trusting faith that overcomes personal doubts and hesitations, at the same time motivating us to actively bring the word of God to the world and to effect social change. Each of these reformatory movements aimed, and continues to aim, at establishing and restoring the balance of the dimensions of faith. In this paper they are discussed in reference to one historical figures and to biblical narratives. Any imbalance in the parts of a body will cause the whole body to suffer (as stated in 1 Cor 12:26), and "happiness" to be lost. Augustine, drawing on a long tradition of the body metaphor, affirms that "the peace of the body . . . lies in the duly proportioned arrangement of its parts . . . , [i.e.,] the tranquility of order."[4]

THE PATH TOWARD ORTHODOXY:
MARTIN LUTHER AND *NOTITIA*

Martin Luther (1483–1546) lived at a time when the papal authority dominated the Christian world. Doctrine and the rules of a Christian life were shaped by the clergy in Rome and by extension through the local bishops and priests. The Pope was regarded as Christ's representative on earth, and thus the unquestionable authority in matters of faith and morals. Local synods and

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[4] Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1871), XIX. 13.

the various Church councils throughout the history of Christianity defined what was orthodox. Arguably, the ordinary believer had no direct access to the sources of faith, foremost the Bible, and thus next to little awareness of how the Christian doctrine was derived.

When Martin Luther, at the Diet of Worms in 1521 stated that he did not trust the pope or the councils alone but in Scriptures and in reason, he rocked the foundation of the Christian Church.[5] Perhaps without realizing it, Luther was providing a new definition of what he perceived to be the basis of orthodoxy. Rather than blindly adhering to any authority, one must verify one's own set of beliefs against scripture, resort to one's own plain reason, and treat doctrinal truths as a matter of conscience.

These principles led Luther, among other acts, to question the belief in the suffering of the saints, a widely held belief during the late Middle Ages.[6] In the same vein, Luther discarded the existence of Purgatory, a state in which Christian souls undergo purification for a certain time after death proportionate to their sins until they are permitted to share in the beatific vision.[7] Finding no basis for this doctrine in scripture, Luther argues in the Smalcald Articles (1537) that "the saints are presently dwelling in their graves in heaven."[8]

It would be wrong, however, to think that Luther rejected Catholic doctrine *in toto*. On the matter of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the consecrated bread and wine, for example, he opposed Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531), who believed that God was only symbolically present in the bread and wine blessed during the Lord's Supper. Against Zwingli's line of reasoning that Jesus cannot be in more than one place at one time, Luther ardently argued for the omnipresence of Christ.[9]

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[5] See Martin Brecht, "Luther, Martin," trans. Wolfang Katenz, in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 2:461–67.

[6] Ibid.

[7] "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name *Purgatory* to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1030–32).

[8] Martin Luther, "Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article II, paragraph 28," The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church, http://bookofconcord.org/smalcald.php.

[9] Jack D. Kilcrease, *The Self-Donation of God: A Contemporary Lutheran Approach to Christ and His* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 195.

This first reformation toward a personally embraced orthodoxy proposes that for faith to be balanced it should be brought to a personal and reasonable encounter with the truth revealed to us in scripture and doctrine. Anselm's famous adage "fides querens intellectum" (faith seeking understanding) encapsulates this notion, which is not "one's necessary attempt to reach conviction through introspection apart from faith" but "one's personally reflecting on doctrine against the revealed foundation of Christian faith." Luther's alleged "Hier steh ich und ich kann nicht anders" (Here I stand and cannot do otherwise)[10] testifies to the sincerity of such faith and the search for orthodoxy: *notitia*. Faith, as Luther's testimony shows, is a matter of truth and conscience.

It is this new sense of orthodoxy that constitutes the first member of the tripod of a balanced faith. An example from the Gospel of John might illumine this point. The question of the woman of Samaria, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink from of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jn 4:9), indicates that she understands Jesus in accordance with ethnic stereotypes.[11] Thus, she misunderstands his actions; Jesus was actually disregarding or questioning common practice. Jesus tells her, "If you knew the gift of God . . . you would have asked him and he would have given you living water" (Jn 4:10). Once more, the unnamed woman is unable to fathom the depth of Jesus's words, mistaking "living" water for "fresh" water. Only when the woman recognizes Jesus as Messiah, in a conversation concerning the right place of worship, does she fully come to understand who Christ is and what he offers (Jn 4:25). She then realizes that her vocation is to proclaim Christ in her city (Jn 4:28).[12] This sense of recognition is equally true for Moses, the archetype of faith, who upon coming to know JHWH one to one, understands that he is not meant to pursue his own goals, but is sent to bring forth God's people from Egypt (Ex 3:10).[13]

If the Samaritan woman had listened to what the authorities and people had been saying about the Jews, she would have been prevented from

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[10] The saying "here I stand, and cannot do otherwise" is widely attributed to Luther, although it is absent from his own works. See Roland Herbert Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 182.

[11] Quotations from the Bible are taken from the Revised Standard Version.

[12] Francis J. Moloney and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 1998), 126.

[13] Danny Mathews, *Royal Motifs in the Pentateuch Portrayal of Moses* (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 55.

understanding who Jesus really was, what he was giving, and what he was asking of her. Likewise, in the case of Moses, vicariously knowing of but never yet experiencing God would not have allowed him to cross the border from profane to sacred ground. What is more, a wrong image of God (for example, that of one who favors the strong over the weak) would inevitably have led Moses to a form of life that contradicted the basic tenets that would flow from a belief in the one and true God. Having, or worshipping, many gods, for example (Ex 20:3; 34:14), would have given room to a belief that distinguishes between masters who worship superior gods, and slaves who adhere to inferior gods.[14]

In coming to understand who Christ truly is, the Samaritan woman turned from unhappiness to happiness. A life that had been characterized by her utter dependence on her *six* husbands and which caused her to be shamed by society, was transformed into a life that testified to Christ so that many came to believe in him.

Contrary to the expectation that Moses, after marrying and siring a son, has finally found a peaceful and happy life, it may be argued that by not yet fully knowing God, Moses is still "a sojourner in a foreign land" (Ex 2:22). The "happiness" of knowing where he belongs (i.e., finally standing on holy ground [Ex 3:5]), results from his knowledge that the God who reveals God-self to him is the God "of [his] father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex 3:7).

Another example of a confused orthodoxy is naively believing that works alone can justify a person. Such a mistaken belief will not only obscure a Christian understanding of human nature and sin (Rom 7:13–20), but will equally diminish the importance of a personal faith (Rom 1:17) nurtured by the truth.[15] Or as Paul would have put it, in not knowing God "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. . . . Wretched man that I am" (Rom 7:15, 24). No other words can better describe an "unhappy" life. The Psalmist describes the opposite: "Happy the people to whom such blessings fall! Happy the people whose God is the Lord!" (Ps 144:15). Such happiness is the reward of a personal orthodoxy.

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[14] E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians: Studies in Egyptian Mythologies*, vol. 1 (London: Methuen & Company, 1904), 21.

[15] "Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church, Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification," The Holy See, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html.

PIETISM: *ASSENSUS* AND ORTHOPATHY

In the seventeenth century, another aspect of the faith became the focus of theological inquiry, namely, orthopathy. Since the time of Luther, knowledge of the correct doctrine had taken center stage. Luther had translated the Bible into German and had authored various catechisms in order to educate the people of his time in the right doctrine. However, this strict and inexorable Lutheran quest for orthodoxy soon attracted the criticism of emerging German theologians such as Johann Arndt (1555–1621), Philipp Jacob Spener (1635–1705), and August Hermann Francke (1663–1727). It also led to another reformation.

This reform movement, of which Spener is regarded the father, is called Pietism. In 1606, Johann Arndt attempted to lay out the essential aspects of the Christian faith in a book entitled *Four Books on True Christianity*,[16] to which Spener later authored a preface. This text became known as the *Pia Desideria*, which was eventually published as a book in 1675. *Pia Desideria*, or pious desire, eventually rose to prominence among German Pietists. It beautifully describes *orthopathy*, the heartfelt disposition toward God, as a necessary yet often neglected dimension of a balanced Christian life. Spener and others criticized the increased focus on the intellectual assent to the Christian doctrines without an inner disposition toward God. Pietists criticized and tried to veer away from the rising prevalence of a nominal Christianity of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and from the resulting neglect of matters of the heart, such as faith, trust, love, humility, piety; all important factors that make one's faith complete. Spener argued that:

> The people must have impressed upon them and must accustom themselves to believing that it is by no means enough to have knowledge of the Christian faith, for Christianity consists rather of practice. . . . If we can therefore awaken a fervent love among our Christians . . . all that we desire will be accomplished.[17]

In Pietism, *assensus* describes the act of faith that is necessary for one's heart to be moved by one's knowledge of the faith. According to Pietism, it is the active transfer of knowledge into a life of piety that flows from, but exceeds,

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[16] Johann Arndt, *True Christianity A Treatise On Sincere Repentance, True Faith, the Holy Walk of the True Christian, Etc.* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store, 1867).

[17] Philipp Jakob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans., ed., and with an introduction by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964). See also Peter C. Erb, *Pietists—Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 31.

notitia. The lack of the interaction of *notitia* and *assensus*, characterized by an absence of *orthopathy* is the hallmark of nominal Christianity.

For that reason, the characteristic of the Pietism movement was the formation of small groups that met for the weekly study of the Bible. In England, the introduction of these types of groups can be attributed to John Wesley (1703–91), then a young pastoral student at Oxford. Wesley became the leading figure of the revivalist movement. He emphasized a conversion experience, in which a person does not simply know the things of God, but adheres to them in daily life through piety. Methodism, the denomination that grew out of Wesley's ideas, is often called the holiness movement because it stresses the importance of personal holiness. After Wesley's death, this movement split from the Anglican Church, especially when Wesley's fellow students at Oxford derogatorily started to call his bible study groups the "bible moths." Nikolaus Zinzendorf (1700–60) also saw the potential of small groups of like-minded Christians, forming the *Unitas Fratum* (Brethren Group), a group that explicitly professed to "learn to love one another."[18]

In summary, Pietists regarded their own reformation as the second reformation, the reformation of life towards piety, *reformatio vitae*, in contrast to the Lutheran reformation, which was viewed as the first, yet incomplete reformation, the *reformatio doctrinae.*

This second reformation, the reformation toward piety, constitutes the next foundation of a balanced Christian faith and life. Knowledge of faith alone is not sufficient for one to truly live a life according to the Christian faith. Peter's encounter with the risen Lord at the Sea of Tiberias serves as an illustration of this idea. Christ asks Peter three times, "Do you love [*agapaō*] me more than these?" In the first two instances Peter replies, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love [*phileō*] you" (Jn 21:15–19). Christ, however, asks Peter the same question for a third time. Peter is understandably aggrieved, but answers again, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love [*phileō*] you." It is then that Christ tells Peter that in the past Peter had girded himself; however, it is now Christ who will lead Peter to his destiny and ultimately to his death.

The reader of Greek will notice that the first two questions of Jesus's feature the word *agapaō*, while Peter responds with *phileō*. In the third time the question is posed, Christ himself uses *phileō*, which corresponds to Peter's answer. The point is that only when a personal relationship of reciprocal love between Christ and Peter is established, suggested by the correspondence in

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[18] James Edward Stroud, *The Knights Templar and the Protestant Reformation* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2011), 142.

the words used by Peter and Christ, will Peter be able to serve Christ and allow God to take over the reins of his life. In relation to Peter's misunderstanding of the nature of Jesus's Messiahship (cf. Mk 8:29), one might surmise that the dimension of love in Peter's faith is equally, if not more, important than his knowing who Jesus is, and thus essential for his following Christ. In encountering the risen Christ, Peter's life turns from utmost *un*happiness, the result of his denial of Christ, to the happiness that is found in his loving relationship with God. It is this reciprocal love that allows him ultimately to lay down his own life.

Another illustration of piety is Paul's reflection:

> When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. . . . Now I know [*ginōskō*] in part: then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope and love abide . . . . (1 Cor 13:11–13)

Paul's conversion, becoming a man, gives testimony to the fact that a life that is purely based on knowledge will inevitably lead to sin, and thus unhappiness (1 Cor 8:13). In the pursuit of a righteousness merely based on the law, Paul came to persecute Christ and his church. It is the Spirit of God that turned his life into a life of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness." (Gal 5:22) In other words, "Happy is he who trusts in the Lord." (Prv 16:20)

In sum, it is easy to see that knowledge alone, without trust, love, humility, all aspects of piety, remains a house built upon sandy ground. Moreover, without love, the body will lose its balance and peace, and happiness will be replaced by restlessness. No better words express this than those of Quohelet the Preacher: "And I applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with" (Ecc 1:13). Or as Augustine put it in the *Confessions*: "Thou movest us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee."[19]

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[19] Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine of Hippo*, trans. J. G. Pilkington (Altenmunster, Germany: Jazzybee Verlag Jurgen Beck, 2012), I.1.3.

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL AND THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT: DEEPING FAITH IN *FIDUCIA*

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, yet another component was emphasized in addition to orthodoxy and orthopathy, namely, orthopraxy. This aspect of right practice or right action provided further balance of the faith. Orthopraxy depended upon the component of what is theologically known as *fiducia*, a person's faith and trust that grounded one's actions. Precursors of this understanding of right practice had already emerged during the lifetime of the Pietists since they started to feed and educate orphans as a form of social engagement in the Christian Church. Of the Pietist Zinzendorf it is said that upon seeing the painting by Domenico Fetti, *Ecce Homo*, he was moved to do something for Christ.[20] Thus the spiritual emotion was directed towards active engagement in the needs of the world.

However, it was not until the publication in 1907 of Walter Rauschenbusch's (1861–1918) book entitled *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, that a more systematic theology of social engagement emerged. Rauschenbusch argued that

> whoever uncouples the religious and the social life has not understood Jesus. Whoever sets any bounds for the reconstructive power of the religious life over the social relations and institutions of men, to that extent denies the faith of the Master.[21]

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries became the hallmark for social engagement of the Christian Church, as well as the missionary movement within the Protestant Church. This development can be observed in the multitude of religious organizations that were formed during this time in order to address the need for social engagement, mission, and evangelization, whether it be in the shape of organizations such as YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association), founded in 1844, or of groups such as the Salvation Army, founded in 1865. The expressed mission of the YMCA is "combining preaching in the streets and the distribution of religious tracts with a social

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[20] Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 100.

[21] Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 48–49.

ministry."[22] The Salvation Army, founded by Catherine and William Booth in 1865, was described by William Booth a: "The three 'S's' best express the way in which the Army administers to the 'down and outs': first, soup; second, soap; and finally, salvation."[23]

Likewise, this period marked the actual beginning of the Protestant missionary movement. The China Inland Mission (CIM), founded by Hudson Taylor in 1865, has remarkable statistics. In the first forty years of its existence, CIM was responsible for sending eight hundred missionaries to China and for establishing 125 churches. The missionary movement saw its peak 1910 in Edinburgh, which hosted the World Missionary Conference, seen by many as the culmination of the nineteenth-century missionary efforts as well as the precursor to the twentieth-century ecumenical movement.

Both the social engagement of those like Rauschenbusch, and the missionary activities of Taylor, speak of the aspect of trust; a trust that society can change and that change can be brought about by one's action. Trust was the force that moved Rauschenbach, for example, to work in the slums of New York City, and Taylor to leave his home to set sail for China. Both are fine examples of a life of orthopraxy.

This reform movement toward orthopraxis is in keeping with the heart of the early Church. Matthew, the first evangelist, concludes his gospel with the Great Commission:

> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age (Mt 28:18–20).

A fascinating example of *fiducia* and praxis can perhaps be seen in the parables in chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel. The inner core of these parables, the parable of the Foolish and Wise Virgins (Mt 25:1–13) and the Parable of the Talents (Mt 25:14–30), seems to convey the message that salvation greatly depends on the proper knowledge of God. Not knowing that the bridegroom is delayed (Mt 25:5) or that the master will reap where he has not sowed and

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[22] J. William Frost, "Part V: Christianity and Culture in America," *Christianity: A Social and Cultural History,* 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998), 476.

[23] "About Us: Our Beginnings," Salvation Army, http://salvos.org.au/emerald/our-history/our-beginnings.

gather where he has not winnowed (Mt 25:26), costs one their eternal life. Knowing God will indeed prevent us from being foolish and will allow us to pursue our personal quest towards holiness.

However, the last parable of this chapter, the Sheep and Goat (Mt 25:31–45), shows an entirely different picture. Those who inherit the kingdom of God have not simply worked for their personal salvation, but have rendered an act of charity to the least of people, and thus to Christ. On the contrary, those who did not are cursed to suffer in "eternal fire" (Mt 25:41). This is a rude awakening. In the words of James:

> If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? (Jas 2:15–16)

At this point, the reader might go back to the parable of the Faithful Servant (Mt 24:45–51) which first asks and then answers: "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing." This example combined both attitude and action. In the end, one might revisit the aforementioned parables and ponder if we can ever attain salvation if we do not share our oil with those who ask us (Mt 25:9), or if we remain ignorant of a fellow servant who is afraid to lose the little that he has (Mt 25:25).[24] Let us take a look at another familiar parable, the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). It is not his knowledge that he should do good that causes the Samaritan to render help to an injured traveller who, as a Jew, should not have expected help from a Samaritan. It is the Samaritan's compassion that moves him to take action, and his trust that the robbed and beaten up man will finally recover.

The scriptures clearly state that a life characterized by charity is a life of happiness. St. Paul puts it plainly: "In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

Christian faith converges towards orthopraxis. The young man approaching Jesus (Mk 10:71–31 par.) with the question of what to do to attain eternal life knows very well that faith and works are inseparably linked. Knowing God but following the commandments in a passive way—that is,

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[24] Markus Locker, "Reading and Re-reading Matthew's Parable of the Talents in Context," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 49, no. 2 (2005): 161–73.

literally keeping them by "not" doing anything—is not enough. Perfection, that is, imitating the One who is perfect (Mt 19:21), is found in charity. Hearing this, the young man, who has great possessions, walks away sorrowful (Mk 10:22). It is yet another compelling testimony of an unhappy life.

A summary of the above reflection can be gleaned from the so-called food controversy in the Pauline Churches.[25] Jews and Gentiles, sharing the Eucharistic table of fellowship, are faced with the question whether or not one should eat food that is dedicated to the Roman gods, such as that which is bought in the public market place. Paul has this to say:

> Now concerning food offered to the idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." "Knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him (1 Cor 8:1–3).

In fact, it is *known* to all of us that since God is one and the Only One, idols simply do not exist (1 Cor 8:4-6). Paul, however, realizes that not all possess this knowledge (1 Cor 8:7), and that eating such food would violate their conscience. Thus, knowledge, even the right knowledge of God, is not a sufficient basis of true faith. On the contrary, such knowledge can become a stumbling block for others who do not possess it and can cause them to sin (1 Cor 8:12). Sinning against one's brothers and sisters is sinning against Christ (1 Cor 8:11). Pure *notitia*, we might conclude, is but the beginning of faith, but never its sole end. Knowledge without love remains incomplete.

Adhering to the truth concerning God (*assensus*) is but the foundation of Paul's compassion and love for his fellow Christians. Paul's remarkable conclusion is that "if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat" (1 Cor 8:13). Here, one can clearly see that Christ's love for Paul is not something he keeps to himself, but something to be paid forward, as *fiducia.* The love that Paul has for God and his churches fills his life with joy and happiness.

CONCLUSION

The reader who expected to be given a simple Christian key to happiness will rightly be dissatisfied, or at least ask where physical "happiness" then is

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[25] Cf. Derek Newton, "Food Offered to Idols in 1 Corinthians 8-10," *Tyndale Bulletin* 49, no. 1 (1998) 179–82.

to be found in a balanced Christian faith. As this article attempted to show, a balanced faith is faith in God "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Dt 6:5). This faith not only rests on truly and personally knowing who God is ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is One Lord" [Dt 6:4]), but culminates in love for God and others that translates faith into every aspect of our lives (Lv 19:19).

It is this balanced faith that allowed the early Christian communities to break bread with one another with "glad and generous hearts" (Acts 2:46), and to give to others (Act 15:3) with happy and generous hearts. Happiness that flows from a balanced faith is the fruit of the Spirit, that is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness" (Gal 5:22). Joy and happiness, however, are not simply given to soothe our souls. In the words of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, joy is "the net of love by which we catch souls."

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