

I am basically a morning person. I like to get up around 5:15 so that I have some time to wake up, to read, and to get ready for work. But my wife is a night person, and likes for me to stay up late with her, but it makes it so difficult to get up. Sometimes when she sees that I am still up, she says, 'Well, Heard, are you living 'on the edge' tonight?' She says it as sort of as a challenge to me, but I finally realized that I do live on the edge: only it's the morning edge rather than the evening edge.

The idea of 'living on the edge' is that of 'living dangerously', of flirting with disaster. There are a lot of people who like to do that with their spiritual future. There may be certain thrills to this kind of life, but there is most certainly a tremendous fear associated with it, too. This idea of an 'edge' reminds me of a bicycle trip that our Scout troop once took in the area of Normandy Lake before the dam flooded the region. There was a place we called 'Razorback Ridge' because of the steep drop-offs on either side, where a gravel road led from the top of a hill down to the river. Being young and foolish, we thought that it would be neat to see how fast we could go down that hill. We began peddling furiously, and it was not long before we were rocketing down at high speed. I don't know what the others thought, but it I soon became aware of being slowly forced to the outer edge of the road, which was curving rather sharply. There was no way to slow down on that gravel, so I began to watch with great fear the dropoff that I was getting so perilously close to. I had such a helpless feeling; there was nothing to do but hope that I could keep it on the road. Fortunately, all of us made it down the hill safely, but I knew that I had 'lived on the edge' a little more than I had intended.

I think that those who live without Christ are living in very much the same way. I don't remember when I was born physically, but I do remember being born spiritually. I also remember before I was born spiritually, and I had the same kind of fear. I remember praying for God to spare me until I could be baptized. I was in a threshold region where I knew what I needed to do, but for some unexplainable reason I would not do it. Even after we are baptized we sometimes play with the edge, trying to serve God and ourselves too, and we have the same kind of fearful existence. But there is no reason to live this way. When I was on my bicycle, there was nothing I could do to prevent disaster; I just had to ride it out. But every one of us has the power to act and change our spiritual situation. Tonight, we can ease the tension within us and be baptized or renewed into Christ. If there is anyone here tonight that has this need, won't you come now as we stand and sing...