

SPIRITICITY July 1958

THE PERSECUTED

By Robert Applegate

"BLESSED ARE they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

It is a paradox of human nature that we always oppose our greatest benefactors. We do not like that which disturbs our comfort; and old ideas, like old shoes, are comfortable, because we are used to them.

To admit that an idea which one has believed for a lifetime is false is the hardest thing that a man can do. And so the bringer of new ideas always meets with every form of human opposition. He meets ridicule, sarcasm, misrepresentation, and, where possible, open persecution and often death. The fact that his teaching is true and would, if accepted, be a great boon to humanity, does not help him; for truth when first presented is always opposed. To such a degree is this so that the opposition a message arouses is an indicator of its truthfulness. The more it is opposed, the more likely it is to be true.

All the world's prophets, in all ages and in all countries, have met virulent hatred as a reward for their speaking the Truth, because they knew it to be Truth.

Moses, who led his people out of slavery and made them chosen instruments for God, met with continuous muttering and with open rebellion. And Elijah, who saved what was then the world's purest religion from being swallowed up in sensuality, had to spend most of his life in hiding. Amos was driven from the temple at Bethel. Jesus was crucified. Socrates was judicially murdered.

The Christian Apostles thought it an honor to suffer oppression "for His name," as indeed it was. The persecution was an acknowledgment of the vitality of their ministry. The case of the early martyrs is well known and is generally attributed to the cruelty of barbaric Rome. But persecution did not stop with the passing of Rome and the establishing of a "Christian civilization." Savonarola was burned at the stake for pointing out the hypocrisy of the religious institution. Bruno was burned, and Galileo would have been if he had not recanted. Maister Eckhart, one of the wisest of all times, mysteriously disappeared and was posthumously excommunicated.

The Protestant reformers, who sought to escape the tyranny of Rome, were as violent as the papists in punishing "heretics." And the Puritans who came to this country to find religious freedom denied that same freedom to others. Anne Hutchinson was driven from Massachusetts Bay Colony for preaching - as Paul did - that God's Grace is sufficient for all man's needs. Her follower, Mary Dyer, was hanged.

"Across the disk of existence, each decade," wrote Elbert Hubbard, "there glide five hundred million souls. . . . Out of the bare handful that are remembered, we cherish only the memories of those who stood alone and clearly expressed their honest, inmost thought. And this thought is, always and forever, the thought of liberty. Exile, ostracism, death have been their fate, and on the smoke of martyr-fires their souls mounted to immortality. Future generations often confuse these men with Deity, the Maker of the Worlds. And

thus do we arrive at truth by indirection, for in very fact these were the sons of God, vitalized by Divinity, part and parcel of the Power that guides the planets on their way and holds the worlds in space. Upon their tombs we carve a single word: Savior."

When Christ spoke of "righteousness," He did not mean what we usually understand by that word - integrity, honesty, diligence, etc. There is nothing especially Christian about such virtues. The pagans practiced them, in degree, and praised them, extravagantly. And anyone confining himself to such "goodness" is not apt to get into trouble. The "righteousness" to which Jesus referred consists in right ideas about God (what else did He teach?) and consequently a right relation with Him. It is "the righteousness of God which is by faith." Anyone who possesses this righteousness will be different from his neighbors, and so will be persecuted just to the extent that this difference disturbs their complacency. In this day and in this country, the persecution usually takes the form of snubbing and ridiculing. Since the logic of Truth is unanswerable, the worldly wise try to laugh it out of court or to dismiss it as impractical and its adherents as idle dreamers. Yet all the progress of the human race is due to its visionaries; and the only hope for further progress - even for survival - depends upon the "impractical dreamers."

"We are the dreamers of dreams,
World-losers and world-forsakers,
on whom the pale moon gleams;
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems."

Those who are persecuted for their true ideas are "fortunate" for two reasons. First, the very persecution attests to the trueness of the views. "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." If our religion makes us different from our neighbors, so that they pointedly ignore us or treat us with condescension, then we can be fairly sure we are on the right track. And this is cause for rejoicing.

Second, the persecution, the ridicule, the obloquy, the spitefulness, that the true prophet always meets forces him to lay up his treasure elsewhere than in human acceptance. It drives him back to the Spirit, to the Truth Itself. It compels him to seek all his satisfaction, all his reward, in knowing and proclaiming the Truth, because he knows it is Truth. Thus all opposition serves to strengthen him, to bring him up to his full stature, to enable him to fulfill the purpose for which he is in the world.

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SPIRITICITY July 1958
DAY OF THE LORD
By Alden Truesdell

"THIS IS the day which the Lord hath made; we will be glad and rejoice in it."

In the Spiritual Way of Life, we will always be in the throes of spiritual birth and growth: sometimes on the heights, sometimes in the depths. When we find ourselves in the depths, this is a good time to preach the Gospel to "the poor"; for these confused and negative states of consciousness are priceless opportunities. They are particularly rich soil in which to plant the spiritual seed.

The ebbing of the tide after the crest has been reached is as natural in the fulness of life as it is in the action of the ocean. The wise one is the one who knows this and adjusts himself to it. Paul discovered this pulsating action and said, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound." Paul had experienced the inner travail that every aspiring person knows. "Without were fightings," he wrote, "within were fears." But Paul was to abound to the extent that he could say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Job was so low at one time that he was seriously considering his wife's advice to "curse God, and die." But Job abounded to the extent that he could declare to God with assurance, "Thou knowest that I am not wicked. . . . Thine hands have made me and fashioned me." We frequently meet with similar experiences and are called upon to make similar declarations. Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

In this fluctuation between the high and the low, we are apt to find ourselves in a state either of exaltation or of resignation. The resignation sometimes merges into self-condemnation, and the exaltation may develop the attitude that we are something special (as, indeed, each one has a special talent to develop).

When we are on the heights, do we have the wisdom to say with Jesus, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God"? When we are low, do we have the courage to say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin? . . . It is my Father that honoureth me"?

We might say: "I will do this a little later, I have some things to tend to first."

But Jesus Christ within us says:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. . . . This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

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SPIRITICITY July 1958

TWO WOMEN: TWO ATTITUDES

By Nell Truesdell

"I didn't come here to theorize about God!" The woman's voice was hard and she glared at the practitioner. "I came for practical help."

"The only practical help that I can offer is God." The minister's tone was confident. "Nobody can foresee the way in which God will answer a request for help, and no one should attempt to direct God according to his idea as to how things should work out. What we must do is give our entire attention to God." He paused for emphasis. "Forget the problem and remember God only."

"Yes, yes, I know." She nodded defiantly. "But I have to make my bread and butter."

"Suppose," her adviser continued, "that you were sitting across from a rich man who might be inclined to help you. Would you wrangle or be insulting?"

"Of course not," she snapped. "I would have sense enough to wait for him to say something."

"That's the point," the minister smiled. "Why not approach God in the same way that you would approach a man from whom you hoped to get help?"

The woman's eyes widened. "Well, at least we can pray and see what happens." She relaxed somewhat as she repeated a statement that the minister had suggested.

Several days passed before she returned to report that the problem had worked out through a relative in real estate who had sold two lots that she owned in another state. "I cannot help but think that those lots were my source of supply," she stated. "How could I have made the demonstration without them?"

Like many aspirants to Truth this woman thought of God as a person from whom she could demand help in time of need; and she believed that He, through the manipulation of her possessions, could stabilize her finances. Too, she put up a mental barrier to any instruction that conflicted with her opinions, so that she was prosperous at one time and at another in the depths of despair.

We shall now consider another woman with a totally different attitude toward God. Recently divorced and without income, she had arrived in the city without funds. Willingly, she turned to this practitioner because she knew that he would help her sustain her faith in God so that her problems would work out in divine order. Immediately, her affairs changed for the better. She secured a job as file clerk, and her thanks for spiritual ministry were gracious. As soon as she was adjusted to her new environment, she enrolled in a night class and studied shorthand and typing. Progress was rapid, and soon she had a new job with better pay. She then attended a series of evening classes in business management and personnel work and after receiving a certificate took a responsible position with a large automobile firm that dealt with every phase of sales, rental, and financing. Soon she was made assistant to the owner.

From the meager sum that her first job paid, her income had increased tenfold. During all the changes that she underwent in her ascent in business this woman never neglected the study of Truth nor did she fail to tithe. Her expanded consciousness of God's goodness drew friendship and good will toward her from every source.

God will not only furnish the bread and butter that is essential to life, but He will add other necessary ingredients that money cannot buy so that the well-being of a person is rounded out and perfected. Those who seek only bread and butter confine themselves to a hand-to-mouth existence in a limited world apparently set against them. Those who turn to God, not only for help but to know Him better, are lifted over what could be terrifying experiences; and they are strengthened along the way.

The person who believes that things are his source of supply serves a hard taskmaster. No one must try to use God as a means to his own ends; for while

God will give anything that is asked of Him a person limits himself by his asking in terms of things. The Divine Intelligence and Love that are God-present-with-man will give instant blessings; for God knows what things any person has need of before he asks. The better attitude, of course, is for one to seek God for God's sake and not his own.

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THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By H. B. Jeffery
(Continued from last month)

FAITH

MANY PEOPLE believe that faith is a theological term, referring to some phase of religious life, but not in any way related to the everyday life which is laden with secular affairs and conduct. The hard-headed man of affairs often thinks that faith is something outside his domain of thought and action, something for "children and weak-minded women" to maunder over and imagine they believe in. It is not for those who have to meet the strife and struggle of the workaday world.

Such a man generally relegates faith to the visionaries and the dreamers, thinking that it has no place in the world of the fact-finders and is of no value to the workers and doers in the realm of human endeavor and positive accomplishment. But is he right in his conception of the word faith? While denying faith for himself and his world, is he not exercising faith, for all that, in everything he does or attempts to do?

In the Moffatt Translation of the Bible we read: "Faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see. It was for this that the men of old won their record." In the King James Version the passage is: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, faith is the stuff out of which things are made, the assurance that achievement is possible.

If we carefully consider our world of things and activities, we shall see that everything - every object, article, device, and commodity - is the outpicturing of an idea or combination of ideas, the bringing of conceptions and beliefs into manifestation, the outworking of that which someone has thought possible of accomplishment. The ideas are not seen, but their embodiments are. "Things which are seen," we are told, "were not made of things which do appear." We see effects; the causes are in the realm of the unseen, in the field of ideas - the kingdom of the mind.

An inventor first has an idea. He ponders over it, reflects upon it, lets it grow and take form in his mind; and only then does he embody it in material form where everyone may see it. His act of clothing his idea in outer form is an act of faith.

An artist has an idea for a picture. He contemplates his whole conception with intense interest. He then places his canvas upon an easel, sets his palette with the required pigments, takes his brushes in hand, and begins to

paint. Out from his brush flows the picture he has in mind, and soon the unseen idea is visible to all. Without faith he would not have made the initial movements nor could he have wielded the brushes. Faith in an idea is the substance out of which the picture is made.

Or take a different sort of man, a builder, engaged in a rougher sort of work, of a coarser and more worldly nature. This man also sees with his mind's eye a finished, though still invisible, piece of construction. He begins to gather to him the necessary men and materials with which to carry the work to completion, and in so doing, he acts entirely on faith. His estimate of the cost and his bid for the job are acts of faith. His signing of a contract; his summoning of foremen, lieutenants, and laborers is done in faith, as are his purchases of materials. Without faith he would do nothing.

Everything man does is an act of faith. We would not rise in the morning and get dressed, were it not for our faith in being able to do so. We would not take the first step to cross a room, if we had not faith. Every movement of the body is an evidence of faith. Without faith we would never attempt to drive a car, nor would we board a public conveyance to be taken to some desired destination. We would not attempt to converse with one another, if we had not faith in our powers of thought and articulation, and also in our ability to hear and understand.

All the business of the world, from the smallest to the largest, is done on faith. A man builds or rents a store, stocks it with goods, opens the doors, advertises the venture; and every move he makes is an act of faith - faith in his judgment as to the selection of his stock, faith in the public's appreciation, faith in the people's patronage, faith in the validity of money paid or cheeks tendered in payment for purchases.

When a person opens a bank account and deposits money, he does so in faith. When he issues a check on his account, he believes it will be honored by the bank; and when he accepts another person's check, this is likewise a matter of faith. Thus we might enumerate the many and varied doings of men and women; and upon examination we would find that whatever anyone does, it is an act of faith - the giving of expression to an inward intention, the making visible by faith those ideas which formerly were invisible.

Engineers conceived the idea of a tunnel underneath the Hudson River, to facilitate traffic between New York and Jersey City. They saw, with the mind's eye, the finished fact and made others believe in the possibility of its consummation. Then the work of surveying and construction began; and by faith in the idea, faith in themselves, faith in the skill of others - artisans, mechanics, laborers - faith in the properties of various substances to be employed, they carried on until the great structure was completed and the public was given to see, accept, and make beneficial use of this product of combined labor - this evidence of a great idea.

At the time of this writing, people from all over the world are coming to a celebration in the San Francisco area of California. These people can now see the finished construction of two great bridges, one linking this city with Oakland across the bay, and the other spanning the famous Golden Gate, the water passage between the Bay of San Francisco and the Pacific Ocean. For years these now accomplished facts were considered to be beyond the possibility of achievement; but behold, they are now monuments to the faith of men, a testimony to their artistic and engineering skill, to their brain and brawn.

Brooklyn Bridge, over the East River in New York, was thought to be but an idle dream. Yet John A. Roebling said he could build it, and before he died he had the joy of knowing that construction was in progress. Truly, "faith is the substance of things hoped for," the stuff of which they are made, the dynamic that moves in all the activities of men, the propelling force in all progress.

All the creative work done by man is initiated and carried forward by faith. And not only man but God Himself - in whose image and likeness man is made - works by faith. By faith were the heavens and the earth made. And man - created by God - was brought into being by faith.

Man is a creature of faith; it constitutes the warp and woof of his nature. "We walk by faith," said Paul, "not by sight." And this is true on all planes of our consciousness, from the lowest to the highest.

(To be Continued)

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

JULY 1958

1. Watch ye . . . and pray ALWAYS.
2. BELIEVE also in Me.
3. If ye love Me, keep My COMMANDMENTS.
4. Ye are My DISCIPLES.
5. My EXPECTATION is from Him.
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7. The Lord shall lead us unto living FOUNTAINS.
8. He GIVETH GRACE.
9. A wise man will HEAR.
10. IMMEDIATELY I was in the Spirit.
11. Let us JOIN ourselves to the Lord.
12. I have KEPT Thy ways.
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14. I LOOKED up.
15. He is the MEDIATOR.
16. NOW say, Peace be within thee.
17. ORDER my steps in Thy Word.
18. The Lord PRESERVETH the simple.
19. He giveth QUIETNESS.
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21. If ye loved Me, ye would REJOICE.
22. In the SIGHT of God SPEAK we.
23. He shall TEACH you all THINGS.
24. Not as the world giveth, give I UNTO you.
25. The VOICE which came from heaven was heard.
26. The host of heaven WORSHIPPED Thee.
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28. Whither I go YE know.
29. ZEAL hath provoked very many.
30. The goodness of God leadeth thee.
31. Come into My House and abide.

"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.