

Tenth Week

First Day

We Are Children of a King

How I have pounded and hammered away at myself trying to melt the hardened metal of my own heart into the softness and pliancy of a little child! How I have argued and expounded and exhorted my friends to turn and become as little children, and how often to no avail! The only way I have consistently succeeded is when I caught myself or others unawares, seated around a camp fire or looking into the calm waters of a lake or ocean, and spontaneously retold familiar fairy stories handed down through the generations by just such retelling. A fairy story performs a sort of painless operation on our subconscious minds. It administers a sort of anesthesia to our cynical, guarded and menacingly logical reasoning processes. Then it opens hidden passageways, blocked in the days of our youth, which lead back to childhood's joys and enthusiasms and awareness—to the fresh and simple aptitudes of life's newness.

One of my favorite fairy tales is "Jack and the Beanstalk," and to me it is one of the most real documents of human life. For we are all sons of a King, and we spend our lives trading beans for cattle or cattle for beans. We all have an opportunity at some time to climb beanstalks and cope with giants. Some of us have known the thrill of catching the goose that lays a golden egg whenever we need one and the harp which sings through our minds the right ideas at the right times, and seem always to be where we wish to be with the people we wish to have with us. And to think that all of these blessings can be ours when we turn and become as a little child!

Oh, there are volumes to write about fairy tales and their parable interpretations which teach the greatest truths to the subconscious mind. And yet we must leave even fairy stories behind us if we are to make the final ascent to the Kingdom. For only the Holy Scriptures lead to the superconscious realms of Christian revelation where our vision is Christ's and the Kingdom of Heaven the only Reality.

And a little child shall lead them. (Isaiah 11:6)

Tenth Week

Third Day

There Is no Death

Will you forgive me for making this mediation somewhat personal? Read again the Foreword to this book, in which I affirm my conviction that death is but a doorway to fuller living and greater service and that in heaven our soul's sincere desires are multiplied in power by infinity.

For six months the parents and grandfather of Mary Lou Elliott watched their little girl fade out of this world, stricken with leukemia. Although Mary Lou did not know that she was on the last journey, her chief delight those months was to contemplate the kind of

joys only heaven can give. She was such a perfectionist that earthly life with its limitations seemed more and more incomparable to the wonders of heaven.

When she passed away at three o'clock one morning I was two thousand miles from her, but at that moment I suddenly awakened with the realization that Mary Lou had stepped into the arms of God. Only those who have given away an only son, or as I did, an only granddaughter, can fully comprehend the sacrificial love of God who gave His only begotten Son that the world through him might be saved. That early morning I experienced an absolutely overwhelming sense of oneness with my Father who had taken Mary Lou to Himself.

Three months later when I went home I found my daughter Marion and my son-in-law Norman so marvelously sustained that their courage and peace were a living inspiration to all their friends. And I told them, "I can just see Mary Lou now, looking carefully all over heaven for just the right little girl to help fill the void she has left." Eleven months later little Kathleen Elliott was born, and a prettier, brighter-eyed laughing girl I have never seen! How I love to tell her about the sister she will not see on earth who will always be blessing her from heaven.

And now when I need strength or inspiration I can go back down the corridors of time to that Upper Room and hear Jesus promise:

He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (John 14:12)

Tenth Week

Fourth Day

Jesus Is Real

Jesus is real! And nothing henceforth can take him from me. Since Jesus has stepped out of the world in the body, his presence is here more apparently than ever before. Though he has vanished from our earthly sight he will never vanish from our heavenly gaze. Only to lift our eyes high enough, only to yearn in our hearts toward him greatly enough, and he will be in our midst. And as we become aware of it and get quiet in the contemplation of it, that presence becomes more penetrating until it is overwhelming in its power. Everyone we meet becomes so lovely and dear that we wonder how such a heaven can exist on earth.

Even mistakes become precious and valuable. The denial by Peter in the courtyard and the wistful yearning that followed become as beautiful as a pearl set in a ring of gold. Even Judas' betrayal and the agonizing remorse that drove him to a rope on a lonely tree take on the aspects of a mother's giving birth to her child. The agony of Mother Mary at the foot of the cross as her son was projected into heaven was more magnificent than her agony in the manger as her babe was projected into this world. It was precious for a child to be born in a manger; it was more precious for a God to be born on a cross.

Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the word shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (John 16:19-22)

Tenth Week

Fifth Day

Ask Seek and Knock

Think of Christ as though he could walk with you, talk with you, put his arm about your shoulder. Think of him standing behind you while you work, or accompanying you while you play. Ask him to be your pilot when you fly in a plane, your engineer when you ride a train, your driver in a car. Perhaps it will be hours after you have made such a conscious effort that you will be aware that CHRIST ACTUALLY WAS THERE. For he is Spirit; he is everywhere. How can he possibly avoid you?

At night just before you retire know that Christ is standing by your bed, ready to guard you—yes, to guard even your subconscious dreams and thoughts. And because he is everywhere ask him to stand at the bedside of the persons you love. Ask him to put his hand on the fevered brow of the lonely, bewildered one, to take into his arms the pain-racked body, to restore souls and minds and bodies to the wholeness that manifests in health and joy and fruitful living. Then ask Christ to stand at the bedside of persons who hate you, revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely—to bring them surcease from pain, purification and renewed understanding.

God needs our faith; Christ needs to be called before he can answer. “Ask, seek and knock!” He commands. Yet he is gentle and patient and willing to wait so that his coming may be acknowledged and our faith renewed, by his presence.

Teach us, O Father, to love Thee more and more. Make our love for Thee a fountain springing up into eternal life. Make for us a new understanding, Lord, until Thy nearness is an enveloping atmosphere in which we live and move and have our being.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. (John 20:29)

Tenth Week

Sixth Day

Only God Can Make a Tree

Look at the tree there in the clearing. To most it is only a tree. It is speaking no speech with its uplifted branches and its many-tongued leaves. To most the tree begins and ends at a certain place and that is all. The true seer knows that where the visible leaves and branches cease, there the true tree begins. The real tree draws up from the earth strange nutrition beyond our understanding; it draws down from the sun the substance of light and moisture from the passing air. Despite our much speaking we understand all this as little as did the remotest savage. The real life of the tree is in the sun and hardly at all in the visible branches. Cut off the sun rays and the tree is dead, much more completely dead than if you merely cut off the branches. Yes, the life of the tree is in the sun. The tree, as it stretches its limbs toward the sky and sinks its roots into the earth, says, "I am a part of all that I have met. I am a part of earth and sky. I, by reaching upward, unite earth and sky. I hold the earth in the grasp of my roots and I uphold the sky in my antlered branches. I stand between two eternities, linking the infinite and the finite."

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. (Isaiah 55:10-13)

Tenth Week

Seventh Day

God Lights the Way

We know, O Father, that man is not responsible for making plans,
For Thou art the only Designer
And plans must grow as flowers and trees, from the seed and the acorn.
They must have roots, ramifications, and interweavings
As beautiful as tapestries, as permanent as the eternal stars.
Keep our eye single, our vision clear as light,
That the radiance of Thy infinite Love may shine always on the paths before us,
Revealing all the beauties and wonders;
And that we may see ourselves as we are—
Thy children, made in Thy image and likeness,
The perfect expression of Thy perfect direction,

Each moment conscious of Thy perfect ideas in perfect succession.
As Thou keepest the stars in their courses
So wilt Thou guide our steps in sequence, without interference of any kind
When we keep our trust in Thee;
When we 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.
Thou art Our God.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)