

OBEDIENCE TO A CALL

By Nell Truesdell

Teachers and ministers in Truth work seem to be strange creatures to the worldly minded. "Why do they do it? What do they get out of it?" These and similar questions are asked by persons indisposed to believe that anybody in this world can survive without business or commercial connections. They are incredulous because it is their experience that they have to strive to get what material benefits they can extract from the world through using their wits and by their efforts. Profit is the great concern of such people. Everything they do is with an eye to profit for themselves and for their business enterprises.

So a woman or man engaged in giving spiritual ministry is challenged. His economic status is inquired into. Information regarding his income is sought with set determination to elicit the truth. But no teacher or minister who lives solely by faith in God's care can answer such inquiries satisfactorily. She or he will speak from the standpoint of Spirit, while the hearer will interpret from the level of materiality, and the two planes cannot be blended.

"Why do they do it?" This obscure question cannot be answered in a few words. Why does anybody do what he does? Because he felt led to do it; because a certain goal captured his attention and held it in such a manner that he gravitated toward it and it became the occupation in which he eventually became engulfed. The call to do God's work comes to the great and small, the rich and the poor. No man knows when the Master will touch him and say, "Follow me." And though he may delay the time for a little while, eventually he must respond; for no mortal can long refuse to obey God.

A brief look into Biblical history will unearth many interesting examples of God's touch upon the hearts of women and men.

Deborah lived in an exciting period in Hebrew history. In her day, women were distinctly subordinate to men. But she, certainly a woman of vigorous mind, keenly vigilant to what was going on within the developing Hebrew nation, enthusiastically devoted to the faith of her people, and filled with patriotic pride, arose to the position of Judge, or tribal leader of her people at a time when they were scattered in small groups throughout mountainous country. The Canaanites were crushing the Hebrews whose morale was failing fast. "Where is the God of our fathers?" they cried in despair. In the crisis, Deborah supplied the impelling force that was to save them. Evidently her attention was fixed on Yahweh, for three lines of her immortal song reveal her steadfastness toward Him:

"Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes: I even I, will sing unto the Lord; I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel." The Hebrews emerged victorious, and never again did the Canaanites trouble Israel. Such was the dynamic leadership of Deborah.

All of us love the story of Ruth, the Moabitess who, touched by the hand of Almighty God, followed her mother-in-law into Bethlehem to make her home in a foreign land among people of another race. She was led into the most agreeable experiences which eventually culminated in her marriage to Boaz. This

union produced a son named Obed, the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, the great King of Israel.

In the New Testament, we find Lydia, unique among women of the early church. She was the first Christian convert in Europe, and her house sheltered the first church in European Christianity. An astute business woman, rich and independent, she was keen enough to realize the true value in the message Paul brought to Philippi. She was among a group of women by a river-bank when Paul and his company chanced upon their period of worship. After Lydia met Paul, she spent many hours receiving instruction about the Master, Jesus Christ, and at length, felt able to say, "I, too, want to make open profession of my faith."

These are but three of many, many women in Biblical history who would have been at a loss, perhaps, to answer the question, "Why did you do it?"

The number of men who have responded to the call of God is so numerous that we can but brush over a few in so limited printing space. Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, - the list could unfold extensively.

We skip to Amos, the sheep-herder and dresser of sycamore trees, who said simply, "The Lord took me." He spoke much of justice. With scorching wrath he denounced the rich who wrung their wealth from the poor.

Hosea, who understood the all-forgiving love of God, said, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously."

Isaiah, a young aristocrat, must have known Amos and have been acquainted with his views. He himself looked beneath the splendor of the society about him and revolted against the moneyed powers who crushed the poor man to enrich themselves. Religion, too, was a soulless service to a God whose Name and Nature they did not understand. People forgot their dependence on God; but not Isaiah. He looked On High and saw the throne of God, and he heard the saraphims cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

Isaiah was sent upon a spiritual mission to a people he was told would harden their hearts at his words. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not."

A discouraging assignment, this; but Isaiah did not hesitate. His commission lasted forty or more years, yet his message changed so little that it is difficult to place the time of certain of his declarations. His enthusiasm never halted; he never wavered. He saw the prosperous Judah of his youth devastated by the Assyrians; but his faith in God became stronger. He moved among the people, talking constantly in public. And in one period of his life, he walked the streets of his city in the wretched garb of a captive.

The Lord, to Isaiah, was always "high and lifted up." He loved to apply names that signified this aspect of his being: "The Lord of Hosts," "The Spirit of the Lord," "Mighty One of Israel," "The Holy One of Israel," and his "Maker."

He laid stress on the holiness of God; he taught that man was utterly dependent upon God; and he promised, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, and perhaps his disciple, was unlike the usual prophets who thought of nothing but making a living. The flatters cried Peace! but sanctioned war against those who did not feed them. Not so, Micah. He could promise no hope of peace so long as rich men dispossessed poor farmers and created ill gotten estates; or who put their trust in armaments rather than in God. His was the prophetic conception of God in that he caught the ideal that God wants a man's whole heart; that He requires more than the purely ethical life. His immortal statement (if he did make it) is vivid: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Nearly three quarters of a century after Isaiah, Jeremiah came upon the scene of Israel. He continued forth years as a prophet. He was a member of a priestly family. His pleasant sociable village life did not prevent him from being intensely interested in what was going on among his own people and in surrounding nations. He reports, "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Jeremiah never tempered his words to fit the occasion or protect his person. His breath-taking experiences with rulers and princes and people and false prophets are as gripping as a modern Western motion picture. He stood like an "iron pillar" and "a wall of brass" against formidable foes. The secret of his protection and his strength is hid in these words: "I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." Though God tested him unmercifully, he never flinched. This yearning, shrinking man knew God and loved Him. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy, and the rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord, God of hosts."

Among other prophets whose words are still living flames to guide the faces of men God-ward are the following:

Joel comforted Israel with, "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. ... I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten."

Jonah, after he was delivered from the fish's belly, cried, "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple."

Habakkuk reported, "The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him."

Zephaniah encouraged, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing."

And Malachi promised to the righteous, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

"Why did they do it?" "Why do we do it?" Who can answer such questions from the standpoint of the world? The world knows not, nor cares little for its

prophets. Yet these very unknown women and men help to preserve the world in which they live and make their living. These simple souls keep their inner eye on the God who made the world. And it is their steadfast faith in Him that connects the world and its devotees to His saving grace. For they act as transmitters by which the Divine favor is handed down, or transferred, from the surpassingly great spiritual realm to the mundane domain in which men feel so secure but which is as the grass that withereth and is cast into the oven.

The Great One who walked in the world, even as you and I, was unrecognized by His family, His church, and His state. And yet His life and word preserved, and is still guarding and rescuing from death and destruction the lives of countless millions of people who are unaware of His existence. Like a whisper from heaven come His words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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A PROVED PRINCIPLE

By Robert Applegate

Paul declared that in Jesus Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Jesus Christ was not mortal-carnal man, though he took upon Himself the form of man. He was not flesh, though he took upon Himself the form of flesh. He was the fulness of the God head bodily; or, the embodiment of all that God is.

He embodied all the gentleness, tenderness, kindness, and compassion that God is. He never condemned. He said, "I come not to judge the world." He also said "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." "I am the resurrection and the life." "I that speak unto thee am He." "I am the door." He proved everything He declared.

He was fearless. He was audacious. He was bold without being insolent. He threw off the ordinary restraints of life without being wanton or lewd. He assumed the authority of the truly liberated soul, with rights and privileges that transcended established rule and exempted Him from the dominion of restricting circumstances. He never broke a law; but He fulfilled all Law.

He embodied Omnipotence; he did all things (raised the dead, healed the sick of all diseases, cast out ignoble passions, fed people by the thousands, and eventually dropped His own body into the grave, only to raise it up transformed into a body of spiritual light). The Source of His liberty of action was revealed in His statement to His disciples after He was resurrected, "All Power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Then he ordered them to go forth and minister in this same Power which was given to them in His Name.

He embodied Omniscience. He knew all things and needed not that any man should teach Him. He knew the inner significance of the Law because He knew the Source of Law. He did not imagine Himself to be the Son of God. He did not feign faith in God. He knew God. He proved this by saying, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

It is a fact that any principle has to be demonstrated before it can become operative in this world. Thus, it was only after the Wright brothers had actually demonstrated the principle of aero-dynamics by flying an airplane, that the principles involved became active and our modern air age was born. The principles were always present, but somebody had to utilize and prove them in actual practice before they could be seized by the mind of man and made to act continuously to produce intended effects in numberless ways.

It was the same with the Principle of Be-ing, which we call God. Men had caught glimpses of It before the advent of Jesus Christ, but He only proved It. Because of Him, we also can prove God's Presence.

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ACCENT ON GOD

By Alden Truesdell

"He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for He was before me," declared one who read the spiritual handwriting on the wall. And the One being announced declared, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ did works that made their names so outstanding that they were to be revered all the days of all generations.

Some people feel that too much attention given to God detracts from their personal glory and accomplishments. But the opposite is true. The Man who came not in His own name, accomplished works none other had prior to his time, and attained glory never before equaled, nor since duplicated. He revealed the secrets of Life itself and taught so plainly that all men can now know the Truth that makes free. He invited all who would listen, to participate in His entree to Reality and made but one stipulation, "Only believe."

His directions were always simple; such as, "Watch and pray," "Ask and ye shall receive," "Love one another," "Let not your heart be troubled," "Lift up your eyes, and look."

Such plain, unadorned directions might not please egotists who place the supreme end of human conduct in the self, and the sophists who argue cleverly but fallaciously. Jesus placed credit where credit was due and relegated to all men full benefits for believing and watching. We might assume that the most steadfast believer and the most intense watcher would receive the greatest rewards. However, it remains a fact that every reward received by anyone true to Jesus' directions proved to be for the benefit and profit of all.

The self-centered dislike the thought of sharing rewards. These include not only the materialists who amass wealth for themselves, but religious zealots also, who believe they are in possession of a creedal God who is going to save their particular congregation and dispense with all outsiders by the very neat process of dropping them alive in a lake of fire. Such devotees know neither the manner of Spirit they are, nor do they understand the nature and character of God. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God." "Judge not," warned the Master.

Is God impressed by a man trying to hoard the wealth of the world, or by his threats against the so-called evil-doer? A man's dramatic proclamations

might cast the veil of fear over the hearts of his listeners; but, the Light that shines away darkness can be depended upon to dissolve the mists of delusion, and that right speedily. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," cried Paul. God is good, plentiful in mercy, and ready to bless any who turn to Him. Blessings, like the atmosphere, enfold the world, and what one receives, benefits all.

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ROOTS

By Mabel L. Watts

What are roots? How necessary are they? How are they fed? All of these questions pertain to every living thing, and we who daily seek to be grounded more firmly in the knowledge and love of Truth will do well to see how stable our foundation is, how deep our roots are.

Have we stopped to consider the relation of the root to the flower? Are we sure that everything we do consciously is rooted in principles which unveil spiritual perceptions and, finally, through our high purpose, unfolds in us the glory of our being?

How great is our opportunity! We are able to watch our experiences unfold in harmony; we recognize that our timing is better because of willing obedience to the Divine processes of manifestation; and this is because the warmth of fulfillment is already upon us.

Everything is seeking the Self. We know that this world springs from Spirit and, as we lift our attention above the momentary confinements, our consciousness grows more vivid, our hearts expand, and a very definite association of Life with our own unique way of thinking, feeling, and acting comes upon us. In this way, we are continuously assured that we are within the Universal Consciousness of God.

We must trust God. We must trust ourselves. To do so, there has to be a hearty interest in what we think. Do our thoughts relate to God? Always, they should be vital and, above all, in a very real way they should be our own. Ours, because we have inquired into their truth and are able to accept and interpret them in our own way. Our experience is our own. We must build, therefore, in the light of our own spirit, not another's; for so it is that eventually our trust in ourselves becomes our trust in our Divine Progenitor.

It is said that a man seeking Truth must be dynamic, "ever moving with the less he has achieved to the more which lies before him. He must remain static in no thought, in no feeling, in no desire, in no aspiration, in no state of consciousness." Always alive to that which unfolds within us, our internal powers grow and strengthen. Our roots may be fed through the rhythm of our thinking which helps our conceptions to be nourished by our love of the ideal; then, as our powers gain in spiritual intensity, they will lift us upward in consciousness.

Whenever we are inclined to doubt, we may trust the Truth of ourselves to find and open the way.

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

FEBRUARY 1949

1. Before they call, I will ANSWER.
2. God BREATHED into man's nostrils the BREATH.
3. Plead my CAUSE, O Lord.
4. God hath DEALT graciously with us.
5. Labor ... for that meat that ENDURETH.

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7. The FATHER loveth the Son.
8. It is a GOOD thing to GIVE thanks.
9. I will HEAR what the Lord saith.
10. Continue INSTANT IN prayer.
11. My soul shall be JOYFUL in the Lord.
12. The Lord God hath KEPT me.

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14. A LITTLE LEAVEN LEAVENETH the whole LUMP.
15. God giveth not the Spirit by MEASURE.
16. Let everyone please his NEIGHBOR.
17. Receive ye ONE another.
18. Thou hast PERFECTED PRAISE.
19. Thy Word hath QUICKENED me.

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21. A full REWARD be given thee.
22. Let your SPEECH be ... SEASONED with SALT.
23. Ye are TAUGHT of God TO love.
24. UNDO heavy burdens.
25. Art not thou a VALIANT man?
26. WALK in WISDOM toward them that are WITHOUT.

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28. The field bringeth forth YEAR by YEAR.

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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.