

A LETTER and THREE ANSWERS

(A CHURCH that we have heard of is seeking a new minister and is interviewing applicants for the position. The wife of one of the board members is a student of Christ Truth and has written to us asking us for our opinions. Since the questions she raises are of general interest, we are printing excerpts from her letter and from our replies. The church with which she is concerned is composed of members from many denominations.)

Dear Ministers of Christ Truth:

"WE HAVE just returned from another church dinner where all of the congregation had an opportunity to get to know the last visiting minister. He is a very nice man. . . . We shall hear his sermon tomorrow. I feel he will tell us of lots of sins to be forgiven, etc.

"Anyway, the one man who seems to be the best choice is still in front, but some questions have arisen concerning his theology: that of his belief in Jesus as the Divine Son of God, His Immaculate Conception, and His Resurrection. This minister believes in Jesus as the Divine Son of God, but he also believes we are all Divine sons of God; that Jesus was the most Divine of all, but that He was not immaculately conceived. He maintains that this point is poorly translated from the Hebrew and Greek, and really not important anyway. He feels that the phrases passed from the pulpit through the ages, i.e. 'Jesus died for you in order to wash away your sins,' etc., are not what he wants to teach. . . .

"At any rate, he says that he preaches about Jesus entirely and believes in Him, but he feels that Jesus' conception is irrelevant; . . . the main thing is that He is the Son of God sent to earth as God's Witness. He believes in the Resurrection, but not in physical form. We like this man; he seems to be the man with the most to offer in many respects. But now we are all confused, mostly over this issue. . . .

"We'll be waiting to hear from you as soon as possible. There is so much discussing to be done; we should welcome your thoughts on these points."

Nell Truesdell's Answer

In the shortest possible manner I shall set forth the principle of immaculate conception. John the Evangelist clearly states it in his Gospel (John 1:11-13):

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Evangelist said it; but who can read? People have notions, opinions, prejudices, that they believe to be true. They judge their lives and everything else from the physical angle, the sense-man, the mortal. The staggering thought is that the whole world in which we exist is nothing but a collection of

imaginary notions. The world is not spiritual. The world passes away. It is illusion. Men's thoughts are always changing, from generation to generation; they are unstable, untrue, unreliable.

H₂O is water. Hydrogen is a gas; oxygen is a gas. Both are formless, invisible, we breathe them every instant. We could put the two gasses together (in the right proportion), but they would not fuse until we shot a current of electricity through them. This shock would bind, or unite, the two gasses and moisture would appear. (This is as simple as I can put it.)

Similarly there are millions of human beings cohabiting over the earth day and night. I once read that the male cells from just one batch of semen could fertilize an astronomical number of female eggs. But how many conceptions are there? Few, in relation to the material available.

To continue: take one female egg and one male sperm; put them together and nothing happens. Not until the two gametes form a union does a conception occur. And the principle that CAUSES the union is SPIRIT - the Spirit of God, the Activity of God. Then when SPIRIT unites two gametes, you have a zygote, which is the body or form that houses the Spirit. Spirit - the SPIRIT OF GOD - is the Father of every child: of every conception. Remember that Jesus said:

"Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." And so every conception is a potential Christ; every conception is immaculate.

Please give my statements some thought before you pass judgment. Drop your notions about "making children." God is the CREATOR, not human beings.

Every child conceived is a pure spiritual being at the instant of conception. However, just as soon as the mother realizes she is pregnant, she begins to imbue the defenseless entity within her with her own wrong notions. These are seldom overcome by the growing child. Jesus, the son of Mary, was uncontaminated, because His mother accepted her assignment with reverence and complete obedience.

It has always been clear to me that the Bible report of Mary's conception is true. Mary was so overcome with reverence for God that she conceived. She had been selected, to be sure, because at heart, she was innocent through and through. Not many are.

(In some laboratory experiments female rabbits have been made to conceive by being subjected to quick changes of extreme heat and cold. The shock brings about an asexual reproduction.)

In His talk with Nicodemus, Jesus revealed that an adult may escape mortality by consciously experiencing a re-birth: "Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." This rebirth is the result of a person's choice to cast off the lusts of the flesh and enter a state of innocence similar to that of a newly conceived child. This is not easy. As Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

We may know that because Jesus succeeded in entering into full Christhood, we also may do so. To start, we must surrender some of our foolish notions.

On the Resurrection, I suggest that you read the article on the subject in the October issue of SPIRITICITY.

Alden Truesdell's Answer

Every conception is spiritual and immaculate. This is a truth that is accepted by all who have "ears to hear."

Most opinions of Jesus Christ have to do with the man - the human being - rather than with His doctrine. His own instruction about birth is that any man can be born anew - must be born anew if he would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus Christ located that Kingdom within man. And He said: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

To be "born of water" means that there must be a cleansing of the mind (consciousness); to be born of the Spirit means that there must be a saturation, or merging, of consciousness with Spirit.

Very few persons have given any attention to the actual Teaching of Jesus Christ; therefore few experience the things that Jesus said they could experience. Those few who have experienced the immaculate conception within their own inner soul nature have had a personal encounter with Spirit, which caused a profound change in consciousness.

The church regards the soul as a sort of skeleton in the closet. But the soul is still there; and the experience of the immaculate conception takes place in the soul of any sincere seeker. For anyone willing to let Christ be formed in him will know the truth about these things. He will not argue or debate with others.

Please know that this Ministry of the Christ Truth will be serving you and the church in which you are interested. And know that you, in your inmost being, will have the closest access to the Christ Ideal, which after all is most important to you.

Christ in you is your hope of Glory; Christ in the Universe is the hope of mankind.

Robert Applegate's Answer

First, let me say that I think the man in question is a good man: he is honest, he is trying to get away from outworn and meaningless words, and he does believe in the Good News of Jesus Christ as far as his reasoning and his training will let him. Both from your words and from my association with orthodox ministers (and future ministers) at school, I think I understand this man and his position; and I do not think you will find a young orthodox minister who does not have essentially the same beliefs as this man.

The New Theology does not have too much to recommend it, but it is easy to see how it came into being. It is an attempt to reconcile the obvious fact that something tremendous happened in the Near East in the First Century with the findings of science - or what the theologians conceive of as the findings of

science. Most ministers today simply cannot believe in "miracles," including the Virgin Birth, because it is "unscientific" to believe in such things. This is a startling position, but I have run into it time and again. I think it is almost universal in the church. But when these men say (as they do) that such beliefs are unscientific, they are taking about the science of 70 years ago.

Several years ago I attended a symposium of some of the outstanding scientists (Harlow Shapley, Robert Oppenheimer, etc.); they were mostly concerned with deprecating this fact: that when theologians, ministers, teachers, etc. talk about science, they talk about the science of the last century. They simply do not know anything about modern science and will not find out. Actually the findings of modern science tend to support the orthodox theology, because they show that the events we see in the world are caused by something in an unseen world that is beyond time and space. We see events; the causes lie in a realm we cannot see. This is a long story and I could go on at length but let me just say this: I have had some training in science (I started out to be a doctor) and I have always been interested in it and kept up with it; and I find nothing unscientific about belief in miracles, including the Virgin Birth. But orthodox ministers are caught in the idea that these beliefs are unscientific; it is a shame that they are.

To the orthodox of His day Jesus said: "You do err, because you know neither the Scripture nor the Power of God." And the men He said this to were the experts in the Scripture, the scholars, the "scribes." They knew the letter of the Scripture, all right, but they did not know the spirit of it; and so they did not know the Scripture. If they had known the Scripture, they would have known the Power of God, for that is what the Scripture points to. The same thing is true today. The one thing that has struck me the most in my observation of present-day ministers and theologians is that they simply do not know the Power of the Spirit. And this, I think, is nearly universal. As Paul put it, they "keep the form of worship, but deny the power of it."

With respect to the Virgin Birth I do not think belief about this is too important one way or the other. The essence of Christianity is that Jesus was the Christ - "Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God," as Paul said - and that He proved, or demonstrated, this by His Crucifixion and Resurrection. "You killed the Author of Life (Peter said to the religious authorities); God raised Him; of this we are witnesses." This was the message of the first apostles; it is still the essence of Christianity. Paul said: "If you acknowledge with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved": i.e., delivered from the effects of your own mistakes.

The important thing is that "the Word (the very Activity of God) was made flesh and dwelt among us." This is the way John, the eye-witness and closest disciple, put it. He goes on: "And we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Son of the Father." This is the essence.

It is true that we are all divine sons of God, but we would not know this if Jesus had not shown it to us. "He became what we are that He might make us what He is." For practical purposes, we are still sons of Adam until we accept what He was and what He did for us.

(I quote Scripture not to prove anything by appealing to the Bible, but because we know what these men meant and we know that what they said is true. It is the explanations of their words that have hidden the simplicity and the reasonableness of them. After all, Paul and the others were men like any one of

us; but they knew a few things, as is evidenced by the power that they had and the work that they did.)

Back to the Virgin Birth. The account is given in Luke 1:26-36:

"In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph. . . . And the angel said to her, 'Do not fear, Mary; for you have found favor with God, and you will conceive in your womb and will bear a son and you will name Him Jesus (God delivers). He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest.' . . .

"Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be? for I have not known a man.'

"The angel said to her: 'The Holy Spirit (Holy Breath) will come upon you and the Power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore that which is born shall be called Holy, the Son of God.'"

There is no question about this Greek, for I have just translated it for you. And the account to me is so reasonable that it carries its own conviction. Why not? But this conviction came to me one time when I was reading the account, and I suppose it has to come to everyone in the same way.

But let me add this: Luke also says (in the opening of his book) that he took pains to learn the facts and to set them down in order. Luke was a Greek (and therefore an intellectual and used to examining the evidence), and he was a doctor: i.e., he was not the type of man to retell fairy stories. And all the evidence is that he was an accurate historian. Whenever it is possible to check on him, it is found that he is scrupulously and meticulously accurate even in minor details.

When your minister says that the Hebrew and Greek have been mistranslated and misunderstood, he must be referring to the passage in Isaiah: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, etc." This actually has nothing to do with the case. The passage of course has long been regarded as referring to the birth of Jesus; but whether Isaiah had any such thing in mind neither proves nor disproves anything about that birth. His words are usually cited in this connection, but there is not much reason for doing so. All that we really know about Jesus was written in Greek (in the Gospels and Paul's letters), and this Greek is so simple that there is little chance of misunderstanding it.

This idea that the Greek and the Hebrew of the Scripture has been misunderstood has been greatly overdone.

The reason for discrediting the Virgin Birth is not linguistic or Scriptural, but the fact that it seems unscientific, unreasonable, and childish to accept it. I come back to this because this is the crux of the matter. Science upset many of the church's cherished beliefs - that the world is the center of the universe, that there is a physical, spatial heaven, etc. The church at first fought science; then it went overboard to make peace with it. Now the pendulum has swung the other way; and science is saying that the physical world has no "reality" apart from our perception of it, that the universe is "of the nature of mind"; and the church is denying the Power of the Spirit because it does not fit in with a materialistic view of the world.

I hope I have not just confused you more. When you are in a quandary and do not know what to do, look within your own heart and ask the Father. The

answer will come. If you want, read some of the New Testament or some Truth, to get your mind turned toward the Spirit; then look within and say, "Father, what is the answer? What should we do?" You will know for somehow the answer will come, and you will know that it is the right answer. "If anyone lack wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally." Do it.

I am sure that your problem will be settled to the ultimate satisfaction of all. Religion is in a state of turmoil and revolution, and your problem is one manifestation of this state. Know the Presence of Peace - It is with you always. Peace is the great Power, the great harmonizer. The more still you are, the more unconcerned, the more satisfactorily everything will work out. God knows the answers and He is with you.

Modern theology is based on the rationalism that characterizes our culture; it tries to explain everything. Science now knows man cannot explain anything. It is salutary to say: "I do not know; God knows." For when we can say this, we can receive the teaching that transcends human knowledge.

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BE YE PERFECT

By H. B. Jeffery

SOME PEOPLE wonder why they do not see complete healings when they declare the Truth that man is created in the Image and Likeness of God - a spiritual being. It is because they are caught in their thinking that man is a spiritual being living in a world of evil. There is no material world. This is a Spiritual World. God created the heavens and the earth; the heavens and the earth declare Him. God is ALL-IN-ALL.

Your descriptions must be of the man God created and the world God created. If you think you cannot attain or are being held back, because some member of your house-hold does not think as you do and that you must somehow try to be good among negative conditions, then you are not living in a Spiritual World. You are recognizing a power other than God. You have divided your faith. A house divided against itself cannot stand. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come."

All men are One; all men are spiritual beings living in a Spiritual World. In this True World there is Love; there is no envy, no revenge, no jealousy, no discord. You live in this Realm of Love, Peace, Harmony, and Joy. You do not have the one-pointed mind if you see anything else.

Some people say there may be another war. Well what of it? "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Fear not; you are always in the Divine Presence. However, you can help avert war by realizing the Spiritual Realm, the World God created.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," Jesus said. That is the command: "Be ye perfect." The theologians have tried to tell people they can be good, but they can't be perfect. The

Father is perfect; therefore you are perfect. The Kingdom is now. "Fear not; for I am with thee."

The Spirit knows nothing of karma. Jesus set aside the law of birth and rebirth. When the disciples of Jesus saw a man who had been born blind, they asked: "Who did sin, this man or his parents?" But Jesus said: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents." In Spirit there is no such thing as sin and its results; there is no such thing as karma. When a light is turned on, the darkness just dissolves, for it is nothing. It is the same with sickness and lack; they are nothing. The more you see the nothingness of the material world, the more your real Self will show forth.

Dwell on what the names of God are: God is Love, God is Truth, God is Life. Dwell often on these things. Look up, and you will be lifted up. God is Infinite. It will help you to use the word infinite in your descriptions of God. God is Infinite Joy, Infinite Truth, Infinite Beauty, Infinite Order, Infinite Harmony.

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Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For every Week Day of the Month

NOVEMBER, 1965

1. A man of understanding shall ATTAIN.
2. I will BEHAVE myself wisely in a perfect way.
3. When He shall appear, we may have CONFIDENCE . . . before Him.
4. I DREW them with bands of love.
5. Be ESTABLISHED in the present Truth.
6. FOLLOW the Truth.

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8. GOD . . . GIVETH GRACE to the humble.
9. HE is raised up out of HIS HOLY HABITATION.
10. HE IS the IMAGE of the THE INVISIBLE God.
11. I will sing of mercy and JUDGMENT.
12. Let us not sleep, as others do, but let us KEEP awake.
13. They LOOKED to Him and were LIGHTED.

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15. MIGHTY works are wrought by His hands.
16. Walk in NEWNESS of life.
17. OFFER praise unto thy God.
16. Through Thy PRECEPTS I get understanding.
19. Thy Word hath QUICKENED me.
20. The Lord shall REWARD thee.

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22. Be SWIFT to hear, SLOW to SPEAK, SLOW to wrath.
23. My soul TRUSTETH in THEE.
24. I will sing, and I will UNDERSTAND in the UNDEFILED way.
25. Thy VISITATION hath preserved my spirit.
26. I WILL WALK WITHIN my house with a perfect heart.
27. Enlighten YOURSELVES with the light of knowledge while there is
time.

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29. Be ZEALOUS for spiritual gifts.
30. The Lord preserveth all them that love Him.

"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."

As electricity is the working power of the electrical principle,
So Spiriticity is the working Power of the Spiritual Principle.

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