**THIS IS ME, THIS IS REALLY ME**

**You are born into the world pre-disposed with physiological traits, passed down through the ages, and you find yourself among other similar people, you interact with your surroundings of which you have no control. You learn by interacting with your environment. You learn movement, language, audio, visual, with faculties that are also the mode for you to assimilate the stimuli. So, you may ask, where is ‘you’? You have to wonder. You have no control over your genes, and you have no control over the stimuli presented to you in your environment. Like a plant, it is the seed of something, and it lands somewhere and there it must grow with no control over where it landed, and the soil and the climate. You are predisposed to go through a developmental cycle, and that is how it will unfold. You can take a moment, stop it, and focus upon it. You can examine it, but, remember that it is constantly moving and changing. Born, as a seed, sprouts, grows root, stem and matures, blooms, develops fruit, grows old dies and rots away**

 **I look in the mirror and my perception is distorted. I think to myself, “here I am, drunk again.” I have submerged from a drunken stupor for one moment, to peer into a mirror, and then, I go back into the room and sink back into oblivion. Oh, if I could call back the time, all of the time spent in a drunken stupor. All of the things I said, and all of the things I did. I would that I could take it all back and do it over again.**

 **I look out of the window, and I see lights, and streets and buildings. I am in a thriving metropolitan area, and I am a stranger here. I do not know any of these people. They all seem to be content, busy with their lives. But, me, I am all alone. I don’t really like it, not do I understand. But, I can’t do anything about it. Perhaps if I leave this place and move to the country, things will be better. I would be better able to make friends, maybe.**

 **And, now, I look out the window, I see a yard, neighbors houses, and a mountain on either side of a creek. I am in the country. Well, how is it? Nobody comes to see me. Nobody calls. I am alone. Maybe, it is me.**

 **Perhaps it is better this way. When you do have someone around, you must compromise your freedom. You must attend to their thoughts and feelings. What do they want to do? How long will it last. When will they find someone else. You know it has an end. You spend your time thinking about them, and how it was. In the back of your mind, you know everything is temporal.**

 **I look outside and it is snowing again. I struggle to keep the fire going. The furnace runs, three hundred dollars a month. I should have known. I am speedily working on chapter thirteen. It is amazing. How much time I have expended. I hope the worst is over. And, then, the sun came out.**

 **Love is possessive. It is not that they love someone else. If you have their total love, and someone comes along. they take it all or most leaving you none. Love is doomed. You may capture the moment, but, as time goes by, the love fades away. So, deny yourself nothing. Grab the moment. Suffer the consequences.**

 **A new born baby, born into this world at a given time, on a given day, to a mother and a father. The child has no choice in the matter. The child inherits the genes of the mother and father, passed down by generations through millions of years. The child ‘inherits’ the environmental attributes as well. This is the way that it is. The child similarly has a spiritual endowment, given by God. This phenomenon, interacting, forms and develops the individual character. Character implies respect, responsible, caring, honesty and tolerance. Language and culture is learned from the surrounding environment. Considering this condition of the Human Being, one may ask ‘how much freedom of choice do we have?” or is everything ‘predetermined’. And, with this question comes the thought ‘if we are not really able to choose, we cannot be held responsible. Oh my, is that the ultimate copout.**

 **We scurry around daily, making choices on what to do, and how much are we really able to choose. When we converse with another person, we say things that have been echoed down through the ages. .. how are you today? What have you been doing… where are you from… what do you want… what can I get from you… We consider what to say… and estimate how it will be received by the audience to whom we speak…. Is what I am going to say ‘politically correct’ well… are we not echoing what is being said around us… monkey see, monkey do… What we eat, how we dress, are they not reflections of how we determine the environment around us… so to be accepted by those around us. How much do we have control of? Viewed physically, we know our parameters, environmentally, we know our constraints, what about spiritually? This is the realm that does not adhere to constraints. Thank God, we can seek a spiritual world, this is the common denominator. This aspect contributes form, provides order, enhances parity, makes everything operate on a level plain. Praise the Lord. We do not have to consider what is politically correct; but, ‘What does God want?’ That is the question. Not what do I want, or, what do they want, but, what does the spirit beckon. Yield to the spirit.**

**Rebuke things that are not of God. If it is wrong and you know it is wrong, it is a sin. Nothing will come of it; but, if it is of God, nothing can be done about it. Praise the Lord.**

 **ODE TO A TREE**

**To be sure, all plants and animals, life itself is pretty amazing. I only focus on a tree because it seems to comprise the forest around here, anyway. Just think of the variety of trees and what they do. It would go beyond the scope of any observation, to enumerate their purpose and function. Trees provide food for insects and animals. Pinecones, acorn, hickory nuts, walnuts, apples, cherries, the list goes on. They provide shelter for squirrels, possums, raccoons, birds, and, they are home for many insects. They also lend balance to the environment by preventing erosion, changing carbon to oxygen, and leaves and needles for fertilize for other plants, and they regulate the temperature of the forest itself. And, they are a sorse of heat for people, and, an essential building material. Where would we be without trees?**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK**

**What are you thinking about? Do you dwell on a certain topic? What have you been thinking about? Oh, what am I going to do today? I will, by necessity, take care of bodily functions. Take my medicine, eat, drink, sleep, rest, make sure the house is warm, everything is working. Focus upon my well-being. How am I feeling. Is there any discomfort anywhere. Is there some discomfort, pain? Well, what comes back to you. Are you ok? I am rested, not hungry, or sleepy. I have some awareness of my prostate, my stomach feels bloated and bulging, I do not see well, or hear well, I tire easily, my head buzzes. Is this being 72 years old? I wonder. Will I get better or worse? And, why not me? I was given many years of health. I squandered it for many years, drinking, slothful living, gluttonous, sinful living. Well, you reap what you sow Have you learned anything? Can you do better?**

 **One thing that has hampered me all of my life has been self-consciousness. I have been intimidated by ‘people’ all of my life. I lacked confidence in myself and I was always self-conscious. I would get nervous in front of a crowd, and I am that way today. I am too passive. I will lay back in safety and let others boldly step forward.**

**I have come close to death twice, with a heart attack. You would think that would change things. It seems people will divert back to their old self without learning anything.**

 **On this ‘self-conscious’ problem, you have to wonder why some people have all the confidence and others don’t. How much control can you have? Caring less would to be a good answer, practicing and gaining confidence would be good. Having confidence in your purpose in what you do would be good.**

 **What are you doing? Why are you doing it? That is the question. Were you born to do this, or, were you influenced to do it by others, or were you doing this as a manifestation of your obedience to God? Therein, lies the secret. Rehearsal, to show yourself approved. If you are performing to gain approval from man, that is one thing, to perform because you were born to do it is another, to perform in order to obey the Lord, that would be good. Could you do all three? Well, with those with ears, let them hear, and those with eyes, let them see. I better do that, because people are looking at me, I better do that or I will get punished. I will do that because the spirit beckons me. Well, have your way Lord.**