

A TRUE STORY

By Nell Truesdell

"Does your life pay?" "No!" the answer shot back. "Why not?" "Because I do not have what I want." "What do you want?" "Well -- I want prosperity, more health, and -- oh, I want lots of things." My caller's voice trailed and she gestured hopelessly.

"Let us start from some definite point," I suggested, "as we consider this state of affairs, so that we shall not flounder in a sea of doubt. You get from life just what you are willing to receive; and what you are able to receive is measured by what you are willing to give. At some time in your life, you felt that you did not receive enough of something or other -- reward, let us call it -- and you began to fall into the practice of withholding. You did not do this consciously; but you were not satisfied with the returns for your efforts, and you began to hold back." I spoke plainly; for I had known my visitor for years.

"You refused to give little services when opportunities presented themselves; you drew yourself in at every contact with the attitude of waiting to see what you would get out of it rather than with the expansive desire to give. You held your tongue when you could have given an honest compliment or voiced a kind thank you. You guarded your possessions in such a way that you shared nothing. You pulled your purse strings tighter. You held on to everything you had with a death-like grip, and you never gave out anything unless you were forced to do so.

"Life among humankind is mostly a matter of response; and, since you have squeezed yourself tightly into the orbit of your own limitations, all the response you have had has been from the restricted attitudes and possessions within that orbit. I repeat: you have in this world what you are able to receive; you receive what you are able to give. The two go together."

The interview ended. I did not see the person who prompted such instruction until three years had passed. Then, after the preliminary greetings, my caller settled down and began to talk.

"You have no idea," she said, "how your words cut me. They burned into my very soul, and after I left you I was distressed for quite sometime. I told myself that you were wrong, that you misjudged me, that I was generous, kindly, and willing to help anybody who came my way. Oh, I was definitely upset.

"The tumult within me was so great that I spent many hours in tears. Then I remembered that I ought to pray. You had taught me how to pray, but I had neglected the practice. Now, in desperation, I began to pray seriously, with the purpose of getting an answer. At first, no answer came. Gradually, however, I was comforted, and one day the answer came! It was the most startling thing that ever happened to me. Out of the depths of my being came these words: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'

"'How,' I asked the Lord, 'do You expect me to preach the gospel?' 'I will show you.' the assurance came. And I knew God would help me. I kept my daily prayer periods with strict discipline. As I remained quiet, I looked straight to God, and, instead of repeating a few perfunctory statements, I waited on Him.

I would not let my thoughts wander or be filled with images of things. I stayed with God.

"I located the statement in the sixteenth chapter of Mark, the fifteenth verse. I studied particularly verses seventeen and eighteen, which report Jesus Christ as saying, 'And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'"

After this long quotation, my caller looked at me inquiringly. A blush made her face beautiful. Her eyes were shining. "Go on," I urged, "I want to hear this story."

She resumed, "I knew that I believed in God and in Jesus Christ but I determined to strengthen that belief -- make it more real and vital. Not an hour passed but that I sought God consciously. It became a habit. As I grew closer to Him, I found myself actually speaking with a new tongue. The whine left my voice, and the habitual critical word was transformed into an expression of kindness, appreciation, encouragement, and constructive suggestion."

She paused. "That in itself was a marvelous transformation," I observed. "You discovered that this new tongue paid off, didn't you?"

"O, yes!" she breathed. "Perhaps the greatest way is in the happiness I have reaped from sowing good words. I could not have done it by myself -- but God helped me.

"Let me tell you one way I discovered to cast out devils. I wondered about it for a long time, and then one day I came across a woman who was nearly mad with fear. She was afraid she had cancer. She had followed the popular write-ups in the news and in magazines, and she was quite distraught for she had seen a close relative die of the dread malady. I had opportunities to talk with her frequently, and I began to suggest that she turn to God for a sense of inner confidence. To my surprise, she responded. I gave her an inexpensive red letter New Testament and told her it was good practice to read just the words of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. She came across the statement in Matthew, 'Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him.' She read on, but these words stood out boldly. She therefore accepted them as hers and began to work by means of them. Whenever dread or fear gripped her, she would say something like this: 'All right, I agree with you if you come to me in the Name of Jesus Christ.' She kept this up and used that response every time the fear terrorized her. Gradually, she became less and less afraid; and one day she went to her family physician for an examination. He assured her she had absolutely nothing to worry about. Oh, the freedom that woman enjoyed! It was a true deliverance; a devil had been cast out."

"How wonderful!" I exclaimed. "Please continue."

"How one would take up serpents had me baffled for awhile," she mused. "It certainly didn't mean snakes, I was sure. What it did mean amazed me when I realized that serpents had frequently inhabited my own heart. As my enlightenment expanded, I saw that to take up serpents meant to deal with a concealed disposition to injure another in such a way that the intent was not suspected. I found that the idea embraced also that corrosive and implacable hatred that often inhabits the heart. Even mischievous gossip, as harmless as I tried to make it seem, was harmful not only to others, but also to me; for I was

the one who reaped the suffering. I purified my conversation gradually; and, to my pleasure, I found that my friends spoke more constructively and more thoughtfully than ever before. But the change was in me, you know."

"How wise she has grown," I mused as I gazed at her. "How did you handle the thought, 'if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them?'" I asked.

"Oh, I went to the story of the Samaritan woman for the answer to that. Drink suggests water to me, and in that story Jesus said to the woman, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.' We can drink in other ways than by swallowing liquids. We can take into our consciousness all sorts of impressions through our senses with eagerness and with pleasure. We can indulge ourselves in ways that are harmful. We absorb or suck into our mind whatever we give our attention to in the world, and we bear the consequences; but we can escape hurt if we insist upon His word of truth as our drink. For, after all, God is the only Reality.

"I suppose you want to know whether or not I laid hands on the sick. Not actually. But whenever I clasped anybody's hand in meeting, I felt that new vigor and vitality was transferred from me to him. In fact, I was very conscious of a quickened response to my hand grip. People left me with the conviction that they felt better after being with me, if only for a few minutes. More than once an acquaintance has remarked 'I feel better after I see you.'"

"What an extraordinary development you have undergone!" I commented. "I recall having asked you what you wanted, and I feel sure that you have found it."

"O, yes!" My visitor's voice was soft. "I have found more than I ever suspected it was possible to want in this life. I have been prospered far beyond my expectations, I have undeniable health of mind and body, and I am blessed with an undying happiness because I know that joy springs from within me -- it is not something that comes to me from somebody or something outside me. I give joy now. And wherever I go, I observe happiness; so I know that I carry it with me."

We remained silent. That stillness was like taking communion. A hush pervaded the atmosphere around us, and we were at rest. We both knew the Spirit of God was with us, and we closed our eyes in brief silent prayer.

In a minute or so, we smiled at each other, and she said, "I shall always be grateful for Jesus Christ." And I responded, "I shall always serve whoever comes to me in His Name."

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SPIRITICITY July 1950

MY ANSWER

By Patricia Ann Bookman

"Why do you do it?" you ask. Because you belong to that small group of great souls who find their work, their joy, their peace of mind and satisfaction in following the Master.

Because planting hope where despair has been, giving courage where fear has been, helping one to look up, to smile again, and to live again are dearer to you than the fame of Washington or the fortune of Midas.

Because healing a body stabbed with pain, lifting one crushed by circumstance or bowed under disappointment or blighting grief have more meaning to you than the plaudits of the crowd or the ease and comforts of wealth.

Why do you do it? You who possess so much of talent and charm; you who would grace any profession?

Because knowing Truth and God, knowing the world's void and emptiness you are too good to do otherwise. Lifting others up is to you the meaning and purpose, the beauty and glory of life.

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NOTE: This comment is an answer to the article "Obedience to a Call", Spiriticity, February 1949, p. 2.

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SPIRITICITY July 1950

MAN LIVES IN GOD

By Alden Truesdell

The race as a whole accepts the idea that there is a Source from which all humankind springs. However, because this fact is not always understood, different views or opinions about it conflict and man is at a loss as to what to believe. The broad, general term that names this Source is God. Some men perceive directly that God is a fact; others deny God; still others fluctuate between these two beliefs in varying degrees of warmth or coldness.

Man possesses an awareness of his Source in his memory; for deep within each person is the secret conviction that he came out from Something and must return to Something. (We call that Something God.) However, with the greater percentage of mankind this memory is so vague that few ever learn how to accept and enter into their divine inheritance. Jesus Christ taught that the way to accomplish this was to become as a little child.

Paul warned, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." He pointed out in his letter to the Colossians that he would have them rich in the full assurance of understanding to the point that they would acknowledge the mystery of God and of Christ, His Son, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The appearances are that man comes from man and lives in man's world; so he sets his attention toward that and gathers knowledge of what he examines: and what man views reveals its nature to him. Gradually, his affections follow the line of attention toward any objective and, if the attention is steadfast, cause everything beheld to move toward the observer. Since appearances are "nothing" man exposes his life to "nothing" and ultimately reaps "nothing".

However, once a man starts to pursue his Origin, he experiences changes in consciousness; he is born anew time after time; he loses his life for Christ's sake as he moves toward the transcendent heights that constantly beckon, invite, and encourage him to make full acknowledgment of his indisputable Origin. He learns that he must place all his hope, all his faith, and all his love at the disposal of this Source; and he finds, eventually, this practice is more pleasant and more rewarding than any he has ever known.

The enticements of the world fade as the elaborate promises of the Scriptures are fulfilled. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." "All things work together for good to them that love God." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

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SPIRITICITY July 1950

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SAMUEL TO THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL

By Robert Applegate

(Continued from June 1950)

That Samuel chose and anointed Saul as Israel's first king is universally accepted. That he likewise anointed David as Saul's successor after the latter proved unworthy is more often regarded as apocryphal, but there is no sufficient reason for rejecting the account. Not only, however, did Samuel select and anoint Israel's first two kings; but he also instructed them, prepared them for their task, and set the tone that they should maintain in their rule of the nation. According to the older tradition Saul was a different man after his first visit with Samuel from what he had been when he came seeking his father's asses: "when he turned to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart." His willfulness remained and it was the cause of his undoing, but he no longer hesitated to accept his responsibility of delivering Israel from its oppressors. When the opportunity for action came, he responded with alacrity and vigor; and, after the defeat of the Ammonites, he proved for a season to be an energetic and capable ruler. Samuel, however, remained, as God's spokesman, the power behind the throne. This was as it should be; but, when Saul disobeyed the expressed will of God, the prophet rejected the king; and the latter relapsed into spasmodic insanity and increasing inefficiency, until, in a mood of maniac depression, he killed himself upon the field of battle. Samuel, acting on behalf of Yahweh, had decreed that Israel should remain a theocracy with God giving the commands and the king executing them; but Saul had thought to take matters into his own hands. The result was disaster.

The anointing of David is told in I Samuel 16, where the same result of contact with Samuel is told of him as of Saul: "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD seized upon David from that day forward." In Chapter 19 it is reported that, when David fled from Saul, he stayed for a short while with Samuel at Naioth. The verses in which this notice is contained are a late prophetic addition; but the connection of Samuel with the ecstatic prophets, which is recorded in them, is accepted as fact; and it is not impossible that the visit of David with the aged prophet is also historical. There is nothing that militates against such a supposition, and it is a priori probable that the future king in his first

flight should seek out the man who had anointed him. If such was the case, it cannot be doubted that Samuel instructed his protégé in the duties of kingship and especially in that of obedience to God. This of course, is conjecture; but, in any event, the lesson of Samuel's rejection of Saul was sufficient instruction for a person of the stature of David. Thus Samuel anointed Israel's first two kings and established the pattern that the kingdom was to follow, ideally, and occasionally in practice: the pattern of subjection to the will of God as expressed through his prophets.

It was in his capacity as a prophet, a spokesman for God, that Samuel exercised his decisive influence. He was one of those rare individuals who knew God in an intimate and personal way and who could speak with authority in his name. This was the secret of his power. His connection with the later prophets is by no means clear, but it is significant that he was the first of that imposing succession; and he set the tone that they were all to follow. That tone, and the key to his own life, is contained in the words of his rebuke to Saul: "To obey is better than sacrifice."

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Re. James, Fleming, Personalities of the Old Testament, p 93:
"Did he found the prophetic movement? Perhaps in a sense he did. Unquestionably he marks a beginning of some sort in the history of Israel's prophecy. Before him, few recorded appearances of prophets and not one mighty name since Moses, unless it be Deborah. After him a self-perpetuating movement, more and more outstanding names, increasing ethical purity, till we come to Amos the herdsman of Tekoa. How much of this beginning was due to Samuel we have no means of knowing; but we shall not go far wrong if we see in him at least one who fostered prophecy in its early days and set it forward on its true development."

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You redeem, or buy yourself by means of your own expression. In any field of endeavor, what you give out of yourself becomes the payment for your continued advancement in that field. To withhold in any wise means poverty of expression, and the price, being short, does not purchase full achievement.

-- Nell Truesdell

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

JULY 1950

1. Before they call, I will ANSWER.
3. BLESSED is he that BLESSETH thee.
4. I COMMAND thee this day to love the Lord thy God.
5. Ye shall DWELL in the land in safety.
6. The EARTH is the Lord's.
7. Master, I will FOLLOW Thee.
8. Desire spiritual GIFTS.
10. I shall be HEALED.
11. I will INSTRUCT thee and teach thee.
12. The meek will He guide in JUDGMENT.
13. O KEEP my soul, and deliver me.
14. LAY up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
15. He that hath a MERRY heart hath a continual feast.
17. Love thy NEIGHBOR.
18. Set thy words in ORDER.
19. PREACH the word.
20. QUIETLY wait for salvation.
21. REST in the Lord, and wait.
22. SING aloud unto God our STRENGTH.
24. TURN To THE Lord THY God.
25. Good and UPRIGHT is the Lord.
26. I will pay my VOWS unto the Lord.
27. WISDOM is better than rubies.
28. Gather YOURSELVES together.
29. The Lord is great in ZION (the within).
31. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

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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.