

## THANKSGIVING

By Alden Truesdell

"OUT OF the mouths of babes . . . Thou hast perfected praise."

We know that little children - under a certain age - are star performers in any field. Actors have a warning never to perform with babies; they always steal the show. The actors have studied in dramatic schools and have learned how to act by acting; and yet these untaught babies get all the attention, all the applause. How do they do it?

Babies steal most public shows, but where they really star is in the home show. We know how the home-talent cast must center its whole attention upon the youngest member of the show. He (or she) must be the first item on the agenda before any lesser plans can be made or any ordinary member of the family can be considered. He has the complete support and encouragement of every older, but seemingly lesser, member of the group. The older the member, the greater the support (and even worship) .

How do babes get to be such great demonstrators and practitioners? The demonstration of prosperity is no trouble to them at all.

A young man whom we christened in Houston, who is now about four or five years old, met me at his home when I called on his mother, who was out. He led me to his room, which was lined, piled, and packed with expensive playthings, among which were at least a half dozen wild-west outfits, complete with six-guns and riatas an arsenal sufficient to shoot his way into the Kingdom of Heaven and take it by storm. Before I left, he gave me the privilege of selecting from a toy catalogue anything I might want to give him. At the risk of becoming unpopular, I had to tell him that we gave in a different way, that we gave the blessing and ministry that enabled him to get all those things listed in the catalogue.

How do these little ones become such great actors, practitioners, and demonstrators - such scene-stealers?

They have a built-in joy of living, an effervescent sense of thanksgiving for all the interesting things they see, and know are theirs simply for the asking. In their practice of praise and thanksgiving there is no idea of need or want or lack - no want of any thing and no lack of any attention or appreciation.

We could well afford to pray to our God to help us become as little children in teachability and receptivity, in anticipation and appreciation. A good method of so praying would be for us to say:

"I thank You, Father, that we are all babes in Your sight and that we have You for our doting Parent - that all You have is ours."

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## SOME WORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Robert Applegate

FOR MOST people the New Testament is something that they feel they ought to read; it is not a book they want to read. It is not something they read eagerly like the sports' page or the woman's page of the morning paper, or like a long-awaited letter. It is not something the average person reads carefully, as he would the deed to a piece of property he was about to buy. But the New Testament is more exciting than any sports news and more vital to all of us than any legal paper that might affect us.

Part of our trouble with the New Testament is the aura of specious sanctimoniousness with which it has been endowed. The supposition seems to be that anyone who reads it will ipso facto become a good man - possibly good for nothing, but nevertheless "good." And most men feel that it is more fun to be at least a little bit bad. The Gospel is still the Good News; it is not good advice.

Another part of our trouble with the Scripture is the archaism of its language. We just don't talk and write like that nowadays, and this makes the Scripture seem far removed from our everyday life. So the New Testament seems to the average person a fine thing to turn to in times of crisis and a fine thing for old women and divinity students to moulder over, but not something for him to base his life on.

Jesus Christ was not a priest or a clergyman. He was a working-man, and all His deputies (or, apostles) were workingmen. These men did not speak and write in a poetic, religious language; they spoke and wrote in the everyday language of the street and the countryside - language such as you would find in a newspaper today. (Much newspaper writing today is a lot more highfalutin than the original language of the New Testament, but it is a good comparison. For reading the New Testament in the original is like reading a simple, factual account of something that happened just recently.)

But the New Testament as we have it today - even in most of the modern translations - is not in our everyday language. Some of the most common words in it are words that we do not use at all except in a religious sense. For example: If a person made a mistake in adding up a column of figures, we would not say, "He sinned"; we would say, "He made a mistake." If a soldier on the rifle range missed the target, he would not say, "I sinned"; he would say, "I missed." If a person recovered from a sickness, he would not say, "I am saved"; but, "I am well." If you had to write a letter of recommendation for someone, you would probably not describe him as a "righteous" person, although you might say: "He is honest, hard-working; has integrity," etc.

Many of the key words in the New Testament have entirely dropped out of our everyday vocabulary and consequently have come to have no definite meaning for the average person, but only a vague religious connotation. This ought not to be. The New Testament is our most valuable possession. To have it become something that merely makes us feel good when we hear it read is a great loss.

Accordingly, in the next few issues I want to "explain" some of these key words of the New Testament to see if I can bring us a little closer to the original meaning of these words - what they meant to the men who wrote them and the men to whom they were addressed. I will do this, of course, in the light of my own limited understanding; and what I say is not meant to be authoritative, but only suggestive. We can never say finally what a passage in the New Testament means. We can never say it means this, period; for, as we grow in understanding, we will continually see deeper meanings in the familiar words. A

passage that means one thing to us now will mean something different two years from now - and both meanings will be right. The deeper meaning will not contradict the more superficial one, but will include it (as Relativity Theory includes Newtonian Mechanics). The Scripture is like that. It has that power of infinite revelation.

If we start through the New Testament, one of the first words we meet is "repent." John the Baptist said, "Repent." Jesus Christ said, "Repent." All throughout the New Testament the writers keep repeating the call to "repentance." The Greek word these men used is metanoeo. It does not mean to feel sorry for what you have done; it means to think differently, to change your mind, or to change your plans. If you had planned to take a vacation this fall, but have postponed it until this winter, you have "repented."

Since repentance is a change of mind (or a change of attention; for you think about whatever you give your attention to), it is a change from one thing to something else. So in Revelation we read: "I gave her space to repent of her fornication (turn away from it); and she repented not." The Letter to the Hebrews speaks of "repentance from dead works"; and Paul speaks of "repentance toward God." The early Christian writer Ignatius said: "The Lord forgives all who repent, if they repent (turn) to the Oneness of God."

To "repent," then, is to turn to God. It is to think differently about God. It is to change our plans: to seek our satisfaction, our good, in God rather than in the world.

The next religious word that we come to is "blessed." The Greek word makarios that is translated "blessed" was the ordinary word that meant exceptionally happy, fortunate, or lucky. So in the Beatitudes Jesus Christ is saying that the lucky ones are the poor in spirit, those that mourn, etc.

We come then to the word "poor." The Greek word translated "poor" is ptochos; it means literally a beggar - or a person who has nothing, as distinguished from a penes, an ordinary poor person who has only a little. A ptochos, or a person who is destitute, is entirely dependent upon others. So one translation of the First Beatitude could be: "They are lucky who are entirely dependent on the Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." (Since everyone is in fact dependent upon the Spirit, the ptochos is simply he who recognizes this fact.)

Jesus called His own disciples ptochoi (the plural of ptochos), because they possessed nothing in the world, although they always had everything they could use. It was a term of praise, because it proclaimed their indifference to things and their trust in God. (The Dead Sea Scrolls show that the Essenes also used the word ptochos in this sense and called themselves ptochoi.)

There is a saying attributed to Jesus: "Accept not anything from any man, and possess not anything in this world." We can do that right now, today, by knowing and declaring that the things we seem to own are not ours (we did not create them), but are God's and are lent to us temporarily for some purpose. To declare this, to get rid of all sense of personal ownership, to own nothing, is to be a ptochos.

There is another saying ascribed to Jesus that illustrates this point: "Buy for yourselves, O ye children of Adam, through these transitory things which are not yours, that which is yours which does not pass away."

(To be continued)

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## THE TEACHING OF JESUS

Paraphrased by Nell Truesdell

JOHN, Chapter 17

(AFTER HIS final meal with His disciples Jesus led them out of Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane. We may imagine that when they came to the steep bank of the Kedron Valley, they descended the zig-zag path single file; and that, before crossing over to climb to the other side, they drew together at the bottom to catch every word Jesus said. The men must have felt the seriousness of the situation though they did not suspect what was going to happen. Jesus had already told them that they would forsake Him; that He would be alone (yet not alone, for God was with Him); and that, because He had triumphed over the "world," they would have joy and inner peace. Then He lifted up His eyes to heaven and prayed:)

---- Father, the time is here. Honor Your Agent, that He in turn may honor You. You have provided Him with the ability to overcome the weaknesses of humankind, so that He can bestow lasting Being on the ones You have assigned to Him. This is lasting Being: to be able to comprehend You, the One Supreme Being, and Jesus Christ, the Agent that You commissioned.

---- I have honored You on the earth. I have completed the assignment that You gave to me. Now, O Father, honor me with Your Being - with the honor that I shared with You before humankind existed. I have made Your Identity plain to the men that You assigned to me out of the realm of humankind. They belonged to You and You assigned them to me. They have obeyed Your command. They now know that everything that You have assigned to me belongs to You. I have delivered to them the instructions You gave to me. They have accepted, have clearly perceived, and are sure that I moved out from You into visibility.

---- I speak earnestly for them. I do not include the realm of humanity, but speak only for the men that You have assigned to me, because they are Yours. (All that is Yours is mine, and what is mine is Yours.) My Identity is sacred to them. From this hour I shall exist no longer in the realm of humankind. But these men are still in that realm, and I return to You. Holy Father, protect with Your Being those that You have assigned to me, that they may remain together, even as You and I. While I was with them in the realm of humankind, I kept them conscious of Your Being. I have held these men that You assigned to me and have lost none, except the one that believed in separation - that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Now I return to You.

---- I speak these things openly, so that these men may be filled with my gladness. I have taught them Your Word. Humankind hates them because they are different, just as I Am different. I do not pray that You remove them from humankind, but that You save them from the sense of separation from You. They do not belong to the realm of humanity, just as I do not belong to that realm. Make them spiritual by means of Your Real Being. Your Word manifests as Being.

---- As You Ordered me into the realm of humanity, so have I ordered them into that realm. For their well-being I spiritualize myself, so that they too may be spiritualized. I pray not only for these, but also for any others that shall accept my teaching through their instruction. I pray that all of them may be united, Father, as You and I are united - that they too may be united in us,

and that the realm of humankind may realize that You have made me Your Agent. The honor You bestowed on me I have given them, that they may be unified as we are - my Identity in them and Your Being in me, that they may be faultless, and that the realm of humankind may perceive that You have commissioned me and have loved them as You have loved me.

---- Father, I will that the ones You have given to me be with me where I Am, that they may see my glory, which You have given me; for You loved me before the realm of humankind existed. ) Father full of integrity, the realm of humankind has not perceived You, but I have known You, and these have known that You appointed me. I have revealed Your Being to them and will continue to reveal it, that the love with which You love me may be in them and unite them with me. ----

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

Anonymous

(Continued from last month)

JESUS' PARABLE of the Prodigal Son illustrates the journey of man's soul out from the Father's House and eventually back to it. Each step of the pilgrimage indicated in the Universal Allegory is a definite stage through which each individual soul must pass. Each person can determine at any time just where he is if he will stop and analyze the story as his own personal experience.

It requires many incarnations before the average man awakens, or comes to himself, utterly surrendered and obedient, and ready to be guided by his own Light of Wisdom.

Today we observe humanity at the stage of awakening - hence the axiom, "Man, know thyself." Know the true Self, the Christ Self - so called because the Presence that is our own individualized Ray of Light is infilled with the force of the Cosmic Christ. "He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

This reveals clearly that, as man chooses to give his attention to his spiritual nature, believing and trusting in the Unseen Presence, he shall no more of necessity know the realm of the shadow of death; but, by divine affinity, shall gravitate toward liberation.

At the present time we witness innumerable cults and religious orders springing up all over the globe, each one in a different stage of unfoldment, each one tinged with the clinging fragments of intellectual conceptions yet to be shaken off and left behind ere the full illumination of the soul can be uncovered. We find a keener element of spirituality breaking forth over our civilization since man has caught a glimpse of himself as a deathless, changeless reality.

One of the outstanding contributions of modern Truth teachings is what is known as the Silence, Meditation, or Scientific Prayer. The teachings, in any form, under any name, are excellent; for they present the Truth to those who are ready to adopt the practice of the Presence. Let us never be critical of any phase of teaching that flies the banner of Truth, for each "label" is destined to convey in its own way a gleam of light to the minds that support its growth.

Minds have to be prepared, cultivated, tilled (even as the soil that is made ready for the sower) before the seeds of Truth can take root and mature. Hence any teaching, regardless of its limitations, is a hand outstretched to lead man upward to God, if it teaches the Way of the Silence.

It is at this stage of development, under the confinement of form, that man enters the portals of his own Divine Temple, the Cavern within, and perceives the Truth of his own mysterious Being. Then, and then only, does he tire of the husks - become "fed up" as it were with materiality; and, with his inner ear listening for the inner Voice, he soon discerns the One whose Power and Presence is greater than he, yet is one with him.

As the "Prodigal," then, man is rapidly recovering himself and seeking to retrace his steps to the Father's Kingdom. Since that Kingdom is where Jesus told us it is, within man, much stress must be laid on finding the Center of Being. Blessed is the Way of Silence; for to "you who are within it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Coming to himself here and now, propelled by his own power, and moving forward in his own Light, man rises into the ecstasy and lordship of his own Being in Christ; he chooses to arise and shine. "I will arise and go to my Father!"

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

With a feeling of enchantment - resplendent and radiant - man faces Deity and remembers who he is. This is indeed the Will of God: that, journeying in a far country, man shall never lose sight of his Motherland in the realms of Heavenly Dominion.

Functioning in this world of duality, where his feeling body is supercharged by forces from the realm of feeling and desire, man is so immersed in the sensation of his exterior nature that his response to his own interior Nature is numbed and rendered dormant. He is as one drugged, asleep.

Understanding the subtle dangers man must face during this sojourn through the lower planes of matter, the Master Jesus Christ gave to man the key that will forever open the doors of his self-made bondage and release him from the prison, or "hell," of earth-bound ignorance. This key is in the form of a miniature masterpiece; we know it as the Lord's Prayer. When man begins to appreciate the priceless value of this ancient masterpiece and uses the key for himself, he will find himself releasing himself - that the words of the Master may be fulfilled: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

To know the Truth is to remember the Truth, to embrace the Truth, to exalt the Truth, to abide in the Truth. And what truth is man to remember? That he has never ceased to be the child of a King; that the robes and riches of his Father's Kingdom are his eternally; that the Heavenly Mansions are his native dwelling-place and his inheritance; that the Father, the All-knowing Mind, is not influenced by the mistakes man has made; that all his blunderings are overlooked and forgiven.

There is only one matter of importance. That is: he who was lost has returned; he who was lost has found himself (his true Self). Over this there is great rejoicing in Heaven.

(To be continued)

Alphabet Of  
DAILY MEDITATIONS  
For Every Week Day Of The Month

NOVEMBER 1959

2. ARRAY thyself with glory and beauty.
3. BEHOLD the things that are in Heaven.
4. CONTINUE in the grace of God.
5. DELIGHT in the law of God, in the inward man.
6. EARNESTLY contend for the faith.
7. FAITH cometh by hearing.

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9. Do not frustrate the GRACE of GOD.
10. Let the HOUSE of God be builded.
11. INHERIT the Kingdom of God.
12. Seek His face with JOY.
13. Speak what thou KNOWEST.
14. LEAVE thy LABOR to Him.

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16. Be transformed as the MINISTERS of righteousness.
17. The Lord is NIGH.
18. OWE no man anything.
19. PROVE the sincerity of your love.
20. It is the Spirit that QUICKENETH.
21. We are RISEN and stand upright.

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23. He would SHOW thee the SECRETS of Wisdom.
24. God hath given you TREASURE.
25. Be profitable UNTO God.
26. Thou shalt be VISITED of the Lord.
27. His hands make WHOLE.
28. YOURS is the Kingdom of God.

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30. In everything give thanks to God.

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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.