

SPIRITICITY March 1955

THE BODY OF CHRIST

By Alden Truesdell

"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Would it not be surprising to discover that all the spiritual mysteries and miracles - rather than being difficult to attain - are eager to expose themselves and to express themselves as the standard form of existence? The magician seems to create a rabbit out of an empty hat, but the magician knows the rabbit was there all the time under a false top. So it is in spiritual demonstration. The practitioner knows that the object desired - whatever it is - is already created. Spiritual know-how exposes it. And just as "there is no new thing under the sun," so "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed."

To the purely physical man, the mental processes are a mystery, but they are simple exercises to the intellectuals. To many intellectuals, however, any dealings with intangibles are not only mysterious but heretical. In the consideration of man's various bodies for example, the mentality says that body is body; there is only one body of anything, and that is the body everyone can see. There are ponderous bodies and frail bodies, but bodies finer than physical sight are fantasy. The spiritually minded, however, see beyond the physical body to interior dimensions. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body," Paul declared. It has been said, further, that the body and mind that man thinks himself to be are only two per cent of his entire being.

Strange indeed are the concepts that the different schools of thought have had regarding the physical body. The ancient monks would beat the body with chains to keep it in subjection. Easterners are crucified alive and buried alive to prove superiority over bodily claims. The Greeks considered the body as the tomb or the prison house of the soul. Recently one member of a metaphysical society was heard bemoaning the need for being burdened by his "big hulk of a body." But if this physical form is only two per cent of man's being, it should not be too much of a problem to accommodate that small amount.

There is one school of thought that relegates all the functions of the Father to the body of man claiming that the body surrounds and gives place to the Kingdom of God, and that the soul is contained within the body. Tours of inspection throughout the body are arranged with stops at given locations to repair various organs. But as one teacher observes, by the time the student comes to the end of the tour, the places where he started have run down and must be repaired again. Under this system the body struts and swaggers to an untimely end.

What, then, is the profitable attitude regarding the body? We refer to Jesus Christ for the answer to all questions; we check all teachings against His Gospel. We find that He advised, "Take no thought for your body." He said also, that the body is a temple or a place of worship. The body, then, is something holy that takes thought for itself. Evidently Jesus considered the body to be essential, for He resurrected it along with the rest of His being;

and to prove it was the same body that had been crucified, He showed the marks of the spikes in His hands and the scar of the spear in His side.

The body is at the mercy of the inner eye, the seer, the visional faculty. If that eye is directed downward or outward the body will become the food of worms. But as Jesus Christ promised, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." The body is a temple filled with light when the inner eye is correctly focused. More than this, the body - even the physical body - is a permanent structure, capable of being resurrected. For an understanding of this, we need only turn back to first principles, wherein Spirit is Life, Energy, and Light; and Light and Energy are the Substance of Being. Therefore spirit, soul, and body are identical Substance. "There is one body (i.e. substance)," Paul declared. "Ye are the body of Christ."

Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and it in three days I will raise it up." In modern terms, He could have said, "If you destroy this form, I can resolve the substance back into energy, the energy back to Spirit; and then reverse the process to reform the structure." This is the principle of transmutation sought by the ancient alchemists. Further, this principle explains many esoteric points of Christ doctrine; for when all form is recognized as spiritual Substance, one has a better understanding of eating the body of Christ and of letting Christ be formed in him.

As the Greeks had a word for everything, so we may depend upon Paul to have a description of all things spiritual. Here is Paul's contribution to our subject matter:

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. ...

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. ... For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

This matter of putting on the body of Christ, of putting on immortality, is a matter of placing our attention and affections on the spiritual Realities, which is our way of letting Christ be formed in us. This is making His soul the offering for our sins. Thus are spirit, soul, and body transmuted back into original perfection. This is the complete objective of the life of man in this present experience.

NOTE

SPIRITICITY begins its fifteenth year of publication with this March, 1955 issue. We want to tell all readers of this periodical that we value their cooperation, and we promise that we shall follow the teachings of Jesus Christ who declared, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

SPIRITICITY March 1955

PROSPERITY

By Robert Applegate

"A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him."

Prosperity has been excellently defined as having all that one wants and a little left over. By this definition, many persons who have a great deal of money are not prosperous, because they want more than they have; whereas many who have less are prosperous, since they have all they desire. Prosperity is being free from anxiety about finances; for he who is free from this concern must be called "prosperous," regardless of how much or how little he possesses.

In this present century, many have discovered that prosperity, like every other form of good, is a gift of God. Some have gone overboard in seeking this form of good, and there is now a reaction in the opposite direction. Objections are raised to connecting faith in God with financial success. One widely quoted writer takes exception to the statement that everyone should take God into business with him. He states that we are apt to depart from true Christianity if we practice this foolishness. He holds Abraham up as an example of this practice and declares, without any foundation, that Jesus Christ fought against the religious practice of Abraham, who trusted God for his supply. It was, however, to just such self-satisfied religionists as this writer that Jesus said, "Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

Granted that many commit idolatry by making a god of financial success, should we therefore leave God out of our business and thus make sure that our business will be ungodly? Do we glorify God by poverty? by dependency? by failure? by anxiety? And when have we ever had true Christianity?

Christianity, if it is anything at all, is practicing the instruction of Jesus Christ and following His example. What, then, did He teach about this matter of finances? You will find that He taught quite a bit. Read the Sermon on the Mount, and see how much of it is concerned with the problem of provision. The expression, "Do not be anxious" (which is translated, "Take no thought," in the King James Version) occurs three times in the Sixth Chapter of Matthew. This is the key to Jesus' teaching: Do not be concerned about provision, for your Father knows what you need and provides it at the right time. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" - not "second," not "last" - "first." It is only when one has surrendered to God all his concern about provision that he can do this. Otherwise he has to seek first a supply in order to maintain himself in the world.

"Blessed be ye poor," said Jesus; but we must not misunderstand this. The "poor" are fortunate because having no other recourse, they seek their provision from God; and, seeking, they find - not only the gift but also the Giver. Anything that turns one to God is a great blessing. "Woe unto you that are rich." Just as the "poor" are blessed because they realize their entire dependence upon God, so the "rich" are apt to be self-satisfied and to feel no need for their Creator. Thus the words "poor" and "rich" in Jesus' instruction refer to states of mind. Blessed are those who recognize their complete dependence

upon God (without whom none of us would exist); woe unto those who, in their own eyes, are self-sufficient. They are truly blind.

If we want to find God, which is the whole purpose of our life in this world, we had better seek Him where we are, for we will not find Him anywhere else. If we are in business, then most of our waking hours are occupied with that business and we had better seek God in it. If we are homemakers, we had better seek God in our home, for we cannot find Him apart from where we are. All work is, or should be, a form of service. The more efficiently, quickly, and easily it is done, the more satisfactory are the results for all concerned. We do not glorify God by sloppiness, by laboriousness, by burdening ourselves with responsibilities that are not ours. Our responsibility is to look to God where we are, to do what is to be done, and to leave the results up to Him. We do not even have to take God into our business; He is already in it. We have only to acknowledge Him, to trust Him, to acquaint ourselves with Him. Our work is a gift of God and the recompense for it is a gift. To acknowledge this is simple honesty. To bless that which God has given us to do and to ask His guidance is but gratitude and common sense. To try to use God for the purpose of gaining success with an eye to being seen of men would be foolish, but to use our occupation to become acquainted with God is only reasonable.

We do not need to make financial success the end of life. Those who do so are unfortunate; they do not realize that something infinitely more satisfactory is offered to them. This, however, is a question that everyone must settle within his own heart - what does he want more than anything else: wealth? comfort? prestige? God? All that a minister can do is to point out that if anyone serves Mammon, he will be a slave to Mammon; whereas if he serves God, he will find that Mammon turns around and serves him.

There are many who have imagined that "godliness is a means of gain"; who, by compromising with principle, have turned spiritual understanding into money. Of such the Psalmist said God "gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." They have lost infinitely more than they have gained. But this does not mean that wealth is to be despised or that we should leave God out of our everyday undertakings. On the contrary, it is precisely because God is the omnipresent Helper and the unfailing Provider that we can leave the results up to Him and can concern ourselves with seeking to know Him. Our business, our everyday activity, is our richest opportunity to become acquainted with Him, to come to know Him - not as a means to an end, but as the End to which all else is the means. It is not what we do or do not do that matters; it is the motive; it is what we are seeking; it is where the heart is.

If you look up the Lord's Prayer, you will find that the reason Jesus gave for this form of address is that "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask." Should we not, therefore, every day, in every occupation, use this Prayer to assure good results, to remove anxiety, to acquaint ourselves with the Father? The more we know His Presence, the more we are apt to discover that He is what we want and that He gives Himself and all needful things to everyone who looks to Him.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass."

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."

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FREEDOM FOR YOURSELF

By Nell Truesdell

"How can I enjoy my three small children, keep our house reasonably clean, and myself looking pretty?" writes a young mother. She goes on, "There is no extra money to hire a sitter so that my husband and I may go out for an evening of fun, and we cannot afford a maid to help with the housework."

In this, and in countless homes, the children are looked upon as an accessory to, and not as an integral part of, the family. The mother has trapped herself in her misguided affections that have bound her in servitude to her offspring. In her attempt to take good care of her brood she has transgressed the law of human relations, under which a judicious neglect would allow the children to thrive as they learn to take care of themselves. For the human at any stage of his growth is a learning being quite capable of voluntary development in all phases of his existence. Too close supervision, too much care, too many devised teaching methods tend to thwart the natural joy of a child not allowed to experiment or cope with the demands of his own nature. Any child can be taught early to help himself. He loves to feed himself (and the hungry child does so with dispatch); he revels in entertaining himself; he is happy when he is free to solve his own problems. The mother who gives her offspring freedom always has lots of freedom for herself, for it is a law that whatever a person gives out he gets back increased and multiplied.

A mother may claim that her children are too young to let alone; but she would be surprised at how quickly they would learn to take care of their small needs if they were given the chance. She would only have to provide an uncluttered room, with furniture of little value, some simple playthings; and then let the children have the confidence that there they could go all-out in whatever they wanted to do. Such a mother could arrange to have friends in once in awhile, and her children, already trained to enjoy themselves by themselves in their own room, would never intrude on her social evening at home. This is no theory; it is practiced by many sensible parents who value their own freedom as much as they value the benefits of freedom for their children.

Adults who cater to their bodies in much the same way that a solicitous mother tends to oversupervise her children find (often too late) that their bodies take every advantage to get attention. Such a body anticipates discomforts, exaggerates physical or mental distresses, and exhausts not only its inhabitant but everybody who lives around him. The body of an enslaved individual is always unhealthy and unnecessarily hypersensitive. We find this state among people who love to explain how delicate their systems are, how difficult it is for them to keep certain functions working, and how extreme are their special limitations. The body that is expected to fend for itself will automatically keep in good shape. Twinges and aches do not claim the full attention of the person who is more interested in the business of living than he is in superficial demands. His body, if it starts to ail, will suddenly swing about and be well.

Many people do not realize that they carry their bodies in their "mind." The body of man is an integral part of his being and is necessary to his existence. The body can be released from overanxiety about its well-being when the attention of the person is withdrawn from it and placed on God who created

the body. Man did not create his body; but he, as the tenant of his body, does formulate the conditions it reflects. The body has no will of its own; it is plastic, and it is subject to the mental and emotional supervision of its owner.

"Be not anxious," was one of the Master's instructions. We are anxious only about that which we are in selfish possession of or about that which we do not understand. Uneasiness of mind always dissolves when fears vanish. Fear is based in a lack of love for God. If the body has fallen under the load of misapprehension, wretchedness, and extreme unhappiness, it can be raised up into a condition of normal functioning when the negative attitude is changed into a constructive in-and-up-look. It may take some time to swing the attention from the low view to a high view, but once this is done, the body will automatically respond.

We recall the meeting of Jesus with the man at the Pool, and we see how quickly a body can react to a positive attitude. Jesus asked the man: "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man, who had been held in bondage thirty-eight years, began to complain that nobody ever helped him at the right time. But Jesus cut through his whimpering and commanded, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The man responded because, at heart, he wanted to be well. He had remained sick by placing his body in subjection to the prevailing wills of solicitous relatives and friends. His response to the strong word of the Master snapped him out of his delusion.

Whether we be mothers of small children or caretakers of dependent bodies, if we have enslaved ourselves through oversolicitation we may free ourselves from bondage by reversing our attention and placing it on Something higher than that which holds it transfixed. We can show outwardly that we possess a balanced and wise judgment regarding whatever it is that we are responsible for. With children, their own God-given intelligence will keep them happy and healthy and free when we lift the grip of our fear away from them; with our bodies, the same practice will hold good.

Look up and away from appearances and you will not be caught in the downdraft of assumed personal responsibilities or bodily limitations. A highlight of Jesus' teaching is, "Look up." "Ye are gods; " He said, quoting the Psalmist, who went on to declare, "All of you are children of the Most High."

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS

For Every Week Day Of The Month

MARCH 1955

1. Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God ACCEPTABLY.
2. I have BELIEVED Thy commandments.
3. Wait on thy God CONTINUALLY.
4. He that keepeth His commandments DWELLETH in Him, and He in him.
5. ENTER in at the straight gate.
7. God will be FAVOURABLE unto you.
8. The Lord will GIVE GRACE and GLORY.
9. All men should HONOUR the Son.
10. Thus saith the Lord: I AM the Lord; and there is none else.
11. Teach me good JUDGMENT and knowledge.
12. My KINDNESS shall not depart from thee.
14. LOOK unto Me, and be ye saved.
15. Seek ye the Lord, all ye MEEK of the earth.
16. Call upon the Lord while He is NEAR.
17. The eyes of the Lord are OVER the righteous.
18. The Lord is my PORTION, saith my soul.
19. He giveth QUIETNESS.
21. They that wait upon the Lord shall RENEW their strength.
22. Thy Father ... SEETH in SECRET.
23. TRUST THOU in Him.
24. UNDERNEATH are the everlasting arms.
25. Thy Word is VERY pure.
26. Take with you WORDS, and turn to the Lord.
28. YE shall seek Me, and find Me.
29. Where is thy ZEAL?
30. Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.
31. Thou hast been my help.

"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.