

SPIRITICITY, July 1956
GIVE THANKS
By Robert Applegate

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess. 5:16-18)

To give thanks to God in every experience and for everything that transpires is so unsophisticated a practice that it sounds juvenile, even silly, to suggest it. But Paul was not ignorant of the world; he had had wide experience of it with all its cruelty and inconsistency. Yet he gave this instruction at every opportunity. And he is right. A Christian should be continuously in an attitude of thanksgiving. It is a mark of his faith. It is the only response that he can make when he perceives what has been given to him. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. . . . Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him," we are taught. This is one of the first things that we learn in the study of truth. Whatever we do, it is the Lord doing it through us. Wherever we are, it is the Lord who has brought us there for our good. Whatever we have, the Lord has given it into our hands for some purpose. Our work is God's work, our possessions are God's, and we are His stewards of that which has been entrusted to us. As we recognize this, we are freed from covetousness and from the sense of responsibility. We turn all responsibility over to the One; and we know that our only duty is to remember Him, to remember that He is responsible.

Those who know that they do nothing, because the Lord does all that is done; who know that they possess nothing, because all belongs to the One: these are the "poor in spirit," and to them belongs the Kingdom of Heaven. They are not careless or negligent, for they know that they will be required to give account of their stewardship. But they are carefree. They are free from concern about things. They are not owned by things, for they know to whom all things belong. They do not call anything "mine," for they know that all is God's. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." But "the silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." "The land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me." "The world is Mine, and the fulness thereof." Since all things belong to God and since He is still in command of His creation, we gratefully acknowledge this fact. We recognize His provision, His guidance, His care for us, His power working in us both to desire and to do that which He desires for us. We acknowledge God working in our personal affairs and also in the affairs of the nations. We commit everything to Him. Consequently, there is nothing left for us but to give thanks, continuously.

Jesus Christ gave us the formula for the right attitude towards life:

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done. . . . When ye pray, believe that ye receive."

God's WILL contains all good for us, "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think." And we are told to believe that this WILL is being done

in our lives. Again, there is nothing for us to do, after we have said our prayer, but to give thanks.

It is generally only in moments of high inspiration that we are really aware of God's guidance and care, of His Allness. Therefore we must practice to enforce our awareness, to build the temple "not made with hands," which is our own inner consciousness of God's Omnipresence. One salutary form of practice is thanksgiving. Try it for a day - for a week, if possible. The more you give thanks, the more you will see to be thankful for. Therefore, in every event of the day, for all that is said or done to you and for everything that you say or do, give thanks inwardly to God. If you desire to do something, give thanks that it is already finished; for there is no time in God. Keep up the refrain: "I thank you, Father, I thank you." It is both a pleasant and a profitable practice. You will find your attitude changing toward many things; you will see benefit in happenings that had seemed irksome and unnecessary. Especially, therefore, when you are irritated or critical, pull yourself together, look within, look up, and give thanks.

In the smallest events and in the greatest, express your thanks that God is there. If you are exasperated by the foolishness, the selfishness, and the littleness of those who guide the destinies of the country and of the world, give thanks that the Spirit of Wisdom is with them and is in control. There has always been malfeasance in office and "spiritual wickedness in high places"; but, from the beginning, there has been the Spirit, which alone knows the end to which we are heading and which still rules in the affairs of men. Give thanks that it is so. We can never give thanks enough that it is so; for, if left to ourselves, we would quickly destroy ourselves. Paul knew what persecution is, and tyranny; but he wrote: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called; . . . and be ye thankful."

Summer, when the weather is hot and tempers are short, when all the worst in us seems to come to the surface, is a particularly good time to practice the inner giving of thanks for everything that transpires. Such practice will not only make life pleasanter for ourselves and promote our growth in understanding, but it will also make us a blessing to those around us. Thanksgiving is an act of faith, and the practice of it increases faith. For faith, like everything else, grows with exercise. And faith is infectious. If we have it, those around us will catch it from us. Thanksgiving promotes joy, and joy also is contagious. As we give thanks for everything, more and more we will find ourselves giving thanks simply that Christ is. This inward gratitude gives the gladness of heart that so many people seek for outwardly and fail to find. The grateful person is always the blithesome person, no matter how much - or how little - he may seem to possess outwardly. It was thus that Paul wrote in his Letter to the Ephesians:

"Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity, which are not fitting (and which give but a counterfeit, unsatisfying stimulation); . . . but instead let there be thanksgiving. . . . Be filled with the Spirit, . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father."

SPIRITICITY, July 1956

CHRISTHOOD

By Alden Truesdell

No one but Jesus Christ has ever completed a spiritual work, and that work was the saving of the race. The churches are by-products of this work, and rather pleasant by-products, if one is interested primarily in comfort, culture, and currency. For these, in turn, are by-products of religion. And while all of these are added to those who follow, to any degree, the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, yet that Doctrine - followed and practiced to its ultimate - will bring one up through churches, through culture, through commerce to Christhood itself. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," said Paul. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

No one has completely acknowledged the magnitude of the finished work of Jesus Christ. Many have acknowledged the Advent of the Man and His Ministry, but the Man has received more homage than the Ministry He performed.

What may we do to prepare ourselves for a greater concept of Christhood? How may we be spiritually seasoned to comprehend the hard sayings, so grievous to be borne? Preparation and seasoning both suggest the application of certain practices. For example, if we wanted to build muscles, we would adopt a system of setting-up and muscle-building exercises.

Similarly, brilliant mentalities have not come into full bloom without a great deal of what is called "boning up." During this boning process, some students become haggard and seem less than brilliant. They suffer from lack of sleep and from excess concentration. They become peaked and sometimes pale, but eventually they come through the ordeal triumphant.

Surely a similar initiatory seasoning and preparation may be expected in the all-important purifying movement into spiritual realization - or being born into Spirit. To one, this may seem to be a refining movement, whereby, like Job, he will come forth as fine gold. To another, it may seem to be an achievement, where he presses on "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." To another, it may be a growing "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." To the prodigal, it was rising and going to the Father's house. Each one seeking to know and do his spiritual task will react in his own way and have his own impressions. Each one will describe his experience in an individual way, for each one is at least a little different from his brother. Each one has his own gift or talent, his own place in the Divine Plan. Therefore anyone would be unwise to criticize any other one. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" Part of our initial practice is the surrender of our personal judgments. "Judge not," we are told, "and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you."

Believing on the name of Jesus Christ and acknowledging, to the best of one's ability, the finished Work He did is a part of the consciousness-building practice, and it is a most practical way of benefiting by proxy. To so believe and so acknowledge is to have part in the most successful spiritual project the world has ever known or ever will know. Considering what Jesus did and what He asked us to do reveals our own spiritual capacities. Contemplating what Jesus Christ IS, reveals what man is in reality and can be in manifestation.

"Know thyself," the Greeks inscribed on the temple of Apollo. "The proper study of mankind is man," declared Alexander Pope. The Advent of Jesus Christ revealed just how worthy the subject matter of the study of man can be. The object of study seems to gain in stature as his Origin is considered. He is

discovered to have many transcendent qualities and apparently unlimited possibilities. He seems never to have extended himself to his full capacity, except in one instance; and at first there is reluctance to identify ordinary man with the extraordinary Man we know as Jesus the Christ. We seem here to be treading on holy ground. But we are told: "Follow Me." "Whither I go, ye know, and the way ye know. . . . He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to My Father."

At a certain point in his study, Emerson found man and God merging; and so will every student of this all-absorbing subject. We say the subject is "all-absorbing" because it is possible for one to be completely submerged in his investigation. It is possible for one to become so intrigued with his spiritual capabilities and his Christ Identity that he forgets his mortal, mental, and personal life. When he does so, he is losing his life for Christ's sake, or forgetting the personal to remember the spiritual.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." However, Jesus did not say that being born anew called for any special talent other than the ability to repent and believe. The spiritual birth is what Jesus envisioned for those who choose to consider His Words and His Way. This is what He meant when He said: "if any man serve Me, let him follow Me." This is where they will find Him, who hear and heed His word, and who follow His example of overcoming.

We can readily see how the one who goes all out for the things of the world can become so bogged down with the weight of these perishable possessions that he may neglect the attention and application required for permanent prosperity and eternal well-being.

One must aspire to anything before he can attain it; and so we can see how any distraction of the attention from the Spiritual Realm will tend to delay the spiritual birth and the consequent reception of the inheritance incorruptible. We can see why the young man with great possessions would have to stop depending upon those possessions if he aspired to true riches; and how "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." We can see, too, how these very things are possible with God; for "with God all things are possible." And with the correct concept of God, all things and all possessions become subsidiary. If the rich young man could trust God more than his riches and if he could see the Truth about God, he could conceivably have God and the riches; but God would have to come first.

The highest study of mankind is man, and the highest area of investigation in the study of man is consideration of his Christhood. To this everything else must be secondary.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

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SPIRITICITY, July 1956

MAN MAY KNOW GOD

By Nell Truesdell

"I love You, God, because You are my Father, just as I loved my earthly father because he was my father and my mother because she was my mother, and as

I love my brothers because they are my brothers and my sister because she is my sister." I shifted my weight on my knees and remained silent for awhile.

My meditation completed, I arose. But I could not drop this idea of my love for God. I felt His closeness within and around me, and I wanted to translate the feeling into words.

Why do I love God at all? Or Jesus Christ? Or the Holy Spirit? I can answer myself simply enough. I love God because He is my God; I love Jesus Christ because He is my Master and Savior; I love the Holy Spirit because It is my Teacher and Guide in the Way of Truth.

A psychologist, no doubt, would offer a rational explanation for this love of the Unseen. He probably would sum up his statements like this: "Since all human behavior is learned, you love God because your mother taught you to love God. You love Jesus Christ because in Sunday School you were taught that He loved you so much that He died for your sins. You love the Holy Spirit because, in your metaphysical studies, you learned that It is the working Power of God and, as such, does all things for you. Everybody wants to keep in touch with anything that does (or promises to do) all things for him."

However, the rationalizing that a trained intellect would offer about God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit would neither help nor hurt anybody who actually loves the Divine. To such a one, rationalizing is simply unnecessary.

Notice how an animal loves the person who fed it when it was a small, helpless thing. No matter how much the owner ignores the pet after it grows up, it will seek him out when thunder rolls or when overloud noises spread suddenly through the air. Or, if the pet is hurt, it will first look for him who took care of it when it was a baby.

I have observed a dog, in a desperate search for sympathy, roll her eyes toward the person who had cared for her since the day that she was born. The mother dog had had too many puppies: so this one was taken away before she had been weaned. The new mistress fed the puppy from an eye dropper, kept her warm and sheltered; she played with and fondled her until she grew big enough to take care of her own needs. Later, the dog was turned over to another person, who loves and feeds her and takes her for long walks. But the dog always seeks out her mistress when anything happens, and indicates her expectant faith, her devotion; by whimpering a little, lifting a paw, and rolling her big brown eyes. After she gets a sympathetic pat on the head, the dog will lie on the floor near her mistress and fall into a contented doze.

This may serve as a fair illustration of why human beings never really forget God. Somewhere in our consciousness, there is a deeply hidden attachment for our Creator. Though loving parents took care of our every need while we were infants and directed our paths as we grew up, we leaned hard (without knowing why) toward Something higher and deeper than the love of our parents for us. Some active principle within us urged us to look past the enveloping human relations for a peace, a satisfaction, a security that we felt rather than understood. The natural inclination that turns the attention away from the established father-mother-child alliance is the misunderstood, unseen cause of apparent friction between parents and child and the consequent frequent sundering of common interests within the family group. The parents grieve the loss of the child's affection; and the child (not yet emotionally mature) defies his parents' authority over his life.

In the majority of cases, the child, in his ignorant attempt to respond to the inherent urge toward the Unknown, mistakenly follows the path outward and downward into the world; for this path is the most visible one to his immature inner sight. He misdirects the irrepressible action into the pursuit of "his talent": art or music or science or literature or religion, or (on the extremely negative side) into gambling, drunkenness, brawling, lying, licentiousness, and other indulgences of the flesh.

Very, very few people are able to discern clearly that what they really want is a more understanding association with God, their Creator. In the beginning of anybody's search for God, the road is hard and very tedious. The baubles of the world dangle before the unenlightened eyes, and the craving for self-expression tempts the immature seeker to follow off illusions that lead to the destruction of high ideals.

"Unattainable!" the beaten one cries. "Something fit for imbeciles!" the intellectual sneers. "Foolishness and stupidity!" the materialist shrugs.

God is not easy to find; that is, the Real God seems to hide Himself from prying eyes. The earnest seeker has to prove himself over and over before the Divine will reveal His Presence. And the only reward for the seeker is that of knowing the Presence.

Always the revelation comes from the deeply hidden recesses of an inner Being-within-the-being that seems to be altogether different from the surface member of the human society known as oneself. No man knows God except by the Spirit of God that is within him.

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

JULY 1956

2. Seek the things that ARE ABOVE, where Christ is.
3. He hath dealt BOUNTIFULLY with me.
4. I have learned in whatever state I am, to be CONTENT.
5. DECLARE His glory, His wonders among all people.
6. Do EVERYTHING in the Name of the Lord Jesus.
7. Make the Word of God FULLY known.
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9. The body GROWS with a GROWTH that is from GOD.
10. Whatever your task, work HEARTILY, as serving the Lord.
11. He is the IMAGE of the INVISIBLE God.
12. Make a JOYFUL noise unto the Lord, all the earth.
13. KNOW the love of Christ which surpasses KNOWLEDGE.
14. LEAD a LIFE worthy of the LORD.
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16. Stand MATURE and fully assured in all the Will of God.
17. It is good to draw NEAR to God.
18. Whoso findeth Me, shall OBTAIN favour of the Lord.
19. Let the PEACE of Christ rule in your hearts.
20. The effect of righteousness (is) QUIETNESS and assurance.
21. The salvation of the RIGHTEOUS is of the Lord.
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23. May you be STRENGTHENED with all power.
24. Be THANKFUL.
25. UNDERSTAND what the Will of the Lord is.
26. The right hand of the Lord doeth VALIANTLY.
27. Conduct yourselves WISELY.
28. Sow the fields which may YIELD fruits of increase.
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30. God is ZEALOUS.
31. Let your speech always be gracious.

"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.