

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

Something Given

It was cold and damp; and, after working in the garden for many ours, I came in “bone tired” and chilled down to the very marrow. So, my first act was to flop down in the nearest chair, and, as I collapsed into it, I was struck by an unexpected pleasure: the chair was warm...actually warm. And, as I snuggled in a bit deeper, it dawned on me that someone must have been sitting in that chair just a few minutes before I arrived. I reveled in the unexpected comfort and thought, “How nice of whoever had left, to leave me this...this...what was it? A bit of himself?”

It was, in fact, heat created from someone else’s body...and it was mine to use freely, with no strings attached. Whoever it was had made no claims on that heat (probably never even thought about it). You might as well say that the warmth of the sun belonged to the sun alone.

“And yet,” (warming, as it were, in both body and spirit) I mused, “what is so different about something created with one’s hands, or mind, and something created with one’s body? The hands and the mind are a part of the body. Still, with the one type of creation, we level “claims” left and right; while, with the other, we simply let it become one with the rest of Creation.

Take carbon dioxide, for example: It leaves our bodies and goes into the air...and can, therefore, be used by the plants to grow. I’ve never heard anyone cry, “You can’t have

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

that CO₂! It's mine! Thank goodness, or it wouldn't have been free to become one with the plants, in order to produce something we need...i.e., food.

Our bodies came from the dust and to the dust they will return (Gen. 3:19), but the breath of life came from God (Gen. 2:7)...and He did not "hold us" to Him, but rather, gave us free will to follow the path of our own choosing. And it is to that Life that we would hope to return.

We are like one small molecule of the CO₂; for if that molecule is to "leave," "change," and "return in a different form" to the one who originally exhaled it, it must follow a very narrow path. And so, also, must we.

"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few." [Matt. 7:13-14]

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."

[John 14:6]

said Jesus; and He had been willing to give freely of His body...not just its warmth and its breath, but the gifts of His knowledge and the healing of His hands...becoming one with the Father; and thereby producing something we need...i.e., the food of eternal life.

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

The process is as ageless as “time” itself...and “eternal cycle”...with something being “given as the essential step:

“For God so loved the world that He gave...” [John 3:16]

(August 13, 1979, revised later)