

THE RESURRECTION

By Nell Truesdell

The most important event in history, other than the Advent of Jesus, was His Resurrection. As His Advent ushered in a new system of reckoning time among men, so the event of His Resurrection changed the day of worship for believers, and to this day Sunday is called the Lord's Day.

The phrase, "the first day of the week" is not found in the New Testament until Easter Sunday. The Sabbath for the Jews was the last day of the week; after dark the new day began.

Testimony of the Resurrection given by eyewitnesses forms the foundation for the Christian faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who came into the world to forgive sin and to prove that life is eternal.

In the Gospel of John, the story of the Resurrection is related in Chapter 20. Hours before dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, where (on the Friday before) the body of Jesus had been laid, and found that the stone had been rolled away. Frightened, she went to summon Peter and John, and by the time that they arrived the predawn light was strong enough to permit John to peer inside the tomb and see that it was empty; he was aware also that the linen cloths lay folded in an orderly manner. Peter rushed in; then John went in. But the men did not understand what had happened and together they went away. Shortly after, Jesus appeared to Mary and, cautioning her not to touch Him, told her to go to the disciples with the message: "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."

In the evening of that first day Jesus stood in the midst of the ten disciples who had gathered in a closed locked room for fear of the Jews, and said, "Peace be unto you."

After eight days, the eleven met in a locked room, and Jesus appeared among them. After greeting them, He ordered Thomas (who had been absent at the first gathering) to touch His hands and side, which had been pierced; Thomas who had doubted, knew Jesus and cried, "My Lord and my God."

Again, according to John, Jesus appeared to His men at the Sea of Tiberias (Galilee) where they, with a large catch of fish, had come ashore and found Jesus waiting with a meal of bread and fish already prepared. As they ate, every man knew that it was Jesus who was with them. A little later, Jesus talked privately with Peter and commissioned him to "Feed My sheep"; and, "Follow thou Me."

Paul, in the 15th Chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians, wrote:

"Christ died . . . He was buried, . . . He was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and . . . He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive. . . . Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also unto me. . . . If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised; then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. . . . If in this life we who are in Christ have only hope, we are of all

men most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead. . . . For as by a man came death, by a Man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (Revised Standard Version)

The unerasable incident of the resurrection of Jesus Christ was actually observed by many men who saw and talked and ate with the Risen One. In His resurrected state, Jesus Christ assumed the form of man so that those to whom He appeared could not possibly be confused about His identity. His resurrected body was not a flesh body; it was a spiritual body that Jesus made visible on many occasions for forty days. On the last day that He was with His disciples, He said to them, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." After stating this, Jesus arose while the disciples gazed after Him until he disappeared from sight.

If you cannot accept the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, you do not believe in Jesus Christ. His Resurrection made His Advent important for all time and for all men. His appearances among people were not manifestations of deceptive emanations from some discarnate spirit. They were the Real Man made visible to the eyes of common men. His Ascension was not a disappearance into a vapor; it was visible rising of the spiritual body of Jesus Christ in the presence of His disciples.

The Crucifixion served a purpose both for Jesus and for mankind. It was the means by which Jesus Christ made the transition from a flesh body to a spiritual body; and while He was going through the agony of transformation, He did not for an instant lose consciousness of God.

We, also, must cultivate an unshakable awareness of God so that, under no circumstances, will we let go our sense of oneness with Him. By His example, Jesus Christ cleared the way and made it comparatively easy for us to make the transition from the mortal to the immortal state of being. Regardless of what happens to our flesh body, we must keep our attention - our inner vision - centered on God in our midst. With Jesus Christ we must know and declare, "I and my Father are one."

"Watch," said the Master, "and pray always."

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SPIRITICITY April 1957

SUCCESS

By Robert Applegate

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" - James 4:4

Most metaphysical movements hold out the promise of "success" to their students, because success is what people want. The pressure is on everyone to show that he is successful. But what is this success that is so earnestly coveted and ardently pursued?

It is obvious what the world considers "success": wealth and status. Even religious organizations measure their success in terms of size and numbers, although they are expressly told: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." It is easy to tell people what they want to hear and thus attract large crowds. It is all too easy to minister to people's self-righteousness and thereby build up a large organization. But is this success?

In this world, success consists in being looked up to by others, but we cannot accept this standard. For we know "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." According to the world's view, Jesus Christ was a complete failure and Joseph Stalin was the greatest success (for he had wealth, honor and power, and he kept them to the end of his life). It is obvious that the world's values are backwards.

What, then, is our criterion for success? Jesus faced this problem among His own disciples, and He said: "Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." Service is success; self-seeking is failure. (And those who live the most completely for themselves are always the most unhappy.)

Yet there is only one service that is worth rendering, and that is to bear witness to Christ. Since everyone is his own consciousness, there is nothing that you can really do for another (aside from the ordinary considerations of kindness and justice) except to point him to That which is the Source of all good. And the best way to do this is to be an example of It, to bear witness to the Allness of Life, Joy, and Peace; for one example is worth a thousand words. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." This is the service to which we are called. It is promised: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Consider the billions of years that this earth has been in existence, the billions of years that it will still be here. Consider also the immensity of the cosmos, and what an insignificant grain of dust our earth is. Then you will see how ludicrous all human pretensions are, and how silly all merely human efforts. Go further and consider the Infinitude of the Almighty; and you will see, as Meister Eckhart said, that "creatures of themselves are mere nothings." Yet this Infinite Creator has something to do in everyone of us, some special way in which to reveal Himself, some special method in which we can bear witness to His Love, Joy, and Peace.

Only as we surrender our self-importance and self-assertion and let the Almighty reveal Himself through us - as He will to the extent that we permit Him - can we be considered successful in Spirit. The Lord will work in and through us only as we cease from our own efforts. The Spirit will fill us and shine through us only when we are empty of self. It is thus true that "whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest."

In the matter of spiritual ongoing, everyone must be his own judge. But we can tell whether we are making progress by whether our awareness of the Presence of God is becoming more and more important to us. Are we becoming ever more interested in God and in obedience to Him and ever less interested in the world and its views? If so, then we are making progress in Truth, and we may consider ourselves on the way to being successful.

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SPIRITICITY April 1957

EASTER

By Alden Truesdell

"What is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honour."

This minute has come to pass. It will not remain; but the degree of the Truth that we recognize this minute will endure for us. Time will pass; Truth will remain.

We may know the Truth about ourselves - we should know the Truth about ourselves - for we have been instructed by tenet and by example. But, for the most part, we have put off the awakening until a future time, for fear we should lose some of our gloom and gluttony; for these have become habitual. These are the qualities we refer to when we speak of ourselves as "only human," and these human habits have become preferable to spiritual quickening and divine enlightenment. We have no excuse for a delayed awakening, except as we are willing to admit that, because of familiarity, we love the darkness more than we do the Light.

If man's Divine Destiny is to live forever in a state of freedom, he will be wise to start payments of attention to the ways of this spiritual security, much as he makes payments of money to a future social security. And he will find that, unlike social security, the spiritual security is right at hand, although centuries of theological instruction have tried to place it, too, in the future.

Easter Sunday should be the day of days for rejecting all futurity. For Easter celebrates the day when a Man named Jesus - later to be named by many other names - overcame every man-made concept, overcame the world, and demonstrated dominion over death. This was the Man (or God) who previously had taught the Kingdom of God "at hand," the Kingdom of God "within"; and that "he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." This is the Man of God who promised that if anyone would keep His true and spiritual words that one would "never see death." This is the Man who promised the repentant: "This day is salvation come to this house."

We revel in the complacency of compromise, when we might be pioneering in the Principle of Eternal Life. For we have the Christ doctrine of Eternal Life; we have the Example so dear to those who have found the practicability of Principle. If we knew what has come upon us and who has brought it to us, we would cease to be complacent. We would become avid for more of this light, power, and life - available as of the present time, this present instant. Instead of relegating our immortality to a future time, we would be diligent in giving our attention to the immediacy of our heritage.

At Easter we may find ourselves considering with profit some of the cryptic words of Jesus, some of the "hard sayings":

"I go to prepare a place for you, . . . that where I am, there ye may be also."

"A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father."

"Neither pray I for these (disciples) alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: . . . that the Love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Jesus Christ prayed for all who would hear - including you and me - that they might be with Him where He is and behold His glory.

We have already been blessed by our acceptance of such of the divine qualities as we could use. But at Easter we may well consider those things that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man."

For when Jesus said, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father," He was speaking to you and to me - for your benefit and my benefit.

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SPIRITICITY April 1957

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(concluded from last month)

By H. B. Jeffery

In the interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, I have attempted to give some idea of the inner significance of the Prayer as it is found in the Greek. For there is a spiritual meaning, unknown to the uninitiated - among which uninitiated are to be found the translators of the Bible into English.

From what these translators have given us, we can readily believe them to have been men utterly devoid of all knowledge of the mysteries, and most darkly ignorant concerning the mystical sense of the inspired writings. Their attempt to give a literal translation, which in the case of this Prayer has proved most abortive, is evidence of the truth uttered by Paul: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Indeed, Paul must have foreseen the danger of future literalness in the preaching of the Gospel; for this is his full statement: "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

The Prayer was first given in the Aramaic language. Later it was rendered into Greek; but the common version, as we have it, is a translation from the Latin Vulgate. In the Greek, it is in the imperative mood. It is musical and in the form of a chant; but it is also in the form of a command to Deity - who, in another part of the Scripture, is credited with saying, "Concerning the work of My hands command ye Me."

The whole Prayer, as originally given is affirmative and commanding, and in no sense a petition. It declares that all must be so. Thus the repetition of it has a certain energizing efficiency, like that of eating and drinking. It is indeed food and drink to one whose spiritual nature is quickened and alive. The effect upon the mind is to make it bold, courageous, confident; and in turn the body becomes energized and vitalized.

The following is a very adequate rendering in English:

Our Father which art in the heavens (or, Thou in the heavens),
Thy Kingdom must be returning (or, Thy Realm must be returning);
Thy Will must be being manifested, as in heaven, so upon the earth.
Our spiritual bread give us today.
And forgive us our obligations, as we also have forgiven those under
obligations to us.
Thou wilt not abandon us to trial (or, in the proving),
but preserve us from uselessness.

In the earlier manuscripts, the Prayer ends here. And so it does in our Scriptures, except in Matthew, where there is added: "For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever" - or, "Thine is the Realm, the Force, and the Radiance."

This addition, which appears in Matthew, is made up of two forms of doxology in common use among the Jews at that date, and is in the nature of a credo, the affirmation of an implicit belief.

It is the sincere desire of the writer that whoever may read these lines, even if he learns nothing else from them, will rightly come to understand that Jesus never taught men to beg for material food from the Almighty, and never intimated that the heavenly Father would ever lead anyone into temptation.

The reader can see how important it is rightly to understand these passages of the Lord's Prayer, when he remembers Christ's ceaseless guidance of mankind toward a perfect worship of "the only true God."

For could anyone trustingly and whole-heartedly worship a god who is likely to lead mankind into temptation? a God whom he has to beseech not to so lead him? a Father whom he must beg for his daily bread? No. Such a conception of our Heavenly Father would engender fear, uncertainty, and a sense of bondage, instead of opening our hearts to God's gift of love and life and joy and freedom.

But Jesus knew the true God, as He declared many times throughout His teaching. He dealt bountifully with the multitudes, bringing forth an overabundance of food for them by simply speaking the word of God. He was beneficent, forgiving, protective, and gracious in His munificence, stating that he did only what He saw the Father doing. Charged with the Will of God in every word and deed, he lifted men's hearts to that realm of purity and peace in which there is no temptation; and he warned his followers away from the worldly pitfalls of ignorance and selfishness.

The Son of God told us that He was sent that we might have life more abundantly, that we might have the Divine Joy fulfilled in us, and that we might be free by knowing the Truth as He did.

Moreover, He said of those who shall love the true God to the point of self-abandoned worship, "in spirit and in truth," that "the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

Therefore, "if any man have ears to hear, let him hear," for it is to such true worshippers that God's Kingdom is given - in earth, as it is in heaven.

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Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

April 1957

1. ALWAYS be steady, . . . fulfill you ministry.
2. BE BLAMELESS, as the steward of God.
3. There is a great gain in godliness with CONTENTMENT.
4. Teach what befits sound DOCTRINE.
5. Take hold of the ETERNAL life to which you were called.
6. Hold FAST the FAITHFUL word.
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8. GOD GIVETH GRACE to the humble.
9. HUMBLE yourself therefore under the mighty HAND of God.
10. Christ Jesus brought life and IMMORTALITY to light through the Gospel.
11. The doers of the Law will be JUSTIFIED.
12. God is of great KINDNESS.
13. All who are LED by the Spirit are sons of God.
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15. Show Thy MARVELOUS loving kindness.
16. God shall supply all your NEED.
17. So run, that ye may OBTAIN the prize.
18. PRAISE Him for the help of His countenance.
19. QUENCH not the Spirit.
20. REKINDLE the gift of God that is within you.
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22. The testimony of the Lord is SURE.
23. TEACH what is good.
24. Preach the Word, be URGENT in season and out of season.
25. He heard my VOICE out of His temple.
26. I will call upon the Lord, WHO is WORTHY to be praised.
27. I shall YET praise Him.
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29. Where is thy ZEAL.
30. Gird up the loins of your mind.

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