

SPIRITICITY, November 1957

## THANKSGIVING

By Alden Truesdell

GIVING THANKS is regarded as the proper response to the receipt of a gift or a service, and often it is expressed in acknowledgment of a compliment or a kindness. But it need not be confined to these customs; it may profitably be expressed for itself alone. And if thanksgiving is expressed for its own sake, it is liable to become habit-forming; for its action is cumulative.

One of our members calls the days he has experienced since coming into Christ Truth "golden days," and most of us can testify to a similar feeling concerning this new way of life. It is entirely within the power of our choice to make our days golden, and thanksgiving is a sure means to this end.

The Law of Providence is set in motion by the attitude and expression of thanksgiving. In our Scripture, the Psalmist seems to be the most consistent giver of thanks. He knew his Principle of Providence, and we can benefit by his example.

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High."

"O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgivings and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods."

We could do well with a Psalmist as a guest speaker. The joyous expression of gratitude for high Truth and an Immanent God would do much to hasten the advent in consciousness of Him who brings "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

If we are ever distracted from consideration of self-possession, self-motivation, self-desire long enough to consider God's Being, God's All-capacity, God's Will, we shall feel inadequate to be grateful enough. But, like the Psalmist, we must try to express our thanks - not because God likes to get credit, but because we measure our own welfare and well-being by our appreciation of, and thanksgiving to, God.

What is there to be grateful for but that invisible, intangible, yet self-evident Power and Presence that gives the increase and causes all visible and tangible things to work together for good; and all recipients of God's good favor to shout together for joy?

How grateful we are for the demonstration of the efficacy of the true practices we have learned! How grateful we are for failure to demonstrate some fancied vanity which might have distracted us from greater glories! How grateful we are for the operation the Great Physician and Surgeon performed on our consciousness and our soul!

When we consider some of the expressions of gratitude of Jesus Christ, His practice seems simple and naive. His appreciation was expressed to a close and intimate Presence for benefits already received (though not yet visible). "I thank Thee, Father, that Thou hast heard Me." Here is an assurance that

bordered on blasphemy, of which He was accused. "And I knew that Thou hearest Me always." Here is expressed the certainty of an established communion.

Jesus Christ gave thanks for the unfailing operation of an all-providing Principle. He thanked the Father when He had occasion to call upon that Principle in the feeding of the five thousand. But He explained that provision is not enough; for "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The worldly-wise could not be trusted with the knowledge of the Principle by which Jesus fed the multitudes. Therefore He thanked the Father that these things had been hidden "from the wise and prudent" and revealed only "unto babes." For so it seemed good in the Father's sight.

In Scripture, with its symbology of names, we find two phases of everything. "Judah" means praise and "Judas" means praise. But the Judas-praise stands for possessions; while the Judah-praise stands for the Providing Principle. Praise of things, possessions, so magnifies things in consciousness that eventually the consciousness becomes cluttered; and the individual cannot see over the accumulation. The Judas praise says, "Goods are my prosperity"; and eventually it is weighted down with its own false god.

Judah says, "God is my prosperity"; and, although it seems to have no place to lay its head, this unencumbered consciousness skims lightly over rough places; while the heavily laden Judas is weighted down with a self-imposed handicap.

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

"Doth not wisdom cry? . . . 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."

Those who have heeded wisdom's call know that 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 the Bestower of all substance.

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WHAT JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT

By Nell Truesdell

(Continued from last month)

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

THE CROWDS that gathered about Jesus were composed mainly of men who, in that day, considered women as chattels. More than anybody else in history,

Jesus Christ elevated women in the eyes of men and paved the way for the western concept of equality of the sexes. In Palestine, as in all the East, the male parent arranged the marriage of his daughter. A bride moved into her mother-in-law's house and often the dissension that a spirited wife aroused in the household would cause her husband to put her out. If the husband refused to give his wife a bill of divorcement so that she could lawfully remarry, and if her father refused to take her back into his own house, her only recourse was to prostitution. Jesus understood the heartbreak and hopelessness of discarded wives and He plainly told men that women were to be respected.

Jesus cautioned that there would be an ultimate accounting for the man who violated the most intimate of human relations and that it would be the better part of wisdom for a man not to let his eye stray toward, or his hand grasp after, what did not belong to him. Jesus illustrated His instruction with graphic word pictures, and He drew an even finer line when He said that lust in the heart is equal to the committing of an illicit act; and He warned that torment ("hell") is the fruit of trespasses, not only in the end result but in the sharpening of desire that becomes insatiable.

If a man's willful desire is self-centered, the forces of his being urge him to take what does not rightfully belong to him. Jesus knew this and He warned against the self-destruction that results when a man does not control his desire. Illicit relationships among humankind are not only degrading but they upset the moral balance and disrupt the spiritual forces of man's being. Jesus said plainly that if desire causes any organ (eye) or instrument (hand) to demand satisfaction regardless of the good of the whole man or that of another person, that that organ or instrument must be removed; "for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell (torment)."

Righteousness is right-use of basic principles that must not be ignored, abused, or betrayed. Jesus went to the heart of human relations when He quoted the Seventh Commandment, "thou shalt not commit adultery."

(To be Continued)

NOTE: Please read Mt 5:21-48

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THE POOR IN SPIRIT

By Robert Applegate

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

IT IS a characteristic of most religions and of many religious leaders to glorify poverty. Jesus Christ did not do this. It is not the destitute, outwardly, that He declared "blessed," but the "poor in spirit."

It is never possible to say with finality, "This is what Jesus meant." For we constantly find deeper meanings in His words as our understanding increases. The best thing therefore that anyone can do for himself is to read the words of the Master, meditate on them, and follow them to the best of his ability. Christianity is a Way of life, not a matter for speculation. And the promise is that if anyone will follow the Way, then he will be taught more and

more about it. "If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine." We need not "prove" the Teaching logically; we should prove it empirically. This is scientific and sensible.

The Beatitudes have been wrongly regarded as impractical counsels of perfection, as idle faldral, or as specious sops for those who are downtrodden and miserable in their present experience. They are, rather, statements of fact, which anyone can verify for himself - either by following the Way of Christ or by considering the example of those who have followed it.

All the Beatitudes say essentially the same thing, which may be paraphrased: "Fortunate are they who are empty of self (self-importance, self-assertion, self-seeking); for they shall know the Allness of God."

The word translated "blessed" was a common Greek word at the time Jesus spoke it. It meant "fortunate" or "happy," and was applied by the Greeks to their gods, who lived in perpetual, untroubled bliss. "Blessedness" is not sanctimony or religiosity, but what everyone is seeking - happiness. Jesus, then, in the First Beatitude is saying, "Happy are the poor in spirit."

Both the followers of Jesus and the Essenes were frequently called "the Poor." And no doubt, these men took pride in the name. They were not mendicant or destitute, for they always had what they needed; but they had surrendered their possessions and means of livelihood to follow something which they believed to be of more value. Jesus, however, said in effect that this was not enough; for it is not the outer condition, but the inner attitude, that determines a man's destiny.

If "the poor" are those who own nothing, having surrendered all to follow an ideal; then "the poor in spirit" are those who know inwardly that - no matter what the outer appearance - they do not ever own anything; for all belongs to God.

If a man purchases a piece of property, then it belongs to him legally; but he does not own it. He did not create it, he did not bring it into the world, and he cannot take it out of the world. He simply has the use of it for a while. It is a gift (just as the money to pay for it was a gift, and the ability to make the money was a gift). It is given into his hands for a time, but it is God's eternally. "The earth is His, and He made it." Knowing this relieves one of the sense of personal possessiveness and the fear of loss, which are barriers to an awareness of the Spirit. "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. . . . All these things My hand has made, and so all these things are Mine, says the Lord."

We are the Lord's stewards, but we do not own anything. Whatever is given into our hands is given for some purpose; and it is our responsibility to use wisely what is entrusted to us - as Jesus taught in the Parable of the Talents.

If the Kingdom of Heaven is that area wherein God is King, then the whole Universe is that Kingdom, for God rules the entire Universe. And it is a spiritual, not a physical, Universe. But the Kingdom "comes" only to those who are aware of this Truth, not as a theory, but as an Eternal Reality. They are those who realize that they own nothing, know nothing, and can do nothing; for God is All. These are "the poor in spirit." Such a one was Jesus Christ to perfection. His was the Kingdom to such an extent that He was the living Embodiment of it.

SPIRITICITY, November 1957

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By H. B. Jeffery

(Continued from last month)

### PEACE

The average person still persists in looking without for that which can be found only within. Beauty and order are spiritual. They are not material but are inner states of Being. Yet to find satisfaction for the yearning of mind and heart after beauty and order, man seeks in the region of shape and appearance; and so he never finds satisfaction. For if the sense of beauty and order is not awake and alive within a man's consciousness, he has eyes that see not and ears that hear not - even though he may be standing in the immediate presence of the most exquisite beauty and order.

Beauty is a living state of Being; and if it is not possessed in consciousness, there is no possible perception of beauty in the sights and sounds that obtain all around. This is also entirely true in regard to the state of peace.

By manipulation and legislative planning, men and women are endeavoring to bring about peace. They form peace societies for the promotion of peace; while they earnestly discuss ways and means whereby to organize peace in the earth through external, material agencies and congressional procedure. They seem not to realize that "an act of Parliament cannot change human nature," and that peace must be established in the heart of man before it can be outwardly expressed.

So long as men and women indulge themselves in dislikes, offences, resentments, covetousness, ambitions, envies, and jealousies; so long as they work for approbation, place and station, recognition and reward; there will continue to be "wars and rumours of wars." And though multitudes cry, "Peace, peace!" there will be no peace.

Even in the sessions of so-called "peace-societies" there can be witnessed the striving for high position and for places of preferment, as also the struggle of individuals to get their pet ideas fostered by the society. Thus we see a miniature warfare waged under the banner of peace.

No peace conference ever established a state of peace. No peace treaty, however authoritatively signed and sealed, ever placed peace on a permanent footing. For if the citizens or subjects of a nation know not peace within their individual selves, no representative - by word or act in conference or in congress can bring about peace.

So long as there is selfishness, envy, and greed in the heart of man, there will be war, and not peace.

Out of the heart are "the issues of life." If the people have not found the abiding-place of peace in their own hearts, the nation as a whole will be restless and unstable. Within its borders will be lack of peace, and in its relations with other nations there will be uncertainty and suspicion. The skill of diplomats, the tactics of politicians, and the maneuverings of statesmen will

be all for naught regarding peace if, in the hearts of men, greed, envy, and jealousy reign.

Man covets peace, and his very warrings and strivings are unwise efforts to have and to hold it; for man intuitively feels that peace is good and therefore desirable and beneficial.

But the possession of riches and the things that riches can buy does not bring peace of mind. On the contrary, sad experience has taught many that an abundance of possessions tends toward anxiety, apprehension, and much vexation of spirit, rather than toward a harvest of tranquility, calmness, and peace.

Where then shall peace be found? The answer is that peace, like charity, begins at home, in the heart of man, who - knowingly or unknowingly - lives and moves and has his being in God, the Giver of all good. In the heart of God, peace lives eternally. Therefore peace is, and it can be found. But the kingdom of peace can be made actual and operative on earth only through man's realization of peace within himself.

God has put His Spirit in man, written His Law in man's inward parts, and established His Kingdom in man. God is Love. His Kingdom is the Kingdom of Love, and His Law is the Law of Love. Man, with the Kingdom and Law of Love within him, is already loving by nature and needs but to turn within his own being to find peace; for where there is love, there is peace.

When fully awakened to the realization of this truth, man will no longer seek peace in material circumstances. He will no longer try to manipulate, conjure, or experiment with social, political, or commercial conditions and affairs. Man will then seek and find peace by turning away from all these outer things, by fixing his attention on the Spirit within his inmost being - the Spirit of God, which is Love.

It is an unalterable law of consciousness that an object reveals the secrets of its nature when undivided attention is given to it. Even so does God reveal His Nature of Love, Wisdom, and Power to whosoever rests that self-same attention upon Him.

Therefore those who, undiverted, have steadfastly kept their mind on God have discovered that peace inheres in God. They perceive that peace is born of love, and that it emanates from Deity. They know that wherever love is, there also is peace.

As God, who is Love, is the creative Principle of the universe and the Power that upholds and sustains all things, so is peace a creative activity of the Divine Principle and likewise alive, assertive, positive, and dynamic. It is not static, inactive, and purposeless, as many people seem to think.

Peace is not negative, inert, theoretical; but is a living, moving, intensely active power, which becomes increasingly manifest as man's attention on its Source is constantly maintained. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee."

The action of peace is heightened as one's attention becomes more perfectly focused, until finally God's Law of Peace, in its consummate order and beauty, is realized to the point of absorption. "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

If one is easily disturbed by anything or anybody, offended by the sayings and doings of another, made restless or dissatisfied by circumstance or condition, he gives proof of not being fully acquainted with the Law of God - which is Love. He who is fearful has not yet been made perfect in love, and as a consequence he is unmindful of peace; for fear and peace are antithetic.

But he who is kindly disposed, gracious, tolerant, and prompted only by the feeling of good will and friendliness will be ever conscious of the reality and presence of peace. For peace is not something for which to strive; it naturally flows in the wake of kindliness. And when man learns to love his fellow man, he will come into fulness of peace, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

(To be Continued)

Alphabet Of  
DAILY MEDITATIONS  
For Every Week Day Of The Month

NOVEMBER 1957

1. We ALWAYS THANK God.
2. He is BEFORE all things.  
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4. Look CAREFULLY how you walk.
5. Let the Word of Christ DWELL in you richly.
6. From the Spirit reap ETERNAL life.
7. FOR FREEDOM Christ has set us FREE.
8. GRACE was GIVEN to us.
9. Christ loved us and gave HIMSELF up for us.  
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11. Be IMITATORS of God.
12. Thy JUDGMENTS are good.
13. Be KIND to one another.
14. Know the LOVE of Christ which surpasses knowledge.
15. The Voice of the Lord is full of MAJESTY.
16. The Lord is Governor among the NATIONS.  
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18. ONCE you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
19. Learn what is PLEASING to the Lord.
20. QUENCH all the flaming darts of the evil one.
21. I the Lord am your REDEEMER.
22. Be STRENGTHENED through His SPIRIT.
23. Let there be THANKSGIVING.  
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25. Maintain the UNITY of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
26. When anything is exposed by the Light it becomes VISIBLE.
27. Let us also WALK by the Spirit.
28. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy YOUTH.
29. The ZEAL of the Lord will perform.
30. Forget not all His benefits.

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