

SPIRITICITY, October 1957

WITH GOD IS WISDOM AND STRENGTH

By Robert Applegate

"HAS NOT GOD made foolish the wisdom of the world? . . . But we preach . . . Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (I Corinthians 1:20-24, RSV)

Wisdom and strength are valuable commodities and are necessities for any degree of success in any undertaking. Wisdom is more than intellectual knowledge, for there are many educated fools and there are unlearned men who possess considerable wisdom. Wisdom has to do with values, with choosing the right goals and the right means of attaining those goals. It has been defined as the "power of discerning and judging properly what is true and right, coupled with just judgment as to action."

Strength is defined as "inherent capacity to manifest energy, to endure, and to resist ." Wisdom, then, is knowing the right thing to do, and strength is the ability to do it. The two should always go together, for they complement each other. It would be of little value to know the right thing to do if you did not have the strength to do it. And on the other hand strength of character without wisdom is destructive.

From beginning to end the Scripture states and confirms that strength comes out of weakness, and wisdom from lowliness, before the Almighty. "He giveth power to the faint": said Isaiah, "and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." "Let the weak say, I am strong," said the prophet Joel. "When I am weak, then am I strong," declared Paul. Job cried, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." "With the lowly is wisdom," says Proverbs.

The story of the young David, who, trusting in the Almighty, defeated the giant Goliath, who trusted in his own strength, is a true story, whether it is factual or not. It illustrates a truth which has been manifested over and over since the beginning of time.

About 1850 B. C. a young man went out of Haran in Mesopotamia to travel to the West. He had no army, no royal commission, no special talent or ability that we know of - only faith in his God and a consequent willingness to obey that God. Such faith is considered a sign of weakness by the self-sufficient, and to move to a foreign country without knowing where one is going is an impractical bit of foolishness. Yet this man became known as Abraham, the father of multitudes - known and revered today by one third of the human race. To be a "descendant of Abraham" has been considered a mark of great distinction.

We think of Moses as a wise law-giver and a tremendously strong leader. And so he was. But he did not think of himself as such. When he had fled from Egypt, and the Lord ordered him to return, he said: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh? . . . Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either hereto before or since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant. . . . Send, I pray, some other person." And so we are told, "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." But this meek man, who did not trust in his own ability, brought his people away from slavery, kept them alive and together for

forty years, turned them from a rabble into an army, and gave them laws which have guided them for three thousand years. Until the time of Jesus, there was not a leader with greater wisdom or greater tenacity of purpose. A later writer said of him truly: "There has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, none like him . . . for all the mighty power and all the great and terrible deeds which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel."

Three hundred years after Moses, David performed the seemingly impossible feat of uniting the jealous tribes of Israel, defeating the superior power and organization of the Philistines, and raising the Kingdom of Israel to a position of wealth and power. He found his country impoverished, defeated, and on the verge of extinction; and he left it powerful, prosperous, and united. Yet he does not conform to the usual picture of a strong-arm leader. When we first meet him, he is the youngest son of an obscure shepherd in a village of the smallest of the tribes of Israel. Even after he became king and conqueror, he said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me thus far?" And he sang, "the Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer." Not, "Look at what I have done"; but, "God is my strength and power: and He maketh my way perfect."

Of all the prophets after Moses, Elijah was probably the greatest. He was courageous enough to face the king who sought his life; strong enough to overthrow the sensual worship of the Tyrian baals, which had the support of the king and his queen; and wise enough to discover that God is in the "still small voice." He overthrew the dynasty of Ahab, purified the religion of Israel, and set the pattern that all later prophets were to follow. Yet he spent most of his life in hiding. And he cried to his God: "O Lord, take away my life. . . . The people of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thy altar, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." But the Lord spoke to him in the still small voice and sent him back to finish his work. Always strength comes out of weakness when that weakness is turned to the Lord.

Nine hundred years later, just as Elijah fled from King Ahab, so Paul fled from King Aratus. And just as Elijah returned with a new message and a new commission, so Paul returned with new understanding of the Gospel and with orders to preach it to all who would listen. In point of sheer physical endurance, Paul was one of the strongest men that ever lived. And in wisdom in preaching a new message to all conditions of men, in meeting misrepresentation and opposition, in refuting errors, and in organizing men to carry on in his absence, Paul has never been surpassed. Yet he said that he was a "fool" and "least of the apostles." But he said too, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Paul tells us the secret of his strength and wisdom; for when he prayed for help in a particular case, he received the answer from God: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." By his works, his life, and his writings, Paul revealed just how adequate is that grace and how God's strength is revealed through man's weakness.

How often do we find the great leaders running away! Moses ran away from Egypt. David fled from Saul - not once, but several times. Elijah ran away from Ahab more than once. Amos fled from the temple at Bethel. Jesus withdrew from Herod's jurisdiction and He was continually trying to get away from the mobs of people. Paul fled from Damascus and later he withdrew from Jerusalem. But all these men had two things in common: (1) They ran to God; they did not

run to some other person; they went away from all people, where they had no one but God to depend on. And (2) they returned. They returned with new purpose and with new strength and new wisdom to achieve that purpose. Today, there are many who think that they can practice the Truth alone, without guidance and without association with those seeking the same goal; but they do not have the meekness and the wholeheartedness of a Moses, a David, an Elijah, or a Paul.

Strength comes out of weakness, and wisdom out of lowliness. But this weakness and lowliness are not such in any absolute sense. For Moses was brought up at the Egyptian court; while Paul was an educated Pharisee, student of the famous Gamaliel. The "weakness" is rather an acute and continuing awareness of personal insufficiency and also of the inadequacy of all human agents. It is the clear realization that "vain is the help of man," that "cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart turns away from the Lord." (RSV) This is the "fear of the Lord" which is "the beginning of wisdom."

When the truth of man's complete dependence upon God becomes so dominant in consciousness that everything else is pushed into obscurity, then that one rises with supernal wisdom and strength, which reveal once more that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

Therefore we are told: "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord. . . . If any one among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. . . . If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by Him." (RSV)

000

SPIRITICITY, October 1957

WHAT JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT

By Nell Truesdell

THE PRACTICAL ASPECT of Jesus' teaching is a most important feature, for it gave (and still gives) His listeners a new lease on life. As He talked to the people who swarmed about Him, He was aware of their troubles: they were hungry every day, they were burdened heavily with taxes, they were scantily clothed, and their houses were poor. But He pointed their attention in a new direction and He told them that their Heavenly Father knew that they had need of all these things, that it was His pleasure to give them all Good. His words burned into their hearts so that they were not forgotten or twisted out of meaning.

In the Gospel of Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount is a record of Jesus' sayings that were gathered together and written up as one discourse. The words in that Sermon are still practical and their basic meaning is still true. In this Sermon, we note with interest that Jesus began many of His lessons with a reference to some well established Law that the Jews already knew; e.g.:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill . . . Thou shalt not commit adultery . . . Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but

shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths . . . An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy."

With a mastery born of understanding, Jesus always interpreted a familiar Law in such a way that His listeners saw new values in it. They could see that instead of following their own willful determinations in dealing with their fellowman, they could turn the attention of their mind and heart inward toward God and get a different slant on their personal problems. They could practice forgiveness, tolerance, and love; then their worship of God would be rooted in the right use of changeless principles that formerly had been hidden under Law. Thus, instead of being self-righteous, they would be truly righteous.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill . . . but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment."

Here Jesus reveals that anger which men hold lightly and often take pride in, is packed with murderous intent. Anger reduces a man's energies and abilities, often to such a degree that restoration is impossible. This is the "danger of the judgment" to which Jesus referred. He knew that anger destroys the fine fabric of a man's being. He taught that if a man will substitute forgiveness for anger not only will he gain a friend, but his prayer to God will reap a rich reward.

(To be continued)

NOTE: The phrase "without a cause" in Mt. 5:22 is an interpolation that changes the basic meaning of Jesus' instruction. Exercise: Please read Mt.5:21- 48

SPIRITICITY, October 1957

RELIGION

By Alden Truesdell

MAN'S PRACTICE of religion is but a means to an end. Religion itself is not that end. Religion is apprehension of the existence of a Supreme Being, accompanied by reverence and love for that Being. It expresses as obedient service to Him. Religion causes man to seek the rules for right thinking, right acting, and right relationships, to the end that they may find a solution to life.

Men responsible for present-day religions (Moses, Gautama Buddha, Zoraster, Mohammed, and others) had deep concepts of the rules of life. There is no doubt that if their followers had had the same understanding, life would have been infinitely better for all of the human race.

We think of our own religion as Christianity. We refer to its Progenitor as our "Savior" or the "Way-shower." In these references there is an implication that we need to be saved and that we desire to be shown.

It is not just popular fancy or mass imagination that has put the robe of righteousness and the crown of glory on this Leader in spiritual verities. Jesus Christ is something that happened to the race. Jesus Christ was, and is, the representative Spiritual Man. Neither Jesus Christ nor His doctrine need our championship. It is we who need the championship of this true Teacher.

Religion is the urge to know the spiritual realities. Jesus Christ is our Authority concerning those realities.

"Pure religion and undefiled" is a beautiful thing. Religion is practiced by organizations that capitalize on man's innate reverence and fill the temple

with money-changers at the expense of souls seeking spiritual guidance can and does become pernicious. It is reactionary and defeats its own purpose. Our sense of tolerance should not blind us to those who "have taken away the key of knowledge." To such, Jesus said, "Woe unto you! . . . for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

All "ideals" and loyalties that have become static by compromise with worldliness must be relinquished, so that new, true, vital inspirations may be received.

There will always be an inspiring, uplifting, and renewing activity in a true spiritual ministry - not for the purpose of proving old doctrines but for the sake of new inspirations. For it is only through such new insights that you will see greater things "that ye may marvel." A man should receive a blessing from his religion. He should experience healings and prosperings, freedom from cares of the world and happiness.

The object of the Christ Truth League is to call attention to the One Source of all benefits.

000

SPIRITICITY, October 1957

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By H. B. Jeffery

(Continued from last month)

JOY is a stabilizer and serves to maintain a healthful balance of the forces of mind and body. Therefore the juices, solvents, and lubricants flow with greater ease; they are increased in quantity and are of a higher quality. This quickens, thereby making more thorough and complete, the insalivation, deglutition, gastrohepatic and gastrointestinal digestion, which induces good assimilation and absorption of food.

Endurance is also increased, bringing forth man's capacity for long hours of mental application and physical labor without any sense of weariness or fatigue, because in true balance there is no exhaustion, the influx and efflux of the forces of life being equal. "They shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

The "oil of joy" or "oil of gladness" is a verity, for joy renders more supple the joints and muscles of the body by promoting the secretion of the lubricating substances that serve these parts. Joy augments the flow of nervous energy by relieving tension. It opens the nerve channels to the influx of the life force flowing from the universal and inexhaustible Source of life, which is God.

The Joyous heart is thus proved to be a point of contact with the Realm of the Spirit; and by the light of joy man finds himself at one with the harmony of heaven, a recipient of divine grace, and in favor with God.

This sense of harmony constitutes a fundamental and abiding realization of health. Joy, then, is definitely a health-producer, a tonic and restorative. It is a living agency, a vital substance, and one of the most essential, effective, and efficient instrumentalities in the ministry of the truly spiritual metaphysician. Without this essential agency, he would often find himself lacking in the one necessary means required for the healing of a seemingly critical case.

In joy there is an element of contagion. We feel joy, we become aware of its presence, and we are caught up in its action, when we are brought into

contact with a person imbued with its tonic quality. It is a contagion to which we gladly submit ourselves, for we intuitively know that it is good.

In fact, we delight in association with the glad-hearted. We are drawn toward such as by a magnet. Something within impels us to seek familiarity with that intangible though very present Something which we recognize in the merry-hearted. We feel the urge of our own divinity leading us to its kind.

When we meet the truly joyous, there is imparted to us an ardent sense of the immanence of God, and through this awareness, we rise to a new perception of the transcendence of God. Then the immanent and the transcendent become One in the realization of our hearts. Thus does joy lead us from the slough of discord, sadness, delusion, and disease to harmony, wholeness, and illumination.

How shall we therefore, become more conscious of joy? and with our awakened sense of it, experience tonic to the mind and renewal of life in the body?

Since we are already to some degree conscious of joy, we are increasingly impressed with the truth that it is good, and we know that anything that is good must be of God - The Good. This being true, it should be so declared; for it is by the word of truth spoken, in our minds and hearts and speech, that all good is outwardly made known and manifested.

When we face what joy is, feeling it to be of the Nature of God and so affirming it, we discern underneath and behind all joy a motivating force of good will, kindness, and love. We discover that through the exercise of good will, kindness, and love, we experience a growing realization of joy within us; and we are impressed with the fact that LOVE is the mighty principle back of joy, as well as the power that causes joy to move in the mind and extend through the consciousness.

True joy is found to flourish and grow when rooted and grounded in love; and, as joy permeates the entire consciousness with its strength and beauty, we become more and more certain that love is the power which causes joy to be, to blossom, and to bear fruit.

Then are we constrained to the belief, which belief becomes clear knowledge, that the greatest joy possible to man comes through the greatest exercise of love, good will, kindness, gentleness, compassion, and service to his fellow man. This exercise, having become a habit, establishes joy in consciousness as a moving principle which nothing can destroy.

Such joy, "no man taketh from you," no circumstance or condition can remove. For it abides forever as God-created, eternal, alive, vivid, bright, radiant. This joy, once established in our consciousness, is reflected in everything, in every circumstance and event, in every person and every creature coming within our ken.

Therefore, to all, we shine with a brightness that is life-giving, renewing, restoring, and healing - without effort or design, and wholly free from the sense of labor. And so also, as we rest from our self-labor in the immanence and transcendence of the Divine, great works do follow us; not by might nor by power, but by the consciousness of the spirit of joy, which is of Love, which is God.

(Next month: "Peace")

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

OCTOBER 1957

1. ASK of Me.
2. He who BELIEVES in the Son has eternal life.
3. He who CONQUERS (himself), I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.
4. He DELIVERS.
5. He who has an EAR let him hear what the Spirit says.
*
7. Stand FAST in the FAITH.
8. The Father has GIVEN all things into His (the Son's) hands.
9. HOLD fast what you have so that no one may seize your crown.
10. Nothing shall be IMPOSSIBLE to you.
11. This JOY of mine is now full.
12. Behold, I stand at the door and KNOCK.
*
14. LEARN that I have LOVED You.
15. It is not by MEASURE that He (God) gives the Spirit.
16. NOW will I arise, saith the Lord.
17. I have set before you an OPEN door.
18. O, that men would PRAISE the Lord.
19. It is the Spirit that QUICKENETH.
*
21. RIDE prosperously because of truth and meekness.
22. He SHOWED me a pure river of water of life.
23. THE TONGUE of the wise is health.
24. He whom God has sent, UTTERS the Word of God.
25. Ye are of more VALUE than many sparrows.
26. He sent His WORD and healed them.
*
28. YOU YOURSELVES bear me witness.
29. Be ZEALOUS and repent.
30. The former things are passed away.
31. In Thy Presence is fulness of joy.

"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."

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