

Lord, Thou Hast Won*John Newton (1725–1807)*

Lord, Thou hast won, at length I yield,
 My heart, by mighty grace compelled,
 Surrenders all to Thee;
 Against Thy terrors long I strove,
 But who can stand against Thy love?
 Love conquers even me.

If Thou hadst bid Thy thunders roll,
 And lightnings flash to blast my soul,
 I still had stubborn been:
 But mercy has my heart subdued,
 A bleeding Savior I have viewed,
 And now, I hate my sin.

Now, Lord, I would be Thine alone,
 Come take possession of Thine own,
 For Thou hast set me free;
 Released from Satan's hard command,
 See all my powers waiting stand,
 To be employed by Thee.

My will conformed to Thine would move,
 On Thee my hope, desire, and love,
 In fixed attention join;
 My hands, my eyes, my ears, my tongue,
 Have Satan's servants been too long,
 But now they shall be Thine.

And can I be the very same,
 Who lately durst blaspheme Thy name,
 And on Thy Gospel tread?
 Surely each one, who hears my case,
 Will praise Thee, and confess Thy grace
 Invincible indeed!

ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ*In the Nick of Time***Growing Up Fundamentalist, Part Six: College and Conviction***Kevin T. Bauder*

My parents always stressed the importance of college education. My father actually modeled his commitment to higher education by going to college during my teen years. He graduated the same spring that I graduated from high school.

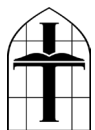
As commencement drew near, the question was not whether I would attend college, but where and how. The *how* was a matter of finances. Neither I nor my parents had money. My grades weren't good enough to earn a scholarship (I actually graduated in the lower half of my class). The idea of paying for college loomed as a huge, intimidating barrier.

I've mentioned that my mother ran the bookstore at my father's Bible college. One of her perquisites was that I was granted free tuition. An added bonus was that I could continue to live at home. Effectively, the *where* was decided by the *how*. That fall I enrolled at the same college.

In January my father moved to a new ministry. I had to move into the dorms and pay tuition like everybody else. It was probably the best thing that could have happened to me, but at the beginning I hated it. Besides having to make the usual adjustments to dorm life, I found that the college's rules were rather stricter than my parents' household rules had been. They weren't as bad as some institutions I'd heard about, but they were still strict enough that I found them onerous.

On the other hand, my roommates were not stereotypical Bible thumpers. Three had transferred from state universities. One was just out of the Army. After he was discharged in Panama, he rode his Honda 350SL up the Pan American Highway until he blew the engine in Kansas City. We rebuilt the bike in our dorm room that spring—surreptitiously, because motorcycles were against the rules.

My roommates were a riddle to me. On the one hand, they were serious about spiritual things in a way that I was not. On the other hand, they weren't exactly pietists. They had seen more of life than I had, they knew what they liked, and they weren't averse to skirting institutional regulations



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to enjoy themselves. I found myself drawn to that side of their character. I still wasn't what most people would think of as a bad kid—I still didn't drink or do drugs or even go to movie theaters (which were strictly forbidden by fundamentalists of that era). But I did like to have a good time, and I didn't really care whether I broke a few rules doing it. My grades, never very good, plummeted.

After our freshman year, two of my roommates left the school and a third went in a different direction. I continued to room with Dave, the guy who rode his motorcycle up from Panama. He was about five years older than me, which seemed like a lot at that age. He took it upon himself to tutor me in a kind of quasi-countercultural masculine maturity. Dave taught me about motorcycles, stylish clothes, big stereos (he introduced me to Yes and to King Crimson), and revolvers (Dave had one in our dorm room—naturally against regulations).

Oddly enough, it was also Dave who showed me again the importance of spiritual things. He read his Bible like he expected to hear from God. When he prayed, his prayers were not just forms like mine were. Dave was genuinely trying to grow in his walk with God. As his roommate I saw the struggles through which he passed. As these unfolded, I perceived that some of them were the result of Dave's past sins. I began to understand that sin produces consequences in one's life. I also saw that my own sins, particularly my rejection of authority, were beginning to produce consequences in my own life.

I received a particularly rude shock when our residence advisor (the student leader of our dorm) challenged me about the negative results of my attitudes and actions. I'd had conversations like this with others (including the dean) and remained unmoved. Mark, however, was from the church in this college town—the church I had joined at thirteen and where I judged the young people to be indifferent toward spiritual things. Mark and I had been in the junior high youth group together. It was jarring to realize that his commitment to the things of the Lord exceeded my own.

To this day I insist that some of the rules at my little college were silly and unnecessary. Some of them, however, were designed to protect us from spiritual influences that really did have the potential to hinder our wellbeing. Others were intended to keep immature college students from hurting each other while they were trying to grow up. I saw that some of my choices really were hurting other people—perhaps only in small ways, but the hurts were real. Furthermore, I began to grasp that simply living life to have fun was not going to produce much fulfillment in the long run. For the first time in a long time I took a good look at myself, and I did not like what I saw myself becoming.

The result was a change of direction during the middle of my sophomore year. At that time I remembered the price that Christ had paid to save me. I recalled that I had once promised my life to Him, and I recognized that I had been neglecting that promise for years. In fact, I began to see myself as something as a leech on the system. Godly men and women had built my college to prepare young people for future ministry, but at this point I had no intention of serving the Lord. In fact, I really had no idea what it would even look like to serve Him.

This was a turning point. I chose to renew the commitments that I had made years before, and to renew them in the following terms. (1) I had no idea what the Lord might wish to do with me; I really had no sense of calling at all. (2) I was willing to allow God to direct me in my future choices, including big ones like vocation and marriage. (3) Rather than simply freeloading on the system, I would look for ways to give something back, to make my school better, and to make life better for the people around me. (4) While a student, I would no longer try to judge which institutional rules ought to be kept, but would do my best to keep them all, both in letter and in spirit.

From a theological perspective, I'm not fond of talk about rededications. Too often that talk betrays a seriously flawed understanding of the normal Christian life. Still, I admit that what happened to me in late 1974 does look suspiciously like a rededication. I did not walk down an aisle or make any sort of public demonstration. But the choices I made were real, and I began to put them into action immediately.



This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.
