

SPIRITICITY June 1955

WHY SHOULD WE KNOW GOD?

By Nell Truesdell

God is always in and through and around us every instant. As He is in us, we are in Him. We cannot get away from Him, for there is no place where He is not. We need not try to go out to Him somewhere else, for He is already with us.

Why, then does He refuse to answer my prayer? Why is it hard to get Him to help me? Everybody asks questions like these, and I believe the quickest way to answer them is to use an illustration.

Take the word "music" into your mind and let it rest there, while you look at the word carefully. Why do you not know more about music than you do? Is it because music has been withheld from you? Is it because you would have to go far, far away to discover it? To any question concerning music and your relation to it, the answer is that, all your life, you have been in touch with all the music there is. If your knowledge of music is limited, it is because you have neither investigated music nor participated in it. You may excuse yourself by saying, "My parents never gave me the opportunity to study; we did not have the money to spend on instruments and lessons; no teacher was available"; and so forth. None of these excuses is the truth. If you had wanted music sufficiently you would have had an opportunity to learn and to master it in any form that you desired - piano, voice, strings, brass, drums, composition - regardless of the circumstances of your family. Extremely poor parents have suffered untold privation to buy a violin or a piano for a child who would not be denied; and instructions have come from the best sources as the student showed his insatiable talent and his determination to master music.

When any person is willing to go through the season of suffering that is the gateway to complete fulfillment of his genius in any field, he arrives at the enviable destination that is termed success by everybody. And after the last word is spoken regarding his success, the unspoken answer still lies in his heart: he responded to the secret hidden in his midst, and he was willing to pay the price for full expression of that secret. In entering any realm of achievement (artistic, scientific, financial, social, religious, spiritual), you have to become nothing to yourself before you can become something to it. And to become something to a particular realm, you have to turn yourself over to it so that it owns you. Only then can you have a part in the full benefits of that realm. Of all of them, the Spiritual Realm is the most rewarding, for There you will find God; while in the lesser worlds you will find only your own idea of God. That is never God, no matter what benefits are yielded.

You are you in whatever time of life and wherever you find yourself. In you is "your hope of glory," your expectation of honor, your real worth. Nothing that you can pile on the outside of you will ever be gain, nor will it ever give you the satisfaction that you inwardly crave. You may gather the riches of the world, the plaudits of your fellows, the powers of kings or dictators. All will turn to dust with you; none can save you.

But one, and just one glimpse of God in the midst of you will cause a glow to pour through your being and will start you on the search for THAT which you suddenly know is all the worthwhile reward a person can achieve. Paradoxically

you may appear to lose the hold you have had on the things of the world, but you need not be concerned. You may have less fellowship with the people who have been close to you (who may even turn away in disdain), but you will not feel forsaken or alone. You may lose your old ability to command people and to get things done; but you will know that the real power to will and to do anything is within you, and that the only power you need exercise is the power to control yourself.

After you have striven to get things and to do something in the world, settling down to the realization that God is the only worthwhile goal may seem to involve an unnecessary letting-go of your ability to achieve and a useless throwing-away of your material goods. But you must be willing to become nothing in the world before you can become something to God. In the becoming nothing, your experience will be easier if you will learn to be satisfied right where you are; for it will be impossible to play your worldly schemes in competition with your spiritual aspirations. As the Apostle John wrote, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

At first, in all spiritual ongoing, it appears that the seeker goes down; but the going-down is nothing more than an unlearning of false values and a relinquishing of unnecessary burdens, after which there is a mighty coming-up. As Jesus Christ bluntly put it, "He that loseth his life (and the things of this life) for My sake, shall find it."

What are you sacrificing yourself for - riches? honor? power? What do you think God ought to give you if He loves you - things? a carefree existence? fine clothes? servants? high social standing? business success? All these are the "worldly goods" that have to be surrendered in payment for spiritual values. Unless there is a willingness to let the lesser values go, the more worthwhile values will remain obscured from your view, and you will remain unsatisfied with your state of existence, no matter how well off you appear to others.

The marvelous part of turning to God is that, actually, you never lose anything of value in the outer; and, if there is anything you need for your well-being, you will be provided with it in some way that will appear miraculous.

Turn yourself over to God, and He will turn Himself over to you.

But you cannot violate Him and His Goodness if you would possess Him wholly, no more than you can violate a talent and expect to have its full benefits. A misused talent will leave you. With God, you will cut yourself off from Him the instant that you abuse your privilege of knowing Him in your midst.

Turn to God now, in this hour. He is within you. You may find Him now within you. Search around your being. If you are earnest, He will seem to come to you in such a way that you will know that He has come. Be still. Be still, and feel the quiet within and around you. God will come to you out of that stillness. You are the tabernacle of the Almighty God; you house God in your consciousness. You do not limit Him to the dimensions of your humanness, but the only place you can find Him is in the center of yourself. That center is called "the heart," or "the closet," or "the secret place within." The more awake you are to God's Presence, the more you will dedicate yourself to Him. The more often you return to Him, the more joyful and secure you will be. You will not have to ask or beg for anything; for the Master has assured us: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him."

"Be still, and know that I am God."

"Thou, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy Name."

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SPIRITICITY June 1955

JUDGMENT

By Robert Applegate

The idea of Divine Judgment has struck terror into many simple hearts. All of us are repelled by the thought of God as a Judge, separating the wicked from the righteous.

The very notion of judgment is abhorrent to us. Yet suppose that you were arraigned before a human court on the charge of murder; while, as a matter of fact, you were entirely innocent. In this case a righteous judgment in your behalf would be highly desirable. Accordingly, if we are afraid of God's Judgment, it must be that we are thoroughly convinced of our guilt before the Almighty. And it is no wonder that this is so; for it has been drilled into us for centuries that we are all guilty sinners, who ought to be, and probably will be, punished for our transgressions. Yet this teaching, which has come from almost every pulpit, is not only un-Christian, but anti-Christian.

In order to clear our minds of these false notions of judgment (which are deeply imbedded in our consciousness, whether we are immediately aware of them or not), let us look at the whole concept of sin and judgment as it is presented in the Scripture and especially in the New Testament. There are three points that should be noted: (1) that God's judgment of His children can only be that they are what He made them to be - perfect; (2) as a corollary to this, that man's "sin" is his refusal to accept this judgment; (3) that, while the man who turns to God must be declared perfect, many of his ways (which are the out-picturing of his ideas) will be revealed to be what they are - vain.

If "God is Love" and He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," then surely He cannot see us as imperfect in any way. In fact God can see us only as he created us - as His sons, made in His Image and after His Likeness. This is, and always must be, His eternal Judgment of us. It is "the devil" that accuses us of sin and shortcoming; and evidently he has done a good job, for we all seem to be convinced of our unworthiness. The word that is translated "the devil" in the New Testament literally means "the slanderer," and that is what he is. He has slandered and accused the sons of God until he has convinced them of their own wickedness. Yet Jesus said of this accuser, "He is a liar." His accusations are not true, and we can and should turn around to convict him of perjury. In Revelation (which is John's revealing of things that are to happen within each unfolding consciousness) we read: "The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Needless to say, "the devil" is not a malevolent, celestial being who opposes God and works to harm us. Nothing opposes God but we ourselves. "The devil" or "the slanderer" is simply the vivid personification of the idea of separation from God. All our consciousness of unworthiness, all our self-reproach stems from this notion that we are - or can be - separated from our

Creator. All our woes stem from this error and it is one that we have manufactured for ourselves. We want to be self-reliant when we should be God-reliant. By turning away from God and imagining ourselves separated from Him, we have developed the two opposite reactions, which go hand in hand: self-esteem and self-condemnation. We have become self-centered, instead of being God-centered.

"All have sinned," we are told, "and come short of the glory of God." This is true; but before he made this statement Paul declared just what man's "sin" consists of:

"When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. ... Thinking themselves to be wise (i.e., imagining they could have some intelligence of their own apart from the Divine Mind), they became fools. ... Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts."

In this passage Paul declares that man's lack of reverence and gratitude toward God starts a chain reaction, which produces first a foolish self-esteem, then a host of deceitful desires, and finally a feeling of complete separation from God and utter unworthiness of Him. It is this feeling of unworthiness that produces the false notion that God is judging man. Man cuts himself off from God; and being unwilling to accept the responsibility for his unhappy state, he imagines that God has cut him off. Feeling guilty about his foolishness, he imagines that God is judging him; whereas it is he who is judging himself.

Nevertheless, God's Judgment - that all men are His sons - still stands. Man's "sin" (which means simply "mistake") is his turning away from that Judgment and his bull-headed refusal to turn back to it. But God always waits for man to return, just as in Jesus' Parable of the Prodigal, the father waited for his son. He did not go out to compel the boy to come home; but, allowing his son the dignity of free choice, he waited. When the son did return, the father went out to meet him and "fell on his neck, and kissed him." There was no condemnation in the father's attitude towards his son. Nor is there any condemnation in God's attitude towards us, no matter how far we go away from Him nor how long we stay away.

If man's only "sin" is his turning away from God, then his only salvation lies in turning back to God. There was nothing that the prodigal son could do in the "far country" that would bring him to his father's house; nor was it required that he prove himself worthy before he could return. On the contrary, he had only to go to his father's house. Similarly, there is nothing that man can do in the outer that will bring him back to God, but he must "arise and go to my father."

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is God's judgment; this is the Word that goes forth eternally from God. Jesus heard it at His Baptism and again at His Transfiguration. Any person may hear it and accept it for himself; for it is the impersonal Word always and forever the same, spoken by God, who "is no respecter of persons." Man's only error is his stubborn refusal to accept this Judgment; his only salvation lies in his accepting it by faith in it. "For by grace (the free, unmerited Love of God) are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

The Judgment of God is actually the revelation of His Perfection, His Glory, His Majesty. The Day of Judgment is the time when this revelation is received by any individual. It comes to everyone who persistently seeks God; it

is entirely an internal experience. The Perfection of God, His infinite Wonderfulness, is revealed; and It, by Its Nature, exposes the foolishness and emptiness of all human pretensions. This experience is vividly described by Jesus in a passage which has been woefully misconstrued by man's picayunish literal-mindedness.

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left."

The throne of God's Glory to which Jesus here refers is within each individual; for it is there that each one meets God. The "nations" that are gathered there before the Lord are the ideas that inhabit each consciousness. Most of the ideas which we carry about with us and upon which we base our lives are materialistic. They are the outgrowth of the root idea that man is a physical-mental being, who must make his own way by his own craft and cunning. These are the "goats." They are to be removed far from us. They are to be utterly consumed by the revelation of the Glory of God. "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." On the other hand, the ideas and beliefs in the heart which acknowledge the Sovereignty of the Master and follow Him are the "sheep." To them the promise is "The King shall say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." It is an unfailing promise.

The Day of Judgment, therefore, is a desirable event. Since our heartfelt beliefs rule our lives it is essential to us that the untrue and destructive ones be removed; that the true and healthful ones be lifted up.

This matter of man's acceptance of God's Judgment is vital. It is not something to be reasoned about as an intellectual pastime, or to be regarded lightly. It may be noted that those whom Jesus denounced were always those who refused to accept Him.

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

Thus it is when the Christ comes to each individual. Each one has the freedom to accept Him or to reject Him. If he rejects Christ he condemns himself; if he accepts Christ, he is blessed beyond his wildest expectations. It is man's arrogance and self-assertiveness that keeps him from accepting the Christ. Conversely, his salvation lies in his becoming as tractable as a little child.

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

SPIRITICITY June 1955

FATHER

By Alden Truesdell

For many years in my childhood, "Papa" was the only name I knew for my father, with whom there was little sentimental attachment. Now I believe that his stern exterior was an armor for an internal tenderness, as is the case with many of today's dads. But my early misconceptions of "Papa" were similar to many of our concepts of the Spiritual Father; for many of us have such a biased opinion of God that we want to postpone acquaintance with Him.

My grandfather was an old-school Methodist minister who knew where the sinners were headed, and told them. Because my early impressions were formed through association with these seemingly harsh men (my father and my mother's father), there was the inevitable intermittent bitterness; but now I know that they were trying to be true to their own ideals. Now I have a certain sense of honor and even gratitude toward them, for they were responsible for my receiving the rapid revealing of the experiences the world has to offer. Such lessons are valuable, because they teach quickly that until a man turns back to the Father's House of his own volition, his actions will produce frustration. Most children, however, have the utmost confidence in earthly parents. The breaking-down of this idolatry seems tragic, for it is like learning there is no Santa Claus. But the time comes to every child when he must realize that the earthly parent is not omniscient.

Those of you who are parents know how difficult it is to keep from indulging the child who comes and looks earnestly and appealingly into your eyes. Imagine, then, the response of the Heavenly Father when you (His son) return home after an absence in the hinterlands of the heathen. God does not scold. He is not vindictive or vengeful. To Him, each one of His children is gifted with greatness and endowed with success. The child may expect reward for good behavior; but no behavior is good enough, no works of sufficient value, to earn or deserve the successes and prosperings prepared by the Heavenly Father for the returning child.

Jesus Christ was an obedient Son of an all-competent Father. His confidence in His Spiritual Father was a tribute to the Nature and Character of that Father. He knew Him in whom He believed.

Fathers delight in giving to, and doing for, their children. God has in store an array of gifts and talents that will enable each of His children to duplicate the wonder-working of the ancients of the Old Testament and the miracles of the more modern New Dispensation. Jesus Christ, the Elder Brother, has exhibited what all the sons of God may enjoy, when once the Fatherhood of God is acknowledged.

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

JUNE 1955

1. God hath ANOINTED thee with the oil of gladness.
2. I have BELIEVED Thy commandments.
3. Wait on thy God CONTINUALLY.
4. Teach me to DO Thy will.

6. I will EXTOL Thee, my God.
7. Truly our FELLOWSHIP is with the FATHER.
8. It is GOOD for me to draw near to GOD.
9. HE is raised up out of HIS HOLY HABITATION.
10. Greater IS He that IS IN you, than he that IS IN the world.
11. By thy words thou shalt be JUSTIFIED.

13. He that KEEPETH thee will not slumber.
14. The LORD God hath given me the tongue of the LEARNED.
15. MY MOUTH shall speak the praises of the Lord.
16. NEW things do I declare.
17. His tender mercies are OVER all.
18. God is my PORTION for ever.

20. Study to be QUIET.
21. REST in the Lord.
22. Be SILENT, O all flesh, before the Lord.
23. My soul THIRSTETH after THEE.
24. His greatness is UNSEARCHABLE.
25. God hath VISITED His people.

27. The Lord thy God is WITH thee WITHERSOEVER thou goest.
28. Keep YOURSELVES from idols.
29. Where is thy ZEAL?
30. Loose him, and let him go.

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