

IS THAT ALL THERE IS?

Joe Slater

Imagine living in Eden before sin spoiled the scene. You have a 100% harmonious relationship with God and all of His creation. Your every need – physical, emotional, and spiritual – is completely met. You wouldn't dream of whining, "Is that all there is?" How could you want more? Yet Satan convinced Eve that all of this wasn't enough; he deceived her into thinking she needed the one thing God had put off limits.

At Mount Sinai, God had just delivered His people from abject slavery in Egypt. He had pledged to provide for their every need and to give them the land He had long ago promised to their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They, in turn, had pledged to worship and serve Him and only Him. In only a few weeks, however, "Is that all there is?" became their attitude (though not their spoken words) toward the true God and His requirements. They went back on their promise, demanding that Aaron fabricate an idol around which they danced.

Centuries later, Solomon built God's temple in Jerusalem. God let it be known that only there was sacrifice to be offered to Him. But the people's attitude became, "Is that all there is?" They refused to comply, erecting their own altars on the "high places" where they worshiped whatever gods they pleased. Seventy years of captivity finally removed that corrupt practice from their system!

When the church began in the first century AD, the apostles and other inspired men proclaimed the gospel of Christ in its purity. Before long, though, the "Is that all there is?" syndrome became evident. Certain false teachers claimed to possess special knowledge (hence their name, "Gnostics," from gnosis, the Greek word for

knowledge). Jesus just wasn't enough, they asserted. You needed special knowledge to really have salvation.

From the beginning, Satan has specialized in convincing people that what God has given simply isn't enough – there must be something more. Today we commonly hear people alleging that the Holy Spirit told them this or that (in addition, of course, to what is written in the Bible – "Is that all there is?"). They are confusing their emotions or intuition with some imagined revelation from God.

The divinely-inspired Scriptures claim to be complete, and to equip us for "every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). As far as verbal revelation from God is concerned, "That's all there is!" Rather than yearning for more, let us focus our efforts upon learning and doing what the Bible teaches. That alone would occupy us for a dozen lifetimes.

Four Things You Can Do With Your Hands

1. Wring them in despair
2. Fold them as if there were nothing to do.
3. Clench them in anger.
4. Find a place where they fit in the work of the Lord and KEEP THEM BUSY!

Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest – the more often you use it, the fewer obstructions you find in the way!

Soldiers of Christ

I recently read *Never Surrender* by LTG (Ret.) William G. Boykin. He was reared a Christian, and the book deals with his life-long walk with God. He served in the Army Special Forces, and its creed inspired this article. We need to understand what being a soldier of Christ means.

- ✓ I am a soldier of my Lord (II Timothy 2:3-4).
- ✓ I will do all that my Lord requires of me (I John 5:2-3).
- ✓ I am a volunteer and serve following the example of those who have gone before me (Acts and Hebrews 11).
- ✓ I will strive to maintain my Lord's honor (I Timothy 1:17) and my integrity (Psalm 26:1).
- ✓ I will strive to excel in my knowledge of my Lord, His word, and His will (II Timothy 3:16-17).
- ✓ I will strive to surrender my will at all times to that of my Lord following His example seen in the Garden (Matthew 26:39).
- ✓ I will strive to keep my mind clean, strong, sober, and alert (I Thessalonians 5:4-6).
- ✓ I will do all that is necessary not to cast shame on my Lord (Hebrews 6:6).
- ✓ I will never surrender to the forces of the world or Satan (Revelation 2:10).
- ✓ I will never forget who the real enemy is (Ephesians 6:12).
- ✓ I will strive all my life so that I will hear, "Well done" from my Lord.

We must never lose sight of our Commander, "Fixing our eyes on Jesus..." (Hebrews 12:2a). He has led the way and He is our goal. Jesus is also with us always (Matthew 28:20). He is our strength and provides us with our armor and equipment (Ephesians 6:10-17). We can be confident that He hears us (I John 5:14-15).

Let us then serve in confidence, boldness, and faithfulness knowing that our Lord's grace is sufficient for our needs.

--Ed Wittlif (Denver, CO)