

SPIRITICITY November 1944

Beloved of God, greeting:

Man's superstitious approach to God is the cause of much fluctuation and indecision in his mind and affairs. He wants to be religious. Always something within and above beckons him onward and upward.

Man is quite content to follow this inner upward urge until it seems to lead him into strange and peculiar ways. Then he asks for time out to consider the matter more thoroughly.

All of us are prone to condemn Judas Iscariot for the betrayal of his Friend and Master. But we might do well to be tolerant of his behavior while we check ourselves to see how often our affinity for possessions, places, people, and prestige betray us into lowering our vision and placing our dependence upon something less stable than the Most High.

We go along gladly while we are able to envision worldly powers. But when our practice of Principle requires us to change our worldly ambitions to spiritual aspirations, we find ourselves in agreement with our critics; then it seems logical for us to try to salvage what we can from a seeming impractical association.

Judas got thirty pieces of silver - no more. He appeared to be the only disciple to make a demonstration. The others were filled with doubt. Still, compare the tone and quality of their eventual demonstration with that of Judas. The Master returned to instruct, bless, and feed them.

The ability to praise God and minimize forms and appearance of things is the mark of upward progression of true aspirants.

Sincerely yours,

A. J. Truesdell

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THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving was a mighty practice with the prophets of old and miracles can be traced to its exercise. The Psalms record many songs of praise and thanksgiving. Items, one by one, are listed for which thanks to God were given. Even today, after centuries, we can sense the power of praise and thanksgiving when we read the Psalms.

The composers of these songs were specific in praise to God and we discover little was overlooked by them. They praised God according to his righteousness, his mercy, his strength, his excellent greatness; for the help of his countenance, his truth, his wonders, his faithfulness, his great and terrible Name, his holiness, his loving-kindness, his word, his glory, his power, and for having dealt bountifully with them.

The entire doctrine of praise can be summed up in one Psalmist's statement, "Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely."

The prophet Isaiah commanded, "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted."

The wonder-workers of old were quick to learn and apply the potent practice of praise and thanksgiving. They praised God in a very personal way: "with my whole heart," "with uprightness of heart," "because thou art my God," and "because I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

The Psalmist promised, "Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy Name for ever and ever." This idea is echoed by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name."

None of the characters, expressing such elaborate praise, enjoyed blessings such as the ordinary citizen of our country takes for granted. These pioneers in realms spiritual, struggled for their meager sustenance, even for their very lives. But they found much for which to express gratitude.

It is good for us that they did, for their praise, and the succeeding expressions of thanksgiving by their sincere followers, have been responsible for much of the wealth the world has since enjoyed. And, everyone being born into the world today enters into the benefits of other men's labors, and will take for granted as their just due the fruits of the practices of their progenitors, their trail-blazers.

What might any Psalmist find to praise here in this State? Why should we wait for a Psalmist, or even a Savior, to teach us acceptable and divine manners? We should honor them indeed, but should not expect them to do for us what they hoped they had taught us to do for ourselves.

If benefits, or even reasons, are required for the practice of praise and thanksgiving, then we must see ourselves delinquent in this respect. Still, praise is not a specific act for a specific gift; it is a spiritual prerogative of a spiritual creature. Thanksgiving is a measure, a yardstick, by which we indicate our joy and pleasure in expressing our divine culture. It is an expression of delight in our divine origin and spiritual heritage.

The world has become wealthy since the day a lowly Carpenter looked up to heaven and gave thanks simply, then, fed five thousand truly hungry people. Everybody was always hungry in those days. That crowd could have come through our rationing period feasting like kings, had they our money. Yet we, in this time, offer little sincere praise and thanksgiving. It seems fashionable, even popular, to complain rather than praise: more sophisticated, less naive.

As we trace the tone and quality of expressions of praise from Psalms to Jesus, we find their wordiness decreasing. Where the Psalmist required whole songs, and the prophets used several verses, the record shows that Jesus Christ almost apologized for his unnecessary use of spoken words, explaining that he used the more elaborate expressions because of the people standing by. His own effective prayer of thanksgiving was not in spoken words, but in silent attitude of grateful acknowledgment. Feel the intimacy of, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always."

To bring our practice of praise up to date, (if we are convinced of its efficacy,) we may choose our method. If, like the Psalmist, we carefully list our blessings, we shall have an imposing, even a cumbersome one, indeed. It might be awkward to memorize so many items, but it is profitable practice and God is longsuffering. He will bear with the verbal gymnast so long as the intent and purpose are sound and sincere.

Or, like Isaiah, we may choose to exercise our prerogative of command. He told the heavens and the earth to praise the Lord. This, too, is profitable, for the heavens represent the high consciousness, and the earth, whatever has form. Both respond to the magic of praise expressed in gratitude.

But if we want to be truly modern we shall express gratitude just for the fun of it, just for the joy of living. Gratitude will be a joyous, spontaneous attitude of life, rather than studied words for specific effects.

In literature we find men, inspired by a spirit of wisdom, writing words which come from above their own understanding and practice. Galsworthy writes:

O Lord of courage grave  
O Master of this night of spring  
Make firm in me a heart too brave  
To ask thee anything.

Much acceptable poetry is an effort to express inexpressible truths. We cultivate a large vocabulary only to find it completely inadequate to set forth the laws of the unlawful. That there is a higher practice of every principle and its laws is brought more convincingly to our attention each day as we find our response to familiar situations changing. Our early affirmations and denials, and other such words of praise and thanksgiving become the chants we use while we rack our memory for the picture of reality to expose itself.

In this country we are not driven by stark necessity to appeal for food, clothing, and shelter, though some are having experiences which prove the efficacy of prayer and thanksgiving in this wise. Prayer and praise always work in an emergency, but no such emergency urges us to practice the spiritual principle. So we must have a different motive for practicing the principle of praise.

To us, there must be a state of well-being more desirable than that represented by being well-fed, clad, and housed. The Scripture furnishes us with references and recommendations as to this state and its attainment.

In our search, we come upon Solomon who knew from experience every manifest blessing. His daily diet was the first fruits and meat of all the produce of the land. Where ordinary men wore certain garments, Solomon was gloriously arrayed. Where some of the citizens may have been comfortably housed, Solomon dwelt in palaces such as had never before been equaled in sumptuousness in that land. And yet he learned, through experience, that appearance was vanity of vanities.

Wisdom and understanding, he said, stand in the top of the high places, call to men and the sons of men with enticing assurances, and is to be desired for the blessedness it brings.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

By me kings reign, and princes decree justice; ... I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

The foregoing are just a few of the reasons for a continued search for something transcending material riches which is, in the final analysis, the actual cause of any exhibition of wealth or glory.

Those persons who have never had much in the way of possessions might be inclined to discredit the report of a man who had everything. They might be tempted to say, When I am as well fixed as Solomon, I, too, can afford to be indifferent to riches.

But we can remind them of Solomon's first choice: it was for understanding.

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore. ...He was wiser than all men; ... his fame was in all nations round about.

Too, for these skeptics, we offer the report of another man who had no palaces, no money, no food supply, - "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," - clothing, food, shelter.

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise, and praise thee?

The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord.

Those who have heeded wisdom's instruction know the Giver and the Gift come to him who is of a grateful heart. Thanksgiving, in its highest form, is a giving of the grateful self-and-substance to the Creator of that self and Giver of that substance.

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Dear Friend:

This morning I was looking at the top of a beautiful hand-pieced quilt. I observed the wonderful detail of finely spaced stitches and the beauty of pieces cut to pattern and sewed together in such a way as to create a design lovely to look upon.

As I studied the quilt I thought of the art talent that was revealed; the patience employed in the making; the skill required to lift the whole article above average; the love of detail in stitching that raised it to a work of art.

Then I looked at each bit of colored cloth. The tiny pieces of brightly printed material were but fragments from large manufactured bolts that had been woven and stamped in the mills. In every printed piece was embodied the talent of many people for design and color, and the patience and skill essential to production. Each piece was a bit of beauty taken from a larger store.

The question arose: What one quality does the entire quilt represent; what one quality is reflected in each tiny piece? The answer was: Rhythm.

The whole quilt expressed rhythm of design which made it pleasant to gaze upon. And each bit of printed cloth, so gay in its individual coloring and design, contained that essential also.

Rhythm is essential to a happy, orderly life. It is composed of harmonious cadences of patience, skill, work, love, and a talent for artistic living.

The CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE blesses you.

Lovingly yours,

Nell Truesdell

Alphabet Of  
DAILY MEDITATIONS  
For Every Week Day Of The Month.

NOVEMBER 1944

1. I have set the Lord ALWAYS before me.
2. I have BELIEVED Thy Commandments.
3. They that are with Him are CALLED, and CHOSEN, and faithful.
4. DAILY shall He be praised.
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6. His Name alone is EXCELLENT.
7. Be FILLED with all the FULNESS of God.
8. It is GOD that GIRDETH me with strength.
9. The Lord is HOLY in all HIS works.
10. To them that have no might He INCREASETH strength.
11. JUSTICE and JUDGMENT are the habitation of Thy throne.
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13. KNOW the love of Christ which passeth KNOWLEDGE.
14. Now shall mine head be LIFTED up.
15. One is your MASTER, even Christ.
16. His NAME is called the Word of God.
17. He is the Lord OUR God.
18. The Lord will receive my PRAYER.
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20. Make him of QUICK understanding in the fear of the Lord.
21. REMEMBER His Marvelous works that He hath done.
22. SERVE Him in SINCERITY and truth.
23. Be THANKFUL unto Him and bless His Name.
24. UNTO Thee lift I UP mine eyes.
25. Every VALLEY shall be exalted.
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27. WE know WHAT WE WORSHIP.
28. Thy YEARS shall not fail.
29. See my ZEAL for the Lord.
30. Seek His face evermore.

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Added spiritual understanding comes to him who lifts his vision toward the Most High God. We invite you to join with us in DAILY MEDITATION. The statements you hold before your mind will be illumined by the Light that comes from above thinking.