

The God Who Becomes

John R Gavazzoni

Please note: My title is not, "Becoming God." That, I would expect, would understandably raise some eyebrows. Still so, eyebrows just might be raising a tiny bit at the thought that God could be conceived of as the God who becomes.

With all due respect to the Bard of Avon, the real issue is not, "to be or not to be;" but, much more fundamentally, to be, so as to become. Conventional concepts of God within Christendom are inclined to think of God, that is, as pertaining to His Being, as having no where to go, if I may put it that way.

I propose that we give serious consideration to what seems obvious to me, that being, and particularly the Being of God, or the Being which is God, is expressed in all life, in all living things, and what is immediately observable about life is that it becomes, it multiplies and grows. The acorn becomes the mighty oak, with many acorns, and the many acorns, afforded the opportunity, become many more mighty oaks, and on and on.

God eternally draws forth from out of His essence an unfolding of Being, so that Elohim, the God who is constituted of The Primal Oneness, also has a divine plurality and multiplicity factor built into His nature of Oneness. Rather than casting doubt upon God's perfection by proposing that He is a God who becomes, in fact, I hold that His characteristic of becoming is intrinsic to His perfection.

Something is wrong with non-unfolding, non-multiplying, non-expansive life. In fact, such is not life, but death. But let me hasten to add, that death is integral to the growth and multiplying of life.

As the acorn's life proceeds forth as the oak, God's Being proceeds forth as Divine Personhood, a Family-defined, Family-constituted Personhood. Father, including Mother; Son, including Daughter; and Their Family Spirit. In the patriarchal culture out from which the Bible came to us, "Father," was representative of, and inclusive of, the

Family, so that Paul could write of "the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named (is natured, is characterized by).

Clearly God is a Family. Better, God is THE Family from which all real family proceeds, as it is true that the Family which God is, proceeds from the Being "in whom we live and move and have our being."

Though the unfolding of which I write is eternal in nature, the Reality is re-enacted in the aeons, so that in the re-connecting with our Family by re-membering, by the regeneration that returns us to our eternal generation; by the rebirth that reintroduces us to the life of our Family, a special display is given to all creation, including our own creaturehood, and especially to principalities and powers in the heavenlies, of the Love which is the deepest, most cellular constitution of the Divine Family.

This Thanksgiving Day, Lord willing, once again our family of the combined Gavazzoni, McClintock, Wheeler, and Vig families will gather around the table to feast. The real feast will not be in the table-stressing abundance of turkey, yams, mashed potatoes, and sundry other delights; the real feast will be our family itself. Our spirits and souls will feast on love that has been tested to the limits, and has not only endured, but conquered and transformed all that has come against it.

I have precious memories of, not only Thanksgiving meals, but every Sunday meals around a table presided over by my grandfather Giovanni Gavazzoni. Oh, no, I'm not forgetting Grandma, believe me, the Grande Dame of the family who made those meals happen; but in my senior years now, I have a particular empathy with Grandpa.

I would glance at him from time to time and notice the tiny smile of joy and contentment that revealed how deeply satisfying it was for him to see us altogether enjoying one another around those incredible repasts that combined the best of Italian and American REALLY home cooking.

The last several years, especially as I'm of the age comparable to his during those times, I realize that I'm sitting there with the same little smile, filled up with family. Our three daughters, led by my eternally

young-in-spirit wife, will inevitably get to giggling about family stuff, and the giggling will intensify to howling laughter, and I'm thinking, "it doesn't get any better than this." I think I'm feeling just a little of what our Heavenly Father feels at the gatherings of His Family.

Ira Stamphill's songs have always touched me. I think of him as the Christian Stephen Foster. One stanza of one his songs says:
"When I was but a boy in days of childhood; I used to play till evening shadows come. Then winding down an old familiar pathway, I heard my mother call at set of sun: 'Come home, come home, it's suppertime. The shadows lengthen fast. Come home, come home it's suppertime. We're going home at last.' "

Father is bringing all creation back to His table. He has multiplied Himself in us all. Out of His Being, through us all, He is becoming the Family which He is. It is inconceivable that He should lose any of His Seed, It is inconceivable that the most infinitesimal particle of His substance in all of creation should miss out on enjoying His glory. It is inconceivable.

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