

RECOGNIZE YOUR DEMONSTRATIONS

By Nell Truesdell

OUR DEMONSTRATIONS of good usually appear in guises far different from those we had visualized. I am reminded of a story that I heard a deacon of our church tell a group of teen-agers in the early 1900's. A minister was slated to perform the marriage ceremony for one of the rich and socially prominent couples in his district. He anticipated a substantial fee for his services and looked forward eagerly to his reward; for he was a poor man with a large family.

After the festivities, the groom handed his minister a slender package which he opened on the spot. As he thanked the couple, the distressed man, with great difficulty, managed to hide his crushed hopes. The package contained a pair of the finest grey kid gloves that money could buy.

Months passed. The couple returned from a long tour of Europe and set up housekeeping. The minister faithfully served his parish day by day, but a slight coolness tinged all his contact with the couple, for the hurt of his disappointment still rankled in his heart. Then one day he asked his wife to find the gloves, so that he could wear them to a funeral. "I may as well get some use out of them," he remarked sarcastically, as he pulled out what he had thought to be worthless paper stuffing. Imagine his consternation when he saw that each finger of the gloves was padded with a ten dollar bill!

He fell to his knees and cried out in shame to God for his misjudgment and prayed earnestly for forgiveness. As soon as possible, the good man called on the young couple, told his story, and begged their pardon. His confession not only released all the pent up resentment in his heart, but it clarified the air for the couple who had suspected that their minister was ungrateful.

God never fails. His Will is to give Himself to all. Those in straitened circumstances may quicken the movement of benefits into their areas of activity by remembering to thank God, simply because He is God. What other reason is more excellent or meritorious? Those in affluence may increase their inner gratitude and so protect themselves from the erosion of half-complacency.

I know an exceedingly rich woman whose husband continues to make vast sums of money, seemingly without effort. She gave me the key to their opulence: "Even when we didn't have much, Mrs. Truesdell, I'd fall to my knees every day and thank God for His goodness - for our health, our home, our happiness. And I still do," she said modestly. I saw in an instant that her recognition and praise and childlike thanksgiving to her Source of all good drew overflowing abundance into her life.

Have you neglected to recognize God's generosity? Have you prayed for wisdom to see His blessings concealed in the limited appearances they may have assumed?

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SPIRITICITY, June 1961

LETTERS RECEIVED:

(The following unsolicited letters to us are examples of the working power of Christ Truth in behalf of any person who cooperates with God's law of giving and receiving.)

Monday, October 5, 1959
CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE:

"Today I am a middle-aged women and penniless. Once I was very rich and had plenty. I had many responsibilities which took my money, and I helped people that I thought and knew needed help. But I forgot God, our Creator and His spiritual guidance. These I neglected. I mean, I was selfish and didn't set aside any for the church. I believed that charity was to be given among the people and not the church. How wrong I am. God provides for His people day by day - not the tomorrows. I have been provided with the necessities of life by Him, day by day. Now I look back and realize the necessity of a church where I, and others, may go when we have that desire that is within us to be in His house and feel the closeness of His arm around us, reassuring us that He will not let us falter if we have faith in Him.

"Today I have \$4.00 and I do not know when or where I will get any more. This morning I woke up and was led to give a tenth of all the money I now have, and will have in the future to some church that helps people to find themselves and that teaches them to have more faith in the Divine Being, our Creator.

"Enclosed, \$1.00. Please accept it and pray for me that I shall be able to take care of myself without depending on others. I pray that God be merciful and help all of us. I will dedicate a part of my earnings as I receive them to your church." - JLM

Tuesday October 6, 1959

"FANTASTIC!"
CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE:

"Yesterday after I had placed the dollar bill in the envelope and sealed the flap, a young lady whom in the past I have helped over many rough miles, walked into my room and firmly requested me to go downtown with her. This young lady is now working and has several charge accounts. To my amazement (and she rightly knew that I hadn't had any new clothes in three years), she told me that it was my day and that she was taking me home with some new clothes. This is exactly what she did: Two new dresses, five pairs of hose, and undies. We were fortunate to hit some extra-special sales. Normally the clothes would have cost three times as much. And the precious young lady had only to say, Charge it, please. God has been merciful to me, and to her. I have totaled the price of the gifts the best I can and find that it amounts to at least \$25.00. Since this was like money to me, I pledged 10% to your church and wondered how I was going to get the 10% to send. This morning, a friend of a long way back (that I had loaned some money to) came by and gave me \$5.00 of what she owed me. I am sending you \$3.00 of this \$5.00, to cover the cost of the gifts and the money that was given to me. The Man Upstairs will not let me down." - JLM

Our Answer:

"Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me.' Sometimes the rapidity with which God responds to our slightest movement in His direction overwhelms us. Last night I took your letter home for Mrs. Truesdell to read, and this morning read your second letter over the telephone to her. She thought we might some day print this account of spiritual practice in our monthly paper, SPIRITICITY.

"Such splendid responses as you have reported reveal the efficacy and results of combined spiritual dedication and ministry of the Christ Truth that do not surprise us. We have rejoiced to see many miracles of healing and prosperity throughout our years of service in the Name of Jesus Christ.

"Please let us thank you for your dedicated tithes, the first fruits of your increase. May you continue to prosper and be in health as your soul prospers."

CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE
- AJT

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SPIRITICITY JUNE 1961

FLESH OR SPIRIT?

By Alden Truesdell

FLESH OR SPIRIT? Does it seem that we have heard this subject matter discussed time and again?

It is the only subject there is to discuss, as every discussion is a phase of this subject. Man seems to be a twofold creature, having two different goals. One aim is bodily comfort and manifest benefits; the other is inner peace, poise, balance. We find this apparent duality expressed in simple Scriptural statement and in complicated philosophical treatises. It is self-evident. It manifests in everyday life as excess on one hand, conservation on the other - self-indulgence or self-denial. The choice should be simple; the complexities of duality make it seem hard, or make the unwise decision seem to be the practical one, the one any normal person would choose.

Although we might not care for some of the presentations of the Truth about Life and would like instruction given with a coating of sugar, the fact still remains that this is a matter of life and death - so vital for each one as to be called "the terrible alternative" - or, as the Scripture puts it: "I have set before you life and death: . . . therefore choose life."

It should not be too difficult to choose between life and death; and yet this admonition has had to be repeated again and again and again through all the books of spiritual instruction. Surely one would prefer life to death, happiness to sorrow, health to sickness, light to darkness, wisdom to ignorance. But once the negative choice becomes habitual, there is a nostalgic preference for that degree of darkness over any degree of light. As Jesus said, men prefer the old wine.

The process of emptying out this old wine to give place for a new vintage is what is comprised in that process we hear much about: repentance, forgiveness, remission, redemption, and atonement.

If the process were as simple as filling up the old demijohn, all would be simplified. But the new wine is still working, still, fermenting; so it would break the old bottles. "No man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but now wine must be put into new bottles."

Even when the disciples had been prepared by the Greatest of all teachers over a period of three years, when the full force of the new wine was poured out upon them at Pentecost, they were so overcome with the experience that men accused them of being drunk. This outpouring was the result of the three years' intense training when they were, as Jesus said, with Him in His temptings. They had been indoctrinated as no other group of man has been; so their reaction was comparatively mild, compared, let us say, to that of Paul.

Paul was blinded for three days, during which he neither ate nor drank. He was made to see again by a Christ-appointed healer, who was instructed to go to him and lay his hands upon him, that he might receive his sight.

Paul is a good example of the contrasting ways of life we designate as Spirit and flesh. Paul was a product of the Jewish race, which was the leader in the field of religion. And he was as good a product of the traditional Jewish training as could be found, "a Pharisee of the Pharisees," as he described himself. Not only was he trained in the Jewish religion, but he was zealous in practicing and protecting it.

His zeal in opposing the new religion, his zeal in persecuting those who preached it, proved to be the cause of his being violently converted to it. This may show how that which is opposed to Spirit need not be resisted, for it will finally break itself up by its own opposition. Thus we are to pray for "those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

We could talk all day on the subject of flesh and Spirit, and find at length we had said nothing as well as it has been said before by such masters as Paul the Apostle. But we have too long looked upon the Scriptures as something laying great emphasis on morals for morals' sake - or on Ethics, that we might show forth good behavior to be seen of men. Scripture is a handbook of right living, and Spirit is the essence of that living.

The modern generation would no doubt consider the writers of the Scripture the original squares. But even in their endeavors to break up all the orthodox patterns and to set up new ways of non-conformity, the beatniks are seeking what the spiritual man is teaching. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"; and only there will true liberty be found.

The beatnik on his pad or fisherman by the pond is seeking his liberation, his solitude, his salvation. He is looking outward for something he will find only within.

Paul discovered in very violent manner the reality of Spirit. He could easily have died of his lesson, had he not been a chosen vessel for the Lord. He is not found telling his people that, if they are not good, they will hurt God's feeling; and if they are good, they will go to heaven when they die. Let us go along with this master for a bit and find out how he does handle this subject:

"Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. . . . This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. . . . Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation,

wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you also in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and the lusts. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit."

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WE NEED NOT ask God for blessings. We need to watch toward God and wait on Him with thanks in our hearts. He then will bless us according to His Idea; and His blessing will then supply, or assuage, our need in ratio to our capacity - our willingness to receive His blessing as He gives it, not as we want it to be.

To touch God with our attention is our way of giving to God. That is all we have to do: give Him our attention. Ask nothing. He will give us the essential blessing that will satisfy our need not according to our wish, but according to His Wisdom and Love.

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I do my best,
God does the rest. - AJT

SPIRITICITY, JUNE 1961

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

By Robert Applegate, Jr.

(Continued from last month)

AS POINTED out last month, Paul attributes mankind's ills to its turning away from God, inwardly; i.e., to its becoming infatuated with its own mental discoveries and mental powers. His words are worth repeating:

When they know God (as all man do), they did not reverence Him as God and were not thankful; they became foolish in their reasoning, and their uncomprehending hearts were darkened. So, imagining themselves to be clever, they became foolish, . . . They revered and served the created thing, rather than the Creator.

Paul continues:

Since they did not think it worthwhile to keep acknowledging God, God gave them up to a base mind, to do those things that are unprofitable. They became filled with all injustice, ugliness, graspingness, hurtfulness; they are replete with envy, murder, strife, deceit, vulgarity; they are whisperers, slanderers, despisers of God, proud, overweening, unstable, lovers of vice, disobedient to parents, senseless, faithless, loveless, merciless. Although they know the judgment of God that they who do such things are worthy of death, they not only do them, but also applaud those that do them.

Many have thought that these words of Paul show that he had a very jaundiced view of mankind. Others, who are more acquainted with the evidence, say that he presents a fair picture of Roman society of the First Century. Yet

his words are equally applicable to all men in all generations including our own. The men who crucified Jesus, poisoned Socrates, burned Joan of Arc, are the same men who are walking the earth today. If things are going according to men's liking, they can be quite jovial, affable - and even honest. But when something happens to disturb them deeply, or when they become fearful, the ugliness comes out. Human nature is not a pretty thing. It is the "old man" that is in every one of us; it must be crucified. "You can't change human nature," we are told; and that is true. But you can rise above it, if you realize strongly enough that this is what must be done.

Paul's words have been taken as presenting a hard picture of God, who punishes men for not loving Him enough - as though it were possible to love that kind of a God. This is the result of trying to analyze a metaphorical statement as you would a scientific observation. Paul is not giving a reasoned account of the nature of God; he is telling us how this thing works - and it does work that way. God does not punish us for our ingratitude. "He is kind to the ungrateful and the foolish." But He will not force Himself upon us. If we want to turn away from Him, He permits us to do so, just as, in Jesus' parable, the father let the Prodigal Son wander into a far country, instead of keeping him at home, where he would have fumed inwardly and never learned his lesson.

Paul's words must never be taken as defining the nature of God. The mental attitude of analyzing and defining was foreign to the Jews. It was an outstanding attribute of the Greeks, from whom we have inherited it. If you want a reasoned account of the nature of Deity, read the works of Plato and Plotinus. You may be glad to turn back to the simplicity of the Hebrew Scripture. The Jews did not analyze and define God, just as you do not attempt to analyze and define a close friend.

A great deal of our misunderstanding of the Scripture comes from our analyzing it literally. This leads to ridiculous conclusions and the rejecting of the Scripture by many thinking people. And the reaction to this, which is to regard the Scripture as "simply poetry," is equally ridiculous. The Scripture is an account of men's seeking, and very often finding, the way back to their Creator. "What we have seen and heard, we announce to you, that you may have communion with us; and our communion is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And we write these things to you that your joy may be full." The Scripture is priceless, because it is the description of a pilgrimage we all must make, given to us by those who have already made it.

Paul does not reason about God. He knows God. "I know Him in whom I have believed."

His words about human nature may seem a peculiar way to introduce a discussion of the Good News, but they are meant to show us our need for the Gospel. Just as Socrates spent most of his life trying to convince the Athenians of their ignorance, since only when they had acknowledged this, would they make an effort to learn that which is priceless, so Paul starts his letter by showing man their helplessness without the Gospel. In this present age our spiritual destitution, which has come from our reliance on intellect, should be obvious. But we still do not seem to have grasped it. We still need Paul's words - and need to take them to heart. So Paul's contemporary, John, heard from the Spirit the message he should convey to the intellect: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. . . . As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent."

Paul continues his introduction with words that I (and I suspect many others) should have read to me ten times every morning. They are addressed particularly to the religiously self-righteous - who look down on others: You are without excuse, O man, you who judge; for wherein you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge do the same things.
(To be continued)

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

JUNE 1961

1. Offer up spiritual sacrifice, ACCEPTABLE to God.
2. He gave them BREAD to eat.
3. He hath CLOTHED me.

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5. He shall DIRECT thy paths.
6. His mercy ENDURETH forever.
7. FORGIVE, if ye have ought against any.
8. GOOD shall come unto thee.
9. My HEART is glad.
10. Thou upholdest me IN mine INTEGRITY.

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12. Your JOY no man taketh from you
13. My KINDNESS shall not depart from thee.
14. The Father LOVETH the son.
15. MOUNT up With wings as eagles.
16. There IS NONE holy as the Lord.
17. Nothing shall OFFEND them.

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19. Thou wilt keep him in PERFECT PEACE.
20. QUIETLY wait for the Lord.
21. REMEMBER me, O God, for Good.
22. Ye SERVE the Lord Christ.
23. Talk ye of His wondrous works.
24. Good and UPRIGHT is the Lord.

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26. Use not VAIN repetitions (in prayer).
27. Praise the Lord for His WONDERFUL WORKS.
28. YE are the temple of God.
29. He was ZEALOUS for my sake.
30. The Lord reigneth; He is clothed with majesty.

"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.