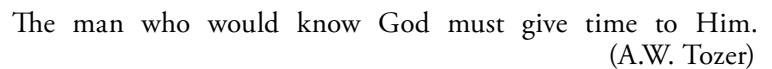


There He is: calling and waiting... calling and waiting...



From a different perspective, however, the new and dazzling advancements in science and technology today have effectively erected barriers that stand between the God of heaven and His people. As we have created new technology to facilitate communication between each other, we've added new layers of insulation that have reduced the communication between ourselves and the Creator.

Back in the late Fifties, when I was a little boy growing up in the American Midwest, not much of our time was given to watching TV. Televisions back then were physically smaller, the image was black and white, and channel selections were limited. Tuesday night meant Red Skelton, Saturday night meant wrestling, and Sunday night meant *The Ed Sullivan Show*. People gathered around the glowing picture tube in the evening much as they had earlier around the softly glowing dial of the radio: to pause at the end of the day to hear and see a little of the world outside their own small community. But for the rest of the day it was mostly silent, a heavy square box that offered a convenient place to set a plant or a lamp.

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of the day. Image quality has become so refined that the lifelike High-Definition image draws the viewer into the box as if drawing him into a magical realm from which he might never wish to leave. The Dolby stereo sound system envelops the supplicant inside a theatre-like environment, masking the senses to all other stimuli, such as the sound of the doorbell, the ding of the oven timer, a baby's cry—and the soft call of a discarded God.

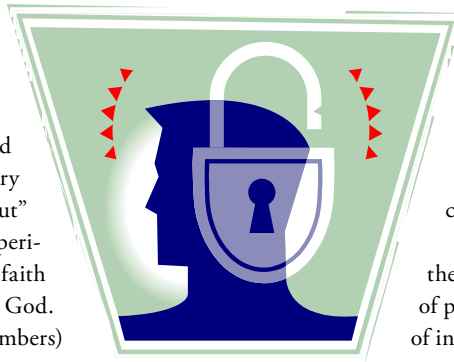
As mankind has invented its way into self-sufficiency, it has moved further *from* its dependency upon God. Where before He was essential, now—as if “God” were just another selection on a multilayered menu—He has become optional.

And as the layers of civilization build up and compact down upon each other, setting the voice and touch of God even further from our senses, we fail to notice His ever-diminishing call.

...and he went out, not knowing where he was going.
(Hebrews 11:8b)

Believe God is always the God you know Him to be when you are nearest to Him. Let the attitude of your life be a continual willingness to “go out” in dependence upon God, and your life will have a sacred and inexpressible charm about it that is very satisfying to Jesus. You must learn to “go out” through your convictions, creeds, or experiences until you come to the point in your faith where there is nothing between yourself and God.

(Oswald Chambers)



THE MEDIUM ISN'T THE MESSAGE

Technology is not the villain. We can't blame an inanimate object for the layers of insulation wrapped over our heads. Neither can we blame the scientists, technicians and visionaries who have created the remarkable inventions that have become the objects of our affection. God is as much the Creator of the super computer as He is the mewling infant. As always, we must look to ourselves to find the one to blame.

For years I did all of my writing on a manual typewriter—a machine as far removed from my current writing instrument as the quill pen is from the typewriter. It felt right to me, organic. The pounding it was necessary to inflict upon the stiff keys to impress ink upon paper had become a part of my thought process. The words flowed out in lines and paragraphs to the rhythm of the tapping and ding, tapping and ding, and the satisfying rasp of the return lever.

Once in a while, back then, I would have access to one of the electric typewriters at Linda's office. Suddenly the technology became an obstacle to my thought process. The massive beast—usually an IBM Selectric—would sit there and vibrate, its internal motor humming: “Write something. Write something. Write something.” Intimidated, my creative juices squelched, I'd sit frozen, staring at the blank page, sniffing the grease and oil of the mechanical wonder churning and waiting, churning and waiting beneath my nose. With relief I would flee back to my more familiar typewriter, the one that worked at *my* pace, and wasn't nearly so insistent.

But that old typewriter also made my work more time-consuming. A thirty-page script would go through several drafts before completion, with margin pencil-scratchings in blue and red in between. If an added line moved text from one page to the next, every page following would have to be retyped. Worse, if a flash of brilliance came over me after the final draft had been completed, I'd often let it pass by unused, since the thought of retyping the entire script to include it was simply too hideous to contemplate.

Now, of course, I use a writing instrument that has made even that cutting-edge IBM Selectric obsolete. Now it isn't necessary to use up blue lead; I just make changes to the text itself. Now when I add a new line, the following pages make the adjustment for themselves—and those last-minute flashes of brilliance *always* get included. Yes, technology is a wonderful thing, and it would never occur to me to return to using my old manual typewriter, now collecting dust in the corner.

There are still writers who put down words by hand, writing entire books by scratching pencil lead or ink onto a ruled pad. There are still some who craft their sentences and paragraphs on manual typewriters—or even one of those monstrous, overweight, insistently humming IBM Selectrics. Most, however, use computers of one sort or another.

But one thing has remained the same: No matter the mechanical instrument, every writer is capable of putting down both words of genius and words of insipid pap—the responsibility for which is the writer's alone. Words come from the mind, not the pen; thoughts and new ideas come from the human imagination, not the keyboard. A bad writer will be bad even if he's using the latest whiz bang software; a good writer will be good even with an old stubby pencil.

And no piece of technology can be blamed if our mind has become numbed to the call of God. We are the ones who have set in place the barriers that block the sound of His voice; we are the ones who have made the choice. The relationship between God and man is organic, spiritual, and no mechanical leviathan can come between without our invitation.

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

(Mark 10:17-25 niv)

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