

SOME WORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Robert Applegate, Jr.

"UNTO ME, WHO am less than the least of all saints (i.e., those who are dedicated to following Christ), is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 3:8-9)

The word "mystery" (musterion in Greek) was common one in the religious language of the First Century because of the "mystery" religions. These were a prominent part of the religious life of the Greeks, but we know very little about them because only initiates were admitted and they kept their secrets. But the early Christians adopted the word "mystery" to designate that which was revealed only to those "initiated" into Christianity.

Jesus Christ, as far as we know, used the word only once ("Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables"). Paul used the word frequently. The best commentary on it I have seen is that given about the year 400 by John Chrysostom: "A mystery is what is proclaimed everywhere, but is not understood by those who have not the right judgment; it is revealed not by cleverness, but by the Holy Spirit, as far as we can receive it."

The word translated "fellowship" is an even more common one in the New Testament. The Greek word is koinonia, and there is simply is no adequate English rendering of it. But the idea is simple; it is that of joint-ownership, as in a company where the stock-holders are joint-owners of the company. The New Testament tells us over and over that joint-ownership of God, of the mysteries of God, of Christ, is the proper portion of the sincere Christians.

In the first Letter of John we read: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." This is less than what John wanted to say. It would be better to translate: "Truly we are joint-partakers of God and of His Son Jesus Christ."

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"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. . . . Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins: and in Him is no sin." (I John 1:9; 3:5)

I would translate this passage as follows:

"If we acknowledge our mistakes, He is faithful and just, so that He will cancel out our mistakes and purify us of all deviation from His way. . . . You know that He was revealed so that He might destroy our errors; there is no error in Him."

The word translated "sin" in our New Testament is hamartia, which means any mistake of any sort. Originally it meant to miss the mark in shooting a bow and arrow; and then it came to mean any missing of the mark, any mistake, any miscalculation, whether in battle, in navigation, in business, in politics, or

in daily conduct. (Our English word "sin" originally had this same meaning; but our ideas about God have been so anthropomorphic that we have come to use the word exclusively to mean an offense against God, for which he is, rightly, angry and will probably punish us.)

In times of great distress and uneasiness (such as the First Century, when the Roman Empire was obviously decaying, and such as today), men start to feel that they have made some grievous mistakes (as truly they have); and the idea of sin becomes prominent in the race consciousness. And so Arnold Toynbee designates the two alternative responses - a sense of drift and a sense of sin - as being indications of the decay of a society.

But the word "sin" as it is used in the New Testament means any mistake, and the Christian teaching is that Jesus Christ came into the world to free us from our mistakes and the results of them.

The word translated "forgive" is aphiemi. It means to cancel out, to destroy (literally, to throw away). So forgiveness is not simply pardon; it is the removal of our mistakes and so of the cause of our misery, failure, and unhappiness.

There is one basic mistake that is the source of all others; and that is pride: the idea that we can do something or be something of ourselves, apart from our Creator. This is the lack of reverence for God that Paul in the First Chapter of Romans points to as the cause of all human depravity, foolishness, and consequent misery:

"When they knew God, they did not reverence Him as God and were not thankful; but they became foolish in their reasoning, and their uncomprehending heart was darkened. Imagining themselves to be clever, they became foolish. . . . Since they did not want to keep acknowledging God, God gave them up to a debased mind."

This is the story of everyone of us. We are in this world as "exiles" because we have turned away from God in the desire to be independent. And our troubles in this world are proportionate to our lack of reverence (which the Bible calls "fear") for God and our consequent desire to be self-sufficient.

This is the mistake that Jesus came into the world to wipe out. He allowed Himself to be crucified, and He was resurrected in the sight of men, to show us our eternal oneness with the Father and to rekindle our reverence for this most tremendous Fact.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save (deliver) sinners."

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SPIRITICITY August 1960

THE TIME FOR TRAINING IS NOW

By Nell Truesdell

ON A NIGHT in June in 1960 two men met at the Polo Grounds to fight for the title of World Champion in Boxing. The Challenger was black; the Champion was white. Once before, these two had boxed for the title and the black man,

the World champion at the time, had lost the title to his opponent. On this fateful night the two men again met to fight for the coveted title: the black man to regain it; the white to retain it.

Training largely determines whether or not a person will win or lose in any field.

For nine months the challenger secluded himself in a remote training camp. His only companions were his manager and his sparring partners, for his former fair-weather friends found the journey to camp too difficult. Left alone, he had to work out his own problems and make himself ready for the scheduled fight without their dubious assistance. Daily he ran the required miles, worked in the gym, and observed strict rules of eating and sleeping. As the weeks and months passed, he worked steadily, doggedly. "I'm religious about the physical side of training," he told a visiting reporter.

He reviewed films of his former fight with the Champion, not to watch himself caper about the ring, but to observe and study all the movements of the other man. He had had the bitter experience of believing what reporters had told him - that the white man was a fool in the ring. All too late, he had discovered the white man possessed a right punch that was fatal. Now, with a chastened attitude, he studied the white man's movements in the ring so that he could forestall those movements successfully. He had learned the hard way that unless a man sets about to change himself, he will continue to go through the same ineffective and unproductive motions year after year, in test after test.

Armed with the awareness of his problem, the Challenger practiced with purpose. He perfected punches designed to thwart his opponent's moves. Instead of mechanically shadow-boxing, clobbering a light bag in the gym, and relaxing many hours with superficial friends, he trained his whole body to coordinate and move in new and effective ways. He punched with purpose until purposeful punching became a reflex action.

For a similar period the Champion lived in a different environment. Preferring free and easy living, he chose for his training camp a lavish hotel in a popular summer resort in the Catskill Mountains. With all expenses assumed by the hotel management, the Champion's only obligation was that he be agreeable with the other guests that crowded the resort to see and be seen with the Champ. They openly marveled at his physique, timidly felt his arm muscles, and flocked to watch him skip rope, punch a light bag, and shadow-box. At every opportunity his admirers flattered him, and their adoration doubtless puffed his sense of self-importance and false assurance. When he trained, he trained hard; but the results of periods of concentrated training were lost as he played around: riding, swimming, and golfing with new-found friends, and enjoying the company of his lovely fiancée, who was his constant companion. Not only did the Champion enjoy himself socially, but he attended to the details of the many businesses in which he was involved. And to clinch his philosophy of relaxation while preparing for a fight, he did no training for five days before the match.

As the two men climbed into the ring, the vast crowd that filled the grounds to capacity roared with anticipation. After the usual preliminary instructions from the referee, the men retired to their corners. The bell rang, and the boxers faced each other, each filled with desire to win.

We know the result. The favored Champion went down in the fifth round under that crushing weight of his opponent's left. His ignoble defeat not only dragged down his own hopes and confidence, but that of admirers all over the world. Apparently having everything, he showed to the world that he had nothing; for inordinate self-esteem is a forsaking god - and no man can be god to himself.

This boxing match was a test between two men on the same level in the same field. Why did the Challenger win and the Champion lose? The answer lies in the attitude of each toward the game. One buried himself alive; worked, ate, and lived for one purpose: to win. For, once, he too had been overly self-

confident and had paid the penalty. The other reveled in his title of champion, and lived to regret it. He allowed his inner strengths to leak out in meaningless associations with people who, themselves, were seeking the thrills of personal indulgence.

Flattery is a dreadful thing. It puffs a human being up in such a way that he believes that he has powers far beyond the ordinary; and, at the same time, it subtly steals the very powers that the person thinks he possesses.

The Challenger had trained his body to react automatically under pressure. He did not have to think about what to do when the fight was under way. All he had to do was let his training take over and work through him. At a time when he could neither rationalize about nor analyze his opponent, his body, a perfect working machine automatically obeyed the rules of the game.

The Champion believed that he could win by thinking what to do while in the ring. But thinking never pays off during a crucial moment. To the contrary, thinking will interfere with right action when a person is under stress. Success for a person put to the test will manifest when previous training rises and takes over in "the last hour," the time when no man can think for himself or deliver himself. At such a time a man is forced to depend on what he has already banked within himself, as he automatically goes through the motions of doing what needs to be done at a given time.

The mental and physical crackups that so many of our generation are experiencing are not accidental. They are the fruits of lack of training in all the small disciplines that are important, from infancy through adulthood. The child is not allowed to experience suffering or trial or denial of personal pleasures, so that he might learn from inside himself how to cope with adversity. Can the adult help himself when he has stored no cache of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual strength to meet the emergencies of human existence?

Do you flare easily in anger? Train not to. Are you hopelessly negative in trial? Train not to be. Are you continually fearful of loss or lack? Train not to be. Begin now to round up and preserve your inner energies. Curb them from flowing outward wastefully. And all that you conserve will serve you and bless you.

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. . . When we let go of our intellect and our reasoning in order to realize the Essence of Being, when we become fools for Christ's sake, then have we opened the door of our consciousness to receive the light of Love. To this end the sense-dream must be forgotten, for it preoccupies us with that which is unreal. CHRISTIANITY, H. B. Jeffery

SPIRITICITY August 1960

MERCY EVERLASTING

By Alden Truesdell

"HE HAD COMPASSION on them and healed them."

If there ever has to be surgery, the best surgeon is the one who discards sympathy for science. A surgeon who is fearfull of hurting the patient might put off the necessary operation, and the long delay would cause complications more serious than the original disease. A capable surgeon knows that the

quicker and cleaner the cut, the better the chance for a normal cure, and the sooner will the ointments of healing do their perfect work.

Although, at times, the Great Physician may act as a heartless surgeon in cutting out infected parts with his sword of Truth, this is a last resort, which is always followed by an anointing of healing Love. If the patient had applied the correct spiritual medicine before the condition became acute, there would have been no need for the spiritual operation.

Therefore we forestall the need for invoking the two-edged sword of Truth by keeping in a constant state of spiritual solvency. The ideal method of doing this is set forth in the first practice of principle taught by Jesus Christ: "Repent." To "repent" is to turn around completely, to face in a new direction altogether. When repentance has been set into motion, remission (healing) is then experienced.

Remission is the Mercy of God that man finds by looking, watching, and praying, within himself to the Divinity that is in all men alike. The steadfast watcher experiences conscious contact with that Divinity. When such a one has not kept contact, he knows it, and he knows what to do about it. He goes where he found God in the first place - within, or in the midst of consciousness.

Mercy is not the maudlin thing that we find in the do-gooders, who advise everybody else to be kind to criminals, but who are unable to be kind to their own families. Mercy is a medicine that casts out the local beam before it becomes preoccupied with the distant mote.

Everything begins with God. All God's activities are first begun at Jerusalem (the inner center of spiritual sufficiency in all persons). Jesus wept over Jerusalem because of the hardness of the human attitude that had become congealed through forgetfulness of their own compassionate Source of mercy.

We cannot command the spiritual compassion, which is the Mercy of God, by appointing committees or by making a public decision for Christ or by hitting the sawdust trail or by taking a correspondence course to get a degree in metaphysics. Mercy stems from its Source, from the heights within consciousness. It flows through the center of spiritual Identity, and then on out as a transforming essence. It moves from the Divine Center to an equally divine circumference. Man with his various phases of consciousness (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual) is the object that is affected.

Spiritual healing is prominent in a spiritual ministry. This kind of healing is recommended for its permanence. There are other systems of healing; but the Christ Truth healing is advised if we want to exchange illness for health, age for youth, apparent lack for true riches, death for life, mortality for immortality, corruption for incorruption.

There is mental healing; there is psychic healing; there is magnetic healing. Often we can see results in all these methods, but we cannot guarantee the after effects. We may explain this as follows:

In mental healing, particularly in the sort branded "spiritual," there is much exercise of the personal will of the practitioner over the will of the patient, and this is but a form of hypnotism. It is effective only so long as the practitioner wills. We see then that this practice is but a form of bondage.

Then in the work labeled psychoanalysis there is the uncovering of both repressions and suppressions through endless questioning and recitation on the part of the healer and the patient. This is good as far as it goes; but the hitch is that the patient is left holding a bag of trash that he cannot let go of and the "healer" cannot dissolve. Too often, the analyst will occupy the emptiness created by the digging up of inhibitions - that is, the patient may wonder who is the matter with him now, and find that the healer is.

In psychic (emotional) healing, there is usually a strong dependence upon the religious notions already established in the race consciousness. Because these are based upon the race hope of dying and going to heaven, this method is more closely allied with death than with life.

Magnetic healing is mostly a stimulation of the emotional (and consequently the sexual) energies of both practitioner and patient. This kind of healing will build up in the patient a great stimulation which will sooner or later reach a peak, to be followed by a tremendous letdown - much as a bout with hard liquor will lift a person and then let him down with a thud.

Spiritual healing brings all of these lesser forms of healing into subjection and causes them to fall into proper place, where everything will work out for the highest good of all concerned. Rather than the patient's being at the mercy of the practitioner, he is subjected to the Mercy of God - the One who forgives all iniquity and heals all disease. Then, as long as the patient desires, he may be ministered to by this benevolent compassion. There will be no recurrence of disease, unless he himself renounces his birthright as a son of God entitled to all good.

The Christ healing exposes the Reality of Being: that Perfection in man that is, Itself, the Way, the Truth, the Resurrection, and the Life. The person who receives this type of healing enters into a measure of wholeness that has been compared to the measure of an angel and to the stature of Christ.

In Christ Truth healing there is always an integrating of scattered forces, an uplift of frustrated hope, an eventual regeneration of depleted phases of being. True spiritual healing does not do a repair job; it completely renews the whole man in spirit, soul, body, and affairs.

I have touched briefly on some of the benefits to be received from the several kinds of healing practice that are common among men today. I urge all who want healing in any degree or on any plane to turn completely, without reservation, to the practice of Jesus Christ, who without considering symptoms or bank account healed all who came to Him.

We here shall resolve to deal with a resurrection into newness of life in Christ Jesus "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." We accept His Mercy, the Compassion of Christ, that fills our heart with gladness and purifies our soul of inhibitions.

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Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

August 1960

1. Let thine ear now be ATTENTIVE.
2. BELOVED, let us love one another.
3. I Am CONTINUALLY with thee.
4. It is good for me to DRAW near to God.
5. The Lord my God will ENLIGHTEN my darkness.
6. Let the whole earth be FILLED with His glory.
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8. Thou shalt GUIDE me with Thy counsel.
9. Thou HAST HOLDEN me by Thy right HAND.
10. Take fast hold of INSTRUCTION.
11. My soul shall be JOYFUL in the Lord.
12. I KNOW whom I have believed.
13. I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy LIKENESS.
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15. God MAKETH MY way perfect.
16. Blessed be His holy NAME forever.
17. OBTAIN joy and gladness.
18. As for God, His way is PERFECT.
19. In QUIETNESS and confidence shall be your strength.
20. I will behold Thy face in RIGHTEOUSNESS
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21. God is the STRENGTH of my heart.
22. I have put my TRUST in the Lord God.
23. The meditation of my heart shall be of UNDERSTANDING.
24. This is the VICTORY, even our faith.
25. WHOM have I in Heaven but Thee?
26. Our land shall YIELD her increase.
27. See my ZEAL for the Lord.
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29. Teach me good judgment and knowledge.
30. Delight thyself also in the Lord.
31. Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.

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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."

SPIRITICITY is the Working Power of the Spiritual Principle
as electricity is the working power of the electrical principle.