

## MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD, Part II

By Nell Truesdell

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. . . . The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."  
(I Cor. 2:11,14)

The natural man is the growing, the learning man. He changes from day to day, from year to year. He understands other natural men, for he and they have common aims. Together they pursue similar objectives in the world, and they obtain practical results from their efforts for which they feel justly proud. Because they are acquainted with the same things and work in the same way to carry through to successful ends the same enterprises, they have the same spirit. And that spirit in them knows "the things of a man."

Any child born in any given period in any community in the world goes through a growth and development (physical and mental) common to all children. From the day of his birth, the adults with whom a child is closely associated begin at once to force his attention outward toward the things of the world. Through a gradual awakening of his primary senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) he becomes aware of his world and of himself in relation to it. As his impressions congeal, his personal will sets and tends to become inflexible concerning the things that appear, and he believes that his world and all that is in it is the only reality. Consequently, he has the spirit that is of the world.

We might note here that a child at the beginning of his experience with life in the world seldom is given the opportunity to investigate his God-like Nature within. He is not taught to direct the attention of his mind inward toward his true Identity, the changeless One within. He is taught to direct his attention outward; consequently, he gathers, and fills his consciousness with, knowledge of his world and of himself as he understands himself. This knowledge envelops him in a way that insulates him from the urge to search out the Source of his true Being.

One might ask, "Is not man taught about God through his religious connections?" Of course he is. We observe, however, that his attention is directed to a fixed theological study of God; and such a study, evolved from and based in human concepts of the Nature of God, His attributes, and His relations to man and the universe, is unreliable and often far from the Truth. Theologians have failed to realize that what they report about God reflects their personal, limited opinions only, and is not the Truth of God.

Through the ages man has been taught that thinking is his most important activity. He is seldom warned about the pitfalls of thinking based upon false standards and foolish notions. As in the past, man continues to engage himself in this stimulating exercise of his mentals, unmindful of the harvest he must eventually reap; for thought is formulative, and all that man experiences and possesses in body and affairs are the formulations (out-picturings) of his thought. Even his knowledge of God is nothing but formulated thought. Since, in his search for God, he has been directed far afield, his formulations are

that God is a vindictive, cruel overlord who exacts punishment for sins. Man, bound within the limits of such false knowledge, worships that knowledge and subjects himself to a hard taskmaster. As long as man attributes to God human, personal motives, he will dwell in sorrow and darkness. As long as he tries to cram God into the limited measure of his personal misbelief, he will impress the oncoming generations with his misconceptions and set the pattern for them that he himself copied during the formative period in his own physical-mental development.

"The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not," declared Jesus Christ. The Son of man is the Identity (Image) of God within that reveals Itself suddenly when man leaves off thinking about God and quietly waits on God at the center of his consciousness. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty." So spoke Zephaniah hundreds of years before Jesus, who, in turn, announced, "The Kingdom of God is within you."

How does man get to the center of his consciousness to find God? and where is that center? Such questions demand answers; for he who is awakening spiritually perceives changes taking place in a definite manner in consciousness and he sets himself to gain sight and knowledge of Something previously unseen and unknown.

When an earnest student first approaches any subject, he is very quiet. Often the quiet is so intense that he is filled with awe. As man stands on the threshold of the Sanctuary in which he hopes to learn of the things of Spirit, he is gripped with expectant stillness. In that timeless state, his attention (the inner visional faculty) detaches itself from the tentacles of intellect (the region in the forehead where man does conscious thinking) and it drops gently, almost imperceptibly, to a place just back of his heart. In this secret place, this Holy of Holies, man meets with his God in reverence and adoration. This reversal of attention is the key to spiritual freedom. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

The center of consciousness, the closet, within which we are to pray to the Father in secret, is not a physical point in the flesh or a set of nerves. To pray back of the heart suggests that one leave the region of the front brain, where the tumult of intellectual doubt and questioning is never satisfied nor stilled, and enter a place already prepared in consciousness, where one can commune with God in silence and repose. "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." In this Sanctuary; one waits on God. Prayer, here, is quiet expectancy (with good reasons) that God is nigh. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."

As one confidently waits, one feels the urge to look up from within, for the inner sight opens and the attention flies upward. One then realizes what is meant by the words, "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil." "The prayer of the upright is his delight."

Man has not been told that he contains a faculty, or instrument, that transcends thinking, by which he may know the Truth without the need for thought. Attention always precedes thought; and, it is man's greatest achieving power. For he first looks toward, and then goes on to know and to do, whatever

he has given his attention to. This agent, or means, is part of man's equipment at birth and it remains with him all the days of his life, though it is held in the bondage of intellectual ignorance and worldliness. It is impersonal, will-less, and instantly responsive to man's direction. It is man's one skill that obeys orders without quibbling or questioning the consequences. With it man makes contact with objectives of his choice (for he has free will), and by it he collects all his knowledge. The purity or impurity of knowledge does not concern this tireless, submissive, uncontentious servant.

When man learns to release this faculty from the grip of intellect by simple desire to know God, it leads him at once to the center of his own consciousness. At this place it becomes the means of his learning the Truth about God and about himself in relation to God. Here, too, the Master, Jesus Christ, helps him to be steadfast, and points him to the Father, for, as He said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

(To be continued)

SPIRITICITY January 1952

PAUL'S CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from last month)

By Robert Applegate

#### I Corinthians

Last month we considered the first part of Paul's long letter to the Corinthian church (I Corinthians chs. 1-6). The second part of the letter (chs. 7-14) is concerned mainly with answers to questions the Corinthians had asked the Apostle. These questions had to do with (1) the eating of foods offered to pagan gods and (2) spiritual gifts, or manifestations of the Spirit. We may consider Paul's answers to each of these questions in turn, for they are problems that arise to confront every aspirer to spiritual understanding.

The first question that the Corinthians asked Paul was about the eating of food offered in sacrifice to pagan idols. While this question seems to be one that does not concern us today, the principles that Paul enunciated are applicable to the whole question of eating and drinking. We still have our idols also; for an idol is, in reality, anything less than God that one worships, fears, or even respects. Thus many men make an idol of the opinions of others, so that they do things that they know are deleterious to their well-being, because it is expected of them. They fear the censure of society if they depart from the accepted mores. This problem of the conflict between social custom and wisdom in the day-by-day living of one's life is that which was presented to Paul. He answered it, characteristically, not by laying down a multitude of rules, but by subsuming everything under the principles of consideration and temperance. He stated first the fact of Christian freedom: that he who knows God as the one and only substance is free from all restrictions of the "Thou shalt not" type. He went on, however, to assert that, for himself, he would do nothing that would offend the conscience of one who was not yet awakened to the point he was: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." Here we see the kindness and consideration of Paul, and he advised the same practice to his followers: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God."

With respect to temperance, Paul felt that it is so obvious a requirement for any sort of attainment that here was little need to do more than remind his correspondents of it. He mentions the example that athletes provide in training for their games, and adds, "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Then again he calls attention to the example that he provided: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

These two principles of consideration and temperance Paul in turn subsumes under the encompassing principle of seeking first the glory of God: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." It should be needless to say that the only way that anyone administer to the glory of God is to let that glory shine through him, by giving his attention to it, loving it, and waiting upon it. If he does this sincerely, he will automatically lose interest in the demands of his body or of the social mores, so that it will be impossible for him to act either intemperately or inconsiderately. Thus, as always, we are brought back to Jesus' instruction: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

In answer to the Corinthians' question about the gifts of the Spirit (the powers to preach, teach, heal, etc.), Paul pointed out two things: first, that every gift is a manifestation of the Spirit, revealing Itself through that man who is receptive to It; and, second, that each gift (whether healing, teaching, preaching, or serving in some seemingly humbler capacity) is essential to the work of God in making Himself known to mankind. Since every gift is a manifestation of the same Spirit, any comparison of one with another is both childish and futile. Since each one is necessary, everybody has a responsibility to get his personal self out of the way, so that his gift may be freed to do its work through him, blessing both himself and others in the process.

There is, however, one gift that may be sought and practiced by everyone and that is by far the greatest of all. This Paul deals with in the unsurpassed Thirteenth Chapter of I Corinthians: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal," etc. The word that Paul used in this passage is an uncommon Greek word that the early Christians adopted to denote that rare quality that seeks to give rather than to receive. The word is translated charity in the King James Version of the Bible, love in most modern translations. Ferrar Fenton renders it by the word friendship, which is probably the best translation obtainable; for friendship does not have the sensual and possessive connotations that our word love has. However, we translate the passage, though, we know what Paul meant; and we know that he was right in singling out the desire to give, with no thought of return, as the greatest and most desirable manifestation of the Spirit of God. It is one of the few things that will last, and of these it is the most rewarding, both to its possessor and to all those who come in contact with him. "Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

(To be continued.)

SPIRITICITY January 1952

## THE ATONEMENT

By Alden Truesdell

The word atonement suggests the making of amends for some error, so that it is erased. There are basically, two kinds of atonement: one that seeks out each particular error and compensates for it, the other that erases all error immediately, allowing for a completely new start. For example if a wrong answer is derived for a mathematical problem, one can recheck every step of the problem to locate each individual mistake and correct it; or one can erase the whole faulty set of equations so as to start off with a clean slate. The latter procedure is preferable, for it eliminates the possibility of overlooking one mistake while correcting another.

In the history of the Israelites there were three great leaders who atoned for the mistakes of the people: Moses, Joshua, and Jesus Christ. Each leader, moreover, stands as a symbol for one powerful idea: for each one out-pictured the idea that was dominant in his consciousness (as does every man). While we respect Moses and Joshua of Old Testament times, we want to be on guard against the limitations that may be associated with their ideas of atonement for sins against God; for we accept into our consciousness either a partial or a complete atonement according to whether we believe a partial truth or the whole Truth about God. Of the three leaders, Jesus Christ was the One who demonstrated complete atonement, not only for Himself but for all humanity.

Moses represents the idea of deliverance from ignorance through obedience to the inspiration of God. Moses talked with God face to face and was the greatest Prophet of Israel. He was, therefore, able to atone for the mistaken belief of his people in the necessity of subjection to evil (which, in that period of their history took the form of slavery to the Egyptians who symbolize the limitations of ignorance). However, although Moses welded the Israelites into a nation and brought them to the bank of the Jordan River, he was not permitted to enter the Promised Land; for, in atoning for one error, he overlooked a more fundamental one. He believed himself to be a communicator of God's commands, rather than a partaker of God's Being. Accordingly, under his leadership the people could make no further progress than to be brought within sight of the good and that had been promised to them.

Joshua was chosen to take up the leadership of the Israelites at the Jordan River. Joshua (whose name means "I AM is God") was the first Christ-type man, and he represents the belief in the unreality of evil and in the ability of God to shine away all seeming opposition, as light dispels darkness. Joshua demonstrated the power of this belief by conquering thirty-one kings (which represent the dominant ideas ruling man because of neglect of his spiritual birthright). Joshua's capture of Jericho without the use of any weapon other than seven trumpets represents the impermanence of that which is based on the belief in something other than God. His commanding the sun to stand still symbolizes the fact that, when anyone depends on God, there is always plenty of time.

The change of leadership from Moses to Joshua represents the change in consciousness from trying to follow the commands of God to depending on God to fulfill His own Will. This launching out on a new and higher practice is a fearsome experience. It is good therefore to listen to God's instruction to

Joshua: "Arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people (spiritual aspirations), unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. . . . There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage, . . . that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

The exploits of Joshua form a Scriptural saga. He performed many mighty works, and, through his faith, atoned for the belief in the power of evil to oppose God. However he died (as did all the leaders who followed him), for his concept of God was still limited and racial. There was need for One greater to come who could strike deep into the consciousness of the entire race in order to eradicate the fundamental mistake of belief in the possibility of separation from God.

Jesus Christ came with the startling declaration of the Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Man, the spiritual Offspring of the spiritual Parent. He proved the principle of complete atonement, and thus he uprooted the effects of erroneous belief in separation, and abolished death for all who dare to believe in what He did. "Only believe," He said. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." And the Apostle John added, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

Moses represents the idea of deliverance from evil through the power of God. The Mosaic man (the one who accepts this idea into consciousness) believes in both good and evil. Joshua represents the idea of letting God destroy all seeming evil. The Joshuan man sees only good. Jesus Christ represents the Truth of the Allness of God. The Christ Man believes in neither good nor evil, as they are usually understood, but in the existence of a perfected state of at-one-ment, wherein he seeks nothing and has all, fights nothing and is all-conquering. The Christ Man accepts no duality, but is willing to let be that which is. His mission is to show plainly His own oneness or at-one-ment with His divine Source. His watchword is "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?"

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Alphabet of  
DAILY MEDITATIONS  
For Every Week Day Of The Month

January 1952

1. ALL things . . . I have made known unto you.
2. Only BELIEVE.
3. Lord, we are CALLED by Thy Name.
4. DO whatsoever I (Jesus Christ) command you.
5. The glory of the Lord shall ENDURE forever.

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7. I have called you FRIENDS.
8. I will be GLAD in the Lord.
9. HONOR the Lord with thy substance.
10. He INCREASETH strength.
11. Thou art JUST.
12. I KNOW thee by name.

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14. Man became a LIVING Soul.
15. MY MEDITATION of Him shall be sweet.
16. Behold, I will do a NEW thing.
17. Ye shall keep mine ORDINANCES.
18. He giveth POWER to the faint.
19. QUENCH . . . violence.

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21. Thou RENEWEST the fact of the earth.
22. The earth is SATISFIED with the fruit of thy works.
23. Where your TREASURE is, there will your heart be also.
24. He that walketh UPRIGHTLY walketh surely.
25. He is a chosen VESSEL.
26. The Lord shall rejoice in His WORKS.

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28. YE are my friends.
29. It is good to be ZEALOUSLY affected always in a good thing.
30. Ask, and it shall be given you.
31. Seek, and ye shall find.

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