

PATIENCE

By Alden Truesdell

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience." (Revised Standard Version) As love germinates joy, and joy promotes peace, so peace encompasses and encourages patience.

Patience is the spiritual quality involved in dealing with processes and with the time element. In God, the time is NOW. But the now we know, which we indicate as a certain day on the calendar is only a mental marker in the Now-ness of God, which is the daytime of eternity. This is indicated by the statement in Scripture, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

We are prone to look about us on a given day and analyze our condition as fairly good, quite indifferent, or terrible. In this analysis, the premises we have used to arrive at our conclusions are actually untrustworthy. We are so prone to judge by appearance that we see with unseeing eyes, for we do not see the progression. Our attention is glued to the obvious and apparent rather than to the ultimate objective.

As nature is directing the planting, the germinating, the nurturing stages of the unfoldment of plants, so God is growing man from seed to bloom and harvest. For the purpose of clarification, let us suppose that a kernel of corn should begin to analyze itself at a primary stage of growth and decide to give up the whole business of growing, on the basis that, when it was planted, the promise was that it would be a fine, tall stalk topped with lovely tassels, and would bear large ears covered with silk and garments of green. The seed might argue that its present status belies the promise. It is nothing but a small grain in the ground with no indication of its ever being anything else. This defection is much like that of men who have not been attuned to the spiritual Reality and who therefore judge by, and complain about, the appearance, or what seems to be.

There is also the example of the child who, having planted the corn, worries about its procrastination and accordingly digs it up to see what progress is being made in growth. Both the kernel of corn that complains and the child that interferes are unwise. They need to let nature take its course. They need to stand still to see the salvation of the Lord. They need to "let patience have her perfect work."

The law that grows the kernel of corn into a stalk is contained in the kernel itself. Similarly, the law that grows mortal man into his full stature as an immortal product of an eternal Principle is in his own inner chamber, and he contacts it there. Jesus instructed His Disciples to abide within themselves until they were "endued with power from on high." "Being assembled together with them, (He) commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

Examples of the spiritual quality of patience can be found on every hand, in every worthwhile project, even in the trial-and-error systems of the world;

for Spirit is not something separated from life, but something with which all phases of life are activated. Patience is the mark of the artist, the expert, and the genius. In fact, genius has been described as "an infinite capacity for taking pains," or "a great aptitude for patience."

Those tantrums that have been popularized in the name of artistic temperament are becoming less and less popular in the eyes of the inartistic public opinion. No doubt some artists have been highly emotional and extremely sensitive, but other and better performers have proved the old adage that practice makes perfect. Thus in the unfolding of the higher and finer expressions of life, the temperamental and flighty artisans show by their outbursts the difference between talent and genius. They are unable to control and use constructively the energies that would increase the scope of their talents.

Patience precedes all progress and discovery of merit in the ongoing of the race. Patience was involved in Edison's thousand experimental failures before inventing the incandescent lamp. Consider also the high order of patience required by the finders of new continents and the discoverers of new planets. However, as Milton rightly said, "They also serve who only stand and wait." And who can say which displays the greater degree of patience? For patience, being spiritual, is identified with the Creator of the finished product and waits only for perfection to be exposed. Therefore, while the adventurous and the experimenters are thrilled with the new continent, the new invention, the more perfect chain reaction, the true exponent of patience sees all of these as orderly exhibits and necessary partial expositions of the perfect whole, the finished product.

Regarding the times and seasons, no one but the Father knows, not even the Son. But the time comes in the life of every individual when all his concepts of what constitutes life must be subject to revision. "Wherefore," we are told, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Man sometimes looks out upon his surroundings with a pleased sense of individual achievement, and he is prone to count his blessings with a sense of smug complacency. It is however when this pleasing picture of semi-progress must give place to the more mature concept that patience must do its perfect work. The one who waits patiently upon the Lord is actually enduring "as beholding the invisible," and therefore he is not affected by the breaking up of the visible marks of progress. He is not satisfied with the appearance of success, no matter how great.

I am reminded here of Paul. This prolific apostle certainly accomplished more in the way of successful ministry than any of the others. Surely he had every legitimate right to rest on his laurels and bask in the glory of his splendid achievement; but he said, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This statement summarizes patience: the ability to press on toward the higher calling, to know that all effort extended up to, and including, a given recognizable point has been preparatory and experimental; to concede, as it were, no lesser institution than the Kingdom of God, having come with power among men. Well can patience stand and wait, or drive to press on, as the case may be. Paul knew the value of both waiting and warring. He knew how to be abased and he knew how to abound.

Patience, which is named "longsuffering" in the Scripture, indicates an attitude that is profitable to have and beneficial to use. Although the words used as synonyms of patience, painstaking and longsuffering, would seem to

indicate an attitude of penance and purging, the practice of patience, in season, will do away with future pain and will shorten any period of suffering. The man who has learned that satisfaction and progress are possible only as long as welfare of soul and spirit is encouraged can stand aloof when the affairs of the world seem topsy-turvy. And, so standing, even though the many things he has cherished seem to be done away, this man is possessing his soul in patience and finding his place in Christ.

We who have been indoctrinated in Truth to some extent may look with a degree of tolerance upon those who are being drawn to the new way of life, but we must be patient; for we remember our own days in the wilderness. We may know that their trials are but the measures of growth and self-testing, but we must know too that each test is very real to him who is being tried. As yet he may not have eyes to see or ears to hear, and therefore he must learn patience. And we must be patient.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

000

SPIRITICITY July 1952

ROMANS (Continued from last month)

By Robert Applegate

In the first three chapters of Romans, Paul has established the fact that man is delivered from negation by faith in God, and he has shown that this deliverance has been made available to all men by the atoning work of Jesus Christ, which relieves man of the burden of his centuries of misbelief and consequent misconduct. To bring this point home and to keep his discussion from seeming too abstract, Paul refers to the example of Abraham.

Abraham was a man who is generally recognized, even today, as having led a godly life. And yet what was the outstanding characteristic of this man? He accomplished no unusual work, he wrote nothing, he devised no code of laws, he was not a leader of men. He did not even strive to live up to any arbitrary standard of conduct beyond that which was common to all the nomads of the period in which he lived. Why, then, do we still revere him? The answer lies in the shining example of his faith, which was his single remarkable trait. He had faith enough to leave his home to go into a strange land, because God had promised that he would inherit it. He had faith enough to believe that he would become "the father of many nations," even when he was a hundred years old and had as yet no child; and he had faith enough, later, to be willing to offer his only son as a sacrifice, knowing that God would deliver him. Because he had such a faith, the promises of God were fulfilled for him. Not only was he prospered, blessed, and delivered from many dangers, but also he did become the father of a great nation. In a real sense, he is the father of all of us, because he set the pattern of the way of life we are all trying to follow. He was the first pioneer of this way, which, three thousand years later, we still find hard to follow. It is small wonder that we revere him! We should honor him. And we should profit by the example that he has given us of relying wholeheartedly on God, for we have a stronger ground for faith than he did.

It is in view of Abraham's faith that Paul refers to him in the Fourth Chapter of Romans:

"What then shall we say about Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was Justified by works, he has something to boast about,

but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' . . . In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, 'So shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old, or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in faith, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. That is why his faith was 'reckoned to him as righteousness.' But the words, 'it was reckoned to him,' were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification." (All Quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.)

We may notice one thing about this faith of Abraham: it caused him to be obedient to God. This obedience is always the sign, or indication, of true faith. There is nothing in what Paul says that disparages works as such. The point is simply that true works are always the result of faith. Works, even the primary work of obedience, are not the cause of faith, or of anything else; they are simply the indication that faith is present and that it is sincere. This is brought out by Paul in another letter, where he makes the seemingly paradoxical statement (which was quoted, in part, last month): "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." With this agrees also the statement of James that faith without works is dead. If there are no works, this fact is an indication that faith is moribund. The remedy therefore is to seek faith, not to exert the will to do something. The works follow "them that believe."

The first results then, of faith is that it produces obedience, and obedience produces action - either external or internal; for prayer is the most potent action there is. Some of the other results of faith are listed by Paul in the Fifth Chapter of Romans:

"Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."

It will be noted here that Paul refers back to the statement that he has made previously that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." He completes this observation by adding that, being relieved of the burden of our former errors through faith, we can now rejoice in the hope of attaining that glory. Moreover, this hope will not disappoint us. We shall attain the glory of God, not by our own efforts, but by the action of the love of God, which becomes operative through our hearts and in our lives according to the degree of our faith.

Not only do we rejoice in our hope of being Christ-like, but, Paul adds, we rejoice even in our afflictions. All hardship should make us more diligent in seeking God, and this is cause for rejoicing. The suffering, however, to which Paul refers is primarily the inner distress that is caused by turning away from an old way of life to a new one. The basic meaning of the word translated

"suffering" is "pressure" and it is the pressure of our old beliefs and of the misbelief of them around us that causes us our greatest trials. This pressure should serve only to make us endure in our adherence to our new faith in God. It is therefore an agent in bringing our greatest good to us. If we do remain true, we shall have "character," the tried integrity of the veteran, the proved faith that can stand unmoved when everything seems to collapse. This integrity that has been "tried in the fire" increases in turn the hope of the final attainment.

(To be continued)

SPIRITICITY July 1952

ARE MY THOUGHTS WORTH THINKING?

By Nell Truesdell

To consider whether or not thoughts are worthwhile, we shall make a diagram to show the place that thought occupies in the overall design of Divine Mind. In Truth, we understand that One Mind, God, extends Its Presence throughout the universe and produces and influences all creation. The intention of That Mind for Its creation is Good; and, of all created things, man has an inherent ability that enables him to recognize and claim the operation of that intention in his behalf.

The following diagram is a framework upon which the whole system of our study of Truth can rest. In this discussion, however, we shall touch upon a few facts only which we hope will give the reader a starting point in his own search for more understanding.

1. GOD-MIND
2. IDEAL
3. IDEA
4. THOUGHT
5. WORD
6. MANIFESTATION

We live in the realm of God-Mind. Every moment of our existence, we are surrounded and saturated by the Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience of God-Mind. We cannot get out or away from God. As the Psalmist sang centuries ago, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there." It makes no difference whether we know this Truth or not. Truth forever remains Truth.

The Ideal of creation rests in God-Mind. There It is perfected and There It remains unchanged throughout eternity. Man, in his present undeveloped state, is unable to comprehend that Ideal; he can simply imagine what it might be. Until he is transformed in consciousness by the Living Spirit and, through It, resurrected into newness of life, he can never know the Ideal.

Idea is the next step in our structure. We can speak of Idea as resting between God-Mind and man-mind. In God-Mind, Idea is the manifestation of God's Ideal, His Good and Perfect Creation. In man-mind, Idea lights for an instant, suffusing man's intellect with a startling, holy illumination, and then glances

off because man's attention is not strong enough to sustain contact with It. "I have a marvelous Idea!" man exclaims; and then is unable to tell what It is.

Thought is nearer home. Thought is the result of the activity of man's intellect (or, what he calls his mind). Intellect is the machinery in man's consciousness that responds to the stimuli (from whatever source) that are drawn to it by his attention. Usually, the terms intellect and Intelligence are mistakenly interchanged; so right here, briefly, we shall distinguish between them. Intellect is the mechanical agency in man's mental make-up that Intelligence can use to get Itself into expression. However, man seriously interferes with the in-pouring of Intelligence into his intellect by placing his personal will between It and himself. He thus insulates his life and affairs from the effective influence of Pure Intelligence (Wisdom). He flees Its Light by choosing to set his attention toward the world. Consequently, he draws into his mental range the things of the world, and his response to these stimuli formulates as thought. His thought perpetuates these ungodly influences until such time as he is willing to transfer his attention from the world and give it to God. What man thinks is good for him usually is detrimental; what God knows is Good for him always is his blessing.

Word is the oral expression of thought. It is a re-affirmation that makes the flimsy thought substantial enough to outpicture. Silent thought and spoken word are a combination of utterances that formulates what is unseen and unknown. Through these utterances man determines his measure of the Good in his life. He has the power to choose to respond to the world or to God, and his choice formulates in thought and word accordingly.

Manifestation is the appearance that the Master said we are to refuse to judge as real. Manifestation is the display in man's show window of life that exposes his secret viewings.

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of The Month

JULY 1952

1. Ye ARE ALL the children of God.
2. I Am the vine, ye are the BRANCHES.
3. Ye are a CHOSEN generation.
4. Thou shalt DELIGHT thyself in the Lord.
5. Ye are manifestly declared to be the EPISTLE of God.

*

7. We should bring FORTH FRUIT to God.
8. The Lord will GIVE GRACE and GLORY.
9. Of HIM, and through HIM, and to HIM are all things.
10. I delight in the law of God after the INWARD man.
11. The lips of knowledge are a precious JEWEL.
12. The KINGDOM of God is come.

*

14. They LIFTED up their eyes and LOOKED.
15. They gathered MANNA every MORNING.
16. The NATIONS also heard of Him.
17. They shall OBTAIN joy and gladness.
18. My PEOPLE shall dwell in PEACEABLE, habitations.
19. Then are they glad, because they be QUIET.

*

21. There is nothing covered that shall not be REVEALED.
22. The Father which SEETH in SECRET SHALL reward thee openly.
23. All THESE THINGS shall be added unto you.
24. I will UPHOLD thee.
25. I will VISIT you.
26. WHOSOEVER hath, to him shall be given.

*

28. My YOKE is easy.
29. The ZEAL of the Lord shall do this.
30. Thou shalt have treasure in heaven.
31. The pure in heart shall see 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."

* * *

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