

SPIRITICITY February 1958

BE NOT ANXIOUS

By Alden Truesdell

AS MAN SEES Nature going calmly and majestically about its business, sees the color effects and the perfection of form, and hears the pleasant symphonic tones, he might wonder why he becomes so exercised about his own place and problems in the general picture.

The mortal hustle and bustle, haste and waste, worry and anxiety seem so foreign to the placid and orderly ways of most of Nature that man seems to be the discordant note in the drama of life. One might almost see him as the villain in the cast. Some do. This should not, and need not, be the case; for the same Artistry responsible for all the beauties of Nature is the Cause and Origin of man.

If, in this life, there is a possibility of man's living in complete harmony with the rest of creation, he would do well to investigate that possibility. And if creation itself is fundamentally good, how is it that man looks out upon a world that seems so much in need of changing, reforming, and saving? And who said it needed saving? What is man's authority for his assumption of responsibility? The Christ formula; for by It man saves himself, even from the agencies of salvation.

Man was created to have dominion over the world; and he is in harmony with creation and with himself only when, through spiritual authority, he exercises that dominion. The Scriptures declare man's authority over the world and advocate assertion of that authority. Jesus Christ confirmed this by His own expression of His relation to His Father and His Father's creation. Jesus never forgot, never compromised, never vacillated, never deviated from the assertion of His spiritual mastery. He remained completely free from the world's claims to power. He was always the Master - always in complete agreement with God.

God said, "Have dominion." Jesus said, "I have overcome the world." God said, "Let there be light." Jesus said, "I am the light." God said, "Ask . . . where is the good way, and walk therein." Jesus said, "I am the way. . . . Follow Me."

It was just as natural for Jesus to say: "I am the way, the truth, and the life," as it was for God to say: "Let there be . . ." The life expressed by Jesus should be the natural estate of every man; but man puts off his blessing to worship from afar, and thus relegates his reward to an evanescent future.

The many intellectual explanations of man's origin and purpose do not strike back far enough; or else they had accepted the premise that God, and God only, was in the beginning; God, and God only, will be the end; God, and God only, is in between - regardless of man's anxiety.

When God looked out upon all He had made and said, "Behold, it is all very good," He was speaking of man. He was saying to man, "You are very good, regardless of what you think or how fraught with anxiety you may be. I, God, made you; and you are the self-conscious portion of My masterpiece of creation. Your only sin is forgetfulness of this fact. Therefore your sin is not against

the world, the race, the social or religious orders. The only sin is forgetting who you are."

The one without sin would be the one so enamored of his original state of perfection that he could see nothing but the good product of a Good Creator. Such a one would have the "bountiful eye" and "be blessed." For him the Father's assurances would be more real than anything else. Although there might at times seem to be problems and difficulties, the Light of the Father would reveal them to be but shadowy bugaboos and vain imaginings. Such a one would know that God "hath made a decree which shall not pass," and shall be subject to no interference.

As Paul expresses it so clearly:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What if man were at all times true to the divine admonition, "Look unto Me"? and would see the Goodness of God to the exclusion of all else? What if man dared to endure "as beholding the Invisible"? What if he had never deviated from the original wholesome intention that he be as God declared him to be?

If man had dared to express from his own inner genius, rather than to be seen of men, he had "chosen the better part." He would not have needed to scheme and plot. He had not needed to be worried or anxious.

Man's only sin is in forgetting his true nature and neglecting his true potentiality. When he remembers, and when he acts from the basis of God's original Plan, he is forever free from anxiety, worry, and fear.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

"I am the Way."

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HUNGER AND THIRST

By Robert Applegate

"BLESSED ARE they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The Revised Standard Version and most modern translations read: ". . . they shall be satisfied." It is nearly the same meaning; for when one is satisfied, then he does not want any more - he is "filled." Everyone is seeking satisfaction, or happiness; but who do you know who has found it?

We hunger and thirst after the things of the world and after attainment and approbation; and yet it should be the most obvious fact of existence that neither possessions nor prestige can give satisfaction. For those who have the most of these commodities are often the most dissatisfied. The vain attempt to find happiness by ministering to the demands of the outer man has been aptly compared to carrying water in a sieve. It is impossible for the mortal desires to remain filled.

Ultimately the reason man cannot be satisfied through any material means is that man is not a material being. Man is spiritual, and his desires are spiritual. His desires are not for material comforts, or even for human affection and appreciation, although they are usually so interpreted. Man's desire is for the Spirit, the Love that is God, and cannot be satisfied by any other means.

In the world, the closest that we ever come to satisfaction is in the consciousness of a useful job well done, or in the act of wholehearted giving, when we forget ourselves completely. Yet even these satisfactions are not lasting, but must ever be sought anew. But listen to the reports of those who have sought their good in God.

Jeremiah: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

Psalmist: "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. . . . And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts in Christ Jesus."

Brother Lawrence: "I am always happy. All the world suffer; and I who deserve the severest discipline, feel joys so continual and so great that I can scarce contain them."

Jesus Christ: "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Satisfaction is promised to them that hunger and thirst after the things of God; and no one who has ever sought God as diligently as most men seek their places in the world has reported disappointment. This is not to say that man's desires are "wrong," but that they have been badly misinterpreted. Every desire for satisfaction is the Spirit calling man homeward. But man persists in looking without for what can be found only within. And all worldly institutions, all academic training, and all "culture" encourage this perversity.

"Righteousness" is a right relation with God. It does not consist in the performance or non-performance of certain actions, although many believe it does. According to the primitive view, "righteousness" is obedience to the Law. It is doing what the Law commands and refraining from what the Law prohibits. This idea is still peddled by most religious organizations. Accordingly, many feel that if they keep the laws - if they do not steal, do not kill, etc.; and if they do go to meeting, do give to the church - then they are "righteous." Jesus said that this is not enough. If this is all that we do, we are apt to find "the publicans and the harlots" going into the Kingdom before us.

The "righteousness" which Jesus prescribes consists, not of outer actions, but of inner attitudes. It demands cessation from anger and cessation from all desire for what is not ours. It includes the non-resistance, either physical or mental, to evil. It commands our desiring all the good for our neighbor that we desire for ourselves. It requires the "single eye" - the eye that sees only

God. As Paul succinctly put it, "righteousness" is "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Can we then by our own efforts be righteous? Must we not, rather, recognize our total inadequacy?

Many feel righteous because of their obedience to certain outer commands, and for them there is no hope as long as they maintain that attitude. Rather, it is they who hunger and thirst for righteousness that are blessed. But we do not hunger and thirst for what we think that we already have. And so Jesus told us that He was sent not to the righteous, but to sinners - i.e., to the dissatisfied, to them that recognize their entire insufficiency. To all such the Christ comes with His Good News of the remission of sins - the cancellation of all inadequacy by the Love of God.

Paul insists over and over that "righteousness" consists not in works but in faith. We cannot by outer acts "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"; but God can do it for us and in us, if we cease from our own efforts, turn to Him, acknowledge Him, and surrender all to Him. "I have suffered the loss of all things," wrote Paul, "and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

"Righteousness" removes both the sense of guilt and the attitude of self-assertion. It brings us close to God; for it is conscious harmony with Him - the free and joyous association that a son may have with his Father. Fortunate are they who yearn for this state.

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WHAT JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT

By Nell Truesdell

(Continued from December 1957)

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (Mt.5:43-46)

Jesus was familiar with the teaching of the Essene sect which was a powerful religious body in His time, and He knew the rules in their Manual of Discipline, one of which is:

". . . to love all the children of light, each according to his stake in the formal community of God; and to hate all the children of darkness, each according to the measure of his guilt."

Men had perverted a fundamental instruction of Moses which, as given in Leviticus reads:

"Thou shalt not avenge, . . . but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord." (Lev.19:18)

When Jesus was asked which is the great commandment in the law, He answered:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, . . . this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Mt. 22:37-40)

In talking with His disciples, Jesus stressed the practice of love and He told them that love toward each other would distinguish them from other men.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35)

Jesus urged His men to practice a rule of living that seeks to give ministry, regardless of the treatment received. He knew that if His disciples were on the giving hand, they would reap benefits that would far outstrip any immediate gain by personal retaliation.

Love is the great solvent. It is the only component of human existence that will dissolve any other component, such as hate, enmity, or persecution.

Love toward perverse men is most effective if it is first centered on God. Then, strengthened and made impersonal, that love causes an adversary to turn away from his own willful determinations; and an enemy becomes a friend.

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THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By H. B. Jeffery (Continued from last month)
LONGSUFFERING AND GOOD WILL

GOOD TEMPER gives to mind and body substantial powers of endurance. As steel tempered by fire is made stronger and more capable of service, so is the man fired with a passion for goodness made strong with a flexible, elastic, and resilient strength and power, by which he is endowed with a capacity for long-continued work.

Fear or anger may temporarily summon an increase of energy, enabling a man either to fight or to run. But the strength thus called forth soon exhausts itself, leaving the mind and body even more enervated and tired. On the other hand, the spirit of good temper is found to be a constant tonic instilling a steadily maintained stream of energy that feeds the entire being with elements of endurance. This steadiness insures self-command, calmness, moderation, and a feeling of conserved and organized energy - which, in turn, dispels fear and gives a sense of assurance, confidence, and general well-being. Thus is good temper proved to be an actual and important asset to the mental and physical economy of man.

Furthermore, good will has been found to be a most important element in man's financial and material success. The business world has long since discovered this and recognized its truth. There has been assigned a definite value to commercial good will in general, as well as personal good will in and toward each business house in particular.

Good will creates social advantages and assures to its possessor an open door to the best orders of society. For who does not value the company of the man of good will? And who does not prize the patronage and favor of such a man? He is recognized as a harmonizer in situations fraught with misunderstanding, a

peacemaker in times of stress and strain, and a mediator in occasions of antagonism or strife.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers! they will be ranked sons of God." (Moffatt Translation) And it is recorded that at His Advent into the world angels appeared, singing, "Peace on earth, to men of good will."

Good will is will toward the good. God is the One Good. And thus good will is the Will of God manifest in man.

How, then, shall good will be called into expression and be made fruitful as an active force in man? By turning to the One Source whence comes love, joy, and peace; by consciously receiving the life of good will from God, the Creator of life, "seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." God gives all good to man by means of His Spirit, which in the beginning, before time seemed to be, He breathed into man.

Attention to and reverence for God, the All-Good, awakens the mind of man. It insures the influx of the Spirit of God, the Good, and determines man's will toward the Good. Thus, by wholehearted love for God, is man's will toward the Good, toward the Will of God - the Good Will - brought into conscious manifestation as an operative force and a quickening energy and a healing power in man.

When man looks only to God, the Will of the Spirit pervades and determines the general temper of his entire consciousness. Through his ready consciousness therefore the Spirit bears fruit in the form of good will in man toward his fellow man. This good will finds expression in tolerance, forbearance, patience, calmness, and moderation in judgment.

The fruit, or harvest, of the Spirit is longsuffering and good temper.

(Next month: Gentleness)

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TRUTH HAS BEEN spoken by men in all ages, but Jesus Christ alone offers the short cut to spiritual understanding.

"Learning, without thought, is a snare; thought, without learning, is a danger." -Confucius

"Man runs round a ring formed by his own talent, falls into an admiration of it, and loses relation to the world." - Emerson

"Difficulties are the things that show what men are. For the rest, remember, in any difficulty, that God, like a trainer of athletes, has matched you with a rough antagonist. For what end? That you may be a conqueror . . . and this does not happen without toil." - Epictetus

"There is nothing in the world more soft and weak than water, yet for attacking what is hard and strong nothing can surpass, nay equal it." - Lao Tzu

"Some of us do not want to change our characters; we seem so sweetly perfect to ourselves, and our very faults are so lovable, that the notion of making a few repairs in our foundation hardly appeals to us." - Will Durant

"There is at least one reality which we all seize from within, by intuition and not by simple analysis. It is our own person in its flowing through time, the Self which endures." - Henri Bergson

"By one's Self should one raise oneself, and not allow oneself to fall; for Self alone is the friend of self, and Self alone is self's foe." - Bhagavad Gita

"I laugh and grieve at the things people come to ask our prayers for. They should rather beg God that He would enable them to trample such foolery under their feet." - Theresa

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