

The Soul's Sincere Desire

it represents. When we plant a grain of corn we do not then stick a stalk into the ground above it. For the stalk comes out of the seed — from within it, never from without. Wait upon the Lord, and in His own way, in His own good time, we shall see the harvest issue from the seed, just as the farmer sees the full-grown wheat come from the seed. Or we can think of ourselves as the little child described by Phillips Brooks: "The little child digs his well in the seashore sand, and the great Atlantic, miles deep, miles wide, is stirred all through and through to fill it for him." In the same way, in the presence of our human need all the divine forces in the universe are stirred through and through to fill it for us. Let us give ourselves up to such thoughts as this, knowing that around us are forces more fitted to take care of us than we ourselves. Let go, and know that God reigns and we are in His hands.

But these first three rules stated in the form of don'ts are not merely negations; they teach a lesson that is also constructive, affirmative, upbuilding. These three don'ts are don'ts of purification. We are taught in our grammar lessons that two negatives make an affirmative. In this case we may say that three negatives make one great affirmative — Be free! Be free for what? Be free to see God. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," He meant more than an arid asceti-

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cism; He had in mind more than a rule of conduct compounded chiefly of negatives; He meant rather a whole cleansing of the soul, a removal of all débris which would obstruct the clear flow of God's will. We must first remove all the beams and motes of Self, with its vanity, covetousness, and egotism; of Anger, with its brood of jealousies, envies, and fault-finding; and of Worry, with its children of fear and cowardice; and after this cleansing we can turn the strong, clean, crystalline lens of the soul upon the infinite riches of Heaven and see them as they are in all their majesty, beauty, and glory.

Merely to see these riches is to possess them. Merely to see God is to have Him. In short, to see with the lens of the purified soul is to possess that which we see. This kind of seeing is infinitely higher than thinking. Spiritual seeing means spiritual possession. One who sees — that is, one who possesses in his soul — is one whose prayers are answered. This is verified by the custom that has come down to us from ancient times of calling the man whose prayers are answered not a thinker, but a seer.

These three don'ts, then, are not don'ts that bind; they are don'ts that liberate; and liberation is anything but negative. They make the way straight for the message of God to come to us. If we expect to get a message from the Father of Love we must see that the receiving apparatus is pure and vibrant with

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love. Any unloving thought clogs the flow of God's love, just as rusty pipes retard or prevent the even flow of life-giving waters from the great reservoirs in the mountains.

The first step, then, in preparing ourselves for prayer, is the clearing of the channel, making ready for the inflow of God's love. This is best done not by thinking of one's self, but by fixing one's eyes on God. Think of Him as ALL LOVING, ALL POWERFUL, ALL PERFECT, with no anger and no distrust and no fear. Then, keeping your gaze steadily upon Him, feel the petty annoyances, the prejudices, and the selfish desires falling away like worthless garments. Remember that every residue of wrong thinking, of malice, or of selfishness in your heart or brain clogs the reception of the downpouring light of love. Wipe from the glass of your vision the mist of self, and as Paul says, you will cease to see through a glass darkly and see face to face.

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AFTER a golfer has taken his stance, and has addressed the ball, when he has completely rid himself of the inhibitions of nervousness, impatience, and fear, when his wrists are relaxed and supple, ready to respond to his slightest command, then he is ready at last to give the stroke.

If you have seen a great golfer play you have seen one of the most wonderful things in the world, which, if it could be wholly analyzed and accounted for, would explain and elucidate the whole mystery of power and skill. After he has finished his preliminary relaxation of arms and hands, the great golfer rests in a quietness and confidence which he himself does not wholly understand, feeling only that there are powers far beyond him, which are ready and waiting to play the game for him. For he knows that he could never have learned how to play the game as well as he has done in three months, or three years, or even thirty years. He knows down in the deeper cells of his being that the marvelous coördination of mind and muscle that are his could not have been attained in one or even two or three lifetimes. He knows that the mighty rhythms and coördinations of

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eye and muscle and brain have been worked out for him through the history of the race. He, with his little body hardly out of swaddling clothes, with his little growth of muscle and bone and tissue that has seen the light of day for only a few revolutions of the earth, merely brings into use, with what direction and control he is capable of, the physical and psychic forces that are as old as Time. He knows that, when he sends the ball down the course with one of those perfect and majestic drives, he, as the small self, does not strike that ball, but all his ancestors rise and gird themselves and strike it for him.

In the same way the man who prays with power knows that he does not do the praying; he merely directs, in a very small and sometimes awkward way, forces that are greater than himself. Just as the great golfer is indebted to his physical heritage, the man who prays is indebted to the vast spiritual heritage of the race. The golf-player, made in the image and likeness of his physical father, plays with the instincts and physical prowess which his physical father has handed down to him. The man who prays, made in the image and the likeness of his spiritual Father, prays with the power, radiance, and glory given him from the spiritual powers of his Father, drawn from all the spiritual forces of the infinite universe.

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This is the way Jesus prayed, and it is the reason all His prayers were answered. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself," Jesus said, "but the Father that dwelleth in me." He reiterated to his followers that they must practise prayer in the same way. Seven different times He gave His disciples a promise the purport of which was, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Jesus never spoke what was not true, and when He took the pains to repeat this seven times he surely meant that His word be heeded. I do not know of any other statement of Jesus which has been so misinterpreted or disregarded by most of his followers for the past two thousand years. And this in spite of the fact that He uttered it in such impressive fashion, followed it with examples and parables, and reiterated it so many times.

Now what does it mean to pray in Christ's name? Does it mean to pray in our own name, adding at the end a lame apologetic postscript that the prayer was offered in Christ's name? This smacks too much of cleaning the outside of the platter while within all is uncleanness. It reminds me of my little girl, who, with a drawing that looked like a washtub, asked her mother to write upon it, "This is a kitty."

Jesus does not ask for labels — He asks for the real thing. He does not ask for prayers with clean

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exteriors only — they must be clean within as well. He does not ask that we pray in our own name and then add a hypocritical postscript: "In Christ's name I ask this."

Is it any wonder that our prayers have been so ineffective? All these years we have not been praying as Jesus told us to pray, in genuine communion with God, but have been trying to palm off on Him makeshifts, substitutes, and flimsy imitations.

"The 'name' in primitive thought stands for the person bearing that name; it is, in a sense, the person himself," writes Dr. H. Clay Trumbull. When a woman marries a man she takes his name — unless, as in some parts of the world, he takes hers — and the wife thereby becomes his possession, his representative. When she speaks in the assembly her voice becomes his voice. Jesus himself said, "And they twain shall be one flesh." To pray in Christ's name we should become one with Him — not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

A very beautiful custom in some parts of the South Sea Islands is that when two men become deeply attached to each other they exchange names, and each is known by the name of the other for the rest of his life. Such an exchange of names, — one speaking in another's name, — whether in marriage or in friendship, implies a sacred tie of absolute unity, absolute love. To speak in Christ's

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name then means that we love Him; we represent Him and express Him; we abide in Him and He abides in us.

“If we would ask anything in the name of Jesus,” continues Dr. Trumbull, “we must first be sure that we are ourselves in that name, our life being hid in His life, our name in His name. . . . Coming thus to the Father, we come in the name, in the spirit, and in the likeness of His Son; and the Father will hear us and will answer us, because we are representatives of His Son, enwrapped by and dwelling within His very self as the supreme representative of the Father.”

We might say that Jesus by a mere change of a preposition has revolutionized the entire conception of prayer. In the Old Testament days prayer consisted largely of offering sacrifices on an altar — an exhibition *before* God. In the New Testament it became a petition addressed *to* God. Jesus went one step further by using prayer as a communion *with* God. This change is very important. A writer says, “True prayer is, by our Lord’s own witness, revealed to be not praying for God, or even to God, but with Him. . . . Strictly to state the truth, it is the Holy Ghost praying through and with us; for whilst ‘we know not what we should pray for as we ought . . . the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us.’ ”

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True prayer, then, is the Holy Ghost, Emmanuel, God in us, speaking through us to God the Father, Who abides in us and in Whom we abide. We are but the chosen vessel by means of which the living water is being carried from the spring to the sea. As breathing is merely a taking in and giving out of air, so prayer is merely a taking in and giving forth of God.

Is it any wonder that this kind of prayer is always heard, is always understood — *and is always answered?* For if God could hear and answer every prayer asked by God the Son, speaking through Christ in Galilee, cannot He hear and answer every prayer asked by God the Holy Ghost, speaking through Man to-day?

As the great golfer stands poised, with club above his head, ready for his mighty stroke, he knows he deserves no credit for the wonderful coördination of mind and muscle that is his. He knows that the mighty rhythms and unities and powers that are in him have been worked out for him by his earthly fathers from the beginning of the race. In a similar way the one who prays in Jesus' name knows that he deserves no credit and is not responsible for the mighty coördinations of mind and spirit that are his. He knows that the mighty rhythms and unities and powers in his heart and soul have been worked out by his spiritual Father from the beginning of the

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ages. He knows that all he needs to do is to release himself from the things that bind and relax himself completely to these mighty powers, and they will perform many mighty works through him.

The novice in golf who cannot give himself to the perfect stroke with its perfect "follow through," but who relies instead upon the "chop stroke" that begins and ends with self, can never hope to break a record. So the man who neglects the great unities and harmonies within him and prays a prayer that begins and ends with self must never expect to receive an answer to his prayer. For just as the golf player must give himself wholly and unqualifiedly to the instincts of the race, the man who truly prays must give himself wholly and unqualifiedly to the inspirations of Heaven.

Now we come to the most essential of all the laws of prayer: there must be Love in it. Paul said: —

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. . . .

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

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And he might have added: And though there be prayers, they shall fail; but if love be in the prayer it shall not fail.

Jesus wrought not a single miracle where He did not first love, and where the love was not returned unto Him. The greater the miracle the greater the love. He cared for the people who waited in the wilderness to hear Him. "I have compassion on the multitude," He said, "because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Before He healed the widow's son at Nain He saw her and "had compassion on her." Before He raised Lazarus from the dead He wept, and those standing by said, "Behold how he loved him!"

Nothing reveals better how perfectly Jesus abided by this principle that love be made the centre and core of prayer than His refusal to help the Syro-phœnician woman who, having "heard of him," besought Him to cast out the devil from her daughter. Note the coldness of those words: having "heard of him." She was evidently coming to Him as to a necromancer, a foreign wonder-worker, a mysterious Jew. "But he answered her not a word." This manner of Jesus was similar to His manner with Pilate and the Jewish accusers; where there is no love Jesus is silent. When His disciples begged Him to send her away He answered, "I am not sent but

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unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then to her, when she besought Him, He said that it was not meet to take the bread of the children — who love — and cast it to the dogs — those who do not love. Then in one of the most beautiful expressions of humble devotion and trust ever recorded she cried: "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

The entire philosophy of Jesus' emphasis upon love as the key to healing men physically, mentally, and spiritually is revealed in a conversation that took place in the house of a Pharisee.

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house and sat down to meat.

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment.

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he

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were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty.

And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him, Thou hast rightly judged.

And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

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Had Jesus turned the power of His miracles of compassion and love into a means of glory for His own fame, He would have become a wizard, a worker in black magic, a scourge instead of a Christ. The temptations to which Satan submitted Him were temptations to use the power of prayer divorced from love, in hypnotism, personal magnetism, and clairvoyance, for selfish ends, for personal glory. That such a temptation is a real one is evidenced by the histories of religious leaders who have lost their way, let love drop from their prayers, and let the self in. Such men make prayer a mere system, a mechanical routine, a formula. Whenever this happens, the power that before was kept alive by love is atrophied, and miracles cease to happen. Then prayers are no longer answered.

This actually did happen in the early Christian Church after it had become a State religion, a formal instrument of worldly elements. For three hundred years after Christ, according even to such an agnostic historian as Gibbon, the early Christians continued to work miracles, many of which were almost as great as those of Jesus Himself.

When congregations come together to pray, not merely to listen to a sermon or to go through a ritual, when love lives in the prayers and self is forgotten, then we may expect miracles again: for the blind to see, the lame to walk, and those possessed of fear and terror to be set free from demons.

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The prayer without love is a cursed prayer, in league with the devil. Jesus repudiated such prayer at the beginning of His ministry, and again near its close He gave one final and blasting repudiation in the manner of the parable of the fig tree, which few are able to understand. The fig tree in Palestine does not bear leaves until after it has borne fruit. One day Jesus came upon a tree that was abundantly covered with leaves without having first borne its fruit. Jesus did what was for Him a strange thing; He, the soul of forgiveness and tenderness, cursed the fig tree. When He and His disciples passed it again they found the leaves withered.

The parable of the fig tree, being interpreted, is this: —

The fruit represents the love in our hearts. The leaves are the miracles or the active works. As leaves follow the fruit, so the works follow love. The works are permanent only in so far as love preceded them; otherwise they are cursed and will wither away.

So a prayer which is offered without love may sometimes bear leaves — or results — of a kind; but if the fruit of love has not first been there it is already cursed. For just as the murder-thought, symbolized by Cain, carried the curse of God on it, so the prayer without love bears the curse of Christ. Even before such a prayer is uttered it is already dead and had much better never have been born.

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Another characteristic of the successful golfer is that he puts joy into his game. Dr. Richard Clarke Cabot tells us, in *What Men Live By*, that there are three kinds of labor. One is toil that is tedious and tiresome without any hope of reward; this is drudgery. Another is activity that is unpleasant and tedious but carries with it the hope of reward; this is work. Then there is the kind of activity that is so enjoyable that one is eager to do it regardless of the reward or compensations; this is play. Every one of us can choose which of the three we will make of our own life-work. If we make it drudgery, we are slaves; if we make it work, we are men; if we make it play, we are gods. All great geniuses have made their work play. "I never worked a day in my life," said Edison; "it was all play."

Prayer as we too frequently use it is not a walking in green pastures and beside still waters; we do not throw ourselves into it with joy. We have rather squeezed it out as a lame duty, largely disliked because lamentably misunderstood, while the attitude of prayer is usually that of fear and dread, as we rarely turn to it save in direst need or terrifying disaster.

Compare this attitude of prayer with the manner in which we play. Watch the business man put away his troubles, sling his golf bag over his shoulder, and with a thrill of joyous abandon step out with a

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springy tread over the open spaces of the links. Contrast this with the way the same man would pray. Yet what his time in the joyous open spaces is to his physical well-being, prayer is to his spiritual health; there should be about it just as much joy.

The more joy one can put into one's prayer — joy that is built on unselfish, God-conscious thought and not an ephemeral thing of self — the more quickly will come the answer or manifestation of the prayer. For joy binds man to God, and gives him at-onement. It is by joy, born of the certainty of the greatest realities, that man is forever united to all that is good, and forever regenerated, apart from all that is bad. So often is the immediate sense of joy the accompaniment of the answer to prayer, that it is difficult to tell whether that sense is the cause or the sign of the fulfillment. One might better say that it is both, and yet neither: that joy synchronizes with the answer, that it is, so to speak, the brother and partner of the fulfillment, the inner realization that we are in the presence of God.

A great basket-ball player told me once that just as the ball left his hand he could tell by the thrill of joy that came to him whether or not the ball would go through the basket. In the same way many ball-players know when their bat meets the ball whether it will be a safe hit or not. Golf-players, too, by the joyous thrill which goes through them at the moment

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of the club's contact with the ball, know when they have made a perfect stroke. In every case the feeling of joy begins before the ball is struck and extends for some time after. May it not be that this feeling of joy takes its rise from an inner realization, a subconscious sensation of perfect mind- and muscle-coördination, which makes the perfect stroke the inevitable sequel? In the same way, when a blaze of joy comes to the one who prays it is a sign that the spiritual coördination has been accomplished — of unity with God in the first place, and unity with man, through love, in the second place — that makes the answer to prayer inevitable.

It is after one has attained this spiritual joy a few times in prayer, and has experienced the answer that accompanies it, that he truly knows that God *does* answer prayer. Thenceforth he turns to prayer with that exhilarating joy with which the golf-player turns to his game, with which Edison turns to his inventions, and with which Shakespeare turned to his play-writing. He becomes, like Paul, a genius in prayer.

As the highest peaks catch the first glow of the on-coming dawn, so a man in exalted prayer, with eyes on God, praying on the mountain top with joy in his heart, will be the first to catch the glow of the on-coming answer to the needs of man.

When you bow in prayer, then, you should not be too deadly in your solemnity; you should rather

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make it a joyous and exalted outpouring of the heart and mind to God. Open all the doors of the heart wide to the in-coming flood of joy; take all that you can, knowing that in so doing you are putting yourself in harmony with Jesus' own purpose in coming to man: that we might have joy, and that our joy may be full.

Know this: *that God is Love and He is also Joy.* The nearest thing to love we find in this world is joy. To get all you can of God in your heart, get all you can of joy and radiate it — joyously.

The reader may have noticed that the first three rules in this discussion of prayer, given in the form of "don'ts," are merely the opposites of the next three, which are the same rules restated in their positive form as "do's." To summarize briefly what has gone before, we may say that to pray one must simply let out Self and let in God; let out Anger and let in Love; let out Fear and let in Joy. Moreover, the reader may also have noticed that these rules, stated positively, are nothing more or less than the three jewels of Paul's rosary, Faith, Hope, and Love, restrung together in a slightly different sequence and under a slightly different terminology.

Now we come to the last part of the golfer's stroke, the "follow through." How hard it is to impress upon the beginner the value of the seemingly useless

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part of the golf-club swing: the letting it swing back and up across the shoulder, parallel to where it began! How hard it is to impress upon him the fact that the very power, elasticity, and impact of the stroke depend partly upon what follows after the ball has been struck!

It is the same with prayer. After a man has prayed and the answer has come, the tendency is to lean back with satisfaction, thinking that the task is completed. If this were indeed a task it might be so; but true prayer is never a task; it is a rich and blessed sharing with God. True prayer begins with God and therefore must be returned to God. This constitutes the "follow through" in prayer.

And how can prayer be returned to God? Through the gratitude that glorifies God. This gratitude is what puts the seal of permanence upon any act of prayer.

If gratitude is such an important part of prayer, then what are the avenues for expressing it? The ways and means of expressing our gratitude to God are almost as innumerable as the ways and means of manifesting love. The most direct and obvious way is to express it to God direct. Or it may be expressed to the person who was the channel for conveying God's blessing to us. Or we may return gratitude to God by passing on similar help to another. Jesus said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the

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least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Let us hope that some of the lepers who failed to return thanks to Christ found means of doing friendly human service to others who were in need.

We are told in Harold Begbie's *More Twice-Born Men* that when a man has been saved from sin the surest way to make his salvation permanent is for him to go straightway and save another man. And I might say that whenever we get an answer to prayer the best way to make it permanent and to ensure future answers is to go and express our thanks to God by helping others to find the same blessing that we have found.

"Gratitude, I find, is the strangest and most cleansing and strengthening feeling there is," so writes a friend. Indeed, nothing was more truly said. For gratitude cleanses out the feelings of Self, of Anger and of Fear; it strengthens the Faith, Love, and Joy that are in one. Gratitude sums up, includes, and expresses every attribute essential for prayer. Perfect gratitude *is* perfect prayer. And to keep one's self in a condition of eternal gratitude is to keep one's self in a condition of eternal prayer. Then one knows what it means to "pray without ceasing." "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

"Blessed be God the Father. Unto Him be the glory through all generations, for ever and ever."

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When one has learned all the various parts of the perfect golf-stroke, the final task is to coördinate them in a unified and perfect whole. Perfect prayer also requires a fusing of all the various elements into one simple, direct communion.

This makes it necessary that we summarize at this point the factors that have gone before.

Where there is God, there is Love.

Where there is Love, there is Joy.

Where there is Joy, there is Power.

Where there is Power, God is glorified.

Where God is glorified, there is Love.

The rhythmic round repeats itself. This is the only example of *real* perpetual motion ever known to the experience of man. It is perpetual because it begins and ends in God.

GOD
GRATITUDE LOVE
GLORY JOY
POWER

A straight line has a beginning and an ending. Convert it into a circle and it has no beginning and no ending.

It is from everlasting to everlasting. It is infinite, eternal.

In sports we learn the value of the circle over the

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straight line. The stroke in golf begins with the club over the player's head, describes a perfect arc and follows through to complete the perfect circle. No "chop" stroke can equal the follow-through stroke in athletics, no matter whether the game be golf, baseball or tennis. Moreover, it is an acknowledged fact that the more love a man has for the sport and the more joy he puts into the stroke, the greater the force of the blow. Indeed, we may actually say that the great golfer swings his club downward with love and joy, strikes the ball with power, and follows through with the glorious and majestic sweep of the unconscious artist as his eye follows the ball on its triumphant course. The only conscious part of the stroke is raising the club for the start, and guiding it downward in love and joy. The actual stroke that sends the ball and the follow-through are the unconscious aftermath of the downward stroke.

Consider the length of the sweep of the complete golf-stroke with the fraction of an inch of space in which the club is in actual contact with the ball, and you get a pretty clear idea of the relative amount of attention you should give in your prayer to the actual *thing* you are praying for. Just as the novice in golf thinks he must put his club behind the ball and shove it along the ground, so the novice in things spiritual lays his prayer hard against his need

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and shoves it along. How feeble and how futile are such prayers! "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Let us carry this analogy into prayer. Start the prayer by lifting our eyes to God and stretching our mind to take in His glory. Start the prayer in Love, and Love will inspire in us Joy; then let us not think of the resultant Power that will manifest itself in response to our prayer, nor of the glory and majesty of the follow-through; rather let us *know* that these will follow — will follow as inevitably as night follows day in that vast circle in which the earth turns each twenty-four hours; let us know this so absolutely that we shall rest assured in perfect trust, knowing that he will be kept in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on God.

Every prayer thus uttered becomes an eternal prayer. Though we finish the prayer in five minutes and go away and leave it, so to speak, the prayer goes on forever, because it is a circle; because it is perpetual motion; because it came from God and goes to God; because it has no beginning and no ending. That prayer is eternal. It will continue to work for mankind until the end of the ages. The person prayed for will continue to receive its benefit as long as he lives.

It will abide with him throughout all eternity.

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How can we apply this prayer to the things of the mind?

What is genius in writing, speaking, planning, organizing and creating? According to Stevenson, genius is an artist's true joy in his work. What causes one to have joy in his work? His love for that work. What is love but God made manifest in man? For the man who desires to do inspired, artistic, creative work, whether it be in writing, in business, in teaching, in speaking, — no matter what his vocation or profession, — the process of preparation is the same. He should first look to God, from whence cometh his help, then realize clearly that God expresses himself through man in Love; that Love — if it be unselfish — inevitably finds in its realization the most radiant Joy; that this Joy, founded on Love, releases infinite Power; and that this Power, released through Joy and Love, inevitably redounds to the Glory of God.

How can we apply this prayer to things of the body?

What is the source of the power of the athlete? All trainers agree that it resides primarily not in the muscles but in the condition. What is the secret of good condition? A good heart. And what is the reality of which the heart is a symbol? Love. So when praying for strength in athletics or for health in those who are sick, the process is the same — one should pray again in the perfect circle which carries

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one's thought from everlasting to everlasting, beginning and ending with God. Here one can realize that the reality back of the heart is spiritual, the expression of God as Love; that this Love is perfect, whole, pure, omnipotent; that the reality behind the blood is spiritual — joy circulating throughout the consciousness. This Joy is pure, perfect, life-giving; nothing can possibly prevent the perfect circulation of this Joy, for Love is the power which circulates this Joy throughout the consciousness; and Love is omnipotent, for Love is God.

And what about the "follow-through?" Take no thought for the winning of the race, the getting of perfect health, the making of a perfect stroke. Be not anxious for your (physical) life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the (spiritual) life more than meat; and the (spiritual) body more than raiment? Keep the mind stayed on God, and know simply that "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory and the majesty."

Those who have experienced in their hearts the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven within know that it is compounded largely of Love and Joy. Perhaps the most accurate definition of heaven is: Love expressed through Joy. Remember that definition then, when you end the Lord's prayer next time, and you

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will find you have the complete circle of prayer in one sentence: —

For Thine is the Kingdom
(That is, Love and Joy)
And the Power and the Glory
Forever
Amen

Finally, remember the "forever." Remember that this prayer is eternal. It will stand up in the last day and plead for you. It will walk beside you at the noonday. It will be a light to guide your steps when the darkness comes. Fill the world then with such prayers, living and eternal prayers, knowing that no word of God will come back to you void, but that bread cast upon the waters shall be found again after many days.

Praying on the Mountain

THERE is a beautiful symbolism among primitive peoples, extant in the times of the prophets of Israel and extending clear down to Jesus' day, that the abode of the Most High was in the mountain. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Moses, we know, went up on Mount Sinai to commune with God, and we read that Jesus went frequently into the mountain apart to pray. But we do not have to go to Mount Sinai, "neither in this mountain," according to Jesus; for whoever prays retires — symbolically — into God's holy Mountain. Have we not often in our prayer said in our heart, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," and where is there any more beautiful expression of trust than this: "O send out thy light and thy truth . . . let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

The Mountain is symbolical of praying with the uplifted thought, that is to say, with the mind fixed on God. The higher the thought — the higher we

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ascend into the mountain — the further we are removed from the petty ills and troubles in this world and the closer we are to God and Heaven. As we start to climb the mountain of prayer the world-thoughts still cling close around us and we find that we are kept pretty busy protecting ourselves from their claims. But as we rise higher, where the vision is broader and the air is clearer, the petty troubles and annoyances of this world dwindle in the distance until, if we continue far enough, we reach the place where protection against them is no longer needed. When we finally reach the summit we discover that all we have to do is to keep our thought on God and His goodness, and realize that heaven with all its harmony is round about us here and now, and our troubles vanish before us like mists before the sun. This is getting “up into the high mountain.” And Isaiah tells us how the whole world will “beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more,” when the praying in our churches becomes of this exalted nature, that is to say, when “the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.”

The references in the Bible to the “top of the mountain” are allegorical references to the highest

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type of prayer that it is possible to conceive. They describe the condition of prayer that Jesus attained. He stood at the very summit of prayer, and everything on earth was made subject to him. Jesus had no need of the denial in life, because to Him there was nothing to deny. He stood at a vantage point where He could look straight through the symbolism of facts to the Truth beyond, and by means of His correlating, harmonizing synthesis of vision, expressed through parables and miracles, bring all things into harmony.

Since the first chapter in this book I have hardly once used the terms "denial" and "affirmation." Why? Simply because you and I have been climbing a mountain: we have been very rapidly outgrowing them, leaving them behind. When they have reappeared at times they have usually appeared in somewhat different guise and under other terms. The imagination, for instance, has taken over the office of the affirmation and proved far more effective and adequate to the situation. Up to the present we have spoken of nothing which can stand forth and take over the office of denial.

And what, after all, is the function of denial? Is it not our weapon of defense, our shield and buckler, just as affirmation is the sword of attack? The knights of chivalry discovered that the more expert they became in attack the less use they had for the

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defense. Is not this also the philosophy of our modern knights of the gridiron, the arena, and the tennis courts, — in football, boxing, polo, basket ball, and tennis, — that the best defense is an irresistible attack? And when an attack becomes absolutely invincible, something which nothing can stand before, there automatically ceases to be any need for defense at all. This explains why Jesus never used the denial excepting in two very serious cases, where he was raising people from the dead; and in both those cases he used it to drive away the thoughts of limitation—not from his own consciousness, but from the consciousness of those who were about Him; and in each case the denial took the form of a creative parable: “The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.” This utterance was like the chivalric act of a knight of old, who knowing himself to be impervious to the arrows of the enemies, nevertheless did not scorn to lean forward and interpose his own glorious shield, to ward off the attacking arrows from the bodies of weaker brethren. In other words, while Jesus stood on the summit of the peak, He did not forget that there were in the great throng many who were still lingering near the foot of the mountain.

May we too hope to reach the mountain top where our prayers may become a simple and direct reaching out for the good, instead of a puttering and fretting over things that are bad? Will our attack

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ever become so irresistible that we too may use the sword only, and throw away the shield and buckler?

It depends upon how utterly we give ourselves in trust to God, and how completely we open our imagination as a window for the light of God to shine through us. It depends upon how successfully this inner light can reveal to us that the earth which appears to be flat is actually round; that the man who appears to be bad is actually good; that the tapestry of God's infinite plan for us is not a patchwork of hideous designs but a magic web of marvelous workmanship and infinite beauty. For the imagination, when illumined by the light of God, — as explained in a former chapter, — shows us unities, harmonies, and beauties where the unimaginative mind sees only separations, discords, and ugliness. But with most of us poor humans, who give our imagination only partly and not wholly to God, we find that after it has converted nearly everything into harmonies and unities there still remain scattered bits of discord, of separation, of ugliness, which, like chips that fall from the woodcarver's table, cannot be correlated and unified into the universal scheme of things.

What shall we do with these chips that fall by the way? Deny them? If you will be patient with me I will show you a better way.

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When God blessed us with the imagination to see the harmonies and congruities and logical relationships in this world, He blessed us at the same time with the sense of humor, to see the inharmonies, the incongruities, and the illogical relationships in life and laugh at them. Moreover, humor enables us to see these things without malice and without fear; it transforms them, rather, into the means of giving us diversion, rest, and enjoyment, so that they actually enrich our store of human experience, become assets and not liabilities in the possession of our heart. A teacher can eradicate a pupil's fault by laughing at it more quickly than by any punishment. Doctors can cure people of trivial complaints by laughing them away better than by surgery or drugs.

So we may say that the laugh is the spirit which denies, just as the imagination is the spirit which affirms. Both are needed for a sane, practical, and substantial spiritual life. The one is useful to protect us against relativity, the other is needed to carry us forward into infinity. One represents the Falstaff of our nature, the other the Ariel; one the Sancho Panza, the other the Don Quixote. But the further we climb up the mountain in our quest for the perfect prayer, the less and less we have to depend upon the Falstaff and the more and more we can depend upon the Ariel to fulfill all our needs. As John the Baptist — he who came to make the way straight by denying

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the bad in man — said when he saw the Son of Man approaching, the one who was to affirm the good in man: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

I made reference to two occasions where Jesus interposed His denial like a shield to protect those about Him who were weaker than Himself. Let me give an example of where He used His sense of humor to protect and save others who were near Him. The Pharisees took great pride in their ability to understand spiritual things. And in spite of their manifest faults it is true that there was a great deal of real piety among them. However, there was one colossal evil in their midst that, for some reason or other, they could not as a class easily escape; this was their bondage to hypocrisy. In order to help them to see the ridiculousness of this bondage Jesus painted a series of word pictures that for sparkling humor and brilliant sarcasm have no equal in literature. In one of these pictures, for instance, he described a learned and sober scholar carefully straining out a gnat from his soup and then proceeding to swallow a camel with its immense hump, long, hairy legs, and long, scraggly neck. Merely to visualize this picture would be enough to set an Oriental audience into roars of laughter. If these words had come from the mouth of Sancho Panza or Falstaff, students of literature would be saying to this day that there had been nothing funnier in all literature. That Jesus' heroic

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treatment of this serious situation in the hearts of the Pharisees brought forth fruit in later years, converting many of the younger Pharisees to join his followers, is evidenced from the mention made in the Book of Acts of the very influential place held in the Apostolic Church by men who had formerly been Pharisees.

By humor and laughter of course I do not refer to the low, coarse type of buffoonery. I mean the exalted, spiritual, joyous type of laughter. Laughter that is compounded of love and joy and gratitude is divine laughter, whose echoes are heard in heaven. It is such laughter that sends us tripping higher and higher up the mountain. The more evil that comes upon us and the more we find ourselves able to laugh at it lovingly and joyously, the quicker we shall reach the stage where no evil can touch us; for as the touch of Midas converted everything into gold, so can the touch of heaven-born laughter convert every shadow and bit of darkness into golden bits of sunshine to brighten and gladden our path.

When Hercules wrestled with Antæus he found that every time he threw him down upon the ground the enemy arose stronger than before. But when he discovered that Gæa — the Earth — was the mother of the giant, and that every time her son fell back upon her bosom he rose with renewed strength, then Hercules changed his tactics. Lifting Antæus high

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in the air, away from the source of strength, he held him there till he brought him into subjection.

We, who are not children of Earth but children of God, could learn much from the lesson of Antæus. We too, whenever troubles cast us back upon the bosom of our Father, rise with renewed strength. But just as Antæus let Hercules, who was smaller in stature than he, lift him away from the source of his power, so circumstances, infinitely small and trivial, may drag us away from God. Troubles, misfortunes, disappointments, and handicaps, if they but throw us back upon God, if they merely give us opportunity of bringing into play our God-directed imagination and our heaven-blessed sense of humor, may become converted into marvelous good fortune. For trouble, if it merely turns us to God and hence renews our strength, ceases to be evil, and becomes good; it becomes the best thing that could possibly come to us, next to God Himself. For our growth in power and happiness depends upon the number of seconds out of each twenty-four hours that we are resting in God.

Had Hercules continued to throw Antæus back upon Mother Earth often enough, the giant would have risen at last so strong that neither Hercules nor any other creature could throw him down. Thenceforth the giant would no longer have required any weapons of defense, for he would have possessed

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within himself all the strength of his mother; he would have become invulnerable, invincible, irresistible, for he and the Earth-strength would have become one. And so it is with us. After trouble has thrown us back upon God a number of times, our strength will become so great that thenceforth trouble no longer can toss us anywhere, for we shall abide in our Father, and His strength will abide in us. This use of trouble Jesus had in mind when He said: "Blessed are they that mourn. . . . Blessed are they which are persecuted. . . . Blessed are ye when men shall revile you . . . and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." And what is this reward in heaven if it is not this at-one-ness, this unity with the Father? As Antæus might have achieved dominion over all the physical creation had he ever attained sufficient unity with his Earth Mother, so may we hope to achieve dominion over our little world of time and space, if we can only attain sufficient unity with our Father.

And now, because we are near the summit of the mountain, let us pause and take one look back over the path we have trod, filled as it is with cast-off weapons of defense and attack, outgrown garments, axioms that no longer serve us, rules that no longer rule, commandments that no longer command. For, like Dante when he passed from the leadership of

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Vergil to the leadership of Beatrice, we too have come out from the reign of law and have come under the reign of grace. And as we pause and consider what has happened within us, this great realization comes to us: *Axioms, laws, commandments are not the Truth until they have been incorporated into a life and have life.* The one condition of Truth, according to Jesus, is that it be *alive*. Any axiom, law, or commandment which is not used is dead. This is as certain as that seven times one is seven. Jesus declared, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God *and keep it.*" This is one implication in all of Jesus' teachings which is not sufficiently understood. It accounts, among other things, for His frequent reference to His own life, His own personality, as though He considered it greater than His teaching. It was greater! He did not say, "Follow my teachings," He said, "Follow *me.*" He did not say, "My teachings are the way," but "*I am* the way." He did not say, "My teachings are alive," but "*I am* the life." He did not say, "My teachings are the truth," but "*I am* the truth."

Perhaps one reason for our common mistake in thinking that Truth is something that can be confined in books is due to our dictionary-makers who treat Truth as a noun — something static — when it really has the positive, dynamic quality of a verb. This is peculiarly true of Truth as Jesus used it.

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For Jesus never dealt with people, facts, or formulæ from the outside, but always from the inside — that is to say, from the point of view of the Spirit. This accounts for the fact that whenever He discussed Truth He spoke not as the scribes, who clothed it with vestments of laws, dogmas, and outward things, but “as one having authority,” because He spoke with that freedom with which only those who live and move and have their being on the unconditioned basis of Spirit can speak. In other words, when Jesus used the word “Truth” He always meant *the Spirit of Truth*. And the Spirit, as we all know, cannot be brought into captivity to any form, any formula, any concept. When a man thinks he can confine the mighty rhythms of God within the narrow confines of law and logic, and believes he can measure the very frontiers of Infinity with fragile and feeble theories, hypotheses, and formulæ, he is deluding himself even as Thor deluded himself when he believed he could drain the cup whose contents were linked up with all the seven seas.

The Spirit of Truth, like the Spirit of Love, or the Spirit of Joy, is a condition of Consciousness or a state of Being. It is the Spirit which brings us into at-one-ness with All-Truth. It is a state of perfect discernment, perfect understanding, because of perfect unity with the Father. Truth, then, as Jesus used it, is not a concept. *Truth is the power to conceive*

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and to express concepts. It is an eternally active principle, ever operative, ever available, ever emancipating man. It is not dead, but lives — the Living Christ in man. "I am the truth," said Jesus. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." For Truth, as Jesus used it, is not statistics; it is not statements, — even the aphorisms of the wise, — it is not laws. For statistics will grow old, statements will cease to be applicable, laws will fail; but the power to conceive and express Truth will never die. This power is eternal; it comes from God and it goes to God; it is the one thing which continually lifts man God-ward. It is the Holy Ghost working in man.

This, then, is what awaits us at the top of the mountain — this unity with the Spirit of Truth. To attain this, everything else is but a means to an end, and when it has served its purpose we may, if we wish, cast it aside as we would an outgrown garment. That is why I say: when you have outgrown Denial and Affirmation, you may throw them away without any regret. You may even abandon Humor as a necessary means of growth in spiritual life, if you find yourself able to bring everything into harmony, unity, and beauty without it. And how can we tell whether to-morrow or the next day we shall not find something even greater than the Imagination for opening doors to the love of God — for

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finding our absolute and unconditioned oneness with the Father?

For this reason man will continually reach new concepts, use them, and pass on to find others. One concept of Truth after another will come and go. But the power to conceive and express concepts, the power to realize and live Truth, will remain eternally in the heart of man. This is the power that links man to God, that brings him into harmony with the Divine. This power is what Jesus referred to when He said, "The kingdom of God is within you." And so, while not all of us agree upon the exact meaning of every teaching of Jesus, while we may not be able to comprehend all the Truth of every statement He made, we are all able to comprehend that He had the power to conceive and express Truth, eternally, universally, instantly — that, in short, *He was the Truth*. And only in so far as we also conceive and express Truth shall we understand His promise: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

This, then, awaits us at the top of the mountain — this freedom that comes from knowing the Truth. Then we shall know what the Scripture meant when it said of man, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." All that we shall need to do will be to look at the thing, the need, the problem, the trouble, with Faith, Love, Joy, and Gratitude — in other words, with our hearts and minds stayed on God — until we can see

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through the thing or fact to the Truth or Reality which abides in it or is behind it. Once get this inner realization clear enough and the thing or fact will fade into its native nothingness and the Reality within will take its place. The inharmonies will fall into harmonies, the ugliness will turn into beauty, and the dissociated parts will reassemble in marvelous unities.

Nor will this require effort on our part other than merely to be conscious of the Living Presence of God in us. Just as the rain needs only to become conscious of the sun's rays shining in it for the rainbow to become manifest in the heavens, so we shall need only to become conscious of God shining in our hearts for the fulfillment of prayer to become manifest upon earth. Just as the action of the sky upon the earth can bring marvelous harmony, symmetry, and beauty into being, so the action of God upon man can also bring into being marvelous harmony and symmetry and beauty. Moreover, the result in both cases follows naturally, automatically, and inevitably. No effort, no striving in either case is required, merely a letting go and *letting the light shine in and through*, and the rainbow of fulfillment will appear in the sky.

The rainbow is one of the first great symbols mentioned in the Old Testament, the symbol of answered prayer. It appeared to Noah, but he would never

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have seen it with his physical eyes in the sky unless he had first seen or "thought it in his heart." For it was merely the reflection or refraction of what had already taken place in his own heart. Had he not first prayed a perfect prayer in his heart, he would never have seen the perfect manifestation in the sky.

I referred in the preceding chapter to the perfect prayer — the prayer that has no beginning and no ending, because it begins with God and ends with God; because it is a circle. The rainbow is an outward symbol of such perfect inner communion. The rainbow as seen by man, limited and circumscribed as he is by the bounds of earth, is only a half circle; but the rainbow as seen by God is always the perfect and complete circle. The rainbow as a spiritual symbol is never seen save from the point of view of Heaven. Noah with his mortal eyes could see only half of the promise of God; the rest he must needs see with spiritual eyes. The ordinary man sees only the phenomenon of nature or the half circle; Noah saw the promise of God because he saw the completed circle. But again I reiterate: he would not have seen God draw a perfect circle in the sky had he not first seen God draw a perfect circle in his own heart. For again we must remember that as a man thinketh — and prayeth — in his heart, so is he.

Helps to Prayer

How, then, can we pray the perfect prayer in our own hearts? How can we become conscious of the rainbow within, in order that we may be a witness to the rainbow without? By attaining to a consciousness of absolute Love, absolute Joy, absolute Gratitude, and above all of absolute Oneness with the Father. Once attain this consciousness and everything we think, say, or do comes from the Father. Once attain this condition of mind and Facts turn into Realities, the sick become whole, the lost become found, and sinners become redeemed. And how can we attain that consciousness of Faith, Joy, Love, and Gratitude? By thinking of God, or our highest conception of God; of Heaven, or our highest conception of Heaven. Some can look straight at God direct; some can look through a beautiful sunset into the Kingdom; some can look through the face of a friend straight into the face of the Father. Some can sit down and convert the situation into a parable; others can turn it into a psalm. Every church has its form, its ritual, its individual method of appeal, to bring the mind and heart of its devotees into a condition of consciousness conducive to finding God.

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Our chief problem is how to keep the mind stayed on God and keep the eye single, that is to say, filled with the illumination of Love and Faith and Joy, and keep out the darkness of anger and fear and selfishness. To steady the mind and hearts of the people and to keep their eyes filled with light, the psalmists of old composed prayer-psalms. Because many have sought such comfort in these modern days, and often sought in vain, I have added to this chapter a few simple prayer-psalms, which I hope may steady some mind and keep some eye filled with light.

A Psalm of Faith

OUR Father, Thou art infinite, eternal, omnipotent, and omniscient.

Whether I take the wings of the morning, behold, Thou art there.

Though I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. Though I go to the furthestmost parts of the sea, Thou art before me.

Thy Love is as infinite as the sky is infinite, and Thy Spirit as pure as the morning dew.

Thy Power reaches as far as the east is from the west, and Thy Wisdom is greater than all hidden treasures.

Thy Peace is closer than the atmosphere that wraps us round, and Thy Joy is brighter than the sun at noonday.

Thou art continuously shedding down upon us Thy Wisdom, Thy Joy, and Thy infinite Love.

Make us as pure as the morning, and as powerful to serve Thee as the winds that blow.

Helps to Prayer

We would be branches of Thy living Vine,
Fountains of Thy living Water,
Windows for seeing Thy Truth,
Channels for bringing Thy love to men.

We of ourselves are nothing, but with Thee we are all things.

Open wide for us the doors and windows of our soul.

Direct our steps and guide our ways,
For we are Thine — wholly, utterly Thine,
Closer to Thee than breathing,
Nearer than hands and feet.

We would be filled — filled with Thee, O Father,
That we may give — give — give to the uttermost,
That Thy glory may be made manifest in man!

A Psalm of Love

Thou and Thy Love are infinite;
Thy Love therefore fills all space,
There is no space where Thy Love is not,
Otherwise it would not be infinite.
It is filling the very space which we are occupying,
Here and Now.

That Love is in us and we are in that Love.
We could not escape it if we would,
And we would not if we could.
It abides in us and we in it.
Therefore when we let go doubt, and irritation, and self,
And resign ourselves completely to the great All-Power
That resides within and about us,
We *are* Love, even as God is Love.

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God then speaks through us,
Thinks through us, acts through us;
For when we speak, we speak Love,
When we think, we think Love,
When we create, we create Love;
For God always does his work by means of Love
made manifest in man.

A Psalm of Joy

We know, O Father, that perfect Love expresses itself in
perfect Joy.

This Joy radiates throughout the vistas of consciousness
As sunlight plays up and down the vistas of mountains.
No power can possibly prevent the perfect circulation of
this Joy,
For it is propelled by Love,
And Love is omnipotent;
For Love is God.

This Joy is pure, perfect, complete, and life-giving,
And it is continuously revealing itself in infinite Power
and infinite Glory,

Expressing the eternal Majesty.

This Joy is absolutely pure, untouched by anything unlike
Thee,

Therefore this Joy is perfect, whole, and complete,
Bringing wholeness, healing, and perfection.

Nothing is sick but this Joy can make whole,
Nothing is impure but this Joy can make pure,
Nothing is hid but this Joy can bring to light,
Nothing is imperfect but this Joy can make perfect.

Helps to Prayer

For this Joy is omnipotent Power,
Made manifest in man,
Irresistible, infinite, eternal,
Circulating with un failing regularity and ease
Throughout the vistas of consciousness.
Nothing can possibly prevent the perfect circulation of
this Joy,
For it is propelled by Love, and Love is omnipotent; for
Love is God.

A Psalm of Inspiration

We know that Love is perfect understanding,
For Love is the light which makes all things clear,
For Love is the giving up of self to the Larger Self,
So that the Larger Self pours through us as through a
channel,
And this activity of Love is perfect Wisdom, is perfect
Understanding,
Bringing perfect Inspiration, perfect Peace, perfect Joy.
When the Larger Self speaks, all knowledge, past, present,
and to come,
Speaks through us without check and without limit,
For that which is in part is passed away,
And that which is perfect has come.
For man, standing rooted in eternal Love, relaxed to its
eternal harmonies,
Makes of himself a conch
Through which the music of the spheres finds voice and
utterance,
And man, divested of self and expressing Thee,
Stands witness to Thine imperishable Glory.

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A Psalm of Wholeness

Bread cast upon the waters
Shall be found after many days;
As we measure
So is it meted unto us.
He who gives all
Receives all in return;
He who gives wholeness
Receives wholeness in return;
And he who gives himself wholly
Shall himself be made whole.

Our Father, help us to give ourselves — not as the world giveth, but *wholly* unto Thee.

Without qualification or exception or condition or compromise we give ourselves unto Thee.

Complete, finished, and whole is the giving;

Absolute and utter is the surrender.

Thy rod and Thy staff alone shall support us;

Thy yoke and Thy burden alone shall we carry.

Take us — not in part, but complete and whole,

For in Thee alone shall we find all Completeness and all Wholeness,

And man, the child of Thy Love and the heir of Thy Glory, Reflects and expresses this Wholeness and Completeness.

This complete outpouring of self gives us perfect Peace, infinite Peace.

Nothing can prevent our finding this infinite Peace,

For it abides all about us, in us, and through us;

Before ever the world began it was there,

And through all eternity it shall be there;

The perfect Peace that comes from perfect surrender to Thee.

Helps to Prayer

For Thou art the Lord of Peace,
Our abiding place in all generations,
Our Rock and our Fortress.
Whom shall we fear?

O God, giver of every good and perfect gift, Who giveth perfect Peace,
There is no place where Thy Peace is not, for it is infinite,
And we, when we put ourselves completely at rest in Thee,
Eternally abide in this Peace, the Peace of Mind that passeth all understanding.

A Psalm of Harmony

We lift up our eyes unto the hills
From whence cometh our help.
Though the reflection in the water may quiver and ruffle
And conceal Thy great beauty at the beck of the winds
and tides,
We know that Thy Truth shall never quiver or shake.
Though discord and misunderstanding may appear in the
world below,
We know that if we lift our eyes unto the hills
We shall see the Reality is clear and beautiful and eternally harmonious.
We know that the more the reflection vibrates in wind
and tide,
The more stable and calm stand the everlasting hills.
The more the opposite sides of the mountain appear in
the reflection to be pulling all things asunder,
The more permanently above they are seen holding the
mountain in place;
And the further the tip of the reflection sinks down into
the depths,

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The higher the glorious dome pushes its peak into the heights above.

Give us grace, O God, to see the world of Reality right side up and not upside down.

May we see the mountain — not the reflection in the pool.
May we see behind every argument the Truth that draws it into Love;

Behind every angry thought, the Love that vibrates it into eternal Harmony.

We pray, O God, that we may look up, lift our eyes, and see Thee as Thou art,

And see Man as Thy child, made in Thy perfect and eternal image and likeness, as he really is,
Eternally reflecting Thy Harmony,
Filled with Thy Holy Spirit,
And abiding eternally in Thy Love.

A Psalm of Abundance

The infinite ideas of God continually come to man:
Ideas of Beauty, Service, Leisure, Power, Abundance, Harmony, and Happiness.

Man receives these ideas in perfect symmetry and sequence,
And rejoices to pass them on to give joy to his fellow men,
Receiving beautiful, perfect, and infinite ideas in exchange,
According to the perfect rhythm of God's infinite Love.

God has always placed man in the right place
For the receiving and passing on of these perfect ideas,
For man is led and governed by God,
Who governs the stars in their courses
With perfect rhythm, and with perfect regularity, and
with perfect ease.

Helps to Prayer

There never was a need that did not have its own supply
residing within it,
Nor was there ever a question that did not have its own
answer concealed within it,
Nor ever a yearning for Hope or Love but carried its own
fulfillment.
Who would put a seed in the ground and then plant a
stalk in the ground above the seed?
For the stalk grows out of the seed — from within it, never
from without;
So the answer grows out of the question, the fulfillment
out of the need, and the Love out of the yearning.

So ask, with Love, and it shall be answered;
Seek, with Love, and it shall be found;
Knock, with Love, and it shall be opened;
For as air, soil, and water are to the seed,
So is Love to the question, need, and yearning.
For without Love all prayer is as sounding brass or a
tinkling cymbal

That profiteth nothing.
But Love never faileth.
Love casteth out all fear,
Love is perfect understanding.
Love is its own realization,
Its own completion,
Its own fulfillment.

A Psalm of Guidance

We know, O Father, that man is not responsible for making
plans,
For Thou art the only Designer.
We know that no one ever *makes* plans;

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For plans grow as flowers and trees grow,
Are things of life with roots, ramifications, and inter-
weavings,
As beautiful as tapestries, as permanent as the eternal
stars.

May our eye be always single, our vision always clear as
light,
That the radiance of Thy infinite Love may light our path
forever;
That we may see Thy plan as it eternally is,
In all its beauty, in all its harmony, in all its grandeur,
And see ourselves as we always are —
Thy children, made in Thy image and likeness,
The perfect expression of Thy perfect direction,
Each instant conscious of Thy perfect ideas in perfect
succession.

As Thou keepst the stars in their courses,
So wilt Thou guide our steps in perfect harmony, without
clash or discord of any kind,
If we but keep our trust in Thee.
We know Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind
is stayed on Thee,
Because he trusteth in Thee.
We know that if we but acknowledge Thee in all our ways
Thou wilt direct our paths.
For Thou art the God of Love,
Giver of every good and perfect gift,
And there is none beside Thee.
Thou art omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent,
In all, through all, and over all,
The only God.

Helps to Prayer

A Psalm of Gratitude

Our Father, we worked for Thee till we thought we should
become weak in Thy service,
But Thou hast renewed our strength; we have mounted up
with wings as eagles.

We gave unto Thee our all,
But Thou hast filled our barns with grain.
We gave ourselves utterly to Thee, without stint and with-
out measure,
Only to find ourselves returning to meet ourselves, clad in
garments of glory.

We made ourselves completely captive to Thy will,
And behold, Thou hast set us eternally free;
We let Thee have complete dominion over us;
And behold, Thou hast given us dominion
over every living creature.

How can we ever thank Thee, how can we ever repay Thee,
Thou Lord of our lives?

For even the thanks we send forth to Thee upon the wings
of the morning

Return bearing gifts in the evening.

All we can do is to continue to give — give — give to the
uttermost.

All that we have is Thine; all that we are is Thine.

Take us, use us, we cannot be exhausted;

The more we are used the more beautiful, the more eternal
we become.

Thou hast set a Well within our hearts that springs up
unto eternal Life.

Thou hast set a Light within our hearts that radiates
eternal Love.

The Soul's Sincere Desire

And the light of Love shining through the fountain of Life
reveals the rainbow of Joy,
Joy that is eternal, unending, complete,
The perfect promise of Thy perfect fulfillment.

Accept our thanksgiving, our praise, our gratitude
without stint and without measure,
O Father,
For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory
forever and ever.

Amen