

MAN IS THE CHILD OF GOD

By Alden Truesdell

WE ARE fairly well convinced by now of the spirituality of God. We are coming to realize that God as Spirit created us in His image and likeness, that it is His own Spirit in us that makes us living beings, that it is the Spirit of God that is our life.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage; . . . but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

We may perhaps appreciate the intimate relationship we have with God by considering some of those we have always known as our relations: grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers. These we have always known to be our own kin, our own flesh and blood. And yet how close have we been to the majority of these? Probably the mother relationship has been most vital to most of us. Possibly the brother or sister relationship has been the most casual, and sometimes the most comfortable. The father of the family often seems somewhat austere; while the other relatives leave their mark in memory by sheer force of character.

Some of these associations are close - indeed too close if they are based on an attitude of possessiveness, as they often are. But, all in all, there is an integrating influence in the family circle that charms and attracts.

The spiritual relationship sometimes separates these close-knit groups, even scattering them to far-flung regions, that the more extensive idea of spiritual sonship may have room to exercise itself. There is nothing unkind in the statement of Jesus that He came to separate father and son, mother and daughter:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

When anyone accepts his spiritual relationship to God, he is apt to be separated from his family - not by his choice or their choice, but by the action of an irresistible power. For he must be free and far removed from the critical eye of relatives, so as to have an opportunity to learn about his spiritual birthright.

The Father-son relationship is what Jesus came to teach and to prove, which He did to the satisfaction of all who cared to witness, or to look at the record. He exposed the nature of this relationship as being spiritual. He said in substance: Man is not a material being; man is a spiritual being, the image and likeness of God.

Jesus Christ was never separated from a conscious realization of the All-sufficiency of God that He recommended. He was an example of the superiority of the life He was living - of entire dependence on the Father for everything.

Early in our Truth studies we are instructed in our correct relationship with God. We say: "God is Spirit. I am Spirit, perfect, holy, harmonious. I am one with God and am governed by His law."

This would have set us up and established us in our right relationship, but for the feeling we have of being somewhat less than sons of God. It is possible to go through a lifetime declaring we are sons of God, but having our behavior give comfort to our enemies who scoff at our claims. For as a man "thinketh in his heart so is he" - or as we would say, "As a man feels, so is he."

Time will in due season drop the declarations of sonship into the heart, or the unconscious nature. Here they begin to take form and bring forth after their kind. For here the word becomes flesh and dwells among us. We see, then, how by our selection of the right thoughts, we can regulate the things being formed in, through, and roundabout us. We can see too how this way of working could be a long-drawn-out process; for not only our good thoughts will drop into the heart, but all the other thoughts as well. The law causes the weeds to grow as well as the good grain, and as gardeners know weeds can be troublesome. But as constantly better ways of gardening are being developed each season, so there is a more excellent way of promoting our own growth.

Instead of the trial-and-error method of thinking, we may, if we will, seek God - if haply we may "feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; . . . for we are also His offspring."

We may, if we will, lift up our heart above thinking, to have it spiritually seeded in an area free from troublesome weeds, free indeed from anything but God. We will then be starting to garden our consciousness profitably. And we may then understand what Jesus meant when He said: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things."

Jesus Christ constantly remembered the Spiritual Reality of Father and son. All His works were based upon the works of His Father. As He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Jesus Christ without hesitation declared love for God to be the greatest commandment. So it is that love is the more excellent way. We cannot think our way into love, but we can see love penetrating into our own mind and influencing every mental action. It is in this way that we are able to have that mind in us "that was also in Christ Jesus."

Much of our early probing for, and pursuing of, Truth is an intellectual activity; and as such it is a working of the law. But as it eventually drives us to our Inner Temple, we respond to an inner action that brings us close to the Gospel. The law makes nothing perfect, but it does prepare us to anticipate and appreciate perfection.

Paul sees that now is the time of preparation, when we are seeing through a glass darkly. "But when that which is perfect is come," he says, "then that

which is in part shall be done away." He sees us in process of being perfected, and of this difference between preparation and perfection he says: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

Just as we see children in all stages of growth on their way to manhood and womanhood, so does our Father in Heaven see us in process of growth to full spiritual Sonship.

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

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PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

By Robert Applegate, Jr.

(Continued from last month)

"FIRST, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. My witness is God, whom I serve in my spirit in the Good News of His Son, that I always, unfailingly, mention you in my prayers. I pray that, if it is the will of God, the way may be made clear for me to come to you. For I want to see you, so that I may give you some spiritual gift to strengthen you; that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith - yours and mine. I want you to know, brothers, that I have often planned to come to you, so that I might have some fruit among you as among the other nations; but I have been prevented up until now."

A letter in Paul's day always opened with the salutation "A to B, Greetings." This was followed by an expression of thanksgiving and a prayer, or wish, for the recipient of the letter. So here Paul follows the general pattern. He then goes on to tell of his plans to come to Rome. At the time of writing he was on his way from Corinth (or from Cenchrae, the port of Corinth) to Jerusalem to deliver an offering he had collected. He hoped to go directly from Jerusalem to Rome; but when he did go to Rome, two years later, it was as an ambassador in chains. All of this of course was unknown when he wrote his letter.

"I am in debt both to the Greeks and the barbarians, both to the learned and the unlearned; and so I am eager to tell the Good News also to you in Rome."

This is an indication both of Paul's greatness and of the transcendent value of the Good News. To appreciate the force of it, we would have to imagine that this country had been conquered by the Japanese - that they had imposed on us not only their sovereignty, but also their culture. In that event, a few Americans would ape their conquerors and would collaborate with them; the vast majority would resist the foreign culture by every means at their disposal. Then we must suppose that some Truth teacher arose with the audacity to say, "I am in debt both to the Japanese and the Americans." By so doing he would be forcibly declaring that the Truth was transcendent to, and more important than, these seemingly all-important cultural and nationalistic differences; and that he, as an instrument of Truth, was also superior to them.

This would be a fair analogy to the position and the statement of Paul. And I think it gives us a good indication of the stature of the man. To him more than to any other individual we owe the fact that the Good News was offered to the whole world (and so to us), instead of remaining the exclusive Jewish possession.

"For I am not ashamed of the Good News; it is the Power of God to deliver everyone who believes, the religionist first, then the intellectual. In it the Goodness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, 'The good shall live by faith.'"

This is the theme of Paul's message: The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Power of God to deliver anyone who accepts it by faith. This simple, overpowering truth has been obscured by the verbage of the King James Translation and the misinterpretation of it - the worst offender being the word "salvation."

Everyone wants deliverance from something, if it is just from a general feeling of futility and dissatisfaction. Many want deliverance from sickness, from family troubles, from financial worries. Basically, although we generally keep this hidden even from ourselves, we all want deliverance from mortality. No one wants to die. All these deliverances (and any more that you can think of) are included in the promise with which Paul starts his letter. This is what the Gospel offers. This is why it is the Good News.

This brings us to the second point: deliverance is for those who believe. Just as you have to have faith in anything before you can receive any benefit from it, so you have to have faith in the Gospel before you can accept what it freely offers. You may have the most perfect car ever built; but unless you have faith enough to get in it and drive it, you will receive no benefit from it. If you are firmly convinced that may be entirely wrong, the car will do you no good. And so it is with everything that we use - faith precedes benefit.

Some people are unduly concerned about faith, as though religious faith were somehow different from other kinds of belief, which they are practicing every moment of their lives. There are of course all degrees of faith from a very wavering hope to an unshakable conviction; but, basically, faith is one and the same thing whether it is faith in an automobile, an investment, or God. It is a prime necessity for any achievement. So, Paul says, the Power of God is revealed in the Good News to everyone who believes in the Good News. It is as simple as that.

The phrase "from faith to faith" seems to be designed simply to emphasize that it is faith - not religious goodness - that is the essential. Paul sometimes strains at words, trying to get his message across.

The promise is first to the religionist because his approach to God is more direct than that of the intellectual; it is more like one's direct approach to another person. The religionist, however, usually loses the benefits of the promise (as Paul will point out later) because he puts his own particular religious institution in the place of God.

The promise is second to the intellectual because he has to have a reason for everything, and his own reasoning gets in his way and prevents him from seeing what is before his eyes. Anyone who has read a few of the philosophers knows that these supremely rational men all reason their way to those conclusions to which they are emotionally predisposed.

But the Good News is for the intellectual as well as the religiously inclined; for it is, of necessity, supremely logical (for what can be more logical than the Truth?). But it requires that same suspension of judgment, that same rigorous honesty that a scientist brings to his work.

Faith in the Power of God opens up an entirely new way of life. It does away with self-importance and self-striving. After all, the more faith one has in God, the less he can take himself - as a person - seriously. The more he believes God is working in him and for him, the less effort he will make on his own behalf. This is why the Good News is resisted. Men love their self-importance too much to relinquish it. But "the good live by faith."

This word that I have translated "good" is that difficult word *dikaaios*. "Just" is too juridical; "righteous" is too religious; and "good" is too prissy, but is perhaps the best that can be done. It indicates that which is good for something, really that which is performing its proper function in the proper way. The good man, in this sense, is the man that is doing the job for which he is in the world and doing it well. It can be done only by faith.

(To be continued)

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MINISTRY

By Nell Truesdell

(Continued from last month)

CHRIST TRUTH ministry is a spiritual working power that is effective whenever it is invoked. "Like a sky-cow for rich givings," ministry awaits your request. Like electric current that is available when you flip a switch, ministry will flow to you if you but touch it with your attention. Ministry never withholds its blessings; it cannot for that is not its nature. The reach of your demand and your capacity to receive an answer determine how much ministry you experience or receive.

An established ministry is a storehouse of spiritual helpfulness and supply. Its commodities are spiritual healings and prosperings. If you want ministry it does not matter whether or not you voice your demand; for whenever you look toward ministry, you tune in on its sustained program of God-Presence, God-Power, and God-Knowing. You will observe that whenever you request Christ-Truth ministry, help in some form appears: affairs become harmonious; work is accomplished without strain, mental and emotional pressures lift; the body is refreshed; unexpectedly, something good happens; a friend gets well or gets a better job; opportunities open for you; and so forth.

Through the years such effects have been recounted to us by persons who sought our ministry. The following example of gratitude for help received gives us joy:

"We want to thank you for the interest you have taken in our son's illness. Through your prayers to the Heavenly Father, he can walk without his cane or brace."

Though we have never met these friends, their request for help, relayed through a close relative, brought astonishing results into the life of a young man, doomed by his doctors to paralysis. Such evidence of the working power of the Christ Truth proves that the healing Presence when called into action will disregard appearances and give health and cure where none had been thought possible.

Persons who ask for help must admit that they have received it; they must learn to accommodate themselves to the surprise of wholeness and to make some gesture of thanks for ministry received. Ministry is something that cannot be taken for granted. "Give, and it shall be given unto you" is a key to demonstrations of any kind. Many fail to turn this key in the locks of their own resistance, doubt, trickery, and ingratitude.

If a person is not aware of receiving the ministry he asked for he has in some way pushed the spiritual service away from him, instead of accepting it wholeheartedly. Spiritual ministry does not always appear in the exact guise a person wants it to. Spiritual ministry must not be ordered to manifest in a specific way; it must be invoked, received, and thankfully acknowledged. Channels opened by appreciative acceptance of ministry will always be filled with good and pleasant rewards.

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FOR BEGINNERS

Q. Why do I feel so emotionally upset since I have seriously begun the study of Truth?

A. Paul describes this movement in consciousness as "putting off the old man" and "putting on the new man." (See Ephesians 4:19-25; Colossians 3:2-10) A more recent teacher calls it "chemicalization." The change from old ways of thought and feeling into controlled channels and uplifted directions strains the entire mechanism of spirit-soul-body. Its functions are disturbed and often violently resist the new attitudes being shaped by more constructive responses to stimuli from within and from without. Troublesome negative habits become intensified and irritated; they seek an outlet through the feeling nature. However, if you will persist in setting your attention on spiritual goals and deliberately cultivate the habit of declaring the Truth at every opportunity, you will unify the spiritual elements in your consciousness so that they are strengthened and made substantial. The whole man will be built up and will bear witness to your realization that you are created in the image and likeness of God.

Conflict indicates that you are making progress. Do not fear discord. Spiritual growth will soon overbalance discomforts and with Paul you "shall be a follower of God"; and shall "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away." Do not coddle yourself when you fail, but forgive yourself, and start over again. You are building a new self out of the spiritual elements that have always been with you, but that had been concealed by negative habits of thought, speech, and feeling. Let the new pattern of existence be molded into the new you. Manage the necessary changes with understanding and patience.

Q. I read widely and am intrigued with the teachings of Eastern philosophers and mystics. Will they deflect me from my course to be a follower of Jesus Christ?

A. The mind of the East and the mind of the West approach and handle identical ideas in different ways. Jesus Christ emerged from the East and, facing the West, gave fresh impetus and meaning to ancient ideas and practices. We of the West, not trained in the mores of the East, may misinterpret the subtleties in their teachings and therefore reach impractical and erroneous conclusions. If we would be spiritually illumined, the shortest road to enlightenment is the way of Jesus Christ and His doctrine. He gave specific directions concerning man's transition from human bondage to spiritual sonship. Only He can lead us out of the choppy seas of mental delusion or occult intrigue. There is nothing mysterious in Jesus' teaching. It is so practical and to the point that it is resisted by minds fascinated by obscure and puzzling tenets. The man of understanding may extract true values from anything he reads.

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

APRIL 1961

1. The effect of righteousness . . . (is) ASSURANCE forever.

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3. He that hath a BOUNTIFUL eye shall Be BLESSED.

4. A merry heart maketh a CHEERFUL COUNTENANCE.

5. The heavens DECLARE the glory of the Lord.

6. Let us EXALT His Name together.

7. My FLESH . . . shall rest in hope.

8. GLORY to GOD in the highest.

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10. I will HEAL HIM.

11. Hear the INSTRUCTION of thy Father.

12. There shall no evil happen to the JUST.

13. I am KNOWN of Mine.

14. LIGHT is sweet and pleasant.

15. We will give ourselves . . . to the MINISTRY of the Word.

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17. The Lord is NIGH unto all that call upon Him in truth.

18. The Lord brought us forth . . . with an OUTSTRETCHED arm.

19. The God of love and PEACE shall be with you.

20. Study to be QUIET.

21. He will REST in His love.

22. He will joy over thee with SINGING.

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24. TEACH us THY way, O Lord.

25. The heart of him that hath UNDERSTANDING seeketh knowledge.

26. O VISIT me with Thy salvation.

27. Peace be WITHIN thy WALLS.

28. YE YOURSELVES are taught of God to love one another.

29. It is good to be ZEALOUSLY affected always in a good thing.

"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."

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