

THE DRAWING POWER OF LOVE

By Alden Truesdell

Love is a gift of the Spirit, one of the fruits of the Spirit. Like all God's gifts, it is a part of the Creator extended into His creation and His creatures. The wonder of God's largess is in the quality of the product distributed. The mark of Spirit on a gift indicates it to be a part of God, guaranteed for eternity. God gives the Giver along with the gift, or gives the Giver as the gift. We have considered many of the facets of love. We have lauded love in sermon and song until we would seem to have exhausted the descriptive vocabulary; and yet we have left love inadequately described, although probably no other quality of God has been subject to so much analysis and consideration.

There is so much to be said for love as a valuable gift that a starting point is hard to find. We should therefore go back to the logical point, God. As we try to distinguish the facet of God that is love, we find it to be the integrating action of the Mind of Being. Love draws all required elements for any specific purpose to some given point. Love causes every part to find its rightful place and receive its equal consideration with every other part.

An example of Love's attracting power and efficacious action may be cited in the development of the Christ Truth League. Originally this work was started by two sincere seekers for a right way of life, who were called, and drawn out of the world's way of life into a different and better way. There seems now to be no doubt that we were called, and that our only merit is that we did not resist the call.

So much of our early experience in seeking the new way of life has been deliberately forgotten that it is difficult to bring to mind the hardships attending the time of transition from the worldly way of life to the spiritual way of life. As a man in the commercial field, running up against all sorts of pretense and selfish routine, I can remember that one of my first reactions of rebellion against systems of conduct in the world was a deep feeling in the soul nature that somewhere and somehow there must be a market for sincerity. Somewhere men must be able to exchange information with confidence in each other. We have searched diligently for that place, that utopia, where the slogan would be, "All for one, and one for all." Like Diogenes looking for an honest man, or Luther looking for an honest ministry, we went where other searchers were looking, but we never found that ideal place. Therefore, we turned back to the Ideal Itself, to the inner conviction of the divine destiny of man. We seemed to love this Ideal better than the things It had caused to be, and It loved us severely; for we were not permitted out of Its range of influence. We were seemingly servants, agents, or instruments in the hands of God-Love. We found it to be true that the course of true love does not run smooth.

In a love affair with God one to become may seem an official scapegoat. Any violation of any law is punishable; but, when a law is broken by its own agent and officer, how much more should be, and is, that one chastised. God indeed chastises those whom He loves. It is not difficult to see how the concept of a God of retribution or the concept of a jealous God could be developed by an adherent of Truth, who had declared his intention of loving God for God's sake and telling Truth for Truth's sake, only to find himself immediately in a place where his intentions had to be proved. This Name and

Nature and Character of Him who is Love may not be taken lightly or in vain, but It does respond to absolute sincerity. Thus did our profession of interest in the Principle of Truth as a way of life throw us into situations where we could prove that profession and practice that Principle. We were stripped of all non-essential equipment, such as false prides, ambitions, accumulations, outer dependencies; and I who had been what the field of commerce considers a success (a sort of omniscient ambassador who knew all the answers and spent company money like water), was obliged to learn humility and how to be on the receiving end, rather than being a Lord Bountiful. The lessons were not pleasant at the time, but the effects were evidence of an overbrooding Love, which had our best interests at heart. And soon our pruning, purging, and disciplining were to cause us to bear fruit.

Our steps were ordered of the Lord. We were led here and there over these United States; and, in each place, we lost some non-essential trait, or gained some profitable quality. This was all preparatory for the time when the main purpose should come to pass, for the time when we should begin to fulfill the purpose for which we came into the world. Ultimately, we were prompted to come to Fort Worth, Texas. Though the picture looked uninviting for a number of years, and at times we seemed to stand alone, we remained unshaken in our faith and love of God. The people reacted to our teaching in the same manner reported by the Psalmist, who declared, "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war." We spoke Truth, and our listeners lived every lie at their disposal. They embraced every charlatan and soothsayer who came to town; they encouraged every peculiar doctrine that attracted them, and they violently opposed our declaration of Truth. It was fortunate that we looked to Truth only for our sufficiency in all things; for the people and the world were reluctant to see us exist - in fact, would have been pleased had we ceased to do so.

Then gradually some of the earmarks of success became evident. One of the first marks of God's loving care for His pilgrims may best be illustrated by the report of a young minister at a conference. It was customary for each minister to report the results of the revival in his church by stating the length of time it had lasted and the number of new members added to the church. This new minister got up and said, "Our revival lasted a week and was very successful." Then he sat down. A brother, who evidently was a detail man, reported an oversight in the minister's announcement; "The brother reported a successful revival but neglected to state the number of new members joining the church." The new minister therefore got up again and said, "Our revival was very successful; no new members joined the church, but we got rid of fifty-eight of the old members." We were like that. We found that our declarations of Truth caused the self-seekers and the hypocrites to fall away from us.

As a result of sincere spiritual practice and putting first things first on our part, gradually truly earnest students composed our congregation. We attracted sincere seekers, who honestly desired to know the Truth, and who were willing and glad to recognize our understanding of Truth and our qualification to instruct others. Could there be a better example of the efficiency of Love selecting and drawing its own to itself? The strength and vitality of any work depend upon the quality (not the quantity) of the persons who are a part of it. We therefore gratefully acknowledge the help and the support of all those who are loyal to the ideals of the Christ Truth League.

To those who have heard the subject of Love expounded in an exhibition of violent love-making toward God, this account and this grateful acknowledgment may seem strange indeed. But, now that we have experienced a measure of the Great Commandment, we may be coming to the time of the application of the New

Commandment: the love of, and the appreciation of, each other, not in a personal way, but because of the spiritual urge that is driving each of us to a rightful place in the Father's house. We love each other because we see each other as being led by the Spirit of God.

"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

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SUMMER SCHOOL SESSION July 7, 8, and 9. We hope you make plans to attend.

SPIRITICITY April 1952

PAUL'S CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE

By Robert Applegate

(Continued from March 1952)

THE FOURTH LETTER

Paul's fourth and last letter to Corinth was written after he had received word of an exceptionally favorable response to his third letter. Since his personal difficulties with the Corinthians had been settled, he took the occasion to recall to his converts the message that he had been commissioned to preach, the New Covenant that had been established by Jesus Christ, "not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The old covenant had been established by Moses and his followers. It consisted of multitudinous laws regulating every detail of life. The attempt to obey this code rigorously had indeed had a deadening effect upon men (and is still doing so). Jesus Christ cut through all the minutiae of the letter of the law to the central spirit of it which He expressed in His instruction: "Watch and pray." "Love the Lord thy God. . . . Love thy neighbor as thyself." Then He practiced this instruction so one-pointedly that He became the embodiment of Deity, "the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Thus He established the New Covenant, which gives eternal life to all who obey the instruction.

Man's greatest weakness is his self-satisfaction. Thus it is that, when things are going according to his liking, he gives but perfunctory attention to God; but, when everything seems to go wrong, then he turns back to his Creator. It is for this reason that our seeming afflictions are often our greatest blessings. This fact is what Paul points out to the Corinthians with regard to the distress that he and they had recently experienced: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal (or temporary); but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Any man may prove this instruction for himself. He may make his seemingly greatest hardship yield him an eternal good, which is incommensurate with anything he has ever experienced. He does this by removing his attention from the distress and giving that attention to the things of God, which are the only things that are permanent. This is the way of the New Covenant. Since Jesus Christ proved it to the limit, it is possible for each of us to follow it. We

shall never be satisfied until we do; and, when we do, we shall receive that which Paul promises, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The End

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SPIRITICITY April 1952

MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD

By Nell Truesdell

Part V

Jesus Christ never exalted man. He honored God only. Because He discriminated accurately between God and man, He was never tempted to lower His vision in man's favor. According to the Gospel of John, Jesus "needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." To the religious leaders, He unhesitatingly declared, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. . . . How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" Again, He warned, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

At the beginning of His Galilean ministry, Jesus Christ echoed John the Baptist's resounding cry, "Repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

The fundamental denotation of the word repent is to desire to follow what is right by turning so completely from what is wrong that the old way of life is forgotten. However, the choice to forsake all that has been known in the past in order to follow an undefinable Something to be known in the present stirs the feeling nature (emotions) so painfully that a person is saddened and distressed in heart. Too, the violent disturbance of the intellect that results from the splitting away of man's attention from established religious beliefs and practices makes him reluctant to decide in favor of an untried way of life. Nevertheless, he can obtain no lasting benefits in consciousness unless the change of heart and mind is sufficiently determined to allow the attention to swing permanently from sentimental impressions of God and intellectual conclusions about Him and His Kingdom, and to come to rest on God Himself, in the midst of consciousness. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty," declared Zephaniah hundreds of years before Jesus Christ who echoed the words in His announcement, "The Kingdom of God is within you."

At the point of transference of the attention, man thwarts his purpose to follow Jesus Christ into the Kingdom of God. He erroneously believes that strenuous mental activity is necessary in order to quit the old practice of looking out toward a God clothed in supernal glory, who dwells in a vague place called heaven. Because he perceives the need to clear his intellect of its accumulation of error thoughts, he labors to discard old habits of thinking by applying his will to weed out this negation. In this attempt, he blindly ignores the repeated instruction of Jesus Christ to take no thought. Jesus definitely told man watch: "What I say unto you; say unto all . . . Watch." The Master knew that thinking distracts the attention, but that watching quiets it in such a way that it is disentangled from the region of the intellect (where man does conscious thinking) and is dropped to rest at the heart center. Here, in the secret place within, the meeting place of man's mind and the Mind of God,

should man's attention be. By means of this attention man may receive inspiration directly from the Most High.

Jesus Christ persistently refused to meet men on the plane of intellectual reasoning; for He understood that thought turns in upon itself and blinds man to all but his own partial knowledge. In like manner, the seeker for God must ignore the thoughts that crowd into the foreground of his mentals with their prepared arguments and opinions; for, if he attempts to reason with them about God, they overwhelm him with their partial conclusions, which are the fruit of his own limited knowledge.

To secure the swing of attention away from the intellect, so that it falls to rest in the midst of consciousness (the region of the heart), is not a difficult feat. Primarily, it is a matter of interest. When a person is interested in any objective, his attention gravitates voluntarily toward it. Once his attention is caught, he finds it difficult to transfer it to something else. This is especially true when God is the object of interest.

Love of God is what draws man toward God. The Master repeated the ageless instruction that must be obeyed by any man who longs for his good: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Interest in God is sustained by one factor only - love. To love God in a bigger, freer way is the crying need of every human being. No man can learn to love God through thinking; he learns to love Him through his heart. Thinking involves violent mental activity, which results in disturbance; loving entails quiet waiting, which fruits into watchfulness: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Be as still as a stone; for out of the stillness will come a soundless, formless Word - and THAT will be the Presence of God. Suddenly a man's attention will be transfixed, as he waits and watches. He will not think. He will be quiet to the point of breathless expectancy, and then only will the inner door be opened and he will be ushered into the Presence of the Supreme. The Presence will be without form, though Its formlessness will appear to take form (an appearance that congeals after the attention withdraws from the Formless Glory that has touched the awareness). However, the appearance will not be real; only what transpired before the appearance is real. What is before appearance is the goal of love. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, put it this way: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be other wise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

Because, from man's birth, his attention is drawn out into the realm of form, he believes that all that appears is real. Consequently, he finds it necessary to train himself in forgetfulness of error, and put himself in remembrance of the good. The mental exercises involved are known as denials and affirmations. These exercises, however, are not the end to be sought. They are temporary expedients, developing flexibility, strength, and agility of attention, which guarantee and secure freedom throughout the whole consciousness.

At first, man is at a loss as to how to proceed, but study of the way Jesus Christ met the problem of transition gives the necessary enlightenment. In the wilderness, Jesus denied all desire for material satisfaction in every department of human consciousness, and fixed His attention steadfastly on God

only. After He had left the wilderness and progressed in His ministry among the populace in Galilee and Judaea, He made certain key statements, which give us clues regarding the affirmative phase of His practice. Ultimately, for Him (as for anyone who will follow Him) these disciplines resolved into the watchfulness that is paramount, and that leads directly to God.

The affirmative statements are:

1. "I and My Father are one."
2. "There is none good, but One, that is, God."
3. "With God all things are possible."
4. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always."

It is easier for the natural man to take preliminary steps to steady and prepare himself for the ultimate step, which is the one that leads into all that is of God. A student of any subject must first learn the rules that govern his subject. He learns what to do, and what not to do, after which he enjoys a facility in practice that makes possible his easy dealing with the subject itself. His misconceptions and erroneous impressions are forgotten and left behind as he reaches forth for genuine and accurate understanding. When the subject is God, then God becomes the all-engrossing desire of man's heart, the focal point of his voluntary attention. Mental exercises cease; watchful waiting is established.

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

APRIL 1952

1. The effectual fervent prayer . . . AVAILETH much.
2. Thy BLESSING is upon Thy people.
3. CAST thy burden on the Lord.
4. He hath DEALT bountifully with me.
5. Your faith groweth EXCEEDINGLY.

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7. If any man serve Me, let him FOLLOW Me.
8. The GOODNESS of GOD endureth.
9. The HOUSE of the righteous shall stand.
11. The righteous shall INHERIT the land.
11. Execute JUDGMENT in the morning.
12. Thou KNOWEST that I am not wicked.

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14. I the LORD your God am holy.
15. MARVEL not that I said, Ye must be born again.
16. Walk in NEWNESS of life.
17. What do ye more than OTHERS?
18. Follow after love with PATIENCE.
19. Enjoy great QUIETNESS.

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21. I have REMEMBERED Thy Name, O Lord.
22. The Lord SUSTAINED me.
23. In Him will I TRUST.
24. God UNDERSTANDETH the way.
25. Thy righteousness also, O God, is VERY high.
26. WISDOM strengtheneth the WISE.

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28. I will be to YOU a God: and YE shall know that I am God.
29. Be ZEALOUS therefore, and repent.
30. The ways of the Lord are right.

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"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

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As electricity is the working power of the electrical principle,
SPIRITICITY is the working power of the Spiritual Principle.