

THE PRESENCE OF GOD

By Marian Levering

"THE LORD said unto Moses, . . . 'My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.'"

These are glad words, comforting to the soul of man, who feels inadequate when he thinks of "going it alone."

Moses represents the ruling idea by which we are moved out of the Egyptian, or material, experience into the spiritual, or heavenly, experience. If we think we have to make this journey from lower to higher states of awareness by our own efforts, we feel like giving up before we start. We feel as Moses did when he said, "If Thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." We would say, "You must help me, Father, for I cannot do it by myself."

Jehoshaphat felt the call to deliver his people from the enemy; he looked to the One Presence for help and deliverance. He said: "If, when evil cometh upon us, . . . we stand before this house (the Temple), and in Thy Presence, and cry unto Thee in our affliction, then Thou wilt hear and help."

In the same way we, by an inward act of looking, stand in God's Presence, in His temple within us - ready to receive.

Part of our readiness to receive is our understanding that in the Divine Presence there is warmth of healing goodness, powerful to melt away every obstacle, every disease. "The hills melted like wax at the Presence of the Lord."

There are many ways in which we experience the Presence. There are awarenesses of Its nearness and goodness and helpfulness that come to us on different planes of our experience. One person walks the city streets, practicing the Presence of God, and suddenly he finds himself lifted up, so that, in the midst of the crowd, he has a feeling of inward exaltation, a feeling of being lifted in spirit. Another, sitting in a class, sees the room filled with light, and is suddenly healed of a severe ailment. And yet another suddenly senses the Livingness and Reality of the Presence and is caught up in the experience of oneness with Its beauty, goodness, love, and joy. When we have experiences of this nature, we are coming into contact with the garments of God, the signs of His Presence.

If a person feels impelled to respond to his neighbor with a more kindly judgment, he is feeling the influence of the Presence as surely as the one who finds himself raised to a higher plane of experience. For there are many ways in which the Presence of God makes Itself known.

He who walks conscious of the Divine Presence is blessed. If a man does not know God, he is ill at ease - he experiences fear, emptiness, distress, sickness. Freedom from all these lies in the awareness of the One Healing Power - the Divine Presence which is with us always.

Sometimes when a person does not know the Presence, you find that he is out of balance in some direction. He has an exaggerated fondness for some

object less than the Most High. It may be an animal - a dog, cat, or horse. Fondness for living creatures is good; but when the fondness gets out of balance, it becomes less than good. Sometimes the overbalance of affection is placed on that which is inanimate - an antique or a painting. But when you see a person who walks aware of the Presence of God, you see a harmonized, balanced person. The Presence of God which is in him gives fullness of satisfaction. But when the affections are out of balance, it is a sure sign of lack of satisfaction. The Presence of God gives satisfaction; It gives fullness of good. So the one who walks in contact with the Divine Presence is a mature person. His Christlike, childlike faith abides; his childish attitudes, which are not like Christ, disappear. He grows up to manhood in Christ. He has a mature emotional response.

Physical healing is found in the Presence of God. But it is impossible to find permanent physical healing without a healing of the emotions. It is interesting to see what happens when a healing work starts. If you have asked for healing for a physical condition, you may find your inner attitudes straightening out and becoming more wholesome. There is a reason for this. The healing work is making you "pure and upright," a condition prerequisite to the desired healing. "If thou wert pure and upright; surely now He would awake for thee." So if you ask for a physical healing, do not be surprised if you first find yourself getting a better disposition.

If we wish to help others, we must be "sanctified" - purified of all the attitudes that keep us out of the Presence. When we are all clear within, the Presence will fill us with Its Light, and that Light will then bless our neighbors.

Some persons shut themselves off from the Presence by denying Its existence; others shut themselves off by a false interpretation of the Allness of God. They feel they are all right as they are; they have no meekness, no receptivity to the Presence. There is a right attitude, which is that of a little child before its parent. For "the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Truly the Presence of God is with us; It always will be.

We may say:

God is with me every moment of this day:
As Presence, knowing, power;
As life, truth, love;
As purity, perfection, harmony;
As stillness, rest, peace;
As judgment, justice, success;
As wisdom, health, strength;
As fullness, freedom, satisfaction.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

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SPIRITICITY, January 1962

GOD IS CHANGELESS

By Alden Truesdell

THE IDEOLOGIES of men are subject to revision. God has made "a decree, which shall not pass." Events came to pass; God's Word remains. Though nations rise and fall, and all things change, God remains unchangeable, His Word infallible. So it is said of Jesus Christ that He is "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." It will be well for us to remember this in the days ahead. Regardless of all the changes in the world and in the minds of men God, the Cause of it all, remains changeless.

Some persons seem to grow easily out of the things that be of men into the things that be of God. But for the majority, some sort of emergency is required to cause the soul-searching procedure of getting back to spiritual base. This process in a homecoming, for God is drawing to Himself everything He has made, that it may fulfill the complete promise He has breathed into it.

We have read how God breathed into man the "breath of life"; how Elihu declared to Job, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

Creation is the outbreathing of God; inspiration is the bringing back, or inbreathing. This may sound fanciful, but every ongoer sooner or later experiences this breathing action.

In early spiritual practice, we deal much with words, especially affirmations and denials. We encourage spiritual qualities; such as, life, love, intelligence, and substance. We consider treasures in heaven; we bring forth "fruit of the Spirit." We find all of these pleasant, all yielding much profit. But, further along, when we are drawn back into right relation with our original Source, we find ourselves using fewer words, as we stand in rapt attention before the Beneficent, Altruistic Presence we find within and above. It is then that we are caught up into the Breath of the Almighty that gives understanding. There is a great recharging of energy which integrates all our faculties. The Spirit Itself bears witness with our spirit (or our breath) that we are all the children of God.

The extension of the inbreathing of the Almighty reports itself as a sort of breathlessness; for the act of breathing is stepped up to its ultimate state of absolute, frightening stillness. This time of stillness is a time of fulfillment, a time of judgment. This is the time when we, having brought our works to the light, wait for them to be approved, or manifest.

This silence is the highest form of energy. It is the time when the spiritual word is exercising its power, the time when every mortal word rising against it shall be condemned, or declared useless.

Such intensity is very apt to stun the conscious mind so as to put it to sleep. When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, the disciples who were with Him found themselves unable to stay awake. They were not able to pray with Him for the hour, but dropped off to sleep. But, although the disciples were unable to keep awake, the transfiguring action - preliminary to the miracle of the Resurrection - went on.

A time of wordlessness precedes every miracle and every healing. In the time of rapt attention toward Divine Intervention the work is done, the Reality exposed, the miracle performed, the healing accomplished.

The consciousness of man is a reflector, faithfully reflecting whatever it is turned toward. When it is turned toward Reality, then that Reality is revealed and we call it a "miracle." But the "miracle" is more normal, more real, than any of the fleeting pictures in the constantly changing panorama of man's view of the world.

"I am the Lord. I change not." Spirit is the Reality of all living. God is the beginning, God is the interlude, God is the conclusion, of all things. When man is aware of God as the One Presence, the One Power, the One Intelligence, it is difficult for him to conceive of anything less than God or apart from God. Therefore all teaching efforts are designed to bring the conscious attention back into right relation with God. This is what the Testaments are about, from the revelation of God in the Old to the exhibition of God, in the New.

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." The "works" of God are belief in that which He has made and complete coordination with Him whom He has sent. This work of God is to see all men with the eye of the Christ critic. This is the only constructive criticism. It must be Christ criticism; it must be righteous judgment. "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents."

We do see what is called "evil" roundabout us, but we see it as a shadow which will dissolve when the light is in proper focus. The light is the important thing - the valuable thing.

God is the good thing we want. In spiritual work, we sometimes have to say: "Yes, we can help you to get anything you want, but sooner or later you will not want what you now think you want. On the other hand, we recommend God, whom, at present, you might not think you want, but later will value highly and never care to be without.

Repetition of this instruction is chronic in Christ-Truth teaching. Though you study with so-called adepts, or take intensive "master" courses, you will find no greater, more effective teaching than that given in the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

One time, in San Antonio, when students were under the spell of Oriental teachers, one swami held a series of classes, the cost of which was \$600. After teaching his classes to concentrate upon many objects, including the sacred lotus flower in the brain, he concluded his costly course of lessons by giving each student a sealed envelope. This the student was to open in the privacy of his own home. The secret instruction contained in all the envelopes was "The Kingdom of God is within you."

At the rate of \$600 for the course, the students paid almost \$100 a word for this instruction, for it was the only thing of value in the course. Is it not strange that those of a Western Christian culture should pay that much to a swami for instruction that is given so freely in their own Gospel? But there is no doubt as to getting their money's worth, for no one has enough money to buy the value contained in those words: "The Kingdom of God is within you."

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."

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SPIRITICITY, January 1962

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

By Robert Applegate, Jr.

(Continued from last month)

PAUL WAS greatly concerned that his fellow religionists did not accept Christ. If they had, they would have been a light to the world, instead of surrendering this privilege, which was theirs by right, to the Gentiles. If they had accepted the Truth, they would have been spared the agony they went through (the Romans made a desolation of Palestine in the years A.D. 70-71); they would have gone forth "conquering and to conquer." They rejected the Truth and they became a dispersed people, harassed and persecuted for centuries. They discovered in bitter experience that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

We in our religious superiority can see that this was a foolish and costly mistake on the part of the Jews of the First Century; but we do not see that, just as the Jews of that time denied the Christ, so the "Christians" of the present time have denied Him. We do not see that the mistake of the Pharisees (good, sincere, sober men) is the mistake of all organized religion in all ages, among all races - to become so infatuated with one spiritual advance as to be blind to a greater and more inclusive truth. This is the tragedy of man's institutions.

It is a paradox that almost every advance in the understanding of God has come from outside the body of organized religion and has been resisted by that body. This is true whether we consider the Old Testament giants, such as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah; or the outstanding figures of other religions, as Buddha, Laotse, Mohammed; or the leaders of the Christian tradition, such as Antony, Benedict, Eckhart, etc. None of these men were priests or held positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy; and almost without exception they were harassed by the organization that should have lauded them as the saviors they were.

This rejection of the Truth by those we would most expect to embrace it is a phenomenon that troubled Paul greatly. He met it in a particularly poignant manner because he was brought up and trained as a religious scholar in the most advanced religion of his day. He loved his religion and it tore him apart to see it reject the Truth (as he himself had once done). He returns to this problem over and over again in his letters, and he tried to find the answer to it. Actually, he summed up this answer in one sentence (which comes later in his Letter to the Romans): "Being unaware of the Goodness of God, and seeking to establish their own goodness, they have not submitted to the Goodness of God." This is the story of all who have become too infatuated with their religious superiority. The pages of history are filled with the havoc and the misery wrought by this particular form of idolatry.

Religion holds men in bondage to "revealed truths," which are, at best, partial and usually misunderstood. We are what we believe; whatever keeps us from accepting a fuller truth is the enemy of our growth. So Paul says:

Brothers, you have died to religion through the Incarnation of Christ, that you might belong to Another - to Him that rose from the dead
- and that you might bear fruit to God. . . . Now we are freed

from religion; we have died to that which held us, so that we might serve in newness of Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. What, then, do I say? - that religion is error? Never! But I would not have known error except through religion. I would not have known lust if religion had not said, "You shall not lust." But error, taking its start from the command, produced in me every form of lust. And the command that should have led me to Life led me to death. . . . Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from my death-dealing self? Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ!

The sense of guilt that is fostered by "religion" is a death-dealer. It kills joy; it kills judgment; it kills our awareness of the Goodness of God. It makes enmity in our hearts against the God we feel is judging us. But in Christ we are free from all this. Religion shows us our errors; does not free us from them. But Christ does. Paul knew this. So he could say, "Thanks be to God!"

(To be Continued)

. . . What profit is there to those who are created if they do not know their Creator? Or how can they be reasonable if they do not know the Reason of the Father, by which they have come into being. They will not differ at all from unreasonable animals if they know nothing more than earthly things.

Athanasius, De Incarnatione

Trans. by RAA, Jr.

SPIRITICITY, January 1962

SHORT LESSONS

By Nell Truesdell

I TURN TO GOD AND ALL MY HEART'S DESIRES ARE FULFILLED

WHEN YOU realize that you have been healed of an illness, how grateful to God are you? When a financial difficulty is ironed out, how grateful to God are you? When friction in your personal relations with others is harmonized, how grateful? Search your heart and you may find there a certain apathy, or suggestion that you are not as grateful to God as you ought to be, that you lack a sense of appreciation for your deliverance.

Lack of gratitude is not unusual in man. Man has lost the sense of spontaneous response to God because he prays for his wants to be satisfied, rather than for a deeper awareness of God's Presence. As Truth students, we should realize that our awareness of any degree of absence of the good is our cue to turn immediately with renewed devotion to God in our midst. If we present our need as an empty bowl and keep our attention on God in the spirit of gratitude, God will pour Himself into the vessel and fill it with a full measure of the healing or bounty or harmony required.

Our steadfast attention to God, in the spirit of love and gratitude, assures us of His blessings.

"IT IS God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

SUCH AS I HAVE, I GIVE FREELY

WHAT HAVE you given away lately? I do not mean something you wanted to get rid of; I mean something you could keep to advantage. If clothing clutters your closet, have you shared a few good pieces with somebody your size and weight? If time hangs heavy on your hands, have you voluntarily done a chore that saved time for somebody else? Money is easy to give when you have enough, but can you give away money that you might save or invest? The test of giving is on a delicate balance. The way you meet the test determines the results you will get. Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." (Luke 6:38) Most persons pass lightly over the word give in this text and concentrate on what they might get. This is a mistake. First, give.

A man named Sam Reeve of Birmingham, Michigan, proved this principle. Through his pumps passed 1,186,477 gallons of gas in 1960, and his station is one of 300 that lie in a radius of 25 miles. Other stations in this area pumped a maximum of 25,000 gallons that year. Mr. Reeve attributes his success to a practice he started when the meaning of Jesus' statement struck him forcibly. He said, "I try to find my pleasure in giving, and let the getting part take care of itself."

What can you give?

"O GIVE thanks unto the Lord; for He is good." (Psalm 106:1)

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

JANUARY 1962

1. The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man APPEARED.
2. BELIEVE on the Name of the Son of God.
3. Love one another, as He gave COMMANDMENT.
4. Let the word of Christ DWELL in you richly.
5. The EVERLASTING God . . . fainteth not, neither is weary.
6. The FORMER things are passed away.

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8. Praise the Lord for His GOODNESS.
9. Rejoice in HOPE of the glory of God.
10. Open unto Him IMMEDIATELY.
11. We are JOINT-HEIRS with Christ.
12. We receive a KINGDOM which cannot be moved.
13. Stand fast rejoice in . . . LIBERTY.

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15. It is God that . . . MAKETH MY way perfect.
16. I will NEVER forget Thy precepts.
17. I will OPEN you the windows of Heaven.
18. The Lord will be the hope of His PEOPLE.
19. QUICKEN us, and we will call upon Thy Name.
20. Be READY to every good work.

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22. Give STRENGTH unto Thy SERVANT.
23. Lie not against the TRUTH.
24. You are holy and UNBLAMABLE . . . in God's sight.
25. Wisdom . . . cannot be VALUED with gold.
26. Show . . . WORKS with meekness and WISDOM.
27. Our land shall YIELD her increase.

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29. Come with me, and see my ZEAL for the Lord.
30. The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever.
31. Know ye that the Lord He is God.

"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.