

**“Sharpened:” A Faith Story**

**by**

**RA Feller**

## **The Blade of Unrighteousness**

“In the last days there will be those who shall call evil good and good evil.” When a society has become dull and unable to hear or receive truth anymore, a darkness sets in over the land that brings confusion. Due to people rationalizing, justifying, and then denying full reality, choices within that culture become dulled till, in their consciences, they believe they can do no wrong.

Those who are selfish or self-centered live in a world that revolves around them, and in doing just what is good for them in their situations, they're not in tune with what God has as best in mind. When God's higher good is out of sight, there's no light to see the truth of their situation in a balanced way. This is where Satan moves in with darkness to invade a mind with irrational behavior without full focus. Hocus pocus vision sets in while in an off-balanced state of mind. Decisions are then carried out, and without a complete or skewed picture or the best possible choices, spirits of confusion are really in control by the great dragon who holds everything by deception.

This evil and wicked puppet master holds the wires of those who do not have a true picture of the God of love and truth in balance. Their lack of healthy choices imprisons them and are unable to express themselves clearly, for details are missing while trying to size up the established patterns that they're in.

During frustrations, emotional energies are displaced, and as people become drained, Satan draws from this energy at the center of its angelic web. Have you ever felt depleted when expressing emotions without sight? For when losing sight of healthy expression, anger quickly turns to rage, sadness becomes falling off a cliff into a

bottomless pit, and gladness becomes pleasure-seeking for thrills that only last but for a moment.

Restoration comes from seeking the true and living God who restores by setting us back on course in the pattern that has clarity of sight. This reminds us that in order to remain within His kingdom of love, we must treat ourselves and others right.

Galatians 16:25 “Hence, I advise you to be guided by the Spirit, so that you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are opposed to the Spirit, and those of the Spirit are opposed to the flesh. They conflict with one another, so you cannot do what you want. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not subject to the Law.

Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. As I warned you previously, I warn you that no one who does such things will inherit the kingdom of God.

In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.”

Therefore, practice righteousness and rejoice, “This is the day that the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad.” For God has empowered us by the adorning of His Holy Spirit, and continues to recalibrate us into the resurrection cycle of His love through His divine flesh and blood while in our handbreadths of life. “For to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord,” in a very real and spiritual eternal life, while being made holy in a dying world.

## Hunger

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they will be satisfied.” To me, this means that when we are doing right while in service to God, we’re content because we’re being sharpened more deeply into the presence of His established kingdom.

“As Iron sharpens iron, so does the countenance of a good friend.” I was recently sharpened by a book that acted like a close friend. It took me on a pilgrimage, a journey that brought me even closer to God. I am now sharpened to understand more, for there was light in the attitude behind its words that met me eye to eye to know more about loving Him than before.

Glorious light has allowed me to shut out the world's madness and shut me in with the sound and firm foundation of Christ. His foundation of pure love has taken me up His mountain to see that my desires for fleshly acceptance, accomplishment, and comforts has really been a deeper quest to understand how God can meet my needs beyond them. It’s God’s completeness that we really yearn for from the depth of our soul, as only He can refashion us to be made completely whole.

We all have the mission of coming alive in Christ. “The dead in Christ shall rise again,” and if we miss this mission, we will remain dead within this world. So I must increase my faith within this vision in mind, to remain humble because “Pride comes before a fall” and in knowing this, I must pray more fervently for others around me so that no one misses out. I’ve learned here that true discipline causes us to suffer ourselves less because doing the right thing causes more joy than a season of sin. Therefore a serious attitude allows us a stance that greets us with a rich inner life, for we are met with the

balance of a sound heart and mind, which has become so precious to us that we do not want to lose it. For this is where moments of circumstance become faith, and faith becomes a reality that's no longer a dream.

If we find ourselves getting spiritually overwhelmed, there is a good chance that we are getting our role confused with God's. Slowing down again, for God to take you deeper into His presence to regain your bearings of intimacy is always a good idea. Remember, it's not always about what we're doing but how we do it. Generally speaking, if we lose our peace, it's because we have left God's timing of peace and are being held by grace while in Satan's kingdom of chaos. Again, slow down, and you will level off on God's firm foundation to start building your relationship on Holy Ground, a place where "Everything that can be shaken will be shaken so that which will remain shall remain." The Holy Ground is a place where you can build without your faith being shaken back down to the ground.

So, continue to take every thought captive unto God as a single focus will keep you looking unto what He is doing. If it doesn't look like Jesus, it is not Him, as you'll have extra unstable thoughts of flesh, proving you have a double mind. It's always better to have faith in stability than try to go somewhere you haven't yet grown to in your relationship with Jesus Christ. Although with God, nothing is impossible, therefore you cannot put Him in a box because miracles do happen. For we don't always know what God is doing while being prepared for what will come next. Just leave it up to Him to satisfy your needs with your Holy Eucharistic hunger and enjoy His peace while on your Journey as He works on you. Persevere with Him while on your ride, and pursue peace, as it is essential for friendship and love.

Know this now, consistent behavior keeps us aligned with our faith and values in a relationship with God, for we're growing together as a family where Jesus honored His mother as our example. Mary, the bride of the Father by the Holy Spirit's overshadowing and mother of the blood of regeneration in their Son, grew into her position as the new Eve as she gave birth to the spiritually mystical body of Christ as described in Revelations 12:17, "Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went to wage war with the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus."

Be attentive to befriend silence and hear God's voice. Spend time in that deep place within and connect with your truest self and God. Holiness is something God does for us when we cooperate, and not only for us but for all of mankind to simply live in the moment with Him, or it would be impossible to be patient while in the breadth that passes through time. Each moment of recognition with God freezes time and delivers, He only awaits for us to become aware that He is there at all times, and then to call.

## Things Above

Entering into God's presence is like striking fire. A hot coal of warmth enters your gut, and then by the winds of the Holy Spirit, ignites your soul. For those who are first learning, there is an urge to take off like a rocket, which makes you want to shout and dance for joy. Yet those who are more mature in the Spirit of the Holy Ghost know how to trim their wick and contain the joy that will carry them while they wait with thrill anticipation for the Lord's return.

There is no love without sacrifice, and it takes time to learn how to redirect first frivolous thrilling touches that pamper the flesh and translate them into spiritual growth as led by the Holy Ghost. For how can one love when obsession with comforts is in the way? "Set your minds on things that are above, not on earthly things." These days I see people addicted to comforts without the sacrifice of the cross. "We love because God first loved us," then as love rises in our reservoirs of life, it eventually pours out of us. For when God's love flows into us long enough, it eventually breaks the dam of having a hardened heart to become a river of life for all. Everything just boils down to love without sacrifice is just words in the end. Therefore when you see yourself being genuinely loving towards others without pretensions or fabrications, you know that you're truly on the right path. So, anytime we believe that we want anything other than the love of Jesus Christ, we are mistaken by the flesh as He is life eternal and eternally alive.

"Knowledge puffs up but love edifies," and the true stability of love allows us to help others up without suffocating within a self that has been smothered into the lie of an existence of practice that isn't understood. This is a dark existence without the light of truth. For why do you grasp for sand that is as fleeting moments of

pleasure when you can have the firm foundation of God's stability found in a relationship with Jesus Christ? The only way I found my way out of this lie was to find love in the centrality of everything after studying to show myself approved. For when the truth bears witness of itself, there is no friction, heat, or fire as only seen in creation by the light that emanates from the affections of Jesus the Christ.

Using good judgment to consider the outcomes and consequences of today's choices and how they will affect the future is wisdom. Applying knowledge to your personal life in a way that you can live it out is the wisdom of truth lived out. For I have seen many who are drowning in knowledge but starving for wisdom as they are off the path of the true light of life. Though God's mercy is stronger than the misery of treating God like a dead object or there would not be grace for us to truly find Him in His divinity.

Concerning the true presence of God in the Holy Eucharistic Host, Jesus says in John 6:53-58, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me... whoever eats this bread will live forever." This was sent to us out of love and mercy, and to reject the truth of God is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit because you call the true God a liar and league with the devil in doing so.

Saying yes to God elevates you into eternal life by the desire of your intention to want to be more intimate with Him. Saying yes to God one moment at a time is where we embrace His will, otherwise,



things get complicated, and once overwhelmed, we could lose our way. When receiving the Eucharist, we become living tabernacles, holding the presence of God like Mary, who is our example as the mother of the church, making us ark bearers of the new covenant. For we are not in league with the truth and not the spirits of this world as guided by the Holy Spirit, leaving us selfless and not selfish, as like Mary, our lives are now in service to God, confirmed by John who leaped in Elizabeth's womb with joy as she prophesied. "How is it that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" which doubly confirms her being in service to Him.

My own desire says, "Change my actions to match the desires of my heart." With Mary as my example, I also can say yes to God as I know that through the unity of the Holy Spirit, angels are going to craft me into doing God's will as orchestrated by Him. While I now remain at rest in God's presence, I can humbly say yes to God's power being my strength during many events throughout the day. I know that He will continue to build me on the firm foundation of His peace, for the inner dignity birthed from His humility consumes me with the beauty of His attractiveness to where I will follow no other.

## Strengthened from Within

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Having healthy boundaries with God helps us have healthier relationships and better understand ourselves.

When we're at peace, we have perspective as we're aware of the boundaries of our space in relation to others. Therefore when we sense uninvited motion within our space, as a wind that ripples the surface of still waters upon our minds, we know that we're being spiritually invaded. What keeps the thoughts in motion within our minds can cause us to be blown into distractions or lose sight of God's still kingdom of peace, “Be still and know that I am God.”

Detachment from our emotions disturbs the balance of our psyche, and our perceptions become skewed when making decisions. This affects our choices. Expressing ourselves inappropriately happens without full awareness of boundaries. This is how we can verbally step on people's toes and bruise others emotionally, which can be good or bad. Good because it sends off a signal that something is wrong and bad if we end up in an argument with a fallout from off-balanced feelings that leave us with putting a foot in our mouths which disrupts the atmosphere.

Spirits invade to divide a mind by keeping it in motion because peace and chaos cannot exist in the same space, “The mind is kept at perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.” For the ripples need to stop within a mind in order to have clarity of peace within God's kingdom; the best choices are made with full focus on the light of truth, and decisions will not be concise otherwise. This is why the time for reflection is so important because it's the reason God established entering into a rest on the Sabbath Day. Even God Himself rested on the seventh day after creation, and as Jesus said,

“My Father is always working,” God holds the perpetual cycle of the resurrection of love, light, and life alive. Reflection is also a part of work that allows for better decisions to be made all the way around, as “Love never fails.”

No relationship can survive without reflection, as boredom always sets in in a one-sided relationship that lacks good communication. This is why meeting the needs of others with good listening and speaking skills while understanding boundaries is so important. God respects the boundaries of good communication skills to allow for intimate reflection with Himself when stating, “Come unto me, all you who are heavy burdened, and you will find rest for your soul.” I interpret what He is saying here as “Pause and ponder.” This establishes us to find the better solution of trusting Him for new inspiration in the light of His truth, which is to shut yourself in with Him and lock out the world.

When hearing stories in the Bible about God healing others, we tend to exclude ourselves from this communication at hand. However, I’ve discovered that the longer we read, the deeper our relationship with God gets. Then, one day, we’re finally able to identify ourselves with a Bible character and cross over through a bridge of faith to become a part of the story within eternal life directly, for we have slowed to a stillness to see the light of God through the darkness of time from the breadth. When Jesus Christ becomes the door, we’ve aligned ourselves to receive God’s seed of faith to break through time’s seconds and enter into eternity to take that first breath from His kingdom.

Look at the Holy Eucharist as Jesus passing by, and like the woman who had an issue of blood, having spent all her substance on doctors to no avail, she reached out and touched Him and got healed. Discontent with life and tired of it being stale? Get desperate and

reach out for the fresh bread of the resurrection, and enter the circle of the living waters of eternal life, light, and love. For if you are miserable, why do you keep going back to a God that leaves you miserable and without joy? Haven't you seen others in their faith who are filled with inner smiles and wonder when it will be my time to receive, "The joy of the Lord is my strength?" Seeing someone filled with smiles of life as a fruit of Joy on the branch of the vine of Jesus Christ should make you want to reach out and ask, "Why?" and pluck some joy for yourself. Or at least have a desire to learn all you can by observing them till you meet Jesus yourself.

Do not cling to this world and worry about giving up creature comforts when deep down inside you are miserable. What do you really have without peace, love, and joy? Perhaps a con artist who is always telling you that you need more to be happy who's the devil himself. You don't sacrifice to get salvation; you fall head over heels in love with God and when things of his world grow dim in comparison to the beauty of Christ, nothing else will matter after a season. Once you have truly kissed Jesus fully within His heart, you won't even notice that you're on the cross with Him in this world anymore, for you have departed with Jesus through His door and spiritually entered into eternity by Him.

You have inherited the same bloodline that Jesus pours out in indescribable love, and the love He has for you now will be with you for all eternity as you are His adorned bride, and He must take care of you. Ignorance to having left this world spiritually is being ignorant to what Jesus has for us in intimacy in the receiving of the Holy Eucharist. For when a bride is with her groom, they learn to know each other intimately and thoroughly, through and through.

In the mass, we are to enter into the sacrifice of the world on earth as it is in heaven through Jesus, as we are no longer to be a

part of it but now to be apart from it as we are passing through. We have entered a state of conscious kindness as now we are all in transit of being imbued with changes in our thoughts, words, and actions that align with goodness, testifying to all that we are followers of The Christ.

Now, in all our struggles of discovering what we want and do not want, we all have disordered desires that need to be controlled within our frailness to keep needing God in place of these wants. In this humble place, we must come to know that God is our strength within us. For we must learn to trust God in all as He is our all and all for everything, so in trusting that He will direct our paths, we can rest our minds by not fully trying to comprehend Him as His grace is sufficient for us.

So, go and meet your groom in the Holy Eucharist and tell Him what you're in need of as His adorned bride, and by the mercy of His grace, miracles will happen. Love rearranges our priorities, revealing who and what we love, whereas, in intimate stillness, we're sparked in the light of eternity to exit Satan's dominions of motion and that much more.

Priorities change from self-serving and abusive patterns in how we would put our own interests above others while in a tenacious survival mode. We tried to fight our way into carving out a comfortable niche in a confusing world until God had enhanced our vision. Now gaining in our confidence to trust Him over ourselves through His transforming power all starts to fall into place. Friends and relatives will notice our spiritual growth, and when questioned, this is the time to share in the treasures you have found in the ways of acceptance from a loving God that delivers from abuse. Some will welcome your faith, while others will reject you, preferring their darkness over the truth of light. However, persevere in prayer and

continue to be patiently loving, and God will move in His timing. Yes, I've discovered that God's love not only directs us to change but restrains and keeps us stable.

Thank you, dear God, for looking out for me while in the emotional absenteeism of parents who didn't fully understand how to love but did the best they could, which I see in itself is love. Thank You for teaching me that much more than what they knew before. Love and truth are coming into balance for me while embracing You on the cross. Abba, thank You for Your Spirit of adoption.

## Growth

As a plant grows and changes, different nutrients are required at each growth stage. I want to make you aware that in each stage of your growth, you have an adversary called the devil who will come at you in many different ways to discourage your faith. This fallen angel will try to block you from growing in your relationship with God by using any deception that he can. By racing our thoughts in the mind of the flesh, the devil will try to convince us that a dim mind outside of the light of God's Spirit is the brilliance that we need, but it really enslaves us to its deceptive world to destroy us. It has always been evil to have our substance of life drained away from God's kingdom with the seductions of this world as nothing is for free; physics teaches that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

This is why the kingdom of God found in scripture has to be more real than the reality of a world without His love. After the devil tries to convince us that the bible is a mere fairy tale, it will further try to twist scriptures out of proportion to discourage our faith. James 2:19: "You believe that there is one God. You do well to assert that. But even the demons believe and tremble." Peter also talks about how Paul's teachings can be difficult to understand to the point of wrestling the scriptures to one's own destruction.

God's kingdom is a kingdom of peace as "Jesus is the Prince of Peace," and Satan's kingdom is one of commotion and chaos. "He is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Herein lies the beginning of discernment. We must recognize the differences between motion and peace within others, as without peace, other people have a skewed perspective. "Everything that can be shaken will be shaken so that which will remain shall remain." When we are

in God's kingdom, we are established on a firm foundation that can be built upon without falling down. Line upon line of stability grants us a relationship with Christ that will not bow, which allows us to spiritually outgrow time, unlike Adam's kingdom, which is in a freefall with no stable base to build upon. Hell enlarges its mouth for those who build reality on a slippery slope without stability, for without being "Rooted and grounded in the love of Christ," there are no affections towards Godly restraints to hold them.

We need to be honest with God so He can work on us. Honesty allows us to discover our shortcomings of sin so that we can acknowledge where He is missing in our life and ask Him to fill us in. "God's strength is perfected in our weaknesses." Yes! Be devoted to God, but do not trade anyone or anything for your intimacy with Him. There is a gradual transition to "Live justly, love tenderly, and work humbly with your God," but we must remember that He is more than just a man, or we can lose touch with reality. When a culture begins to deny objective reality, it's heading for destruction.

I said earlier that we grow in our relationship with God in different stages of growth. A preliminary stage is the quest to try things out for a greater understanding of our surroundings. We all hunger to satisfy our curiosities, what is the best food, where do we belong, or the most comfortable way to live, and so on.

The ultimate spiritual awareness is that we are really hungry for intimacy with God. God uses hunger to guide us to feast upon Himself, for He knows that only He can truly satisfy us. If He is not there to meet our hunger needs, then we leave ourselves open to spiritual attacks from deceptive minions that will influence our thoughts in the wrong direction, ones that distract us from God. This is where we try to stop ourselves from falling but instead continue in a free fall due to our pride. This causes us to believe that we are in



control, even when doing the wrong thing that leads us away from God's love. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Counterfeit truths never satisfy our needs in the long run, and physical hunger in excess, reveals a deeper spiritual hunger for God. Yearnings send messages like wanting greater meaning, as there must be more to life. It's a quest that could keep us moving when God wants us to be at rest and hear His voice. Be aware: Continual hunger for material things could mean that we're starving our souls. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst." God wants to feed your soul and meet your spiritual needs with Himself. What does God say to you through your hunger? It took me some time to learn, but I know that the shallows of this world cannot satisfy you. Jesus waits in the Holy Eucharist, so pay attention to the hunger in your soul. Your hunger will never disappear as it needs to be replaced with something else to draw you to Himself. Courage allows us to stand in our fears beyond our hunger and do what is good, right, and just so that hearing God's voice takes precedence above all else in nobility, for you have met Him on the cross. "God rewards those who diligently seek Him." Freedom has met you with nothing else to lose.

What did Jesus do on His final night on earth for us, His children? He established the New Covenant so that we could set things in order before His departure. The next time you find yourself adorned before the consecrated Eucharist while in the presence of God, quiet your mind and receive the Holy Host of your intimate inheritance. Be in the moment with Him and receive your groom. Gratitude causes us to enter God's presence anew each time and when counting our blessings, your time with God will be rich.

## Community

Christianity is a lifestyle of the community. We share in work, prayers, and study the scriptures together. Faith, as the center of our lives, affects everything about caring for each other. In our afflictions, others are challenged to live the gospels by observing our professional and family lives. A Christian is a living part of the church, and those who are watching experience Christ through us.

We must allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in all. The celebration of our love while in the centrality of the resurrection cycle by our bond of regenerative blood in the Holy Eucharist is a feast of life in which we share as a spectacle before others.

In the early church, the first deacons were chosen to look after gentile widows that were not being cared for by its Jewish members. Paul had to challenge Peter because He refused to eat with gentile converts. Today, I find there to be a disconnect between leaders and laity due to the business complexities of running the church. Although I do see inroads taking place to correct this situation by the creation of core outlets for people to express themselves in love to edify each other and bring unity to the forefront again. This upholds the values and principles, preventing division that people need not look outside the church by getting their hunger needs for God met from within it.

The world's system tries to separate faith from reason, saying that public and private life are two different things to dim God's light. However, there is now a hunger for righteousness, which I see as a renewal for the love of the cross to turn back modern madness that leaves one feeling torn. Living the gospel with a divided mind is impossible, for there is no empowerment without the Holy Spirit of God.

I have celebrated Christ's vision in awe-inspiring ways. This happens by slowing down to remain in the moment with God. How difficult it is for me to find my way at times to find Christ in every situation, but I always remember the stability of a sound mind, and His love holds me every time.

It's important to remember that instruction about Jesus must be done with tender, loving, patient care. People want to avoid bad attitudes as it is the devil's ploy for us to run from the church and not to it. So our actions must indeed match our words, or death and not life will occur. "Love never fails."

Humanity desperately needs God's love and truth in a balanced way, or they will perish from a lack of vision as "When the blind lead the blind, the two fall into a ditch." For how can you place Jesus at the center of your life without the centrality of His Holy loving light? God is steadfast in His love towards us. If you trust Him to see you through to the end in your response, you will remain unshakable in your faith.

So persevere in trusting the Lord, and you will grow to bear the fruit of fortitude. Persevere, and God's love will progressively take you deeper into the essence of His heart. "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Jesus fulfills this promise through the Holy Eucharist of the church, which He adorns as His bride, for those who are sincere. We're called to Holiness while enjoying God's presence under the leadership of powerful love and compassion. Keep in mind that what may appear to be cruel to us in our flesh from a lack of understanding may be understood by God as merciful wisdom, for He is kind. Less of me and more of Thee, for you taste much better than I. Our actions and words yield a power for creation towards life or death, so let us choose life by doing right by God. Mere appearances must genuinely draw from God's vine without the

pretension of putting up a front of behaving in a false manner or only a fragrance will come forth without a spiritual fruit to sustain. Love fully with a whole heart and not in part, and your gifts will clearly fulfill your joy. You'll then see what matters most in discovering the root of your consecration to the Holy Host where heaven and earth have met. The love of God, through the doorway of the cross, has accomplished a value greater than anything else. Clarity now comes into focus until one day I'll hear, "Well done thy faithful servant, enter thou into the Joy of the Lord," with bliss too impossible to contain anymore.

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