

Inklings Forever

Volume 8 A Collection of Essays Presented at the Joint
Meeting of The Eighth Frances White Ewbank
Colloquium on C.S. Lewis & Friends and The C.S.
Lewis & The Inklings Society Conference

Article 30

5-31-2012

Nothing Can Come between God and You: Uncle Tom's Cabin, George MacDonald and Shusaku Endo

Miho Yamaguchi
Kurume University, Japan

Follow this and additional works at: https://pillars.taylor.edu/inklings_forever

 Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), [History Commons](#), [Philosophy Commons](#), and the [Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Yamaguchi, Miho (2012) "Nothing Can Come between God and You: Uncle Tom's Cabin, George MacDonald and Shusaku Endo," *Inklings Forever*: Vol. 8 , Article 30.
Available at: https://pillars.taylor.edu/inklings_forever/vol8/iss1/30

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for the Study of C.S. Lewis & Friends at Pillars at Taylor University. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Inklings Forever* by an authorized editor of Pillars at Taylor University. For more information, please contact pillars@taylor.edu.

INKLINGS FOREVER, Volume VIII

A Collection of Essays Presented at the Joint Meeting of

The Eighth

FRANCES WHITE EW BANK COLLOQUIUM ON C.S. LEWIS & FRIENDS

and

THE C.S. LEWIS AND THE INKLINGS SOCIETY CONFERENCE

Taylor University 2012

Upland, Indiana

Nothing Can Come between God and You: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, George MacDonald, and Shusaku Endo

Miho Yamaguchi
Kurume University

Nothing Can Come between God and You: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, George MacDonald and Shusaku Endo

Miho Yamaguchi
Kurume University

Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) urges every individual to "feel right" and be "in harmony with the sympathies of Christ" (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, hereafter *UT*, 404-05). This novel is an ever-lasting treasure that continues to speak to the conscience of 21st-century readers. I find that some of its episodes and theological ideas are close to those of George MacDonald and Shusaku Endo. It is not unlikely that MacDonald and Endo read *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, considering the worldwide popularity of the book. It appears that they pondered and sympathized with the focus and messages of its story line—and subsequently developed and reflected its ideas, episodes, and also its titling technique in their own writings.

All three authors depict characters who cry to God from the depth of agony. They had gone through such experiences themselves, and they also deeply sympathized with the suffering of their fellow men. The focus that the three authors share concerns God's apparent absence when people suffer extremely and God appears to be silent. They further study ways that God reveals Himself in the lives of those who cry out to Him when they feel too weak to carry their own crosses. By shedding light on these issues, they provide their interpretations of the Atonement and God's glory—and their interpretations correspond.

The books that I take up in the argument are MacDonald's *Thomas Wingfold, Curate* (1876), *What's Mine's Mine* (1886), *David Elginbrod* (1863), *There and Back* (1891), Endo's *Silence [Chinmoku]* (1966), *Women's Life [Onnano Issho]: Part II, Sachiko's Case* (1982), *When I Whistle [Kuchibuewo Fukutoki]* (1974), *The Woman I Deserted [Watahiga Suteta Onna]* (1963), and others.

The Atonement in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

The title character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a slave, is first owned by Shelby and then by Mr. St. Clare, both of whom are comparatively kind to Tom and other slaves. St. Clare intends to free Tom because St. Clare's daughter, Evangeline, pleaded with him to do so before her death. However, before this is officially accomplished, St. Clare dies, and Tom is sold to a cruel plantation owner, Simon Legree.

On Legree's plantation, slaves are so oppressed that they are unable to take care of or even care about one another. They are only trying to survive each day without hope. Tom brings love to the place by doing acts of love, first by grinding corn for the wearied women slaves. "It was a new kind of work there,—a deed of charity, small as it was; but it woke an answering touch in their hearts" (*UT* 317).

Tom's manifest compassion for his fellow sufferers aggravates Legree, so he persistently persecutes Tom and beats him. Despairing fellow slaves tell Tom that God is not there with them, and Tom repeatedly ponders the tortured question: "Is God HERE?" (UT 318); "Lord Jesus! have you quite forgot us poor critturs?" (UT 329). Raising such questions, however, does not indicate that Tom was losing his faith in God; on the contrary, Tom grows closer and closer to God through this struggle in seeking Him. (The positive interpretation of such process is shared by MacDonald and Endo.¹)

When a fellow slave, Cassy, tells him that nobody can avoid becoming cruel in their situation, and that God will not blame them—but will charge it to those who drove them to it, Tom answers:

"Yes [. . .] but that won't keep us from growing wicked. If I get to be [wicked], it won't make much odds to me how I come so; it's the *bein'* so,—that ar's what I'm a dreadin'." (UT 329)

The above suggests that the salvation Tom wants is not salvation from punishment—but salvation from wickedness (sinfulness) itself. Struck by his words, Cassy agrees to read from the Bible for Tom, who cannot read, and they come to a passage: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (UT 329-30). Then Tom ejaculates, "If we only could keep up to that ar'! [. . .] O blessed Lord Jesus, do help us!" (UT 330).

Tom endures violence bravely—it is rather when he returns to regular field work that his faith gets shaken. Around him, he sees "souls crushed and ruined, evil triumphant and God silent" (UT 354). Tom knows that St. Clare's sister, "Miss Ophelia," wrote to Mrs. Shelby asking that Tom be redeemed. Mrs. Shelby and her son George had promised to buy him back someday, so he prays and waits in this vague hope day after day, but in vain.

Therefore, "he would crush back to his soul bitter thoughts,—that it was vain to serve God, that God had forgotten him" (UT 356).

Legree tries to persuade him to throw away his belief and "join [his] church" (UT 356), with the suggestion that he would treat him better if he did so. He tells Tom that "the Lord an't going to help" him, but Tom answers, "The Lord may help me, or not help; but I'll hold to him, and believe him to the last!" (UT 356). Tom's "hand of faith" was holding on to God, but "it was with a numb, despairing grasp" (UT 357). Then suddenly, a vision of Christ "crowned with thorns, buffeted and bleeding" rises before him, and as he gazes in awe, the thorns become "rays of glory, and in splendor," He bends "compassionately towards him" (UT 357) and says:

"He that overcometh shall sit down with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." (UT 357)

From this time, "an ever-present Saviour hallowed [Tom's heart] as a temple," and Tom's will is now "entirely merged in the Divine" (UT 358).

After this, when Legree beats Tom, "the blows [fall] now only on the outer man, and not, as before, on the heart" (UT 359), and *Legree understands* that it is "God who [is] standing between him and his victim" (UT 360). Tom keeps on helping and encouraging the fellow slaves while he bears the torture without "uttering a word of reviling," and he begins "to have a strange power over them" (UT 360).

One night, Cassy confides to Tom her plan to kill Legree in order to avenge his offenses against her and also to escape from the farm, together with another slave girl. She asks Tom to join them in the murder and the escape. Tom stops the murder with all his might and exclaims, "The dear, blessed Lord never

shed no blood but his own, and that he poured out for us when we was enemies. Lord, help us to follow his steps and love our enemies" (UT 362). Cassy retorts, "love *such* enemies! It isn't in flesh and blood" (UT 362). Then Tom asserts: "No, Misse, it isn't, but *He* gives it to us, and that's the *victory*" (UT 362).

Cassy and her friend succeed in escaping from the farm without committing murder. Then Legree makes other slaves, Quimbo and Sambo, beat up Tom so that he would tell him where the fugitives are. Legree means to kill him if he does not yield. Tom says to him, "if taking every drop of blood in this poor old body would save your precious soul, I'd give 'em freely, as the Lord gave his for me" (UT 376); "I forgive ye, with all my soul!" (UT 377). He also forgives Quimbo and Sambo, and they weep and repent. Tom says "I'd be wiling to bar' all I have, if it'll only bring ye to Christ!" (UT 378).

Tom shares the Will of Jesus in loving and forgiving his enemies. Tom's will merged in the Divine—this is the At-one-ment and God's glory as depicted in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The Atonement Depicted by MacDonald

In MacDonald's *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*, the title character's mentor, Polwarth, tells Wingfold about his spiritual pilgrimage. Polwarth had been persecuted because of his deformity since childhood, and he says that he realized one day that the same kind of prejudice and meanness he found in others were still within him as well. He says:

"I discovered that I looked down on people whom I thought less clever than myself. Once I caught myself scorning a young fellow to whose disadvantage I knew nothing, except that God had made him handsome enough for a woman."

(*Thomas Wingfold, Curate*, hereafter TWC, 85)

He realized that his problem was not his deformity—but the sinfulness of his heart. Then he imagined that God was angry with him for his sins.

Sometime after that, a little boy mocked him, and Polwarth became angry and caught him. However, as soon as he saw the horror in the boy's face, Polwarth's heart melted—and he tried to comfort him. The boy did not understand this compassion, and he "fled headlong into the pond" to escape (TWC 86).

One evening, Polwarth was remembering the above incident, and in his imagination he was eagerly trying to persuade the boy that he "meant well and friendlily towards him" (TWC 86). Then "the sweetest, gentlest, most refreshing little waft of air came in at the window and just went *being*, hardly moving, over my forehead," and the thought came to him:

"What if I misunderstood God the same way the boy had misunderstood me!" (TWC 86)

Consequently, he read the Bible with a fresh eye, and when he came to the passage that Jesus "*shall save his people from their sins*," he "fell on his knees" (TWC 87). He says:

"I did *not* for a moment imagine that to be saved from my *sins* meant to be saved from the *punishment* of them. That would have been no glad tidings to me." (TWC 87)

Polwarth echoes Uncle Tom—they both wish to be saved from their sins, *not* from punishment.

This belief is also suggested in MacDonald's novel, *What's Mine's Mine*. A young Scotsman, Ian, finds that his mother cares "more about salvation than about God" (*What's Mine's Mine*, hereafter WMM, 98). Wishing to enlighten his mother, Ian tells her about his dream or

vision. Ian actually had lived in Moscow for some time, and while there, one night he went out to the woods to kill wolves because they had killed livestock—and even some villagers. He sat in a tree and waited for them. After a while, he fell asleep, and he dreamed that he became awake, and saw a little girl running for her life in the wood. Somehow, he realized that her terror was not for herself, but for him. Ian tried to help her, but she ran away shaking her head, and he heard wolves howling in pursuit of her. Ian ran after the girl and the wolves and found the girl sitting in a tree. She did not seem afraid anymore and her smile was radiating a light. However, Ian felt that “she was not in safety yet” (WMM 103). He killed some wolves and got to the tree, and as soon as he took her in his arms, he woke up. Then, he found that in reality wolves had gathered under his tree and were howling like devils, and he thought that their deliverance lay in death alone. Ian shot as many wolves as he could, and when his ammunition was gone, he waited for the morning.

Eventually, he dreamed another dream. He was sitting in the tree with the shining girl, and below it were the howling wolves. He realized that she was his “own soul,” and that the wolves were “all the wrong things [he] had in [him], and all the wrong things [he] had done, with all the weaknesses and evil tendencies of [his] nature, whether [his] by fault or by inheritance” (WMM 104). Then “[s]uddenly [his] soul was gone” (WMM 104), and he felt that he “was left and lost” “in the waste of [his] own being” (WMM 105). He “was at once everything and nothing” (WMM 105). He cried to God in utter despair, and then “a great quiet fell upon [him]—but a quiet as of utter defeat and helplessness” (WMM 105). He continues:

[T]he quiet and the helplessness melted away into a sense of God—a feeling as if great space all about me

was God and not emptiness. Wolf nor sin could touch me! I was a wide peace—my very being peace! (WMM 105)

Then the words came to his mind: “I, even I, am he that comforteth thee. I am God, thy saviour!” (WMM 105). Ian continues, “Whereas I had seemed all alone, I was with God, the only witness man can really share!” (WMM 105). The narrator goes on to say that this is “a vision [. . .] of the atonement” (WMM 105).

Ian’s coming to recognize the wolves as symbolic of his own sins corresponds with the above seen Polwarth episode. They both came to see that sins in others could not really harm them, and that what they need to fight against is the sins of their own.

As to why the girl turned out to be Ian’s own soul and why Ian failed to secure her, the narrator does not explain. The episode suggests that no matter how hard one may try to get rid of one’s “wolves” (sins), it is impossible to eliminate all of them, and one cannot really rescue one’s own soul. All of us would find ourselves powerless, and fall into utter despair, as if God were not present with us to help. However, God reveals Himself, and fills us with His peace. Then, we realize that God *is*, and *has been with us—loving and helping*, and the “wolves” (sins) cannot come between God and us; and that this togetherness with Him—the At-one-ment—is life itself.

The above belief concerning At-one-ment agrees with MacDonald’s theme in *David Elginbrod*: that the wall between God and each person is built by *us—not by God*, and that when we begin to tear down the wall, we realize that *from God’s perspective there has never been a barrier, and that He was with us and loving us even before we turned back to Him*. Similarly, Jesus’ own story known as the “prodigal son” shows the father of the wayward son faithfully watching for him and running to

him the first moment he appears on the horizon. When we glimpse the enormity of God's love, we begin to share God's will in loving and forgiving; and this is the meaning of the At-one-ment. (See "God Is Impartial: *Frankenstein* and MacDonald," *Inklings Forever*, VII, 179-86.)

Corresponding with the above idea that the barrier to be taken away by repentance *is not built by God but by men*, MacDonald asserts in the following passage from *Unspoken Sermons* that we are to be reconciled to God, not God is to us:

I believe in the atonement, call it the a-tone-ment, or the at-one-ment, as you please. I believe that Jesus Christ is our atonement; that through him we are reconciled to, made one with God. There is not one word in the New Testament about reconciling God to us; it is we that have to be reconciled to God. [. . .] Has not his very life by which he died passed into those who have received him, and re-created theirs, so that now they live with the life which alone is life? Did he not foil and slay evil by letting all the waves and billows of its horrid sea break upon him, go over him, and die without rebound—spend their rage, fall defeated, and cease? Verily, he made atonement! [. . .] Jesus sacrificed himself to his father and the children to bring them together—all the love on the side of the Father and the Son, all the selfishness on the side of the children. (*Unspoken Sermons* 536-38)

Furthermore, in the above wolf episode, Ian adds that he "heard afterwards that a child had been killed" by wolves "in the earlier part of that same night" (*WMM* 104). However, the story does not refer to the child's death any more, and MacDonald leaves its interpretation to the readers'

imagination. To me, the episode suggests that when a person dies, whatever the seeming cause of death may be—wolves, sickness, accidents, murder, or anything—it cannot *really* affect the person's life, for nothing can come between God and the person. That all the time—before, during, and after death—s/he exists in togetherness with God. That even if someone should fancy that he is victimizing another person, in reality, he has no power over another creature; no tyrant or murderer on earth ever had power over any life that God created.

The above idea corresponds with the belief expressed in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—Whatever Legree does in trying to enslave Tom's soul, it only helps Tom to see that God is all in all. Legree can never victimize Tom—because God stands between them.

How God Helps the Weaker Ones in Endo's *Silence*

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Tom says to Cassy, "Sufferin' an't no reason to make us think the Lord's turned agin us; but jest the contrary, if only we hold on to him, and doesn't give up to sin" (*UT* 330). Cassy retorts, "You must give up, or be killed by inches" (*UT* 330). Tom answers, "Well, then, I *will* die! . . . I'm clar, I'm set! I *know* the Lord'll help me, and bring me through" (*UT* 330). Then Cassy says, "May be it's the way, [. . .] but those that have given up, there's no hope for them!—none!" (*UT* 330).

Later in the story, as mentioned earlier, Cassy asks Tom to escape with her. Then Tom says:

"No, [. . .] the Lord's given me a work among these yer poor souls, and I'll stay with 'em and bear my cross with 'em till the end. It's different with you; it's a snare to you,—it's more 'n you can stand,—and you'd better go, if you can." (*UT* 363)

Nothing Can Come between God and You · Miho Yamaguchi

Consequently, as we have seen, Cassy finds the way to escape without resorting to violence, and she and her friend make it to Canada. In the story, this is the way God provides for the slaves who had not grown as strong as Tom had.

However, some readers may wonder what would become of a weaker person who is persecuted and finds no escape at all. Endo's *Silence* takes up such a case. A Catholic priest from Portugal, Rodrigues, secretly comes to Japan during the era of the 17th century when Christianity was strictly forbidden in the country, and Christians were severely persecuted—often tortured to death in the most cruel ways.

Rodrigues is welcomed and taken care of by Christian farmers who secretly keep their faith. Eventually, however, Kichijiro, a fisherman from another village who helped Rodrigues to meet the farmers, betrays him to the authorities. After being caught, Rodrigues is sent to another place in a boat. Traveling on in the dark sea at night, he passes by a Christian village that was founded by his predecessors during the time when Christianity was officially permitted. However, he finds that the place was burned to the ground and the villagers were driven away. Rodrigues asks God:

“Why have you abandoned us so completely? [. . .] Even when the people are cast out of their homes have you not given them courage? Have you just remained silent like the darkness that surrounds me? Why? At least tell me why. We are not strong men like Job who was afflicted with leprosy as a trial. There is a limit to our endurance. Give us no more suffering.”
(*Silence* 159)

Then, Kichijiro risks danger and comes to Rodrigues and says:

“Father, forgive me! [. . .] I was born weak. One who is weak at

heart cannot die a martyr. What am I to do? Ah, why was I born into [such a] world [as this] at all?”²
(*Silence* 259)

Rodrigues says the words of absolution for Kichijiro, but “this prayer had not come from the depths of his heart” (*Silence* 260). He cannot help feeling bitter, and he remembers the story of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus. Then he wonders:

[If Jesus] was love itself, why had he rejected Judas in the end? Judas had hanged himself at the field of blood; had he been cast aside to sink down into eternal darkness?
(*Silence* 260)

In prison, Rodrigues keeps rejecting the orders from the authorities to renounce his faith. However, he learns that in order to make him abandon his faith, they are continuing to torture several Japanese farmers—even after they have renounced Christianity; they will be tortured until *he* abandons *his* faith! Rodrigues stands before “Fumie”: the image of Christ carved on a plaque, which people are made to step on to show that they are not Christians. Rodrigues thinks:

“Whenever I prayed your face appeared before me; [. . .] when I was captured your face as it appeared when you carried your cross gave me life. This face is deeply ingrained in my soul—the most beautiful, the most precious thing in the world has been living in my heart. And now with this foot I am going to trample on it.”
(*Silence* 270)

Rodrigues steps on the image, and his foot aches. Then Christ from the Fumie speaks to him:

“Trample! Trample! I more than anyone know of the pain in your foot. Trample! It was to be

trampled on by men that I was born into this world. It was to share men's pain that I carried my cross." (*Silence* 271)

After that, Rodrigues gets taken out of prison and placed under house arrest. Then sometime later, he realizes that it was not against the Japanese officials that he had fought—"Gradually he had come to realize that it was against his own faith that he had fought" (*Silence* 290). (This corresponds with Mac-Donald's above wolf episode which suggests that what we fight against is the sins in ourselves, not our apparent external enemies. This also corresponds with a passage from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in which Tom says that Legree did not really harm him but only "opened the gate of the kingdom" (*UT* 381) for him. [This scene is discussed later in this essay.]

Then Kichijiro comes again to Rodrigues asking for absolution for his sins. Rodrigues thinks that they both trampled on the sacred image, and he feels that Jesus is still "looking at [him] with eyes of pity from the plaque rubbed flat by many feet" (*Silence* 297). Jesus' compassionate eyes say: "Trample! Your foot suffers in pain; it must suffer like all the feet that have stepped on this plaque. But that pain alone is enough. I understand your pain and your suffering. It is for that reason that I am here" (*Silence* 297). Then Rodrigues speaks to God in his heart—and he is answered.

"Lord, I resented your silence."

"I was not silent. I suffered beside you."

"But you told Judas to go away: What thou dost do quickly. What happened to Judas?"

"I did not say that. Just as I told you to step on the plaque, so I told Judas to do what he was going to do. For Judas was in anguish as you are now." (*Silence* 297)

Rodrigues tells Kichijiro that there are "neither the strong nor the weak," and he gives him absolution and tells him to "Go in peace!" (*Silence* 297-98). Rodrigues "loved Him now in a different way from before. Everything that had taken place until now had been necessary to bring him to this love" (*Silence* 298). He concludes:

"Our Lord was not silent. Even if he was silent, my life until this day did speak of him." (*Silence* 298)

God never deserts those who are weak; He forgives everything, and He suffers along with them. Through their weakness, God's infinite love is revealed to them, and it awakens a new life in them.

When you call to God desperately and He seems silent, He speaks through your life; *He makes your very life His words*. In *Silence*, this is the way that "[God's] strength is made perfect in weakness" [2 Corinthians 12:9] and that "the works of God should be made manifest in him" [John 9:3].

Concerning Judas' betrayal, MacDonald echoes Endo in asserting that "I believe that Jesus loved Judas even when he was kissing him with the traitor's kiss; and I believe that he was his Saviour still" (*Unspoken Sermons* 64). MacDonald goes on to say that Christ's words about Judas that "It had been good for that man if he had not been born" were spoken because "it was all to try over again, in some other way—inferior perhaps, in some other world, in a lower school" (*Unspoken Sermons* 64). MacDonald continues: "But I will not, cannot believe, O my Lord, that thou wouldst not forgive thy enemy, even when he repented, and did thee right. Nor will I believe that thy holy death was powerless to save thy foe—that it could not reach to Judas" (*Unspoken Sermons* 64-65). MacDonald also writes in another chapter:

“I would I had never been born!” must be the cry of Judas, not because of the hell-fire around him, but because he loathes the man that betrayed his friend, the world’s friend. When a man loathes himself, he has begun to be saved. Punishment tends to this result. Not for its own sake, not as a make-up for sin, not for divine revenge—horrible word, not for any satisfaction to justice, can punishment exist. Punishment is for the sake of amendment and atonement. God is bound by his love to punish sin in order to deliver his creature; he is bound by his justice to destroy sin in his creation. Love is justice—is the fulfilling of the law, for God as well as for his children. [. . .] He is bound in himself to make up for wrong done by his children, and he can do nothing to make up for wrong done but by bringing about the repentance of the wrong-doer. (*Unspoken Sermons* 513-14)

Father Kolbe’s Episode in Endo’s *Women’s Life*

Another Endo episode sheds light on the topic of weaker people. In *Women’s Life: Part II, Sachiko’s Case*, Endo presents an episode based on the true story of Father Maksymilian Kolbe, who sacrificed his own life to save another captive at Auschwitz. This episode seems to reflect the Uncle Tom’s episode in which Cassy tells Tom that people there cannot afford to help others, and that “the Lord never visits these parts” (*UT* 322). In *Sachiko’s Case*, an inmate, Henrick, says to Kolbe that he does not believe in heaven but in hell, for “this prison is it”⁴ (*Sachiko’s Case* 162). Then Kolbe tells him that it is not so because he witnessed an act of love there. He says that he saw a captive giving away half of his daily piece

of bread to another captive who has become very weak. He continues, “Hell is a place where all love has gone. But here, love still remains” (*Sachiko’s Case* 162). As Uncle Tom’s acts of love awaken the fellow slaves’ hearts, the inmate’s deed has brought hope to Kolbe’s heart.

Henrick is not convinced then, but later, he witnesses Kolbe offering his life to save another captive who was about to be killed in a “starvation room.” Kolbe gets sent to the starvation room instead of the man. After Kolbe was killed, Henrick remembers his words that “if love is not present, we must create love” (*Sachiko’s Case* 265). Henrick retorts in heart that he is an ordinary man and that he is not so strong as him. Then he remembers Kolbe’s saying that he was praying for him. After some days, Henrick sees a feeble captive fall and get beaten up by an overseer. Then Henrick hears Kolbe say, “He might die. Would you give him your bread?” Henrick shakes his head because “if he offers his only food for the day, it will make *him* fall” (*Sachiko’s Case* 268). Kolbe pleads, “I want him to know love before he dies” (*Sachiko’s Case* 268). Henrick offers his bread to the man, and the dying man sheds tears in astonishment. The narrator observes that “it was the only act of love that Henrick could do—Still, he *did* it” (*Sachiko’s Case* 268).

Kolbe’s act of love influences not only Henrick but also other captives. When they hear that Kolbe has died, they feel “something passing at the deepest place of their hearts” (*Sachiko’s Case* 263). Even though “they could not tell what that was,” “in the bottom of the hearts” of the captives, “it gave something, it left something, and it disappeared” (*Sachiko’s Case* 263). That evening, they look up at the sky aglow with the setting sun and see how beautiful this world is. “Until yesterday, [. . .] there was only fear, misery, torture and death, but today, the world is so beautiful!” (*Sachiko’s Case* 264). “They knew who changed the

world—who created love in the world which had been without love” (*Sachiko’s Case* 264).

When God seemed nowhere, He showed Himself through Kolbe, just as God’s love was shown through Tom in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. God made Kolbe a vessel for Himself, and through Kolbe, God worked on Henrick. Although Henrick felt weak in faith, God made him a vessel for His love for the dying inmate.

God Talking through Nature

In the above sunset scene of the Kolbe episode, the beauty of nature comes alive when people come to believe in love. The same idea is suggested both in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and MacDonald’s passages in *What’s Mine’s Mine*. In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Legree will not repent even after remembering how his mother, whom he had forsaken, loved him and forgave him at her death bed; the narrator observes:

Calmly the rosy hue of dawn was stealing into the room. [. . .] O, with what freshness, what solemnity and beauty, is each new day born; as if to say to insensate man, “Behold! Thou hast one more chance! *Strive* for immortal glory!” There is no speech nor language where this voice is not heard; but the bold, bad man heard it not. (*UT* 344)

While Legree cannot appreciate the glory of dawn, Tom hears Jesus through it.

The solemn light of dawn—the angelic glory of the morning-star—had looked in through the rude window of the shed where Tom was lying; and, as if descending on that star-beam, came the solemn words, “I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” (*UT* 345)

In *What’s Mine’s Mine*, a young Scottish clan leader, Alister, continues to trust in God when he finds out that the money he had expected to receive in order to redeem the land for his clan was not available. Alister believes that “if God had cared for his having the money, he would have cared that he should have it” and that “Here was an opportunity for absolute faith and contentment in the will that looks after all our affairs, the small as well as the great” (*WMM* 344). However, “at first he could not enjoy as he was wont the glory of the morning” and he scorns himself, but when the sun rises, “with it his soul arose and shone, for its light was come, and the glory of the Lord was risen upon it” (*WMM* 345). Then he says, “Let God [. . .] take from us what he will: himself he can only give!” and the narrator goes, “God [is], and all [is] well!” (*WMM* 345).

Love Passed on to Others

In Kolbe’s episode, when Kolbe witnessed the inmate giving his only bread to the weaker one, the inmate’s love was passed on to Kolbe, and then Kolbe’s love was passed on to Henrick after Kolbe’s death. Similarly, in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, the love of some characters revives and keeps on living even after their deaths—in the hearts of people who had known them.

A little girl, Evangeline, tells her father, St. Clare, that even though he wants her to be happy and not think about the pain and sorrow of others, she feels that this would be selfish and she wants to know the suffering in the world. Knowing that she was soon going to die from illness, she begs her father to do what he can to help the suffering slaves, for her sake, when she is gone (*UT* 254).

She loves her father dearly, and she shows deepest love toward people around her—especially Tom and the slave girl, Topsy. Evangeline tells Topsy, who asserts that nobody loves her, that *she*

loves her and that she wants her to try to be good—for Evangeline’s sake (*UT* 258). When Evangeline dies, Topsy wishes she could die too—because she again decides that no one loves her now.

Then St. Clare’s sister, Ophelia, who could not love Topsy before, says in tears, “I *can* love you, though I am not like that dear little child. I hope I’ve learnt something of the love of Christ from her” (*UT* 273). St. Clare thinks, “O, my Eva, whose little hour on earth did so much of good” (*UT* 273).

After Evangeline’s death, St. Clare wonders in agony if there is “no more Eva,—no heaven,—no Christ,—nothing?” (*UT* 276). Tom assures him that “there is!” (*UT* 276) and says that he (Tom) would even lay down his own life “to see [St. Clare] a Christian” (*UT* 276). When St. Clare answered that he was not worthy of Tom’s love, he asserts, “O, Mas’r, dere’s more than me loves you,—the blessed Lord Jesus loves you” (*UT* 276). St. Clare exclaims, “Singular! [. . .] that the story of a man that lived and died eighteen hundred years ago can affect people so yet” (*UT* 276).

Later in the story, on Legree’s farm, Tom goes through a fierce conflict: “Is God *here*? [. . .] Ah, was it easy *here* to believe and hold fast the great pass-word of Christian faith, that ‘God is, and is the *rewarder* of them that diligently seek Him’ [Hebrews 11:6]?” (*UT* 318). Then in his dreams, Evangeline visits him and reads the Bible passage for him— “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and the rivers they shall not overflow thee; [. . .] for I am the Lord thy God, [. . .] thy Saviour” [Isaiah 43:2-3] (*UT* 319).

The above episodes show that Christ keeps on living in peoples’ hearts (as well as in heaven), and also that the people whom He indwells continue to help and inspire others—even after their deaths.

MacDonald’s *David Elginbrod* suggests the same belief. David dies in

the earlier part of the novel, but he continues to live in the hearts of his beloved ones, and through them his love continues to flow out to others. (See “*David Elginbrod* as a Prototype of the *Wingfold* Trilogy in Connection with Coleridge and the Joan Drake Case and Its Influence upon Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes Stories,” *Inklings Forever*, VI, 149-56.)

Titling of the Novels

It appears that the reason the above novel is entitled *David Elginbrod* is that, even though David dies in the earlier part of the novel, God’s love shining through him permeates the entire story.

The title also reflects MacDonald’s well-loved epitaph, written in the “Scottish brogue,” for another man in the novel named “Elginbrodde”: “Here lie I, Martin Elginbrodde: Hae mercy o’ my soul, Lord God; As I wad do, were I Lord God, And ye were Martin Elginbrodde” (*David Elginbrod* 72). MacDonald suggests through this unforgettable epitaph that since we, who are created in God’s image, are capable of mercy, we can trust God—who is the very Source of the love in our hearts—to be merciful toward us! MacDonald’s character, David Elginbrod, and the famous epitaph for “Martin Elginbrodde” both suggest that God’s love is evident because it shines through people’s hearts. (See “God is Impartial: *Frankenstein* and MacDonald,” *Inklings Forever*, VII, 179-86.)

This parallels the titling of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Tom appears in less than half of the story, and his cabin appears only in chapter 4 when he has his last supper with his family. However, when the cabin is mentioned by George Shelby at the end of the story, it becomes the symbol of freedom and the reminder to follow Christ by following Tom:

“Think of your freedom, every time you see *UNCLE TOM’S CABIN*; and let it be a memorial to put you all in mind to follow in his steps, and be as honest and faithful and Christian as he was.” (*UT* 400)

Similarly, the title of Endo’s *When I Whistle* reflects the whistling scene, which spans only a page or two in the novel. However, the whistling scene shows the protagonist’s deep compassion for others and his will to share their suffering—the very focus of the book. This is discussed further in the next section.

Hidden Prayers Received by God

In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Legree buys slaves and makes them walk a long way to his plantation. Seated in a wagon, he orders the slaves to sing a song; however, when Tom starts singing a hymn, Legree tells him to “Shut up” and forces them to sing something “rowdy” (*UT* 313). Therefore, they start singing “one of those unmeaning songs, common among the slaves” (*UT* 313). It was sung “with a forced attempt at merriment” (*UT* 313) but was filled with deepest woe.

As if the poor, dumb heart, threatened,—prisoned,—took refuge in that inarticulate sanctuary of music, and found there a language in which to breathe its prayer to God! There was a prayer in it, which Simon [Legree] could not hear. (*UT* 313)

Endo appears to echo Stowe’s belief that imperfect prayer reaches God. In Endo’s *When I Whistle*, the protagonist, Ozu, whistles a song for a deceased friend, and I believe that it is a prayer that cannot find words.

Ozu’s closest friend, Hirame (a nickname), dies young in war. When Ozu becomes middle aged, he still feels Hirame close to his heart. Then one day

Ozu finds that Aiko, a woman whom Hirame had loved—although she had loved and married another man—had developed cancer and been hospitalized. He sends her flowers in Hirame’s name, and after some time, he hears that she has fallen into critical condition, so he hurries to the hospital. When Ozu gets there, she has already passed away. He sits alone in front of her body, and he feels that because both Hirame and Aiko suffered from war, their lives are connected through suffering. He says to them in his heart that he will join them some day. He also tells Hirame in his heart that the room is so desolate—with neither flowers nor families, and that he feels sorry for Aiko. Hirame answers: “Then, why don’t you whistle a song for her? You were good at it [. . .]. Could you do that for her and me?”⁵ (*When I Whistle* 337). Ozu tries to whistle, but only a feeble, broken sound comes out.

Ozu offers what he can do. He connects himself with Hirame and Aiko through suffering. The will to connect with others is the very essence of love, and love is the essence of prayer. Without realizing it, Ozu is offering his prayer to God for his friends. Endo seems to suggest here that whatever shape it may take, Ozu’s love is reaching his friends—and also reaching God.

MacDonald appears to share this belief concerning prayer. In *What’s Mine’s Mine*, Mistress Conal, a stubborn old woman, nags at clan chief Alister, when he kindly helps her by carrying a creel full of peats. From her rough speech, no one could know that “she no less than loved her chief” (*WMM* 33). That night, she prays for her chief and his family earnestly, and “if there was a good deal of superstition mingled with her prayer, the main thing in it was genuine, that is, the love that prompted it” (*WMM* 33). Then the narrator asserts, “if God heard only perfect prayers, how could he be the prayer-hearing God?” (*WMM* 33).

MacDonald's idea concerning prayer is also suggested in *There and Back*. The protagonist Richard and his friend Barbara read and discuss Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. They come to the verse which reveals that the "Mariner" has become able to love "the sea-snakes":

"A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware!
[. . .]
The self-same moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off [. . .]. (There and Back 130)

Barbara says with delight:

"Nothing *can* go wrong now! The man's love is awake, and he will be sorrier and sorrier for what he did! Instead of saying, 'The wrigglesome, slimy things!' he blesses them; and because he is going to be a friend to the other creatures in the house, and live on good terms with them [. . .] the bad deed is gone down into the depth of the great sea, and he is able to say his prayers again;—no, not that exactly; it must be something better than saying prayers now!" (*There and Back* 130)

MacDonald suggests here that the heart of the prayer is love for the fellow creatures—and this coincides with Endo's belief.

Non-Violence and Fight for the Cause

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Tom never resorts to violence because he follows Christ. However, in the novel, there is a scene in which a fugitive shoots a man to protect his family, and this is not described in a negative way. The episode goes as follows.

George Harris and his family and friends head to the North to escape from slavery. When they are about to leave a Quaker settlement of kind-hearted people who devoutly help those who have been persecuted, George prepares a pistol and says that he would not attack anyone, but he would fight to protect his family:

[A]m I going to stand by and see them take my wife and sell her, when God has given me a pair of strong arms to defend her? No; God help me! I'll fight to the last breath, before they shall take my wife and son. (*UT* 172)

To this, one of the Quakers, Simeon, says, "Mortal man cannot blame thee, George" (*UT* 172). When George asks him if he would not do the same in his place, he answers, "I pray that I be not tried; the flesh is weak" (*UT* 172). In contrast, another Quaker, Phineas, says, "but if we are tempted too much—why, let them look out, that's all" (*UT* 173), which is checked by Simeon: "The old nature hath its way in thee pretty strong as yet" (*UT* 173). However, another Quaker, Rachel, says, "but we all think that his heart is in the right place, after all" (*UT* 173).

Here Simeon says he cannot "blame" George for his determination to fight for his family if necessary, but Simeon does not answer clearly whether or not he would do the same in place of George. Phineas sounds more supportive for violence in self-defense, and he is checked by Simeon. While Simeon and Phineas have different views, they both are described as faithful people who are ready to sacrifice themselves in order to help their neighbors. Here the author's view—regarding violence in pursuit of a right cause, is not clear.

A little later in the story, the pursuers catch up with them. George, Phineas, and others have climbed up a cliff, and a member of the pursuer party, Marks shoots at George but the bullet misses him. Then the leader of the

pursuer party, Tom Loker, comes climbing up the cliff. George fires at Loker, and Loker gets shot in his side, but he would not retreat and leaps into where George and others are. That moment, Phineas pushes him off and makes him fall down the cliff. Loker lies on the ground and his party members all desert him. Seeing this, George, Phineas, and George's wife, Eliza, help him. When George learns that Loker is not going to die, he gladly says, "It would always be a heavy thought to me, if I'd caused his death, even in a just cause" (*UT* 184). Toward the end of the story, George, his family and friends safely make it to Canada.

The coexistence of episodes that affirm both non-violence and violence for a just cause is also found in MacDonald's *What's Mine's Mine*.

In *What's Mine's Mine*, Scottish clan chief Alister and his brother Ian do their best to forgive the persecutors who take away the clan's land and homes—and their way of living. When the clan people say that they are ready to sacrifice their lives and fight, Alister persuades them: "We may have a right to fight, I do not know; but I am sure we have at least the right to abstain from fighting. Don't let us confound right and duty" (*WMM* 348). When one of his men, Donal, retorted that they have to fight because "God does not always give men their rights" (*WMM* 348), Alister says, "Have you lived to all eternity? How do you know what you say? God does care for our rights. [. . .] A thousand years I will wait for my rights if He chooses. [. . .] He will set everything straight!" (*WMM* 349). Donal answers, "You must be right, sir! only I can't help wishing for the old time, when a man could strike a blow for himself!" (*WMM* 349). The narrator continues:

It is in ordering our own thoughts and our own actions, that we have first to stand up for the right; our

business is not to protect ourselves from our neighbour's wrong, but our neighbour from our wrong. This is to slay evil; the other is to make it multiply. (*WMM* 349)

Then one day Mr. Palmer, his men, and his friend, Mr. Sercombe, who are the persecutors in this story, show up with guns to threaten the clan people and to stop them from gathering the peat. Alister, who had ordered his men to come unarmed, and who himself was unarmed, kept on gathering the peat, with dignity. Then, the narrator analyzes why Palmer hates Alister. Palmer, a rich man, "owed his position to evil and not to good. [. . .] [H]is success was the ruin of many" (*WMM* 362). The narrator reveals:

All the chief's schemes and ways were founded on such opposite principles to his own that of necessity they annoyed him at every point, and, incapable of perceiving their true nature, he imagined his annoyance their object and end. (*WMM* 362)

(The contrast in character between Palmer and Alister appears to resemble the contrast between Legree and Uncle Tom.)

Then Palmer and Sercombe raise their guns and "one of them fires" (*WMM* 363). Alister gets shot in the arm and chest, and his men push the offenders into the muddy peat-hole just to "wet their powder" (*WMM* 364). The clan people take Alister home and send for a doctor; Alister survives—and he never tries to get revenge on Palmer and Sercombe.

Consequently, Alister and the clan people decide to move to Canada, where Ian had prepared things for them. On leaving, Alister thinks that though he loves his land so much, "Where Jesus, the Son of God, is—there is my home! He is here, and he is over the sea, and my home is everywhere!" (*WMM* 386). After some years, at the end of the story, they become

rich by finding rock oil in Canada, and they are able to buy back ten times more of their homeland.

In the above episode, Donal's wish to strike a blow for himself is checked by Alister—as well as the narrator. MacDonald directly reveals his viewpoint through the narrator. However, in the earlier part of the story, Alister does strike a man; the episode goes as follows.

Sercombe persistently tries to attract the attention of a young woman, Annie, who clearly gives him a refusal. She consults with her chief, Alister, and he gives Sercombe a warning. However, Sercombe bothers her again, so he warns him again. Sercombe would not listen, and retorting, he insults Annie by referring to her as “hussy” (WMM 202). On hearing this, Alister boxes Sercombe on the ear with his open hand. The narrator observes: “He would not use his fist without warning, but such a word applied to any honest woman of his clan demanded instant recognition” (WMM 203). Then Sercombe fights back and he is much stronger in the fight, and this makes Alister bleed badly. Then Ian comes along and takes the place of his brother even though Alister insists on fighting by himself. Ian firstly warns Sercombe, and he also gives Sercombe time to recover his wind. Since Sercombe still tries to strike Ian, Ian hits him and knocks him down. Then Ian wishes that he had not struck him so hard, and he hopes that it was not hatred that made him strike so hard. Alister says, “It was pure indignation, and nothing to blame in it!” Ian answers, “I wish I could be sure of that!” (WMM 204).

In this scene, the idea is shown that it is acceptable to resort to violence in defense of someone as long as it is done in a restrained manner and not out of hatred. However, in other episodes as we have seen, violence is found to be undesirable even when it is for a just cause. Thus, both in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *What's Mine's Mine*, we can find the

coexistence of episodes that affirm non-violence and violence for a just cause.

The Meaning of Suffering

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as mentioned earlier, Evangeline tells her father, St. Clare, that it is not right of him to hinder her from seeing the suffering of the world in his desire to shelter her:

“You (Papa) want me to live so happy, and never to have any pain,—never suffer anything,—not even hear a sad story, when other poor creatures have nothing but pain and sorrow, all their lives;—it seems selfish. I ought to know such things, I ought to feel about them!” (UT 254)

The following episode from the earlier part of the novel sheds light on how people could grow through suffering, and how people could reach out to others through suffering. Protecting and helping Eliza and her son in their escape, Mrs. Bird, who had lost her little son, takes out his clothes from the drawers and packs them for Eliza's son. The narrator tells us:

There are in this world blessed souls, whose sorrows all spring up into joys for others; whose earthly hopes, laid in the grave with many tears, are the seed from which spring healing flowers and balm for the desolate and the distressed. (UT 79-80)

MacDonald appears to echo the idea that happiness should not be the first priority in life. In one of his Wingfold trilogy, *There and Back*, the protagonist, Richard, desperately tries to save his friend's sister, who is near dying from hunger, and he thinks that he would “give [his] life for her!” (*There and Back* 158). Richard continues: “And there is *he*, sitting up there in his glory, and looking down unmoved upon her wretchedness! I

will not believe in any such God!" (*There and Back* 158). The narrator explains:

Of course he was more than right in refusing to believe in such a God! Were such a being possible, he would not be God. [. . .] But was Richard, therefore, to believe in no God altogether different? (*There and Back* 158)

The narrator continues:

What if his soul was too impatient to listen for the next tick of the clock of eternity, and was left therefore to declare there was no such clock going! Ought he not even now to have been capable of thinking that there might be a being with a design for his creatures yet better than *merely* to make them happy? What if, that gained, the other must follow! (*There and Back* 158)

MacDonald also suggests his idea concerning suffering and happiness in *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*. In the story, Polwarth's niece, Rachel, who has the physical characteristics of a dwarf and suffers from illness just as her uncle does, tells Wingfold: "You don't know how happy I am as I lie here, knowing my uncle is in the next room [. . .] and that there is [God] nearer still" (*TWC* 202). Wingfold answers: "It is a great satisfaction to find that suffering is not necessarily unhappiness. I could be well content to suffer also, Miss Polwarth, if with the suffering I might have the same peace" (*TWC* 203).

Like Stowe and MacDonald, Endo shows how people are connected to one another through suffering. In *The Woman I Deserted*, Mitsu, a young woman who was diagnosed with Hansen's disease, is forced to move to a secluded sanitarium. The patients at the institute are compassionate toward her. While interacting in a caring way with Mitsu, a woman patient tells Mitsu that suffering

is not a physical thing—but it is having to endure not being loved by anyone (*The Woman I Deserted*, hereafter, *Deserted* 194).

Mitsu herself has been deserted by her boyfriend, who only wanted to use her, but she does not blame him. Then, two weeks later, it turns out that it was a misdiagnosis and that she does not have the disease—so she gets released from the sanitarium. She goes to a train station, but when she remembers her fellow patients at the institute, she feels she cannot leave them, and she returns to them—determined to serve them. Then, in the evening glow, she looks at the small field within the sanitarium, where the patients are working. The scenery, which she had initially beheld with utter disgust, now makes her feel as if she has returned home (*Deserted* 235).

Later in the story, Mitsu is killed by a car when she is running an errand. A Catholic nun, Sister Yamagata, who serves at the institute, writes a letter to Mitsu's ex-boyfriend, revealing that Mitsu had taken care of a little boy patient who lay in his death bed; Mitsu prayed that, if God was with them, He might make her sick instead and save the little boy. However, the boy passed away five days later. Yamagata continues that Mitsu could not believe in God because she could not understand why the patients, including the little child, had to suffer as they did. The nun asserts that they (the nuns) believe that the Lord shares people's suffering, and that people are not alone in suffering. She continues:

"Even when a person is alone in a desert, s/he is not suffering alone; our suffering must be connected with the suffering of others; how could I make Mitsu understand this?; but, no—without knowing, Mitsu was doing the very act of connecting herself with others through suffering."⁶ (*Deserted* 251)

Yamagata concludes the letter: “If God asks me what kind of person I want to be, I would answer instantly, ‘someone like Mitsu’” (*Deserted* 254).

Mitsu’s staying with the sufferers when she had the chance to leave corresponds with Uncle Tom’s choosing to stay with his fellow slaves when he had a chance to escape with Cassy. Both stories suggest that that is what God is doing: He is sharing each one’s suffering with Himself—never deserting anyone.

Similar to Stowe and Endo, MacDonald also emphasizes the importance of our establishing connections with one another:

If a man say, ‘I have not been unjust; I owed the man nothing;’ he sides with Death—says with the typical murderer, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ builds the tombs of those his fathers slew. (*WMM* 27)

(The above question is apparently taken from the Bible’s Cain episode: “And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?” [Genesis 4:9])

Perfect Love Seeming Like Torture

In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, when Legree takes away Tom’s belongings, he finds a lock of blond hair. It was Evangeline’s hair, which she had given to Tom, but Legree superstitiously imagines it to be his mother’s. He had run away from home when young—abandoning her, and one day he received a letter with a lock of her hair inside it, telling him that his mother died and that, “dying, she blest and forgave him” (*UT* 339). However, Legree had burned the hair and the letter—rejecting even her blessing and forgiveness.

The narrator explains: “There is a dread, unhallowed necromancy of evil, that turns things sweetest and holiest to phantoms of horror and affright” (*UT* 339). When Legree had burned his

mother’s hair and the letter, he “inly shuddered as he thought of everlasting fires” (*UT* 339-40). The narrator goes on: “Ye who have wondered to hear, in the same evangel, that God is love, and that God is a consuming fire, see ye not how, to the soul resolved in evil, perfect love is the most fearful torture, the seal and sentence of the direst despair?” (*UT* 340).

MacDonald appears to share the above belief that there is no inconsistency between God’s being love and God’s being a consuming fire:

Nothing is inexorable but love. [. . .] It is not love that grants a boon unwillingly; still less is it love that answers a prayer to the wrong and hurt of him who prays. Love is one, and love is changeless. [. . .] [A]ll that is not beautiful in the beloved, all that comes between and is not of love’s kind, must be destroyed.

And our God is a consuming fire [Hebrews 12:29]. (*Unspoken Sermons* 18-19)

“The man who cares not about the will of God, to him God appears something awful, and the world around him a confined mass, a discontent, chaotic kind of place, because his own heart is all chaos, and inhabited by creatures wallowing in the slime of immoral uncreation. [. . .] Let us go down on our knees, in the loneliness of our chambers, and give ourselves to the God to whom we belong, and out of whose hand we cannot tear ourselves—the God who will by-and-by, if we do not yield ourselves to Him, appear as a consuming fire. He will not change; but love itself, to the unlovely, is a torment.” (“George MacDonald as a Preacher,” *Wingfold: Celebrating the Works of George MacDonald*, No.76. 44-47)

Our Experiences' Holding New Meaning

All three authors reveal through their writings that our experiences hold new meaning when we become rooted in God. This concerns the above theme on how God can be both Love and a “consuming fire.”

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as Tom gets through “the dread soul-crisis,” a hymn with lyrics to the effect that no matter what happens, “God [. . .] shall be forever mine” begins to have a new meaning to him: “the solitude of the night rung with the triumphant words of a hymn, which he had sung often in happier days, but never with such feeling as now” (*UT* 357).

This idea that mankind can really only appreciate *the heart of things* when we are rooted in God is also suggested in the Stowe scene described above, in which Tom has the capacity to experience the morning in its fullness and glory—while Legree cannot.

This coincides with the Mitsu episode in which she returns to the sanitarium. She is moved by the sight of the patients working in the field in the beautiful light of the setting sun. The same scenery and population that she had at first found terrifying have become dear to her. In the sacrificial death of Kolbe chapter described above, the surviving concentration camp captives perceive the beauty of the world after witnessing God's love shine through Kolbe's act of love.

Similarly, in *Thomas Wingfold*, Curate, certain words come to have a new meaning for Polwarth's brother, Robert. He had imagined himself to be “a wandering Jew,” and he described his spiritual pilgrimage in his manuscript. According to the script, in utter loneliness, he finally found a woman who loved him with unconditional love, and he loved her earnestly, but his love was not yet purified to perfection. Robert felt depressed to think that she was getting old every hour and slowly losing her

beauty. Then this woman got swallowed up by “hell” fire (*TWC* 404). Robert dived into the fire—but he could only find a cinder. He cried in madness, “O Age! O Decay! [. . .] see how I triumph over thee: what canst thou do to this?” (*TWC* 404). He then tried to kill himself by plunging into the fire over and over again—but failed to annihilate his being. A blank line appears here in the text. Then Robert reveals his transformed perception.

And what I had then said in despair, I said yet again in thankfulness. O Age! O Decay! I cried, what canst thou now do to destroy the image of her which I bear nested in my heart of hearts. That at least is safe, I thank God. (*TWC* 404)

Robert continues: “[. . .] a mighty hope had risen within me, that yet I should stand forgiven in the eyes of him that was crucified, and that in token of his forgiveness, he would grant me to look again, but in peace, upon the face of her that had loved me” (*TWC* 404). Then he asserts that Love will be made perfect “in the bosom of the meanest who followeth the Crucified” (*TWC* 404).

Stowe, Endo, and MacDonald show that spiritually-awakening souls can find new, transforming meaning in painful or familiar experiences.

The Meaning of the Glory of God

Toward the end of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as mentioned above, Legree and his men start beating Tom to death. In the words of the narrator:

[T]here was One whose suffering changed an instrument of torture, degradation and shame, into a symbol of glory, honor, and immortal life; and, where His spirit is, neither degrading stripes, nor blood, nor insults, can make the

Christian's last struggle less than glorious. (UT 377)

The narrator continues: "Was [Tom] alone [. . .]? Nay! There stood by him One,—seen by him alone,—'like unto the Son of God'" (UT 377).

George Shelby, the son of Tom's first owner, comes to Tom just before Tom dies. When George calls to him, Tom regains consciousness and says, "Bless the Lord! it is,—it is,—it's all I wanted! They haven't forgot me. It warms my soul; it does my old heart good! Now I shall die content! Bless the Lord, oh my soul!" (UT 380). (This corresponds with Endo's Henrick episode, in which the dying inmate was given bread and realized that love was present.)

Then Tom asks George to tell Tom's wife that "the Lord's stood by [him] everywhere and al'ays, and made everything light and easy"; also, he asks him to tell all his children "to follow me—follow me!" (UT 381). He also says that he "loves every creatur' everywhar!" and tells George not to hate Legree—because he "an't done me no real harm,—only opened the gate of the kingdom for me; that's all!" (UT 381).

After Tom dies, the narrator goes:

Pity him not! Such a life and death is not for pity! Not in the riches of omnipotence is the chief glory of God; but in self-denying, suffering love! And blessed are the men whom he calls to fellowship with him, bearing their cross after him with patience. Of such it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (UT 383)

George frees his slaves after Tom's death, and he tells them—as we have seen previously:

"So when you rejoice in your freedom, think that you owe it to [Uncle Tom . . .]. Think of your freedom, every time you see UNCLE TOM'S CABIN; and let it be a

memorial to put you all in mind to follow in his steps [. . .]". (UT 400)

Here we see the theme that God's glory is shown, *not* in the demonstration of His power, but in His self-sacrificing love, and also, in sharing His will with people who follow Him. God helps people to follow Christ in loving and forgiving their enemies, and while He shares their suffering, He shares His love with them, and this is the glory of God.

This belief is echoed by MacDonald. In *What's Mine's Mine*, Ian says in his prayer after arguing with his mother about the meaning of the Atonement: "thou dost not make men in order to assert thy dominion over them, but that they may partake of thy life" (WMM 113). Ian goes on to pray:

"[T]hou wantest no glory for selfishness! thou doest, thou art, what thou requirest of thy children! I know it, for I see it in Jesus, who casts the contempt of obedience upon the baseness of pride, who cares only for thee and for us, never thinking of himself save as a gift to give us! O lovely, perfect Christ! with my very life I worship thee! Oh, pray, Christ! make me and my brother strong to be the very thing thou wouldst have us [. . .]." (WMM 114)

Then, Ian and his brother Alister do their best in forgiving their enemies and returning good for evil as they follow Jesus every moment of their lives.

The following passage from MacDonald's sermon echoes the above belief concerning God's glory:

[T]o know Christ is the only way to know God. You may learn a good deal of His power in other ways[:] only when you learn His power in other ways you generally forget the power is His, or Who it is that has the power. You may learn of the power of God, but the power of God

is not God. God is love, and until we love with our whole souls we do not know God. We may know Him a little, less or more, in proportion as we are capable of loving; or rather, not as we are capable of it, but as we do it—we know God. (“The Mysteries of the Kingdom: A Sermon by George MacDonald, LLD,” *Wingfold: Celebrating the Works of George MacDonald*, No.65. 16)

Endo also appears to share such interpretation of God’s glory. In Silence, as we have seen, Rodrigues, through suffering, comes to know how infinitely Jesus loves and forgives all people, and when Rodrigues comes to know this, he begins to love God in a new way, and he becomes able to forgive Kichijiro. When God seemed silent, *God made Rodrigues’s very life His words*, revealing His glory in this way.

Conclusion

Stowe, MacDonald, and Endo share the belief that God’s glory is not revealed in His demonstration of power—but in His sacrificial love and forgiveness, which are manifested through the life of Jesus. The essential purpose of Christ’s life is to invite and help people to follow Him—that in all ways He modeled for us what God had in mind for every one of us. To follow Jesus is to love and to forgive, and to return good for evil—even to the point of suffering. When we suffer, God suffers together, and He also shares His glory with us.

Through suffering, we can connect ourselves with our fellow creatures, loving them and caring about them—and to believe in love is to believe in God, who is the very origin of our love.

In following Christ, we come to realize how infinitely God loves us sinners and the weakest—even before we turn back to Him.

Life means oneness with God, and nothing can come between God and each one of us. Therefore, no one can victimize us but they inadvertently assist our growth toward the “At-one-ment.”

God was, is, and will be with us to eternity. “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” [Matthew 28:20]. When those who feel weakest in faith cry out to Him, “I can’t hear You!”, God may be speaking through them—*making their very lives His words*.

Acknowledgment

I am deeply grateful to Ms. Christine Colbert for her expert help and advice in editing my essay.

Notes

¹ Endo writes: “No one can help asking, when they see innocent children dying in war, ‘Why do such things happen?’ I myself thought many times: ‘I shall have to desert God. I can’t hold on anymore.’ But now I think that it is not true faith which goes without being afflicted with such doubts. I don’t think such a thing is true religion. I feel that people who wouldn’t go through such questioning are not true believers” (*Watashino Iesu* [My Jesus] 200-01) [trans. mine]. In MacDonald’s *What’s Mine’s Mine*, Ian is described as “one of those blessed few who doubt in virtue of a larger faith” (*WMM* 62). The narrator continues: “To the wise his doubts would have been his best credentials; they were worth tenfold the faith of most. It was truth, and higher truth, he was always seeking” (*WMM* 62). (See *George MacDonald’s Challenging Theology of the Atonement, Suffering, and Death*, 6-7 and 40-53.)

² I changed/added the bracketed words to make the translation closer to Endo’s original Japanese version.

³ The underlined sentence is my translation, which, I believe, is closer to Endo’s original Japanese version than the original translation: “Even if he had been silent, my life until this day would have spoken of him.”

⁴ All the quotations from *Women’s Life: Part II, Sachiko’s Case* are my translation.

⁵ All the quotations from *When I Whistle* are my translation.

⁶ All the quotations from *The Woman I Deserted* are my translation.

Works Cited

Duffield, Samuel Willoughby. “George MacDonald as a Preacher.” (Reprinted from *The Study: Helps for Preachers*, October 1873.) Ed. Barbara Amell. *Wingfold: Celebrating the Works of George MacDonald*, No.76. Portland, Oregon: Wingfold Books, 2011. 44-47.

Endo, Shusaku. *Kuchibuewo Fukutoki* [When I Whistle]. 1974. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1991.

----- *Onnano Issho* [Women’s Life], Part II, *Sachiko’s Case*. 1982. Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2001.

----- *Silence* [Chinmoku]. The original Japanese version, 1966. The original English edition, 1969. Trans. William Johnston. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982.

----- *Watashiga Suteta Onna* [The Woman I Deserted]. 1963. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2000.

----- *Watashino Iesu* [My Jesus]. 1976. Tokyo: Shoden-Sha, 1988.

MacDonald, George. *David Elginbrod*. 1863. Whitethorn, California: Johannesen, 1995.

----- “The Mysteries of the Kingdom: A Sermon by George MacDonald, LLD.” (Reprinted from the British Weekly Pulpit, Volume 1, 1888.) Ed. Barbara Amell. *Wingfold: Celebrating the Works of George MacDonald*, No.65. Portland, Oregon: Wingfold Books, 2009. 13-23.

----- *There and Back*. 1891. Whitethorn, California: Johannesen, 1991.

----- *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*. 1876. Whitethorn, California: Johannesen, 1996.

----- *Unspoken Sermons*. Series I, II and III in one volume. 1867, 1886, and 1889. Whitethorn, California: Johannesen, 1997.

----- *What’s Mine’s Mine*. 1886. Whitethorn, California: Johannesen, 2003.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. A Norton Critical Edition, Second Edition. 1852. Ed. Elizabeth Ammons. N.Y.: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010.

Yamaguchi, Miho. *George MacDonald’s Challenging Theology of the Atonement, Suffering, and Death*. Tucson, Arizona: Wheatmark, 2007.

----- “David Elginbrod as a Prototype of the Wingfold Trilogy in Connection with Coleridge and the Joan Drake Case and Its Influence upon Arthur Conan Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes* Stories.” *Inklings Forever*, VI. Upland, Indiana: Taylor University, 2008. 149-56.

----- “God Is Impartial: *Frankenstein* and MacDonald.” *Inklings Forever*, VII. Upland, Indiana: Taylor University, 2010. 179-86.