

THIS IS THE LIFE

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STARR DAILY

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Author of RELEASE, RECOVERY &
LOVE CAN OPEN PRISON DOORS

With a Foreword by Glenn Clark

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*To the Apostle Peter who gave
this lead to all in the quest for a
victorious life*

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Contents

FOREWORD, by Glenn Clark	7
INTRODUCTION, "This Is Life . . ."	11
PART ONE TO BE ESTABLISHED IN FAITH	
I. FROM EXPERIMENT TO EXPERIENCE	22
II. THE KINGDOM IS AT HAND	41
III. THE DISCIPLES OF FAITH	58
PART TWO SETTLED IN THE PROMISES OF FAITH	
IV. FOR DAILY NEEDS	78
V. GROWING IN GRACE	111
VI. ETERNAL FULFILLMENT	133
APPENDIX THE TRANSMUTING POWER OF FAITH	
A COLLECTION OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN COUNSELING	158

Foreword

IN HIS ESSAY ON LINCOLN, HENRY WATTERSON WELL said:

The inspired are few. Whence their emanation, where and how they got their power, by what rule they lived, moved and had their being, we know not. There is no explanation to their lives. They rose from shadow and they went in mist.

We see them, feel them, but we know them not. They came, God's word upon their lips; they did their office, God's mantle about them; and they vanished, God's holy light between the world and them, leaving behind a memory, half mortal and half myth.

From first to last they were the creations of some special Providence.

We think of these specially inspired ones as persons apart. They tower above the mass of humanity, as a monument rises out of an open space. We run over the illustrious list from Abraham to Moses, from Socrates to Jesus, and on across the centuries to Shakespeare, to Burns, to Washington, to Mozart, to Lincoln, and we seek an answer to their mysterious power. As we seek, the greatest of them all slowly takes form before our inner vision.

He stands before Pilate. He gives the answer to all future generations: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear

witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

And this is the voice of him who shepherds every soul, providing the possessor of that soul be willing—*be willing* to hear the truth and abide therein.

"The Lord is my shepherd." This is the secret of all the immortals of all time. The important thing about this affirmation is found in its tense. It does not say, "The Lord was my shepherd," or, "The Lord will be my shepherd," but, "The Lord is my shepherd."

The reign of the Lord is *now*. Now is His appointed time. He is an omnipresent Lord. His abode is the soul of man. Within the soul He is regnant. And when His regnancy is known to the mind the mind is illumined; the heart sings with a radiant joy of union; and the body is a transmitter of the highest-known quality of energy. This we call Source Energy, since it is generated directly from the emancipated soul. There is born in such a man a robust common sense; a common sense of thought; a common sense of action; and a common sense that is fortified by experience and is alien to fear.

We are now coming to understand the lives of the truly great; we are beginning to find an explanation of their power. They have an unbroken union with their own souls, an uninterrupted access to the Source Energy of the Divine. The powers and capacities of the human soul are ever at their beck and call. Always the soul-men are inspired.

Are these immortals exceptions to the rule? In this book Starr Daily answers with a "No."

They are born in possession of a conscious purpose

and an ordained destiny. They function from the soul center outward. They are distinguished from the rest of mankind by an uncompromising integrity. They bear witness to the truth. Their office in the world is to glorify Him who made and sent them. They are in tune with the Infinite. They are inspired from On High.

"What they are," says the author of this book, "other men can become. What they are other men ought to be. The process of becoming is an affirmation before it is a denial. To affirm the truth is to deny the false."

Starr Daily also emerged from the shadows to take up his purpose in the world. Almost from childhood he was an active criminal, steeped in the bitter philosophy of the underworld, and hardened under the constant punishment meted out in one prison after another. The best and most formative years of his life were wasted in prison cells. This story he has graphically told in two of his previous books, *Love Can Open Prison Doors* and *Release*. Today Starr Daily is nationally known as a writer of dynamic redemptive books and essays, as a powerful speaker on religious and social subjects, and as a religious counselor to many hundreds of men and women.

When in this book Starr Daily points out the source and explanation of that mysterious power which transforms an inconsequential personality into a man of steadfast purpose and redemptive influence, he speaks from the foundation of personal experience. I can heartily recommend this book to all who would lay hold on the passport out of defeat into victory. It is not

only an inspiration for those whose faith is lagging, but more than this, it may be used as a guidebook in recovering that faith.

GLENN CLARK

Introduction

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee. . . ."

JOHN 17:3

"This Is Life . . ."

THIS BOOK HAS TO DO WITH LIFE. IT HAS GROWN OUT OF my own life experiences and those of others whose concern has been the discovery of a spiritual country and the establishment of a bridge of faith over that "great gulf fixed" between the known and the unknown, between the lower world-mind and the higher spirit-mind. Sooner or later we find that this world-mind of ours is but a partial one. With it we can apprehend natural realities and lay hold on natural resources. But what of that country beyond? Are there not faculties by which it, too, can be apprehended and by which its resources can be made available? As we

read the Gospel story we are well aware that the Christ-mind laid hold on supernatural resources and undoubtedly had free intercourse between this world and that. And he frequently said that this larger vision was the privilege of everyone. "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life" (John 6:40). And again he said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God" (John 17:3). Our destiny depends not only upon making this connection with the invisible realm of the spirit but in maintaining that passage as a well-traveled highway.

The chasm between relative knowledge and universal wisdom, between human affections and divine love has been spanned by countless men and women all down the centuries, and by these unforgettable flights lives have been transformed and made whole. By them ordinary persons have come into possession of higher truths than this present world affords. They have crossed, so to speak, the graveyard between the finite and the infinite, between the veiled and limited intelligence of the physical realm and the transparent and boundless intelligence of the spiritual one.

Paul is, of course, the classical example of such transport. Although he possessed a highly developed world-mind, it is evident that with it alone he would have remained necessarily an agnostic, as are all honest scholars who have not leaped the dark-gray void between the two worlds. He would have been compelled to say with them, "Beyond our circumscribed field of secular knowledge nothing is known. Over

against this field all is theory and speculation. Gazing in that direction we must say we do not know." But in Paul's case something happened. On the Damascus road in an instant of time, he was transported in consciousness across the gulf and there saw the unspeakable realities of the eternal country, and he who was dead to spiritual realities became alive to them in a way he had never anticipated.

I have in my letter files today a large body of evidence in the form of testimonials that assures me that on occasion each normal person may have glimpses of the country beyond the great gulf fixed, and that according to the nature and the temperament of each person there is left a vivid impression of lasting influence on all his later life in this world. To many the effect has been that of mingled joy and sadness, the birth of a great dissatisfaction with things as they have been, and at the same time a joyous reaching forth for things as they ought to be.

The reports of those who have crossed the chasm between intellect and intuition, between mortal knowledge and immortal wisdom, have been varied and variously described. There is, however, a common agreement running through them. First of all, the experience has come suddenly and unexpectedly. It has come as an onslaught of spiritual power, a total invasion of new and different energies. The more mystical of the Christians who report call the experience conversion. Others refer to it as sanctification by grace. Some who have no particular religious label describe the experience as an infilling of cosmic consciousness.

Several who are members of Holiness Churches call it "being filled with the Holy Ghost." A fairly large number of metaphysical students refer to their experience as illumination.

The effect of the experience differs according to people's backgrounds and natural temperaments. To those belonging to the Holiness sects the manifestation was that of unusual, rather primitive behavior, a giving way to crude and undignified emotions, which made them appear to the emotionally poised and mentally reserved as psychoneurotic personalities. Outside of this group the effects were as varied as the individuals, but with major similarities such as illumination and heightened powers of character and courage. Some were attended by physical healings of various kinds.

The experience was accompanied by a new sense of initiative, a greater feeling of loyalty to the redemptive purpose of God and a love for humanity such as they had never felt before. The factor of a blind acceptance of spiritual truths passed over into a definite sense of knowing. The universe was understood for the first time to be regulated by a system of moral laws, and every man was recognized as having God's divine plan written into his constitution.

In these accounts I find that the writers were filled with the new wine spoken of in Scripture and that it flowed through their total lives as through an open, unchoked channel. And whatever their daily occupations may have been they were given deeper significance because of this spiritual insight into the total

meaning of things. As is always the case, the emotion of love was uplifted to a high plane of expression; awareness was born in them so that transcendent beauty and significance could be seen in all God's creation. The aftereffects of stability in character lent a new charm and quality of personality which had a calming and redeeming influence on other people. Old timidities were conquered and lifelong habits of imposing limitations upon themselves were banished from their lives. They now possessed a keen sense of discernment and discrimination. A sort of sixth sense revealed to them what to speak, and when, and how and to whom. They became instruments of the divine process, rather than directors of the process. They were in possession of a new sense of time—an awareness of eternity—that made it possible for them to dispense with hurry and bustle and perform their work in confidence and in harmony with God's infinite patience.

My own flight across the gulf is related at length in my two former books, *Release* and *Love Can Open Prison Doors*. I came back from that region with a huge discontent. Once having experienced radiance and freedom, I longed to establish a bridge by which constant commerce between the two worlds might become my way of life. I knew that others had found such a connection and were using it day by day and they were sensitive to the relevance of the two worlds to one another. I believed it was possible for me to work toward maintaining my union with the spiritual realm.

The spiritual vision had changed my life, but the light of it had faded to a great extent out of my workaday consciousness. A vivid memory remained. I could never forget that I had touched center once, and what I had touched was real. Of this fact I was and am unmovably convinced. All the logical doubts and reasonable arguments piled up in the treatises of the world could not blind my eyes to the realities they had seen.

But there came a time when I felt that what I had seen could be possessed as a permanent value in my life. I had been snatched, as it were, across the "great gulf fixed," but now I would find my way back to that land as the explorer crawls slowly across deserts and mountains to a country that he had previously sighted as his plane flew over it. I would seek out the trails charted by those who had traveled before me. I would knock and seek and ask. And once I had found the path for me, I would settle down to its rules and disciplines; and though I might never arrive, I would at least go part way and have the joy of knowing I had moved in the direction of real purpose—toward the total personality and the goal of enduring light and strength of character.

I began to seek among the mystics, ancient and modern, for a clue or a key that would help me establish contact once more and recapture in a more permanent way the experience of certainty I had felt. These literary searchings were not without value. Yet they did not reveal to me the elusive clue for which I was seeking.

My studies included a constant reading of the Scrip-

tures—Gospels, Acts and Epistles. And there I suddenly found the clue in an obscure passage from Peter's first Epistle: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:10).

I had read this passage a hundred times before without a flicker of awareness as to its meaning. But at a "given" moment, under the lamp of God's revealing light, I saw the concrete, specific rules for which I had been seeking.

I wondered why so great a Scripture could have escaped popular notice. But there it was, glowing in the darkness that could not put it out. It contained all that any man needed in his quest for forgiveness, supply, health, power, guidance, protection, serenity, happiness, illumination and the soul's release. It was a clear blueprint of the creative, victorious abundant life—a perfect set of simple rules for gaining the spiritual world and for taking dominion over the material world, an unfailing technique for attaining union with the life and mind of Christ.

When the meaning of this Scripture became crystal clear before me, I was momentarily caught up in a mental and emotional ecstasy that carried me once again into the world beyond the great gulf. I saw in Peter one who had inherited the power of a Way-Shower, and I knew that I could no longer be in doubt concerning the path that leads to a true release from the bondages of limitation and doubt. Now, I thought, when a man who has been unstable in all his ways

stands finally upon the Mount of Attainment; when his mind has been permanently illumined, his heart purified, and his soul emancipated; and when from this poised altitude of experience, he reports his discovery, it ought to be a mark of intelligent self-interest for me to listen and, if possible, to obey.

Peter, the rough, impulsive fisherman, an awkward, lumbering, emotional man, uneducated and filled with childish ambitions, had stood upon a mount. He had crossed over the dark chasm. His shaggy head had been caught up in the glow of glory; his immature past life had melted away in the light of a genuine wisdom. And standing there in the character of his transformed life he had called out to all future generations, pronouncing the way to cross over the dark and yawning abyss:

But the God of all grace, who hath called
us unto his eternal glory
by Christ Jesus,
after that ye have suffered a while,
make you perfect,
stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Here they were, Peter's royal rules to freedom! Here was the technique for which I had been searching, the blueprint to chart the way across a great gulf fixed—and a way, too, that would keep it an open highway.

Peter had begun with the *God of grace*, the Giver of gifts, and not with the gifts. His was no derived God, one named after the various gifts and fruits of the Spirit: God of Patience, God of Light, God of Faith,

and on and on—chief among them being the God of Law. Peter said that one God was needed, “The God of all grace.” I, like Peter, did not need Law, but mercy, a God of love, understanding and forgiveness. It was by coming under the influence of the old-fashioned grace of God, wholly unearned and unmerited mercy, that Peter had crossed over. And in that he was called unto God's eternal glory by self-surrender and did not make his way by self-direction; he had opened the door for me, making me realize that he had not appropriated victorious life under the Law of Cause and Effect.

From the eternal side of the gulf Peter had given me some cardinal rules. These were not aimed at showing me how to save myself by any system of self-improvement, or by applying the Law. He gave the royal rules to those who wished to open themselves to receive the grace of God, and thus possess that forgiveness and mercy which would render them continually sensitive to the glory and immortality of life both now and eternally. “By Jesus Christ,” Peter said. Here, then, was the central key to the whole Petrine process. I must make Christ the center and work from him outward. I must not strive for the possession of marginal gifts, but for the emulation of Christ's total personality and character. He offered me much in the way of promises, more in the way of commandments. His supreme contribution was to be a cross, and the final victory: “It is finished.”

I recalled that long ago a fellow thief of mine had crossed over the great gulf “by *Jesus Christ*.” His was

the way of conduct rather than of concept. He was the door; by him, if I cared to enter in, I could be saved, and go in and out, and find pasture. That is, I could grow into his character by deeds, go in and out of that larger world at will, and have total freedom, and the abundance of lush pasture instead of the dry stubble of my restricted mortal life.

"After that ye have suffered a while." This liberation and total life would come along after I had wearied of shopping around in religious bargain-basements, after I had suffered enough defeats with substitute religions, and had cut the tangled knots of compromise which I could not untie. When I had suffered all the crude and subtle miseries of trying to find a satisfactory religion for an irreligious temperament, I would put the burden of pride down, stop trying and let go to Jesus Christ, even as he himself had let go to the Father's will, after he had suffered a while.

I knew it would be a tussle to let go and let come. The old egocentric life dies hard. And there is pain in the process—a vast and useless pain. But every stripe which the ego receives is healing unto the soul. It is by his stripes we are finally healed, and whatever wounds the ego for his sake is a herald of joy for the emancipated soul.

"Make you perfect." Yes, in conduct and behavior. There was one place I could be perfect: in the personality and character of Christian love, in the conduct and behavior of my brother's keeper. For: "Above all these things put on love, *which is the bond of perfectness*" (Col. 3:14, R.V.). In those moments wherein I

was active in love I could be perfect. "Walk in love" (Eph. 5:2). In this manner I could be in union with the God of all grace, for: "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God" (I John 4:16).

After an extensive search in the Love Gospel I was convinced that in one place I could answer to the Jesus Commandment: "Be ye perfect." Those moments when I could love in a Christlike way would be perfect moments.

"Stablish, strengthen, settle you." These three, and the greatest of these is settle. They constitute the major articles of command. Whoever can become established in faith, strengthened in the works of faith, can become settled in the grace of love, the final test of release and salvation.

Because this book has to do with life, it necessarily is concerned with faith, the miraculous power that lies within the human soul, by which man is enabled to possess the whole Kingdom of God. It was by the exercise of this highest faculty of all that Abraham was given power to sojourn in the land of promise as in a strange country. Let us then walk forward in faith and lay hold on eternal life.

Part One

TO BE ESTABLISHED IN FAITH

Chapter I

From Experiment to Experience

ARTS AND SCIENCES AND RELATED PHILOSOPHIES ARE ample in their respective fields. Evidence and tangible proof are sufficient on the plane of this world. But the deep needs of human life cannot be supplied by any such means—man's keenest sufferings, for instance, cannot be assuaged by any assortment of concrete facts. In the room of sorrow where an accident seems to have severed irrevocably the bonds of human affection, it does no good to rationalize, to point out some scientific discovery in parapsychology, or to expand on a hypothesis concerning the nature of the afterlife. Only faith itself can transmute the grief into an assurance of the unendingness of love. Occasions inevitably come to all of us when the answers of reason fall flat and only those offered by faith can comfort and heal.

Where the established man of science stops there the established man of faith begins. The rational mind comes to the end of the world, so to speak, but the spiritual mind makes the leap into the world beyond. The man of faith can travel at ease between the two worlds and understands their relevance to one another; his range of consciousness is forever expanding.

"Put your finger in the prints and your hand in the side," said Jesus to the factual-minded Thomas. "Prove my identity upon a basis of actual fact, by the sense of touch. This is well and good, but I tell you there is something better. This sort of proof will not set you free." Thousands of men and women saw Jesus as he traveled about Galilee, Samaria and Judea two thousand years ago. To most of them he appeared much as the prophet said he would, as a tender plant, a shoot out of dry ground—with no more significance to the scenes of the time than a bit of tender vegetation would have. He had no form or comeliness or any beauty that they should desire him. In fact some of them despised him and rejected his teachings so that he seemed to end his brief life as a man of sorrows acquainted with grief. This was *all* that most of them saw. But there were a few men and women who caught a glimmer of a great and inextinguishable light. These were apparently ordinary people—fishermen, shepherds, tax collectors, publicans, sinners—the group included both a thief and a prostitute. Beyond the human form these saw One sent from God, the government appeared to be on his shoulders and they called him Wonderful, Counselor, Prince of Peace.

"Blessed are they that have not seen [with these physical eyes], and yet have believed," said Jesus to the doubting Thomas on that memorable night. Their vision is so much wider that at a glance they catch the meaning of things, he might have added. This last beatitude spoken by Jesus corresponds with his first, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The phrase *poor in spirit* and faithfulness are one in meaning.

How rarely do we experiment with this magnificent statement of Jesus, let alone trying to live by it. Sad as it may seem we even attempt at times to manage spiritual affairs with those faculties that were intended for material use only. Hence, time and again we discover worries and frustration in our daily rounds when if we had attempted to live by faith all things would fit together harmoniously.

A minister of the gospel once said to me: "My church has the Articles of Faith. But how many of us have faith itself! Money is needed in large amounts to run our numerous activities. This is a constant concern of mine, and at least one half of my time and energy flows toward the raising of funds. This article of faith is needed: 'And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.' That to me is an unshakable truth. It lies in my intellect, but it does not possess my heart."

"It does not possess my heart." There is the crux of the matter. An intellectual faith is not enough. It must go deeper down—down into the heart. What is not in bondage to the spirit of faith is in bondage to the spirit

of fear. What is not of God-dependence is of self-dependence. And this must fail sooner or later. If we are to build the bridge that leads to total living we are commanded to experiment with truths like this one. I have been miserably let down at times when I depended on my own ingenuity or on that of others, and have been gloriously lifted up whenever I experimented with God-dependence.

Some years ago I rode into a small town in northern California. Water had piled up behind us, covering the highway for miles. It stretched away on either side of the town so we could not turn back or go forward. In fact the town had become an island—neither plane, train nor automobile could come in, and none could go out. It was mid-morning when we arrived there.

At 8:00 P.M. two days later I was due in Seattle, several hundred miles away, to launch a series of evening lectures. The dates for these were all fixed. The publicity for them had been displayed. Ten thousand printed announcements had been sent through the mails to those who had attended my previous lectures in that city. A large theater had been booked for the occasion and everything was in readiness. Some fifteen hundred dollars had been invested in the total campaign.

There were scientific men in the town, flood-control specialists. There were engineers who knew what they were talking about. To a couple of them I related my plight. It was still pouring rain. The bridges ahead were wavering. They gave me their verdict: "If you get out within a week you'll have to swim—or row."

Even if the rain stopped suddenly it would still take a day or more for the water to recede, and another day to prepare the roads and bridges.

"From your point of view it looks hopeless," I said, "but I have faith that in due time I shall be in Seattle."

They both looked at me curiously and then laughed. "You wouldn't bet on that, would you?" one of them asked.

"If I were a betting man I would," was my reply, "but the Source of my faith precludes bargaining or gambling."

I got a room in the hotel and went to bed. In a little while I was quiet, and said something like this: "Father, I need to be at my opening lecture according to plan. The subject of my series of talks is 'The Living Christ Now and Forever.' My audience will be composed of students, unattached now, but nearly all of whom have at one time been members of the various Christian denominations. My own desire is to bring them my message and my testimony; but I'm willing to leave the matter entirely in Thy hands."

I then let go of all concern, for there came into my consciousness a passage out of Paul's Letter to the Romans: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." All fear and anxiety passed and I dropped off into a deep, refreshing sleep. On that night, as scheduled, I was on my platform in Seattle, and the faith of hundreds was deepened and enriched by the story I had to tell them. That whole series of meetings went forward with rising power and redemp-

tive influence, blessed in part I am sure because of this demonstration of faith.

A willingness to try the untried characterizes the man who is learning to walk by faith. Those of us who are reluctant to live by faith should not think too much about the fact that Peter did not walk on the water for very long, but we should admire and emulate the courage it took for him to step out boldly on that stormy Galilean Sea and see him with his eyes lifted to the face of Jesus, the inspiration of his faith. A man established in faith resembles in many ways an aviator who with all the confidence in the world throws himself out into space trusting in his parachute to open. The parachute of the spiritual man is woven of the commandments and the promises of God. We may be sure that they will not fail. They are not theories but facts. Faith will work for the man who tries it, because faith is, as Paul puts it, one of the abiding facts of the universe. "Faith, hope, love, these three abideth," he says. These three qualities are linked together in every integrated, established personality.

From the standpoint of endurance, of course, *hope* is the pre-eminent virtue. We have all experienced this fact. For hope remains when all other virtues have vanished. It remains even when *faith* has fled and when *love* is dead. The man serving his natural life in prison may lose his faith; love may vanish from his heart; but hope of liberty will remain with him so long as breath remains in his body. Someday, somehow, he hopes, his prison door will open even when there is no tangible evidence to support his hope. The grim facts

may destroy his faith in deliverance, but neither he nor the facts can banish his hope.

I've lived in the underworld where men become lower than the beasts, and where women sink to the bottom in the gulf of degradation. I have seen hundreds caught in the muck of this sordid life. I have seen faith desert them and decent affection vacate their hearts. But I have never seen a man or a woman so utterly lost as to be alien to hope. In the breast of the ragged, burned-out derelict there is a dream of emancipation. The withered, vice-scarred crone nurses her vision of a better day. Not until his life is shocked out of him does the condemned man separate himself from hope. Hate may displace love in his heart, doubt may chase faith from his soul, but hope will wait to glide away with him on the wings of his liberated spirit.

Great as the virtue of hope is, however, it is not enough. Not by the energy of hope are we released. Not by hope alone are we rewarded. Hope is but the balancing rod we carry as we stagger over the tight-rope that stretches between the cradle and the grave. Hope is the central link in a golden chain of three links.

Faith, Hope, Love! These three! It is hope in the center which cannot be banished. Its work is not to redeem, but to balance and bind the liberating, redemptive links of faith and love. Faith and love may separate themselves from the central link of hope; but hope will wait, "and not be tired by waiting."

These three must work together to produce the victorious personality, for they belong together, like Fa-

ther, Son and Spirit. Without faith the virtue of hope can only wait and endure. If faith departs from the central link of hope, then also must the link of love be shattered, and the temple of personality must fall into bits.

Our hope, then, is safe. "It springs eternal in the human breast." In a wilderness of materialism, factualism, the idolatry of sense worship, superficial education, and animalistic competition, to say nothing of our weakness and tendency "to make the worst appear the better reason," and to rationalize away our finest sentiments, our faith is the virtue most in danger. For if it breaks the chain the link of love will also snap. If love goes there is nothing left of life but an enduring, unredeemptive hope, a sad reflection, a living death.

An incident in the New Testament that illustrates the relationship of these three saving virtues in the souls of men is the account of the resurrection morning as recorded by John. Peter and John, who represent faith and love, came running to the tomb of the Lord. Faith and love are capable of drawing men to the place where their most precious possession lies, but are insufficient to hold them there in the face of apparent catastrophe. When the disciples found that the tomb was empty they did not linger. But Mary stayed because she had hope. Mary symbolizes the victorious personality. In her the golden chain was intact, every link strong and in its proper place. Her hope was robust, her faith justified and her love rewarded. Therefore, she met her beloved face to face. In that great

mystery of the resurrection it was to Mary, the integrated personality, that Christ first identified himself.

The text reveals that a little later he was with his group of disciples. "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." With this they became total personalities, established men in *faith*, *hope*, and *love*, the necessary prelude and preparation for the great event soon to come in the Upper Room, the complete in-filling of his Spirit.

When his identity is experienced the threefold personality is bestowed, the golden chain is restored, its links, faith, hope and love, are the faultless eyes through which his universal Reality are seen. Upon whomsoever he breathes, these three become again as one, and the integrated personality is then endowed with power.

Does he and can he identify himself to us today? Yes, to the factual-minded through the record of his life and ministry; to the religious-minded through faith; to the spiritual-minded through love.

Hope, then, manifests itself as the endurance of God in man. Faith manifests itself as the evidence of God in man. Love manifests itself as the realization or experience of God in man. "No man hath seen God at any time." If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

If our educational system has caused us to study our faith away; if our rationalistic and factual philosophies have caused us to read our faith out of existence; if the world struggles and arguments have left us bankrupt in faith; if a form-bound theology and a bickering ec-

clesiasticism have warped and twisted our faith—if these and many other tragedies have broken up the totality of our personalities, then the last beatitude spoken by Jesus becomes for us a commandment of faith: happy are they who not seeing, believe.

The blessedness of faith is evident in the experimentation of the scientist. The fraction we know about anything has to be taken on faith. Edison puts it this way:

We don't know the millionth part of one per cent about anything. We don't know what water is. We don't know what light is. We don't know what gravitation is. We don't know what enables us to keep on our feet when we stand up. We don't know what electricity is. We don't know what heat is. We don't know anything about magnetism. We have a lot of hypotheses about these things, but that is all. Yet we do not let our ignorance about these things deprive us of their use.

No, we put our faith in them and they work. All of our material progress rests solidly upon the foundation of faith in scientific men. They are established in faith. They are strengthened in the works of experiment. They are settled in that form of love which expresses itself through personal sacrifice and devotion to the common good of all.

Now what do we know about prayer and meditation and worship and adoration, or any of the other large array of spiritual exercises? The answer is: "Mighty little." Like the scientist who knows that he can use principles of which he is ignorant, so can we use the

principles of prayer and meditation and worship, and if we use them with a faith that will match the faith of a scientist they will work out accordingly in our individual and collective lives.

Jesus did not explain the mystery of prayer to his disciples. He did not tell them what prayer was. He simply taught them by precept and example how to use it and continually set before them instructions concerning the function of faith in the full development of man and told them that the power of prayer depended on that same quality. Faith for him was an infallible formula upon which he depended as confidently as does the scientist upon an established and unquestionable method. The impact of his teachings and their power may be sensed if we collect those passages containing his words and then read them over and over again—ingraining them into our consciousness.

All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. (Matt. 21:22)

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (Mark 11:24)

If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. (Mark 9:23)

His teaching kept hammering home this point of the tremendous power of faith. It is like dynamite. He says over and over again that we need only to believe that our good is available and we will most surely behold a

visible manifestation of it in this present round of daily affairs.

If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. (Luke 17:6)

or:

For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. (Matt. 17:20)

No obstruction or limitation can withstand the invincible power of a sturdy faith.

It was the burden of his ministry to persuade people to launch out on great experiments of faith, to accept the power that was at hand. By parable and precept, and miracles themselves, he told his followers to become established in faith. They were to accept it as a foundation truth, they were to *act* upon it without strain or fear. Those who asked for healing were told to get up and *do* something, to take up their beds and walk. They were not to lie still and meditate on faith; they were not to speculate as to when they had enough faith to act; they were commanded to get into motion at that very moment and go forward with all the power they had to experience the fruits of faith.

A passive faith in God is necessary; but such a faith

unless it finds expression in works is likely to perish still-born.

A passive faith in God is strengthened in the active display of that faith toward men. And helping people in personal ways works toward a strong, victorious faith in ourselves.

The faith path seems to be from submission to commission, from passivity before God to activity toward men, from prayer to service.

Spiritual experiment, therefore, is commanded, and spiritual experience is promised. The success of the experiment and the fulfillment of the promise, however, will be determined by faith. Without faith the experiment is a useless expression that begins and ends in itself. It can never lead to a vital life-changing experience. Static acceptance of God's commandments brings on experience. But to take up one of his commandments and experiment with it in application in action—this produces fruit after its kind.

Those Christians who have glimpsed the Promised Land and have then refused to attempt to enter it and make it their home suffer from many forms of dissatisfaction. Personal failure, tension, fear and pain, physical illness are inevitable results. Jesus' remark whenever he met with such persons was, "Oh, ye of little faith!" We dare not ignore the obligation that a vision of holy things lays upon us, or make a wrong use of the experience.

If there is one thing that is left with us once we have caught a glimpse it is a challenge to go forward. The meaningfulness of our existence escapes us when-

ever we begin to dabble at Christianity. I am speaking now out of my own experience. After my release I began to go round Robin Hood's barn, doing everything and anything but the thing that would bring me face to face with my obligation to go sell everything I had and purchase this pearl of great price.

I moved about the fringe of that central obligation as a half-respectable character revolves round the edges of vice, never plunging all the way in, nor keeping all the way out. Not solidly established in faith, I tried to deceive myself into believing I could deepen faith by listening and reading. So, to avoid my obligation and lessen the pain somewhat by compromise, I would listen to sermons and lectures, spending hours on end in the goings and comings, the runnings to and fro, and in reading and reading without ever getting down to the business of *doing*.

The sense of need increased, and the sense of guilt and tension grew, like thunderclouds on my spiritual horizon. The crisis came on finally and I had to face the issue of real faith, its cultivation and recovery. When eventually I decided to step out boldly on the commandments I thought it should be a clean break with compromise and a total test of courage.

My wife and I were getting along all right—after a fashion. I was writing some things for popular consumption and was having a portion of it published. The future in this field looked bright. After I had become well-established, perhaps in the better-class magazines, and had settled the problem of economic security, then, of course, it would be time enough

really to trust God and establish myself in the faith state in earnest. But there was that crisis. And there was that still small voice, at this time not so still and not so small, almost shouting within me: "Now is the appointed time!" We faced the issue together and talked it out.

My wife asked: "Just what do you want to do? Do you want to write stories and contribute to the illusions of life? If you do you will help people to escape from the real demands life makes upon them, and for this the world will give you fame if you succeed and will pay you well. Or do you want to contribute to the realities of life? What is it you want to do? You have to decide one way or the other. Your indecision is also mine."

"I want to improve my faith," I said. "I want to seek more strength in the commandments by trying to act upon them. And I want to prove the promises of God in our life. I want to embrace a daring experiment and pass on over into experience. What I really want to do is to promote the Gospel of Love and to trust that Gospel for all our needs."

Thereupon together we made a brave new decision. We did our best in prayer to dedicate ourselves to the Gospel of Love and real service. We felt as though a great load had been lifted from us as we cast all our burdens upon the shoulders of God.

We had taken the initial step on the path of faith. So—immediately the temptations began to pile up. All kinds of opportunities were subtly offered. They seemed at first sight right in line with the avowed in-

tention. But upon a little closer examination they would invariably prove to be a clever appeal to compromise. Prosperity was the glittering lure on the surface of all these chances.

Having failed with the tempting bait of opulence and the promise of power and position, the testings went to the opposite extreme, and we were to become well acquainted with the pinch of poverty.

For many months I kept the mails loaded with pious essays and religious articles. They traveled out and as promptly traveled back on my postage paid both ways, which was a definite sacrifice for us. We tried blessing my outgoing manuscripts. Our blessings were rewarded with disappointment. The rejection slips piled up. I worked hard. I plodded day and night. The thread of decision wore thinner and thinner. Finally it snapped and my wife took a job to support us. With this defeat I was thrown into a violent conflict, which came to a partial end when she gave up the job and I took one. I was not physically qualified for the work, which was handling wet concrete. On this job I was severely injured one day, and our last estate was worse than the first.

With this we made a second decision and a second dedication, which merely reaffirmed the first. We had no money, little food, our modest rent was overdue. We prayed, admitting that we were at the end of our endurance and resources. So with quiet emotion we gave up our concern and personal sense of responsibility. We jointly resolved to depend upon God's ability

come what may. That night we experienced a mutual state of emancipation and a deep and abiding sense of faith and happiness. The morning mail brought two checks from religious publications. One of them seemed like a fortune to us. It was for a series of articles, which were later expanded into a book, *Love Can Open Prison Doors*. From then on our faith increased and God's promises were experienced.

Many years have come and gone. We have to the best of our light and strength steadfastly promoted the Gospel of Love and Service, and no day of self-dependence has stepped ahead of God-dependence in all that time. We have no responsibility except to trust in His ability, and let Him direct the exceedingly busy course of our lives. We have long since ceased to have concern for ourselves, personal fears have faded out, and the faith sense of liberation has increasingly entered in.

Besides this liberation and the filling of our current needs, God has given us one blessing that heads the list—that is, the experience of a spiritual family, numbering now some fifteen hundred members. Our key affirmation is "I belong to Christ" and our goal individually and collectively is "Faith, Hope, and Love in action." Although this family is spread all over the world it is held together by a monthly letter called *A Reconstruction Group Letter*. What we really have in this family is the kind of fellowship in Christ that Paul knew in the infant days of Christianity—a fellowship which drew from him that invaluable collection of

letters which has fed generations down to the present hour.

As I think of this fellowship of spiritual mutuals now, and of the thousands with whom I have shared and counseled, and the tens of thousands whom I have met in mass meetings, my thoughts fly back to a lonely night when, kneeling in prayer, I asked God to send me just one person who would share experiment and experience with me, so that each of us might be edified and brought a little closer to Him.

That was an earnest, sincere desire. He answered not with one but with thousands. And so I have learned that when faith is strong and desire is true God opens the way and clears the path for fulfillment—not a stunted, stinted fulfillment, but an abundance, a rich, white harvest.

Therefore I can say to every person with unfaltering confidence: Whoever experiments in the laboratory of faith, with the patience and testings of a scientist, will experience the promises of God, even as the scientist experiences and reveals the hidden laws of nature.

Both kinds of experiment are based upon the cultivation and application of faith. The quality of faith is the same. It operates in different orbits or degrees. By one kind of faith and hope and love the scientist recovers for human service the powers of the natural world. By another kind or degree of faith the spiritual experimenter steps off in hope and love on the promises of God and recovers their redemptive influence for himself and others.

He passes over, like the scientist, from experiment to experience, from ritual to realization, from application to demonstration, from theory to fact.

Chapter II

The Kingdom Is at Hand

WE ARE ALL TRAVELERS ON A MOUNTAIN TRAIL, SO TO speak. At various points a vision of the light-enfolded summit bursts upon us and gives meaning to our journey. More often, however, we find ourselves either upon a humdrum path that apparently has no relation to that goal, or we are confronted by chasms and cliffs that seem to block the way to our ultimate destination. On these occasions we are tempted to cease our labors and dwell upon the vision of yesterday, or, if we look ahead to the future, to be overcome with premonitions of failure or danger. Hence, we simultaneously lose confidence in the promises of the future while we despair of the present situation. The assurance of things hoped for is displaced by the difficulty of the present moment. The uncertainty that frustrates us today destroys the achievement that might well have marked the tomorrow. A vicious circle sets in. The only escape from such negativity is to take up the manna that the Lord has supplied for this one day. All that any one of us needs is within our grasp, immediate and available, if we but reach out in faith and appropriate it.

This faith for today changes all our tomorrows. Making use of all the trust a man has at the present moment interjects into the situation an invisible ele-

ment that miraculously transmutes both present and future. There is then only one obligation laid upon the man in trouble: he is to respond to God's ability *now*, live in the consciousness of faith *now*; stop all fearful speculations about the future and live each moment fully and serenely as though it were the last. No matter how hard the going, he will find that he can inch along through it when he divides his interest into small segments of time and trusts God thoroughly each step of the way. "One step enough for me," sang the bewildered Newman. Each moment that we achieve life at this level of faith we experience the grace of the unbroken Presence of God and we are aware of the continuity of all life.

Jesus impressed upon his disciples the importance of living in the moment at hand. The keynote in the message of John the Baptist was, "Repent," turn away from the mental images and fixed habits of the past and make the present instant straight. "Prepare" instead of allowing the energy of attention to be dissipated by future speculations. "For," cried that wilderness seer, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now! And as the new translations have it, "within thy grasp."

Jesus echoed the Baptist. The Kingdom of God did not "come by observation," not by speculating upon the future or by analyzing the past for a sign. "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there!" The Kingdom had no particular locality, but everywhere was its locality. "For behold the kingdom of God is within you." It was in the present moment and at all places,

and the acceptable moment for laying hold on it was *now*.

Why look for the Kingdom in the future when it is revealed in the present? Why gaze into the past looking for the Kingdom when it occupies the spot upon which you stand and the moment in which you live? Why take thought of the morrow when the day and the hour and the minute to be lived are at hand? Should we not know that we have but today, the hour and the instant in which we live, and that all the past and all the future, forever through all time, are contained in this omnipresent *now*?

We cannot live on the laurels of the past or by our faith of yesterday, which is gone. If we put off living by faith we shall always find an excuse for delay, even as the misfortune of war excuses a multitude of blunders. The law of the world is *inertia*, and man's ready response to that law is procrastination. All the good that we can ever have is contained in the *now*. All eternity, all there ever was and can be of good, bad, or indifferent is included in the *now*. The faith we shall have tomorrow will have to be accepted in the *now*.

This day, this hour, this moment is the appointed time to lay hold on our immediate good. Living in faith *now* gives us eternal life and good in the present. Faith put off to the future consigns eternal life and good to the future, and restricted life and chaos to the present. Immortality is present in each moment of the *now* when faith is present. Death and confusion are present in each moment of the *now* when fear is present.

A young man came to me anxious and frustrated because of his draft call. The possibility of being uprooted from family, setting aside his vocation, providing for his family, as well as the uncertainty as to whether he would or would not co-operate with the draft, had plunged him into despair. I said to him:

"If you could give up all personal concern and go on living your life in faith each day you would be doing the wise and correct thing. Go on exactly as you have in the past, trusting all future dispositions to God. If and when you are called, go without tension and worry, keeping faith in God to handle the home front. Just release yourself from personal responsibility, for you cannot do anything about it, anyway. Not by taking anxious thought can you alter the situation. Intelligent self-interest for you now is not trying but ceasing to try. Your only obligation is to respond to God's ability. In other words, live in the consciousness of faith *now*."

From the day we talked it out he cast anxiety out of the window and let the light of faith shine in. He stopped all fearful speculations of the future, and lived each moment in faith as though it were the last, fully and serenely. It made no difference to him now as to when if ever he was to be called. He was ready for the next thing to happen, and that thing would be the best thing, for faith would extract all its values. He was no longer poisoned by bitterness, and futile, fussy condemnations and angry resentments. He recovered his faith at the place where he lost it, and where it had remained, the ever-present *now*.

On the other hand to live by faith *now* gives tone and color to the personality; it translates penalties into profits, mistakes into blessings, fears into favors, errors into values. It impresses upon the consciousness the ever beautiful reality of prayer, adoration and submission.

We speak of discovering faith. The faith state is not discovered, it is recovered when we flow into the radiant moment and merge our lives with the Immediate Presence. To the immediate lovers of life go the graces of a constantly releasing soul, a constantly expanding mind and unfolding heart.

When steadfastly we abide in the *now* the light of wisdom breaks in upon our minds, like waves upon the seashore, new interests converge upon us, new energies flow, and new creative powers are loosed. If then we look behind us and become discouraged by what we see; if we look to the future in anticipation of the dark past; if we are not in tune with the harmonies of the universe, then we have only to turn to the immediate moment, which holds the Source of abundant life and infinite power, the very Kingdom of God itself, which is within us *now*.

Yet how can we translate the turmoil of the *now* into the blessings of the moment? By accepting the unseen evidence and wisdom of faith. But if we are not aware of faith, how can we accept it? By acting as though we had faith. By letting go to the moment willingly, freely. By being willing to receive. Freely give ourselves! As freely receive ourselves! God notes each true and earnest desire. Moment-by-moment living in the

Presence of God is the secret. Act now this instant, as though you had faith all through the day.

This is a valuable technique in living the life of faith, so I repeat the instruction: Act now, this instant, as though you had faith all through the day. We should pause ever so often to get still, a fluffy stillness, like loose, porous soil, which allows the Spirit's silent breath to move through us, healing, restoring, renewing our total lives. In these moments the load is shifted from our own to God's shoulders. Without such pauses sprinkled through the day we carry ourselves as a ship carries freight—by force and straining self-effort. When we live by faith life works through us and not against us. These pauses are like the punctuation marks in a sentence. They break the tedium and the strain; they reduce the tempo, and establish rhythm.

We should relax often into the silent *now*, allowing peace to enter the mind and joy the heart. Many moments of silent trusting and receiving throughout the day, many lettings go in faith—these are the seed moments which we plant in the garden of the omnipresent Kingdom of God.

We possess life when we let it work. Life possesses us when we make it work. When we yield in faith to life and allow it to go the way God made it to go, in harmony with the moral universe, life will then sustain us and strengthen us, constantly renew and restore us. Such a habit of momentarily placing ourselves in the hands of God not only alters the course of our own days but makes us instruments by which the lives of others are molded.

One of the best ways of laying hold on our own faith possibilities is—doing the works of faith. We cannot be about the Father's business without benefiting thereby. But we can be about what we think is the Father's business when in reality it is just our own business, and upset the affairs of ourselves and others.

Doing the works of faith from a genuine desire will bring to us good judgment and discrimination, so that we will know to whom the Father takes us, or whom the Father requires us to help. But if the Father is not going ahead of us, directing the way, and clearing the path, we are apt to get things into hopeless tangles. Working in faith is mostly a matter of waiting upon God's green light—and *not* moving against the red.

As an illustration—a young woman came to our living room one day. To her it seemed that the whole universe was against her; she was emotionally desperate and in a generally chaotic state. Our first job was to establish faith within ourselves—and peace. The law of contagion would do the rest. There was no need for instruction here, but for example.

As we grew still, as we softly merged into the serene moment, as we quietly let go of pressure, we felt the tensions loosen in the woman. By and by my wife took her to a bed and covered her. She sank into a deep, restful sleep. When she woke renewed in body, mind and soul—then she was prepared, ready for instruction.

What caused her tension? It was fear, uncertainty of the future, a haunting, subconscious dread buried in her past. Fear had supplanted faith. And the path of fear was strain, struggle, worry, anxiety. Divorced from

faith she was separated from God. Separated from God she was apprehensive of the past and the future, and she gathered bitter fruit in the present.

Always she had been trying and trying, but trying did not solve her problem. She was released and reunited with the Father when she ceased to try. So it was that she discovered the faith state as a peaceful, harmonious way; that it was the way of ceasing to try, of letting go to the all-inclusive moment, "not her responsibility but her response to God's ability."

Truly the appointed time for laying hold on the abundant life through faith is *now*. And just as truly when all the commandments of God have been listed in their order of importance there will be one near the top of the list, and its name will be *now*.

One little word of three letters, but it holds the secret for the new race of men not yet born. For the individual now living, it is the key to the Kingdom on earth, the passport across a great gulf fixed, a personal Magna Charta into freedom.

I say these things out of the background of my own experience. Back in my own compromising days of putting off the obligation of faith, my good intention was always leaping to the future, and I was sidetracked from the now by habit patterns of the past. The result was a life that jerked but did not flow. My negative mental pictures were not dissolved, and my negative emotions were not translated. Habits of the past and little gods destroyed me. One day I realized with a great certainty that I was called upon to replace the

past and future with a living faith *now*, and set aside my lesser gods for *God*.

Living now means living in the consciousness that all the events of life have a meaningful relationship, that all things work together for good. Limitations and failures arise when we lose this conception of the flow of life. Life is a river that moves us toward the ocean of God. If we fasten ourselves to any one thing along the bank we are sure to fail in the unique goal of our existence. Little goals are in reality but signposts that point toward the primary purpose of Life. Paul's description of spiritual perfection—love—makes this clear. All virtue is meaningless, he says, unless it is rooted in love. To clinch the matter he continues in the first verse after the famous love chapter, "Make love your aim, and then set your heart on spiritual gifts" (I Cor. 14:1, Moffatt). We are so easily deceived into wanting the gifts of God and not God, the Giver.

"Is this yearning ache in me limited to the gifts," I asked, "or is it a distant and overlaid memory of a time when I had an undisturbed union with God? Is it then a yearning for reunion, a hungering and thirsting after the Holy Spirit, with the resultant initiation into the Spirit's larger life across a great gulf fixed?"

"Does this then mark the true religious urge in me? Or am I deceived, wanting only the gifts, but not the Giver?"

I sought the answer to these questions in others, also. From what I discovered it seemed fairly conclusive that most normal people wanted the spiritual gifts, as well as the exalted experience of the Spirit which

comes sometimes as they go about their humdrum workaday duties. On such occasions, one feels himself transported, as it were, into a beyond and more spacious sphere of existence. For a little while the fog lifts, the worries and anxieties pass, and one experiences new freedom, a new sense of purpose and importance, an inrushing, as it would seem, of new powers and capacities.

The most common feature of the testimonies I have gathered of these more expansive flights of spiritual experience is that they have no respect to persons. They come to the good, the bad, the indifferent, to the saints and the sinners and to all who lie between. As it comes unexpectedly it is usually related to some common incident rather than to some planned effort we make to woo it.

I could perhaps be safe in saying that the Spirit's grace is experienced for the most part at any point in our consciousness where there is an instant of complete emptiness, a vacuum, a momentary cessation of mental activity, and that these moments are most commonly induced by monotony, often by the act of spiritual daydreaming, or any sudden release of accumulated tension. However and whenever this instant of suspended thought occurs there may come about a miracle of transport, a widening out of consciousness, a new birth of liberty for a little while.

As I have said, many years ago I was hurled across the fixed gulf in an unsuspected moment, experienced its miracle of total release, and was never again the same person. Hence I am persuaded that those who

cross the barrier and touch even for a moment the expansive life on the other side will lose much of what had been and will gain much of what should be. And because all normal people do have these experiences of a larger life, the memory of them lingers on to crown the restricted life with an ever-increasing discontent.

To escape from the pain of this mounting dissatisfaction some people turn feverishly to ambition, or to philosophy and religion. Others turn to substitutes: alcohol, entertainment, even vice of all kinds.

In the later years of my imprisonment I shared a cell with a man whose sentence read, "for your natural life." In the course of his life behind bars he had had an experience of spiritual reality that made him genuinely free. There was a widening of his consciousness, a new vitality was loosed in him and an exalted purpose possessed him.

The essential thing in his experience was the recovery of a glowing, established faith in God, which sustained and fertilized his new intention, and which brought light to his mind such as he had never known before. He could move into his purposes with ease and grace, without imposing imaginary limitations upon himself, once a fixed habit of his. No longer did he sweat and push, anticipating failure. He carried a new feeling of power within himself, an abiding faith in God's mercy and grace that made him an instrument in the redemptive plan of heaven.

Out of his faith rose the desire for corresponding

works and a love for people. His talents unfolded into vital, creative expression.

The memory of his liberation and radiant personality comes back to me when I see the tense, busy people of this so-called free world. So few of them are out of prison houses. Their days are prison fare and their nights are prison dreams. All their fussy nervous energy cannot conceal the bars of their cage. They pass from mental jail to mental jail; from one emotional defeat to another.

Mostly they are earth-gazers, like the cripple at the Gate called Beautiful. Their eyes are haunted, furtive, fearful, shifting quickly from another's look, lest the stripes of their imprisoned soul be discovered and the record of their abysmal helplessness be discerned. They never know what to do with their hands, the hands which so long have wrought amiss. Women jiggle their handbags about—all tap and drum, and draw weird designs and childish pictures. Men hide theirs in their pockets.

These prisoners of the outside world huddle together in man-made canyons and deep catacombs of rock; within them they know it is a travesty, a twisted reflection of reality, grim burlesque, a sham, a mockery, a terrible joke. The best rouge made cannot obliterate the death dew on the faces of passing women, and the morning shave but heightens the prison pallor on the faces of jostling men.

The loneliness of all these people is pathetic and tragic. Restricted, bound, squeezed, they are aliens to liberty and exiles to life. They push and hurry and fret

and toil, their successes a defeat, their defeats a useless cross. Feverishly they turn on all the outer lights as though this can in any wise compensate for the dungeon darkness within.

Being tormented and vexed and frustrated, they struggle and blunder along through their fogs of fear and anger and resentment, as bitter as sour bread, lost souls in a speed-drunken age of greed and self-deception. They are the real convicts in the prison of despair, racing into this tavern and that, from movie to movie, turning radio dials in search of anesthetizing racket—longing for peace, and there is no peace.

Noise and pointless activity, the curse of our modern world, fill the sidewalks and byways with neurotic derelicts, who wear upon the surface a mask of respectability, and within are decay and death.

I have spent these twenty free years among the prisoners whose walls are more than stone and whose bars are more than steel. I pass out papers as I walk and I challenge as I talk. Consequently to my fireside they come looking well and prosperous until the string is pulled on their bag of problems. Some are suicidal. Some are unhappy in marriage. Some are defeated in their religious lives. The list is endless. All bow in the guilt of confession when our Master, fixing them with His steady gaze, administers the gentle rebuke: "Ye of little faith."

Time has not changed the disease, except to make it more intense and universal. Different terms have been coined for the old afflictions. We call them *complexes*.

Jesus called them *devils*. We say: "You have a neurosis." Jesus said: "You are possessed of devils."

By whatever name we name their maladies, the victims remain the same, creatures of small vision and "little faith," the down look always permanent, the uplifted look just a brief and impermanent experience.

For though such ills have been dignified with a scientific nomenclature, this is still the age of ghosts and demons. People are still obsessed with evil spirits and devils, even as in the days of Jesus. And the minister or counselor who is unskilled in exorcising these invisible plagues of the inner life and of guiding their victims into the open spacious life can hardly hope to feed the Good Shepherd's sheep. Even as Jesus cast out the unclean spirits of his day by the power of *the* Spirit, so are the unclean spirits exorcised in our day by those who are led by the Spirit of God.

I have written at length of the futility of men's entanglement with things less than God because this is the ill-fated choice that has ever blocked the human race from attaining its full stature as children of God. Yet at any moment the right choice *can* be made. There *is* hope when we are dissatisfied; our very anxiety may be translated into a blessing at the very moment we choose the Giver of gifts.

A man in his early thirties said to me: "I've been in prison four times. I don't want any more of it. I've got a good job now. I'm doing fine. But the old life pulls me. Sometimes even in bed at night an urge comes over me to get up and go out and commit a crime—just

for relief. I can hardly resist it. I can't banish it. What can I do?"

How can this more spacious life be translated from flash experiences into a steady glow? In a word, how can the faith we once had be recovered?

Said Peter: "After that ye have suffered a while . . . make you perfect."

We begin our cultivation of a habit of faith by exposing ourselves to God, especially every night and morning with the Bible and prayer. Read the Gospels! Pray! Seek the Giver of all good gifts in secret—don't dissipate your good impulses by too much talk! There is a rule of secrecy to be observed that applies especially in the field of faith and prayer. It is one of the rules of prayer which Jesus pressed in the most vigorous and colorful words:

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, 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.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. (Matt. 6:5-7)

Here Christ was teaching them by precept how to

approach God, who was in secret, by the rule of secrecy. He was perfectly correct in this, for we approach like things with like things. Like attracts like. We do not gather grapes from thistles. A fountain does not put forth both salt water and fresh. We do not approach love with hate, but with love. Failure does not attract success. But nothing succeeds so well as success. We work against failure. We work with success. And so, God being in the secret place, we approach Him secretly. The reward for our wisdom is in the open.

But whether in secrecy or openly, the final outcome of our prayer will be determined by the amount of faith we have in it. If we have enough faith it will make no difference where we pray, or how, for according to our faith will it be done unto us. If we pray with little faith our prayer will have little reward. If we pray with a great faith the reward will match the faith.

As we seek the Giver of all good gifts, cultivating his acquaintance through secret prayer, a transformation takes place. Iron comes into the character, an attitude of true affection grows in human relationships, and strength for works of faith increases. Remember this, faith can never be wholly lost, no matter how overlaid it may become with evil or neglect. Faith is at hand in the now and can be recovered at any point along the way, if we but desire it and proceed to act upon all that we have at the moment. But above all *Seek ye first the Giver*. The Great Goal is attainable now. If we approach it without pretense, without compromise or

evasion, but with simple, childlike trust and an honest effort to surrender, it will also approach us. And when we seek first the Giver of the gifts, what gifts we have need of will be added unto us.

Chapter III

The Disciplines of Faith

FAITH OPERATES IN THIS WORLD THE SAME AS IN HEAVEN—according to the purpose which calls for it. It rises no higher than our aim. The small aim requires small faith—and ends in small demonstration. No aim at all means scattered faith, a scattered brain, a defeated life, which ends in the vice of boredom, the vice of indolence, sensuality, or any number of other vices of the appetite and flesh.

Faith will reward its devotee on whatever plane he employs it, according to the importance for service of that plane. Whoever does the works of faith will do with ease and proficiency what others do with "blood, sweat, and tears," for his yoke is easy, his burden light.

A noted concert pianist confided his secret of success. He moved in an atmosphere of music. His family were musicians. With them he talked music, breathed music, loved music. He was surrendered to the god of music. He practiced on his piano from four to eight hours a day, for this was necessary to his success. He was dedicated to the discipline of music. All other interests of his were subordinated to the central interest of music. It was his main devotion.

I talked with a Nobel Prize scientist and it did not

take me long to discover his secret of success. He was surrendered to the god of science. He was dedicated to the absolute disciplines of science, and he was entirely devoted to the central interest of science. So I pressed on in my search to find out just what it was that made men succeed in their chosen fields. And always I found the same answer among the great, the highly accomplished. I talked with great lawyers, doctors, statesmen, businessmen, craftsmen, educators, ministers, skilled workmen, philosophers, psychologists. I covered the ground of the world's successful. Each one was wholly surrendered to his profession or trade. He was dedicated to its discipline. He was devoted to its aims and purposes.

I then studied the lives of the first apostles, and then the saints and the mystics down through the centuries. Here again, as in the secular professions and trades, I found them men and women of strong and established faith. Only the God in whom they had faith was now spelled with a capital letter. To this God they, too, were absolutely surrendered. To Him and His will, His plan and disciplines, they were unwaveringly and undividedly dedicated.

But I noticed that in the world religions the founders were always greater than their disciples. And the reason for this was that their surrender, dedication, and devotion were as nearly perfect as mortal men could make them. Peter, Paul, and John were, perhaps, the greatest Christians to follow in the wake of Jesus. They were surrendered men, dedicated men, devoted men. But the Master was more perfect in his surrender,

dedication, and devotion. Hence he was greater in his established faith.

The lives of these men indicate clearly the challenge of a life of faith. No bridge was ever swung across a chasm without a challenge that taxed the total energy of the builder. The faith that bridges the great gulf fixed and provides a solid passage between the known and the unknown sets before us five such challenges or disciplines: integrity, humility, self-surrender, devotion, dedication.

INTEGRITY

It is easy enough to iterate and reiterate that faith will break the chain of negativity and fear that holds us back from our true estate as children of God. The actual exercise of faith, however, is another matter that calls forth latent energy, the fruit of which appears as a miracle. Those of us who speak and write easily are much too prone to substitute verbalization for performance. Sooner or later it is borne in upon us how impotent even great truth can become when it is confined to words.

It is in doing the works of faith that we are led into ever-enlarging experiences of God's Presence. It is only in right conduct springing from right motive that the power of faith is established and the will of God is done. Holy thought fused with holy emotion leads to the holy action—or demonstration of faith. This unity of thought, emotion and action is integrity and represents the wholeness of personality.

It often happens that the most hopeless sinner is

closer to God than the church member. The sinner's personality may be anemic and his character too weak to resist temptation. But abiding in his heart may be a perpetual sense of guilt and remorse, a genuine yearning for release which wars against the habits that bind him.

These inner motives are in the nature of an unspoken, unshared penitence. They are not concealed under an outer display of self-righteousness or a mask of piety. God takes constant note of these honest motives, and often exalts the sinner, while leaving the outwardly respectable church member sitting in his pew.

When God lays hold on the great sinner He has material out of which He can fashion the saint, because the great sinner is a man of extremes. As a great sinner he is an all-out sinner, totally against God. As a redeemed man he goes to the opposite extreme and he is all-out for God. As a great sinner he is icy cold. As a redeemed man he is afire for God. This kind of a man God can use. He can reach the cold and frozen; He can guide the blazing devotee. The respectable and lukewarm He can neither reach nor guide.

If there is integrity in the heart God is interested. The sinner has at least one estimable quality—he has integrity. Being a sinner, he does not pretend to be something else. So Christ makes a detour round the pretenders and gathers up his lost lambs—from among the lost and honest. The reason why he can do nothing with the self-deceived who wear the mask of false piety, is that they do not know him when he appears.

But the sinners do know him. They recognize him immediately.

Time and again I have seen this fact demonstrated in street meetings where the down-and-outers had already come to recognize their weaknesses. The following story is an illustration:

A girl in the underworld sat talking it out with me in a cheap restaurant over cups of coffee. She chose the place because it had the kind of atmosphere in which she could feel comfortable and at home. She had been in this underworld but three years, which had added ten years to her age. Her make-up was cheap, her skin coarse, her pores large; her eyes were hard and her lips loose.

I was candid with her. "You can't take many more years down here," I warned.

She was defensive. "What makes you think that?"

"Oh, you can take many more," I admitted, "but these three years have taken your youth. At twenty-three you are thirty-three. Emotionally you are much older. Biologically you are nearing midway, though still somewhat attractive to men. Just one more year and your attraction will begin to fade fast. Another year and you'll begin to repulse the men you seek to attract. And one more year after that will so destroy your character and personality that even the dreariest vagabonds along the street will sicken at your approach."

"I ought to get roaring mad and dash this lousy coffee in your face," she retorted. "You burn just like acid. And if you hadn't told me your own story I'd do it."

Then, after a pause, she calmed, "Well, now I'll tell you mine."

She had come from a Christian home. She had received too heavy a dose of religion from parents who had claimed one thing and practiced another. For her they destroyed their precepts by their examples. She had rebelled, gone out on her own, and got lost.

"I don't like this life," she confessed. "I know it is a cheap and tawdry libel of everything in me that is decent. But I'm in it, and there's no way out."

Here was integrity. As we talked God looked on. Secretly and silently I sought guidance for the right words. The guidance that came was unusual. "You've lost nothing," I said presently. "What you really want to be you are already at this moment. It is only covered up. If at this very instant you would reach down and take up your courage again, and then act upon it, God would open the way for you to shake free of this life for good."

"Oh, I've got plenty of courage, but it does me no good!"

"It's the wrong kind of courage, though."

"What's the right kind, then?" she demanded.

"To do something for God. His will instead of yours."

"How do you mean?"

She was interested but puzzled.

"What was I doing when you first came along?" I asked.

She laughed.

"You were preaching to a bunch of down-and-outs on the street corner."

"And why do you suppose I was doing that?"

"Oh, I guess you get some kind of a kick out of it."

It was my turn to confess.

"Not so," I said. "I had become quite proud this morning. A few days ago a woman asked me to pray for her little girl's recovery. What's more, the child was healed. But instead of being humbled by the good news and thankful to God for it, I experienced an emotion of pride and egotism. This was followed by an urge to come down here and preach on the street corner. You came along and saw me humiliated by two or three men," I ruminated. "Perhaps God put this urge in my heart. Perhaps I needed humiliation. Certainly there was no harvest among the men, as you saw. Maybe you are the harvest. And so, I say, courage may be your first step out of here."

Then I made to her this rather exceptional challenge, not the sort of challenge I was in the habit of making.

"Suppose you go out and stand where I stood on the street corner and talk to the passers-by about Christ? That is what I mean by courage *now*. It is acting God's will just as though you wanted to do it in your mind and heart."

A long, sober silence fell between this extraordinary challenge and the girl. Presently tears started to her eyes as the battle between weakness and strength went on within her.

"I'll do it," she said finally; "that is, if you'll come and stand by and prop me up if I start to fail."

There was indeed drama on our street corner that day, as God's strength was made manifest in one honest sinner's weakness. It came through all right, and she fought the good fight there and then. Out there on the street corner she took the first hard step that was to lead her out of darkness into light, out of defeat into victory.

Here was an example of a great sinner with an honest heart. What was the fundamental secret underlying her escape from the sordid habits of the underworld? Just faith. She did not have faith in God, however, or in God's power to deliver her. She had lost her faith in Him when she lost faith in her parents, who had pretended a righteousness they did not possess. Having pretended a faith they did not have they were divorced from it.

The penalty of pretense is that it destroys the capacity to receive the thing pretended, and this rule holds good in the affairs of the secular as well as the spiritual world. Pretending to have what we do not have is the surest way of not getting the thing we pretend.

Faith nevertheless was the secret of her liberation. I had faith in the power of God to release her, and she had faith in my faith. Because she had faith in my faith she accepted the challenge God offered her through me, and acted on that faith. This demonstration of courage opened her to redeeming power, saving grace

and a blessing impossible to her parents because of their self-deception and palpable hypocrisy.

There can be no self-deception to one whose mind is centered on God. For God knows our secret intentions! We can deceive others, and we can try to deceive ourselves, but we cannot deceive God. So the motive in the heart is the all-important thing.

HUMILITY

"Blessed are the meek," said Jesus, "for they shall inherit the earth." Meekness may be thought of as docility when we take into consideration the root meaning of the term—teachableness. A facet of meekness is openness to truth, ability to learn. There is no limit to the breadth a man's mind may attain so long as he hungers and thirsts after truth. Such humility requires courage for it implies the giving up of preconceived notions and following truth wherever it may lead. It asks God as simply and trustingly as a little child asks its parent, "What next?" and confidently takes the risks involved. At no point does it say, "I have attained."

The minds of the faithful ones are constantly open, stretched to take in new truths, and because they do they are ever possessing the earth. Those engaged in works of faith bear a continual testimony to the fact of an enlarged vision and understanding of circumstances as well as a fearlessness about those events and things not within their immediate vision. For them hopeless tangles disappear—that is, as long as they remain guidable. "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have

not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight" (Isaiah 42:16). Working in faith is for the most part a matter of waiting upon God's green light—and not moving against the red.

The ability to be taught and led is a primary step. Those who are beginners fail often to establish faith in an abstract God, or even in a personal Jesus. But they need not despair. They can invest what faith they have in some personality who has traveled along the way. In doing this they go halfway along the path that leads to the building of a real faith in God. When we can retire our self-will, God will lead us through one of His creatures.

Every person who counsels another about his conscience and his deeper problems is a "local deity" to that troubled one, no matter whether that person be a minister, a psychologist, or a practitioner of some new thought. To his followers the Negro minister, Father Divine, is a god. To his flock the priest is somewhat of a god. So is the psychologist to his neurotic patients. To wandering millions seeking faith and comfort their special preachers and teachers are gods to them. After writing a book which was calculated to rebuild the broken temple of faith in the people who read it, and release them to a more useful life, I found that I, too, had become something of an oracle to a seemingly endless line of people in the throes of trouble because of their puny faith.

If the person chosen as guide is really worthy of the name of "helper" he will transfer the faith placed in

him to the Highest One he knows. Then he will endeavor to gather up the broken remnants of the patient's faith and return them to him.

A young woman who walked into our life gave me an opportunity to do this. She was a music teacher, twenty-eight, good-looking, unmarried. Though intellectually brilliant, her emotions ruled her will. Outwardly she seemed disciplined. Inwardly she was uncontrolled. She was well-educated, accomplished in music and dramatic reading and an excellent book reviewer. Cultured and artistic, she had a good platform personality and so was much in demand. As a favored daughter of fortune she should have been happy, but was most unhappy.

Games of all kinds, including outdoor sports, repelled her. Society had no appeal for her, save when her professional talents were in request. She herself had grown up among the Methodists. At fifteen she had taught a Sunday-school class. At seventeen she had experienced conversion, which for a year gave her a sense of ecstatic happiness and a great hunger and thirst for knowledge of spiritual things.

The radiance of her conversion began to fade shortly after she entered college. The college curriculum gradually broke her religious faith up into wildly scattered bits, much like those of a jigsaw puzzle, and deposited them in her lap. When she had pieced them together again the old religious design was gone. The new design was vague, speculative; on many of the disjointed pieces she read only doubts and misgivings. Finally she cut the orthodox umbilicus, because as she put it,

"The church was insufferably dull; its worship crude, monotonous, lacking in artistry, and offering little to the inquiring mind." Religion, however, was in her blood, and the haunting memory of her church conversion lingered on. She began to try out the "little religions," but none of them could restore her faith and show her how to shake free of her misery. "All the meetings," she said, "were attended by hopeless-looking elderly people. Mostly women. No younger men at all."

This showed me she was interested in men, but they were not interested in her. And I knew why, though she did not. I tucked this clue away in my mind.

When she had finished unburdening herself I suggested to her that she was in bondage to a negative religious habit pattern from which she must break free. I advised her to start immediately by doing some of the things she loathed: since she loathed the church she had deserted she had better go back to it and become active in its work. She was to take up those functions that were particularly repugnant to her, singing in the choir, teaching a Bible class, and above all to love and pray for any who might be jealous of her. I urged her to increase her faith in her minister, to forgive his mistakes and to expect from him a prophet's message. She was to carry out this program for three months and then return for another interview.

She did not return but she remembered the date and telephoned me to relate her progress and to announce her engagement. She sought no more the "local dei-

ties." Her lost faith had returned and she knew the peace of a growing faith in God. Her shift in attitude had done the work.

The faithful dare to be docile, for they know themselves to be directed, pardoned, and sustained by a Supreme Power. They feel themselves to be on the right road, at the point where God would have them be—in true relation to both worlds.

SELF-SURRENDER

Self-surrender has always marked the vital turning point in religious living. It stands as the keystone in the five challenges of faith. Without it there could be neither integrity nor humility, and devotion and dedication are its natural companions. We always think of the term "surrender" as an act indicating the end of a battle. One opponent lays down his opposition to another, and complies with the will of his conqueror. As we develop from babyhood through childhood to adulthood, the *I* becomes quite a master and would, if given free rein, become the end of all our efforts and ambitions, dissipating what high spiritual vision we might have had. The ego must not become one of our "little gods," but always remain a means to the high end which is oneness with God.

"Our wills are ours to make them Thine," describes the process of this fundamental discipline. Such an exercise does not mean the limitation of psychic energy, but rather it means the releasing of our little wills into the divine will. In fact, self-surrender is a habitual at-

titude rather than a once-for-all act. Various levels of surrender may be discerned as one develops in spiritual insight.

We have gone really far in the surrendered life when the heart confirms what the intellect declares. Here one kind of discipline stops but another begins. Our first gains must be held while other gains are made. Through the persistent and conscious application of discipline we attain the threefold surrender of will, emotion and thought. With this capability comes responsibility, for Power is now released within us, Power which previously we knew not of; and this Power calls for a new kind of vigilance, demands new adaptations and adjustments of our total lives.

There is never any end. No stoppage of the forward thrust. We must go on, for salvation is never static. If it becomes so it dies. Salvation is alive, fluid, progressive, ever-flowing, now back, now forward, like the tides of the sea.

Water is one of the symbols used for the Spirit. The Spirit flows. It goes where it wills. If we have a high tide of the Spirit we may be certain there will also come a low tide; and it is in this low tide where a new kind of discipline and vigilance are demanded.

The high tide calls for no overcoming. But to adjust the low tide to the high tide demands is not so easy; temptations, both crude and subtle, are great. We may fall back into old habits of conduct and behavior.

The subtle temptation is to rest in the false security of salvation. This is fatal, because here we die, spiritually speaking. The demand is to overcome the low

tide of our aspiration and let the strength of God be made manifest in our weakness, His vitality in our exhaustion. Popularity may not support us here. We may be alone. And it is necessary to say the true thing, come what may, and not compromise by saying the false and popular thing in order to escape the pain instead of overcoming the obstacle by faith.

These low tides in our spiritual lives are the determining factors in the final outcome. Here we cannot be strong ourselves. But we can submit ourselves to God. And this submission brings the courage and strength to overcome. In the low tide of Jesus, and the anguished cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" came the courage, strength, and victory to say "Into thy hands I commit my spirit."

There are many surrenders. To stop at one is decay and death. The life of Paul was a process of surrender. "Remove the thorn," cried he. "My grace is sufficient," said God, for "My strength is made perfect in your weakness." Said the great apostle: "I surrender. I submit. From now on when the low tide is upon my spirit I shall be content to stand in faith, in trust of Thee." These are not his exact words, but they are his exact meaning.

Will, thought, feeling—these combine in the constitution of surrender. They are only attained through persistent discipline. They work together. They belong together, like Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If they fail to work together defeat is certain.

One night I had a headache. My will and intellect joined up to deny it. What they denied my feelings af-

firmed. One opposing element in the trinity defeated the other two. Though I denied, my headache remained. "Very well," said I, "this pain is energy. To me it is a burden. Christ is asking for it as it is, not as I want it to be. I shall deny it no longer. But I shall surrender it, submit to him who asks for it, to do with as he pleases. He can leave it with me or take it away. It makes no difference to me." I gave him this energy of pain. When thus surrendered I found the emotion translated into peace. Then I knew how true was His promise: "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

The universe is energy vibrating in different degrees. When a painful energy can be released, surrendered, submitted, it may then be employed in God's service. Thus passion is changed into compassion, pain into peace. Instead of further inconsistent denial I used admission and surrender. Will, thought, and feeling became one in peace, and the headache was no more.

The sudden total surrender to the will of God is no doubt possible. But if that puts an end to surrender it is vain. This kind of surrender, if genuine, will launch an endless chain of surrenders, new adjustments, constant adaptations to new demands, unending new submissions in the low tides. These slowly and gradually acclimatize us to the atmosphere and altitude of the Spirit, making the low tides of shorter duration and the high tides longer, until finally we can stand the universe and the clean thin air upon the Mount of Attainment where Peter stood when he called out: "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory,

by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

DEDICATION

Dedication means making a gift. Whereas surrender implied the giving up of self, the word of the next discipline suggests making a present of all one has to God. Paul's memorable words describe this manifestation of faith: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye *present* your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

Giving is an innate drive within us that manifests itself even in infancy—the baby presses his cracker to his mother's lips as an expression of his affection for her. The impulse to share what we have is a God-given blessing and is the one that makes us most like God. To stifle this true inclination and cling tenaciously to "me and mine" is a tragic perversion that has overtaken society.

Dedication to God then is in actuality a fuller development of personality—a higher giving. Dedication to the Divine Life means that God becomes the main point of our interest and our life is regulated by this high interest. The First thing is first.

All our secular affairs are secondary and are to be employed not for our own profit but for God's purposes and plans. All our talents are to be invested in His bus-

iness, as Jesus so invested his: "Wist ye not that I should be about my Father's business?"

Our talents, our professions, our occupations reach their highest fulfillment when they are dedicated to the plans of God. If the newspapers of the world, and magazines, if the stage and screen and radio, if the book-publishing houses of the world were so dedicated—these channels of communication alone would help to bring peace and abundance and good will to all the earth. As one Christian says, "Throw open and throw out your heart! Give to God and give to men!"

DEVOTION

Devotion is unbroken allegiance to the Greatest Cause and the Highest Ideal. What is that Greatest Cause and Highest Ideal? There is one place in human history where it broke through into the material plane and where it could be apprehended by the physical senses. That place was in Jesus Christ. The supreme cause he showed to be union with God, union manifested as character in man. He presented the supreme ideal as conduct, and this conduct was manifested as self-giving in man.

Loyalty to a goal such as this gives meaning to the whole business of living—and through it the whole tone of life is keyed to a high and lovely pitch. Truth, beauty and goodness find their way into every relationship, and the relationship of the parts to the whole is made plain. Look around you at the meaninglessness in the affairs of the average man and woman who make up a large proportion of our society. It frequently hap-

pens that they do not have too much faith in what they are doing—their hearts are not in anything. As one woman put it, "I go to church, I hear a sermon and meet groups of people, but it is all very much like my club and doesn't mean very much. Yet there are times when I feel it ought to mean something." We need today a great and burning faith in a great and holy cause that will give meaning to all that we do.

It has always happened that when a few choice souls fixed their eyes and hearts upon the High Goal of God, and kept them there with stubborn courage come what may, they lifted not only themselves but the human family itself nearer that goal.

God does not withhold from men revelation of his glorious kingdom. The revelation, however, does not save them until they are faithful to that which has been shown to them. Partial allegiance, as I have said already many times, means futility and dreariness. Nothing but thoroughness in our devotion will establish us in faith. Jesus said that his yoke was easy, and it most certainly is when we wear it properly; but when we half carry and half drag it, it does not fulfill its purpose and we wear ourselves out. If we have reservations about any of the commandments we shall never arrive in the Promised Land and reap the fruits of the spirit. He says go the whole length with me and you shall live, but casual, shallow obedience will close the door to life. Our relationship to the divine things is the most important one in our lives. Jesus is our example in the meaning of allegiance.

During his incarnation he was established in faith.

In his faith he was surrendered, dedicated, devoted to the Father. When we have faith in his faith; when we, too, are surrendered, dedicated, and devoted to him and his character and conduct, ours, too, is the victory. Not by self-getting but by self-giving then; not by self-seeking but by self-surrendering—this was the kind of life he showed us. It has been written down for us, preserved and bound for all time in the sheepskin and printer's ink of the world.

God is no longer an abstraction, a vague object for speculation. He is with us here in the concrete, a life, a personality; not a theory but a fact, not a hazy concept but an inescapable conclusion, not a controversial creed but an incontestable deed. His life is the blueprint for our lives, the focal point for our own faith.

Says He: "Your highest goal is union through integrity to His commandments. Your finest ideal is self-giving behavior."

Part Two

SETTLED IN THE PROMISES OF FAITH

Chapter IV

For Daily Needs

FAITH SUPPLIES AN INVINCIBLE HYPOTHESIS AROUND which our lesser faculties—senses, mind, will, emotions—may be integrated so that they can co-operate creatively in the environment in which we find ourselves. Faith links the invisible power of the Creator with his creation and sets divine energy to work in the mundane order. The man of faith experiences, then, the unique operation of God in all of his affairs day by day. He is conscious of the eternal good will that God has toward him and realizes its fruits in forgiveness, health, strength, provision for all his needs, whether they be physical, psychological, or spiritual. All this and more, so that he understands clearly the words of Jesus when he said, "Take no thought for the morrow." Only a

beneficent God can transform the guilty, sick, weak and hungry into the glorious, happy beings that he destined them to be.

The unalterable truth is that God's world is perfection itself from beginning to end, from everlasting to everlasting. It is sinless, sickless, deathless; there are no imperfections in it. The limitations, negativity, fears that impede the daily lives of countless men and women are but delusions of the senses. He who would approach the Ultimate Truth of God and His world must set aside the lesser observations, little logics and reason and move forward through faith, for only so can perfection be apprehended. The extent of God's promises to the faithful cannot be fully explored in this small book, but in this chapter we will list those that pertain to our daily well-being if we are truly to function as instruments of God's love.

GOD WILL FORGIVE YOU

"Be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven thee." Two things stand side by side in this promise: forgiveness and good cheer. The cheer here referred to is genuine and can be experienced only by those whose sins have been forgiven—who are no longer enthralled by the past.

The linking together of peace of mind and forgiveness has been the perennial work of religion and is now becoming the aim of psychiatry. Both declare that the root of our manifest troubles, both in society and as individuals, lies in the festering splinter of sin buried deep in the unconscious. Guilt feelings arising from

unfulfilled obligations or transgressions of the highest code we know account for the misery, hopelessness and the hundred other forms of unsocial, neurotic behavior of individuals. To bring to light this cause of negative living and transmute anxiety into good cheer through confidence in the redeeming power of an inextinguishable and eternal love constitutes the complete work of forgiveness.

I once assisted a scientific psychologist with a patient suffering from psychoneuroticism. The girl, a college student, was in a bad way, with her whole future at stake. In a tender, skillful manner the doctor probed for the cause. He traced it back to a point in her childhood, exposed it to her, and we both gave her a few positive suggestions as to how to deal with herself. She responded to these immediately, and went forth to act upon them. She recovered and became a normal, balanced personality, a girl of good cheer whose causal sin had been cast out, forgiven. Abnormality in her had given place to normality.

The psychologist does what many a minister is too squeamish to do. As one minister said, "My Savior does not give me authority to forgive sins. It would be sacrilegious for me to attempt." Nevertheless, Jesus said to his disciples, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."

Maladjusted, unhappy persons are more apt in these days to turn to psychiatry for peace of mind than to seek forgiveness for sin through the church and its minister. The church, however, should be the mental and nervous clinic, where sin is cast out and healthy

suggestions are put in. It is evident that in many respects it has failed to fulfill this function. Particularly is this true of the Protestant Church that has set aside the confessional and developed a ministry that refuses to take responsibility for the whole well-being of their membership.

This failure of the Christian ministry to practice sin surgery has not only called into existence two great sciences—psychiatry and psychology—but also a thousand religious cults that are direct offshoots of the Christian religion. Many of them are fake enterprises that prey upon the need and credulity of suffering, befuddled people. Many of them are highly efficient and helpful toward casting out sin and restoring health. Based upon the Divine Promises that sin can be cast out by faith they do get results, as well as a rapidly growing membership.

But wherever the seeker goes for help, be it church, psychiatrist or cult, the exercise of personal faith is what insures his escape from the past. He is called upon to accept the promise of purity: "Come now, and let us reason together . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). For something that is blood-red and deadly, there is offered something else that is pure white and redolent of life abundant. The very Author of Life will *give* Himself to satisfy the unfulfilled obligations of our life. Forgiveness means giving for. As a great sinner I write what I truly know.

Three principles are set down to guide us to a full realization of the "good cheer" that accompanies for-

givenness of sin. First comes forgiveness of others. "Forgive and ye shall be forgiven," said Jesus. He might have said, Exercise redeeming love if you are to experience the redeeming love of God. We cannot get away from the fact that there is a common bond uniting us to one another and that no man sins alone, nor is he forgiven and set on the path upward alone.

Forgiveness is a regenerative force that not only works within us for our own purification but through us for the purification of the human family. One facet of love is that it is dynamic good will or energy for good that assumes an obligation for another. When one forgives his neighbor he automatically releases a creative force into the world, the fruits of which cannot be estimated. Personal forgiveness then is tied up with human relationships.

This means that all resentment for our neighbors must go. Although it is well and good to offer daily a sort of amnesty for all who might cause us unhappiness, yet the forgiveness that Jesus was speaking of got down to specific cases.

If anyone trespasses against us, and repents, we are to forgive him. If he does it over and over again and repents as many times we are to forgive him as many times. But if he trespasses against us and does not repent we are to rebuke him, and then drop the matter into God's lap, leaving it there and forgetting it, lest we be seared and poisoned by entertaining its memory.

Second, we are also to forgive ourselves too, just as we forgive our neighbor. This is often more difficult, because of our ingrained habit of sitting in smug self-

judgment, and fatuous self-condemnation. "Judge not that ye be not judged" is the rule here, even as regards yourself. Sitting in self-judgment fastens the sin and its result upon us. Living in a sullen, brooding state of self-condemnation is to live an exile to faith and divine love. It does not remove the sin, but feeds it with the emotional poison it loves.

Instead of taking past sins into our own hands, God wants us to surrender them into His hands. Then if we have any faith in Him at all, in His love and promise and ability, the sins will vanish, and in their place will spring up a garden of blessing for the edification and redemption of ourselves and others.

A "Christian" woman of an unwholesome disposition once said to me: "You must suffer terribly because of your sinful past as a criminal."

The truth of the matter is I don't suffer at all because of my past sins. To do so takes too much time and energy; what of these remains to me I would expend where it is needed. Hence I have forgiven myself and I'm therefore forgiven. That is, for my past sins I have exchanged a life that is now dedicated to works of faith and love. This much I can in loving duty do, and I trust in God who has done and does the rest. I could not show faith in Him if I refused to surrender my past to Him. And if I sit around brooding in self-condemnation over a past which has been forsaken and which I cannot change now, then God can give me no power in the present to help myself and others.

He tells me to put my hands to the plow and not look back; to go resolutely forward, and this one thing

I do, forgetting the past. How many, with an unsurpassed past, brooding over some one particular sin of long ago, have had their progress arrested, lived uncreatively and suffered vainly in the present because they have not accepted God's forgiveness, being unwilling even to forgive themselves?

Be assured there is absolutely no virtue in being bogged down in the sins of yesterday. A sure knowledge of God's reality and a sure faith in His atoning love and promises will give release from all sin and bring victory and abundant life to all comers. Forgiven by God you forgive yourself and then go on to forgive others.

"I want to go to church and associate myself with Christian people," said a young woman. "But when I was eighteen I sinned. I've lived in misery and shame ever since. I feel unclean, especially when I'm in church, or with Christian people." Failing to surrender her sin, she had nursed it along on the sour milk of guilt and shame until she had become totally sin-conscious. She needed to realize that sinners, too, contribute to Christ's on-sweeping cause.

I replied to her: "The good people and the saints did not give us the Son of the Living God. He came just because of sinners. We owe his coming to earth to them—not to the saints; for he came not to call the righteous but the sinners to repentance."

By giving your own sin so much importance you blind yourself to the sins of other Christians as well. Sinners are responsible for Christ, the Founder of Christianity. And were it not for him we should not

have the beautiful and potent Gospel of Love and Forgiveness through *Grace*.

"Do you believe that he has power to forgive this sin of yours, as he forgave Mary Magdalen?" I asked this unhappy woman.

"Yes," she said, "but he hasn't done so."

"Why?" I asked.

"I don't know."

"It's just because you can't give the sin to him and hold on to it at the same time," I told her. "How can he forgive it if you refuse to give it? He can give you himself for it, providing you're willing. But so long as you want the morbid memory of the sin more than you want him he must remain standing and knocking outside the door of your heart. Are you willing to give him this past memory for his present abiding?"

"Why, yes," she replied.

"Then put away self-judgment, self-condemnation, self-resentment, shame, guilt, remorse. Give the sin, and all these reactions to him, and for them he will give himself to you. That is God's promise. Be settled in its truth. Repent, turn away from the past. 'And turn again that your sins may be blotted out.' Did not Jesus say, 'Neither do I condemn you'?"

"Yes, he did."

"Then why do you assume an authority he would not assume? Are you better than he?"

"Of course not."

"Then why do you condemn yourself? Why do you continue to do what he refuses to do? 'Go thy way and sin no more,' he says. Or as Paul put it: 'Forgetting the

things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Give it all to him. Trust his love and power and grace. Go on to church. Fraternize freely and fearlessly with Christian people as you say you want to do."

The third instruction is: having found our past sins, having surrendered them unequivocally to God, then we must set about forming new patterns of thought.

Make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel. For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth . . . wherefore turn yourselves, and live. . . . (Ezek. 18:31 ff.)

Behold, I make all things new. . . . (Rev. 21:5)

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned and whereby they have transgressed against me. (Jer. 33:8)

The human race has lived in the consciousness of sin for so long that it has been passed down from generation to generation as a fixed habit of thinking, a thoroughly conditioned complex of the most pernicious kind. It is no wonder that the individual is sin-possessed. All of his ancestors have engaged in the illusory pastime. They have willed evil, thought evil, felt evil, heard evil, and have seen evil in everybody and in everything; always have they been looking through a glass darkly.

But when we turn away from this race pattern all

things become new as they are in reality, in very truth. We are then possessed by the divine Truth and Promises, and seeing through a glass *clearly*—seeing things from God's point of view as they are and ought to be. We not only see but we BEHOLD. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

We are promised good cheer and emancipation. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee." Can you possibly conceive what such an awakening and illuminating is like? Have you ever awakened from a horrible nightmare to find in the waking state that it was all a grim illusion, a grotesque dream? Well, such an awakening is something like this.

You stand in the light of Christ's shining, and in that radiance all the sins and mistakes and blunders of the past vanish like shadow shapes before the rising sun. All these hounding, hideous penalties fade away, and you become a citizen of a new world beyond a great gulf fixed—a new world that is to be for all men when they have awakened—a world of love and peace and joy and creativeness.

And in amazement then you wonder that you could ever have been blinded by reflections and deceived by appearances, now that you are settled in the realm where God's promises are the commonplace order of existence.

Therefore, "be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

"All things work together for good to them that love

God." Said a cynic to me one day: "That is the weakest of all theories." It was a theory he had never tried. For had he really tried it he would have said: "*That is the strongest of all facts.*"

I have never known a man to question the promises of God who had ever tried to live by them. I mean really tried. These promises are the most substantial things in the universe. So substantial that they never fail him who has sufficient faith.

When our affections are centered in God even our mistakes are turned into blessings, our tears into graces, our sins into flowers white as virgin snow. All the accumulated errors of our past are gathered up for illustrations, and out of them God weaves parables and testimonies and witnesses.

GOD WILL HEAL YOU

"Behold, I will heal you." Personal experience induces me to treat this promise with positive conviction and unhesitating vigor. But observation induces me to proceed with caution and reserve. The promise is true, but seemingly there are many bewildering contradictions and exceptions in connection with it. Some of my closest friends in religious work, men and women of undoubted spiritual dedication, devotion and surrender, are severely afflicted. Their understanding of and faith in God cannot be questioned. And yet they have not been healed of their illnesses. The three most saintly women of my acquaintance are all physical invalids.

I am also aware that sinners, on the other hand, violate with apparent impunity all the laws of hygiene and health, and live to a ripe old age without suffering the torments of sickness and accident. The answer to this riddle must somehow be identified with the Scripture: "According to your faith be it done unto you." But even in this statement there is a vast mystery which is not seen at first glance.

What does the passage really mean? This much I know: my afflicted friends and associates have small concern about themselves and their physical bodies. It may be that in this area of their lives they exercise an indifferent faith, and that it is done unto them accordingly. As an ancient teacher says, "God supplies the need, or takes away the need, so no supply is in order."

In my previous book, *Release*, I described my own healing. But I wish to add here that it was not a simple matter to bring myself into this specialized expression of faith—to focus my interest on the personal physical plane after it had become so thoroughly established on the impersonal spiritual plane.

But energy follows attention, and I felt that if I were to be healed I would have to gain an intelligent self-interest, and thus bring the energy of faith to bear upon my physical body. I did this and was healed.

Whether others do likewise I have no way of knowing. Why Christian Kagawa is so frightfully afflicted, for instance, is a question I cannot answer. I can only speculate. It may be that he lacks interest in his physical body, and that the energy of his faith is centered elsewhere. Why, too, Evelyn Hamilton, the saintly

woman of Seattle, is so bound and tormented in her body I am unable to say. But I do know that her main interest is humanity and God, and that her faith energy is constantly flowing in another direction.

Nevertheless, the promise, "Behold, I will heal thee," stands, and is proved in the bodies of countless people. Jesus healed everybody. Yet it was according to their faith. And in his home town, where they had no faith in him, he could perform no miracles.

Sometimes it is easy, where spiritual issues are involved, to argue oneself out of one's good. I did think it strange that so many God-centered people had to suffer sickness, accident, and misfortune, while so many outright sinners seemed to be immune from these evils. I did point out Paul's unrelieved affliction. But "the lifer," my wise old friend in prison, demanded, "What's that to you?" Frankly it was an excuse to me. It sort of justified me in doing nothing about my own affliction. I knew I ought to make a spiritual effort toward recovering my health. And I had a feeling that I would not be happy until I had made that effort, exhausting its possibilities for me, according to my faith.

Through not making the effort in my own behalf, the sense of failure would linger in my consciousness, like an illegitimate thorn, and in time, to escape the misery of this, I would be in danger of assuming a false attitude of martyrdom, even to the extent of being persuaded that I was a chosen vessel, like Paul, fated to carry a burden of the flesh. However, my old prison companion still insisted that I should not argue myself out of my own possible good. Said he:

"Regardless of whether a man is a saint or no, if he is sick, he can be healed if he has sufficient faith. Else the promise of God is not true. 'Behold, I make all things new.' 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' 'As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.' 'Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.'"

"You must remember that Jesus had perfect physical health right up to the finish of His preordained destiny."

My health was restored, I verily believe, through focusing my faith in that area of need. And I am persuaded that it would not have been restored had I remained indifferent to the need.

In a thousand ways, perhaps, healing is promised in the Word of God. It is definitely a privilege, a grace, a blessing, to seek health to the glory of God and to become established in this particular area of faith, settled in this particular Divine Promise. For even if the healing is not effected the effort will not be in vain.

A first step is to set aside negative thinking. We know that there is a great deal of ill health directly traceable to negative habits of thought. So the first commandment in the art of spiritual healing would seem to be: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

It is not the flash fears and negative thoughts which do the damage in the lives of thin-skinned, sensitive people. But the worry and anxiety thoughts that evoke and fuse with worry and anxiety emotions—these, in their cumulative effects over a long period, reflect themselves in the physical organism as—*disease*.

Fear emotions cause little damage if they are supplanted by faith. When faith displaces it fear is transformed into a feeling of power and joy. But if the fear emotion is permitted to linger the delicate nerves and tissues of the body become inflamed, as it were, and infection is possible, especially in the brain.

Fear, like sin, can contribute to one's best interest, if because of it one turns to faith. Fear is a negative energy and has a legitimate, life-saving function, providing it does not outlive its purpose at the moment. If fear lives on after the need for it has passed, then it will feed upon the life it is designed to preserve, and will destroy what it is fashioned to protect. When the negative energy of fear is overcome by the positive power of faith it rebuilds and renews life and balance in the physical organism.

Over against the power of God to build is the force of the devil to wreck. If because of fear we have brought disease to the body, we can then do either of two things: we can make disease a topic of perpetual conversation, and thus testify and witness to the devil, or we can make it an inspiration to faith, and thus testify and witness to God. In this latter case we should show good faith in our faith by trying to relieve others of disease, even though we cannot relieve ourselves of it.

The mind is like a river of flowing consciousness. A stream of water that flows tends to purify itself as it runs. But if water accumulates behind an obstruction it tends to gather a green scum, to become stale and stagnant, and finally to form a pool of infection. So it is

with the stream of consciousness which carries the infection of negative thoughts. If allowed to flow on their way they pass away. But if they are stopped, held, and brooded upon, they gather to them a reservoir of similar thoughts which become stale and stagnant, like a pool of contamination, and in time the body is poisoned by the mind.

In this regard the clear-sighted prophet, Isaiah, offered some sound advice: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts" (Isa. 55:7). Unrighteous thinking is unright-thinking, or wrong-thinking. It evokes wicked emotions, and wicked emotions are destructive to the brain and body and nervous system.

The second rule is the cultivation of right thinking, which leads to joyous, health-producing emotions. Whatever we are dedicated to has a tendency to reproduce its likeness in our flesh. Since God is not the author of sickness, we who would be well should not be devoted to sick thoughts. Even though we have not the kind of faith that will settle us in the Divine Promise of physical healing, we do not have to surrender our minds to the negative conditions in our flesh. We can still live mentally in the realm of God, and have dominion over the physical condition. The child of God has dominion over the flesh because God has dominion over him! Spiritual thinking and feeling lead inevitably to refinement and life: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him" (Eccles. 3:14).

According to this, eternal life is established here by thinking eternal thoughts and expressing eternal emotions. The temple of immortality is built thought by thought and feeling by feeling, and is not made by hands, defeated by accident, sickness, or death. All other thoughts and feelings perish. They are the stuff of which extinction is made.

The only reasonable assurance of eternal life is the fixed habit of eternal willing, thinking, and feeling that we possess now. It may be assumed, therefore, that every right thought and feeling is a treasure laid up in the temple of eternal life, and every wrong thought and feeling is an infection laid up in the corpse of eternal death; and that the way to slow up the funeral march of death is to begin the thinking and feeling march toward eternal life.

There is a flesh mind that is in subjection to flesh conditions. And there is a spiritual mind which has the victory over flesh conditions. The flesh mind can know little of Reality, for its testimony is of the five physical senses, which are untrustworthy and unreliable as we all know. Paul refers to these two minds thus:

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

We can be healed in our flesh, according to our faith, our settled state in this particular promise. But we can also please God though we are not healed. If we are to be healed and express life instead of death even in our bodies, it is apparently necessary to culti-

vate the mind of Christ, which attainment is possible to us because it is promised. Once we are settled in this promise we can have that kind of mental and spiritual health, at least, which declares with the apostle:

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is the essential thing. And healing or lack of healing in the physical parts is incidental to it. If our healing separates us from the love of God it will turn to penalty. If lack of healing turns us to the love of God it will turn to profit.

It is possible to receive a spiritual healing that ends in a curse, and will do so if that health is turned back into the old channels of negative-thinking and feeling, which cannot tend to the glorification of the God who healed us.

But the promise of healing *is* for us. To accept this truth on faith is to grow into it. To know this truth is to be released from all bondage by overcoming its power to hurt, its handicap to halt, even though there still appears a thorn in the flesh to the outside observer.

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Not knowing the truth we impose limitations; knowing the truth we banish them.

We must cling steadfastly to this truth that all heal-

ing power is from God, that He is able, that He cares, and that our job is to surrender our own anxiety and sense of responsibility to Him, and then in faith rely upon His wisdom, ability and will. "Behold, I will heal thee." That is the promise.

Third, prayer is a means to health. Prayer is one of the top-ranking faith avenues through which God heals, for it is the language that connects us with Him, and by which we return to Him after we have strayed. "If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up."

We know that God cares and that He is able. For this we have many testimonials, including this one of His own, for instance, to Jeremiah: "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me? I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee." Or this testimony from David: "Who healeth all thy diseases . . . so that thy youth is renewed."

I firmly believe that we should make the occasion of our affliction an opportunity for specific petition, for the exercise of faith in this particular area of our personal need, but that our attitude should be a submission to God's will in the matter and that our healing should be sought as a glorification of Him as a demonstrated testimony of His love and grace and power before men.

This high attitude would be a safeguard against selfishness, and would make our healing total to the whole of life, rather than confining it just to the physical part healed.

FEAR NOT, I WILL HELP THEE

"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee" (Ps. 50:15). And the promise goes on to state: "And thou shalt glorify me." When we call upon God in faith He responds to our call. But He does so with a purpose of His own. The help He gives us is not only for us but also for the purpose of helping others through us. In the eyes of others we glorify Him when we receive the help He gives us by making of that help an active testimony in service and a silent witness in faith.

Pride and the fallacy of self-dependence may prevent us from calling upon God in the hour of trouble, even when no other source of help is available. Thus He is denied the privilege of helping us and others through this testimony and witness. When we refuse to call upon Him in the hour of trouble we are saying in effect: "You shall not help the world through me. I shall not permit You to take advantage of me in this way to glorify Yourself in the eyes of men. I have my pride and my independence, and I shall not be used by You for the good of myself and other people."

Many a one has said: "Yes, I'm in a terrible jam. But I got myself into it, and I'll get myself out of it, or not at all. God had nothing to do with getting me into trouble. And I'm certainly not going to pray to Him to help me out after ignoring Him all these years."

Only pride and the illusion of self-dependence could prompt such an attitude. His trouble was God's chance at long last; but because of self-conceit and egotism

God was to be denied this long-awaited chance. God's opportunity to help Him and others, and to glorify Himself, was sacrificed on the altar of a fake pride and a sham dependence.

"Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity" (Jer. 29:12-14).

When we are in captivity to an evil condition it is the divine will that we make our difficulty His opportunity. And we do this when we call upon Him in the day of trouble in deep faith and in humble prayer. By these means on our part He can reverse the poles of captivity and make us His captive.

Captivity to God is liberation from evil for us. The help He renders does not stop at our own doorstep. Essentially we are helped that He might help the world through us. Our little self-purpose in seeking and finding Him paves the way for His big purpose to pass on through us, as a redemptive influence, to the neighborhood and world round us.

I am persuaded that one of the surest ways of enlisting God's help is to allow Him to help others through us. One of the quickest ways to bring His aid in time of personal need is to abandon need, for the time being, and devote that time to trying to make others happy. Somehow helping others creates in us a condition to be helped when need arises. It is like

emptying a vessel of what it has in order to refill it with something fresher and better. Having emptied ourselves of what we already have, in the service of others, we are refilled with a fresh supply of better value.

If thus we make God our Cosmic Helper in time of trouble He will make us His helper on a glorious scale in the hive of the world. But pride and self-dependence must not get in the way, and cause us to declare, as one minister declared: "I cannot make God my errand boy."

The answer to that is: "If you don't make Him your Errand Boy you will deny Him the right to work redemptively through you. For only as you allow Him to help you, will His help reach out to those immediately round you and to the world. The greatest among you is the servant of all. If God is not your Cosmic Errand Boy you will not be an errand boy for Him. That is fairly certain."

If you have been as strength to those of little faith, the needy and distressed; if you have been a refuge to those tossed about by the storms of inner conflict and outer confusion; if you have been a shade to those caught up in the fires of passion and defeat, then that was not you, but God making use of you to fulfill His own noble designs and redemptive purposes.

And through you He will continue to "Deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper" (Ps. 72:12). Through you "He will have pity on the poor and needy, and the souls of the needy

he will save." Through you "He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence . . . and they shall live."

In a word, through you will He exercise His redemptive influence in the world. Moreover, says He: "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places" (Isa. 45:2, ff.).

I know a man who, although he now moves redemptively through the gloomy avenues of the underworld, turned to God after living forty years as a criminal. God delivered him, increased his greatness and made him a fisher of men. His was no half-hearted, hesitant turning. A flabby faith and divided expectancy only crack the door of the heart, letting but a little part of Him come in. He can draw nigh unto us only as we are willing to draw nigh unto Him. He asks of us a simple, childlike faith, "Then shall thou call and the Lord shall answer; thou shall cry and he shall say: Here I am." Here I am, I have been here all the time. His love and truth and guidance and help have never been withdrawn for a single moment. It is only the call of faith that opens the door to receive it. Of course, the call must be made with an honest, sincere trust from the deepest regions of the heart.

The sincerity of our prayer for help is often dissipated by the crowding in of insignificant concerns and conversation. In my close, intimate meetings I often come to the end with this counsel:

"Let us now apply the discipline of secrecy and silence, the most difficult thing in the world. Let us go to our respective homes and to bed without speaking an unnecessary word to anyone, lest the help we have received here be dissipated in five minutes of gossip and personality talk."

A minister may deliver a profound and moving sermon under the inspiration of God, and it can all be made vain by the clack and clatter round the door five minutes after the final "Amen" has been uttered.

One of the disciplines connected with a church service should be that of harmless or constructive speech, imposed for at least the rest of that day. The Spirit of God Himself is rendered vain in personality talk. It is but a trifle less obnoxious to God than outright profanity itself. People who would not think of taking God's name in vain by cursing, strangely have no qualms in making His help vain by discussing the inconsequential affairs of others.

"Not until you can talk about the real person within the personality," said a wise man to his student, "can you ever hope to have a sustained favor with the Abiding Presence."

"All things work together for good to them that love God." Not just a partial good. A total good. Those who love God have faith in His love, and an unbroken hope in His willingness to help.

Faith, hope, love—all you need for your total good!

GOD WILL GIVE YOU PROTECTION

Have faith and "thou shalt walk in the way safely." "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27). Heaven knows that in our day there is need for protection. And the only protection that is adequate in the present time, or in any age for that matter, is from Heaven. It alone is impregnable. From all parts of the world we are deluged with news concerning hunger, disease, strife and bloodshed. Ruthlessness characterizes much in our economic, political and social life. Each decade finds civilization threatened with more scientific and extensive means of annihilation. In spite of the staggering number of billions of dollars that our government and other governments are spending for military protection and aggression, no one—except the spiritually minded—is at ease. Here it is that our faith in *things* has betrayed us. Protection extends only to the level of power in the thing trusted. When that *thing* is exhausted, destroyed or lost, we too are exhausted, destroyed or lost. We have in this matter as in so many others lost sight of God; we have smothered all thought of Him in our preoccupation with things.

Yet it has been true throughout the centuries that those who, having risked themselves and all they possess to God's providence, are able to stand unafraid before the powers of this world. These are the persons who have been continually saving humanity when it seems on the brink of destruction. Jesus before Pilate; Paul unarmed as he traveled the roads of Asia Minor

among hostile Greeks, Romans and fellow Jews. The glorious freedom of the man whose protection lies in the promises of God has been no more perfectly described than by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed . . . for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:8, 9, 17, 18). And then he says to the Romans: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35 ff.).

We well know that the most invulnerable military protection that the human mind can devise does not establish a nation in serenity, because such fortification does not touch the real foes that destroy us, both as individuals and as nations. It cannot insure us against illness, death, violence, poverty; it is no safeguard against fear, avarice, hate, pride in our own hearts or the hearts of those about us. The world offers

no insurance against the fruits of ignorance, bigotry, self-centeredness, spiritual indifference. At the very outset of his training of the disciples Jesus gave them a vision of these deadliest and toughest adversaries and at the same time gave them the disciplines by which they might conquer them. We will explore a few of these enemies and the weapons to use against them.

A lack of love. This is the first enemy, for it is a lack of God. "God is love." "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself," is the first discipline.

Deficiency here is deficiency everywhere. We need to be protected against and delivered from this lack, so that we may "Walk in love," so that we may "Let all that we do be done in love," for, "Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins."

We are deficient in love, O God. Protect us against this curse. Deliver us from this enemy. Or, as my wise old friend, "the lifer," recommended: "When dealing with difficult persons, put love in your eye and make them see it." You know you can do it—with the help of God's grace. And the miracles that flow from doing it.

A lack of faith. This is enemy number two. "Ye of little faith." To lack faith is to weaken or cut the lifeline to God. It is like severing the jugular vein in the neck, which bleeds the body white and leaves it stiff and cold and lifeless. Faith to the spiritual body is what the jugular vein is to the physical body. If we cut the vein of faith we separate ourselves from the source

of life. "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." "Have faith in God." And we can, for it is promised. Protect us, O God, against this temptation of "little faith." Deliver us from this enemy, too.

The emotion of fear. This is a universal enemy of the full life. It is the antithesis of faith. "Fear not; for I am with thee." "I will not fail thee."

Out of fear come the three dark-robed sisters of worry, anxiety, vexation, which turn life into living death, destroy personality and character, and defeat God's plans and purposes.

Protect us, O God, against this temptation. Deliver us from this terrible enemy—fear.

The emotion of hate. Hatred is a world-wide plague. It is the antithesis of love. It is death to the spiritual man and destruction to the physical man.

"He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now." "Hatred stirreth up strifes." "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."

Out of hatred come the three dark-robed brothers of anger, resentment, and vengeance, the pallbearers of the dead. These are the worshipers of death, the instigators and agitators of death. Death is their chief pastime and sole affection. "All they that hate me love death."

Protect us, O God, from this temptation to hate thee and our brother man. Deliver us from the enemy of wrath and the evil of malice.

Unredeemed guilt. This emotion comes to us as an angel in disguise. It is the evidence that we are living contrary to the way we were made to live.

It becomes an enemy when we refuse to do anything about it, except to live with it, to nurse it and coddle it, until finally we look upon it as a spiritual virtue in perpetuity, and think that because of our guilty suffering we are especially marked as a child of God. Nothing is farther from the truth. It leads to a dark brood of evils, shame, grief, morbid introspection. It is the antithesis of joy. "Be of good cheer." "Let not your heart be troubled." "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy." "Arise, shine!"

Protect us, O God, from the temptation of unsur-rendered guilt. Deliver us from this self-deceiving enemy of the complete man.

Negative attitudes. This is the habitual vice of narrow-mindedness. It never sees beyond what people are in appearance. It sees failure but not favor. It sees poverty but not possibility. It lives in, for, and by its own prejudices. Its eyes stop at the blemish, the fault, the weakness. It knows imperfection too well to conceive the likelihood of perfection.

"God created man in his own image." "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright." Man is imperfect. But this is not the total man. He has possibility. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The seed of perfection is in a man. There is nothing more powerful than a seed. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the

children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

The negative attitude sees only the children of the devil, and never anticipates the children of God. Always the worst is made to appear the best.

Protect us, O God, from this partial sight, and from judgment by appearance only. Deliver us from the evil of narrow-minded prejudice.

Unsublimated sensuality. This enemy of the total man keeps the center of attention in the physical areas of generation, and thus blocks off the super-physical areas of regeneration.

A practical procedure by which these negative forces may be transmuted into allies is to make use of the promises that specifically counteract them. It is good to collect such promises, memorize them and use them over and over again. For instance, if one is fearful and anxious by nature, he can help himself out of this negative trait by ingraining into his consciousness the passages of the Bible that reveal the protecting power of God. They serve as a sort of hand rail that he can grip when he feels himself falling down. Love grows, too, as we meditate on those passages that reveal the unstinted greatness of God's love for every living creature. These precious words underline our desires and help to bring them into realization. They stand by us in times of trouble and peril.

Protection from physical danger for oneself and others. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh

thee." "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Protection from emotional distress. "Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth." "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell securely, and shall be quiet without fear of evil." "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Protection from the fear of death. "He restoreth my soul." "For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." "Upon them that wait for his mercy to deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine."

Another technique that will help us to lay hold of these promises is to "let go" and accept God's love-way of forgiveness and redemption. Each moment holds the offer of a new start and a new order in our lives.

Said a broken woman: "Is there nothing man can do to help me? If not, then I'm done for. How can I ask God to help me when all my life I've lived selfishly apart from Him in a selfish, sinful world?"

"Maybe it was the quickest way to bring you to Him," I answered. "So make a clean break with the past now, and later on you can say, 'God's kingdom came to me through defeat and pain and frustration.' You do know that He could have prevented the kind

of life you've lived. Therefore, don't blame yourself too much. Regard your crisis as your consolation also."

Which it can readily be—and was.

I have found another tendency on the part of many to put off the promises of God to a period in time which lies beyond the grave.

Why? For there is no logical reason to believe that the flower of faith will spring into full bloom with the call of death. If we lack faith to accept the promises now we can have no assurance of having that faith after we die. Yet this tendency is rather widespread among religious people. There is a continuity of faith, which the incident of death is not likely to break. If we fail to become established in a sufficient faith in this life, to become settled in the promises of God here, how can we be sure that death will confer these blessings?

There is promise of God's protection now. It resides in the consciousness we now have. We cannot take our material possessions with us, but, if we can take anything, it will surely be our consciousness. So if we need protection from vexation and distress now we are likely to need the same protection then. It comes back to: now is the appointed time to appropriate the promise of God's protection.

The answer, then, to the question, "How can I recover my faith and abide once more in the promises?" lies in our getting back to the commandments, which are the works of faith, and begin to live again in those actions which are after the similarity of faith.

Even as we do the works of faith we can cultivate

regular habits of being silent before God, listening to His voice and resolving to learn of Him and always obey.

In our prayer and quiet times we can practice the many needed relaxations and thus release the tensions that accumulate amidst the strains and stresses of the everyday life. The mind often should be relaxed, the emotions quieted, the body stilled. For it is in the relaxed state that the total man is restored.

We can begin to apply the disciplines of faith in many other ways, and thus step by step the faith we have lost will be returned to us, and the promises of God will begin once more to manifest in our lives.

In the meantime we all need this protection promise, and we can have it now, if we'll only *let go* of ourselves and *let come* the promised protection.

"Lo, I am with you alway."

Chapter V

Growing in Grace

AMONG THE PROMISES TO THE FAITHFUL MAN NONE are more sustaining than those made to the devoted seeker in the spiritual life. To him who walks on in the way ever wider vistas of God's abounding graciousness to the human family are made evident. He withholds no good thing from them. When our affections are centered in God even our mistakes are turned into blessings, our tears into graces, our sins into flowers white as virgin snow. All the accumulated errors of our past are gathered up for illustrations, and out of them God weaves parables and testimonies and witnessses. As all experience is grist for the mill of a story writer, so is all our experience grist for the mill of the Supreme Author when our love is fixed on Him. We are the plot for His story. He takes all our laughter and our tears, our successes and failures, and shows the world a dramatic story in life.

For those who love God all things work together to take them into the Promised Land. His prophets assure us: "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. . . . He shall guide thee continually. . . . He shall lighten our darkness. . . ." Fulfillment of spiritual hunger, guidance along the spiritual way, illumination

are the three great blessings that the seeker receives as he grows Godward.

“ . . . THE DESIRES OF THINE HEART . . . ”

As we grow in spiritual knowledge we become more sensitive to the power of desire. William Blake sets this fact before us in a simple sketch that portrays man, dwarfed by the majesty of the limitless sky, looking heavenward and saying with all his being, “I want, I want!” His cry seems to be a shaft that pierces the firmament above him. Jesus was aware of the dynamic force of desire in shaping human destiny. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God,” he says, “and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33). And by “all these things” he meant whatever was essential to fulfilling God’s purpose for you or me as individuals reaching Godward. All the fruit depends upon our yearning and longing for it.

A man who wanted the promise of rebirth described to me, with excellent frankness, high intelligence, and precious honesty just why he was separated from the requirements. On the physical plane there was a digestive disturbance of long standing, a sluggish assimilation and improper elimination. On the emotional plane was a pronounced fear and a hateful disposition. On the mental plane was a tricky prejudice and a lingering intolerance. On the volitional plane was the state of habitual double-mindedness.

The promise, “I shall not want,” covered all his needs. The way to the fulfillment of that promise was the faith life, making all things work in the interest of

God—all duties surrendered to Him, dedicated to Him, devoted to Him.

For this was the promise of physical health, emotional poise and assurance, mental vigor, creativeness, and temperance, volitional unity to God’s plans and purposes. The rebirth!

“They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.” Here is the verb *to seek* keyed to its highest objective. God’s best gifts are designed for man’s highest desire. Other verbs that are linked with the promises of God are *to knock*, *to ask*, and *to do*. When these three are applied to the highest Source the verb *to have* will be fulfilled.

As we consider these promises we cannot overlook the fact that each of them carries the requirement of a discipline to be employed.

“*Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee*” (Job 22:21). Practice his Presence and be at peace. Get on familiar terms with Him through established faith and the works of faith, and then, no matter what happens, it will be a good thing. Failure will be as a steppingstone to success; pain will be as a matchless instructor in the school of wisdom; joy will be as a ministry unto the hearts of others; and peace will be as a peacemaker in the midst of conflict and confusion.

“*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart*” (Ps. 37:4). Delight, radiance, happiness, blessedness, joy, these are experiences concurrent with the developing spiritual life. It is a blossoming, so to speak—and no one can possibly

conceive of a budding flower being downcast. Yet many so-called religious people are walking funerals. They strain and labor and sweat at the business of living a God-directed life. A long face is not a badge of sanctity. Rather it is an indication of religious incompetence and spiritual poverty. Jesus lifted up the little child as an illustration of the Kingdom. As the child grows it is carefree in its concern about growth. And as it grows it is radiant.

A little child lives in all the wonders and delights of the moments. It forgets the stings and hurts quickly. It recovers quickly from pains and promptly forgives, rushing again into the joys of life. It carries no excess baggage of resentment. It has no poundage of race and class prejudice. Its eyes are clear and frank, filled with little stars of interest and wonderment. It lives and moves in the Kingdom on earth, and only the invented and imposed evils of man can rob it of the desires of its heart. Make a jolly game of your religious life, like little children.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5). I watched Dr. Glenn Clark open a Bible at a prayer meeting. "Wherever I open it," he said, "there are promises." Then he passed the Book among the people. He had them lay their hands on the opened promises, as an outward symbol of their desire to trust their problems to God, leaving them upon the Bible, putting them down and taking up instead God's promises to them.

One woman had been guided to come to that meeting, and did come, though she would have been pre-

vented had her doctor known it, for she was even then in preparation for a serious, major operation. That was the burden she put upon the open Bible. What was more, she left it there and took up the promise. In doing so she interrupted the operation. For she walked out of the prayer meeting a healed woman. She had really committed it unto the Lord; she had trusted in Him; and He had brought it to pass.

"Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour" (II Chron. 1:12). If you will live the life of faith, do the works of faith, and become settled in the promises of God, the gift of wisdom will be yours, and all things and experiences will conspire to bring it to you: the sun and the stars and the moon and the sky, the mountains and the deserts and the seas, the trees and the flowers and the stones, the animals and insects and fowls and fishes—everything in the world and above it will increase your awareness and exist for your edification, redemption, and wisdom.

You will have both relative and eternal knowledge, *and also foreknowledge*. You will have the riches of God and the wealth of God's earth, and you will have the true and not the false honor, the honor that is conferred upon a son and daughter of God.

"In the house of the righteous is much treasure" (Prov. 15:6). I discovered this promise in a dungeon cell. For I saw that the word *righteous* meant the right-use-ness of all things: Time and Place and Work. It meant the orchestration of Head, Heart, and Hand. And no matter what the Place, the Time, the Work,

when all are dedicated to right use there was indeed much treasure.

"I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit" (Isa. 48:17). World turmoil today roots in man's neglect of this promise regarding his education. Destruction and chaos mark every generation because the economic and political pattern of governments reflects the failure of their rulers, who although intelligent and academically well-educated, have not attained that wisdom by which they lead the nations to profit instead of to penalty. All the wisdom that is essential to provide for the human needs of the world, physically, psychologically and spiritually is available.

"They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Ps. 34:10). "Our sufficiency is of God." This is the total promise. It includes all and excludes none. Who has God has a total sufficiency, the right supply for every need, the right reward for every deed. It is a fitting and compact climax, the last rich word from the pen of that great apostle, Paul, born out of time, who lives in all time. God's sufficiency is for you as you turn your face Godward, moment by moment.

GOD WILL GIVE YOU GUIDANCE

"The Lord shall guide thee continually" (Isa. 58:11). The fact that we are subject to various kinds of inward promptings and hunches when we become quiet does not remove or disturb the reality of genuine, unerring divine guidance. The Spirit still guides people into the realm of absolute as well as relative truth.

Authentic divine guidance has little to do with the crude emotional nature, but reaches us through the higher levels of the mind, as inspiration, spiritual knowledge and wisdom, which evoke within us subtle feelings that correspond and confirm our thoughts.

Where divine guidance is there is a beautiful sense of transport and joy, which is ever under control though the ecstasy may be well-nigh unendurable. The Spirit's outer expression through a human being is a personality radiance, which is quiet and reserved, and delivers its own testimony and witness whether with or without words.

Jesus had this sustained radiance, always under control, and he advised his followers to let their light shine, which alone would constrain others.

Genuine divine guidance witnesses to all people, like love and music and laughter, and not merely to those who are immature in their minds and emotions and personalities.

It is also possible to be deceived about divine guidance even though one has a normal personality, a developed intellect and controlled emotions. In the cultivation of the higher mind through which we are divinely guided we have to work out of a deep belt or area of illusion. This belt is interpenetrating but might be thought of as lying between the intellectual consciousness, which reasons, selects, and analyzes, and the undifferentiated mind which thinks in generalities, absolutes, and abstractions. It is necessary to learn how to discriminate between the guidance that is mixed

with illusion and that which is clear and pure, between the false and the true.

There are many marks of true guidance, and thousands of ways to mark the false. We can touch only upon a few of these here.

One of the unmistakable signs of true guidance is the quiet radiance previously mentioned. Another sign can be noted in the redemptive influence true guidance has upon ourselves and others. If this redemptive and edifying element is missing in our actions we are likely to be under the spell of illusion.

When we are divinely guided we shall never contribute to the weakness of ourselves or others, but always to our own strength and to the strength of those with whom we deal. When we are divinely guided, while we can see things in detail, we also see totalities. We not only relate facts to each other but see them in relation to the whole, as its members to the whole body. We see the diversity of all things, but also a unity of all things, as of many different kinds of coins working together to make one dollar.

From means we see ends. From the initial action we see the conclusion. From our beginning impact upon another we see the result, as the good story writer sees the climax of his story from the introduction of his first word. It is pretty certain that if we are moved to guide another without at the same time feeling a deep sense of personal responsibility for our words and actions we are apt to be misguided, blindly leaping in where perfectly guided angels fear to tread. We thus become blind guides of the blind, and even-

tually we all fall into the same ditch. We should therefore be chary of any guidance that concerns others in the absence of God's deep searching of ourselves. We can be deluded by evil, delaying or arresting our own progress, when we seek to promote the progress of others.

If the guidance we get to help another is false our effort may turn out to be destructive meddling in other people's affairs. All guidance is in danger of being false where it involves the spiritual life of another person if that person does not seek it. For spiritual things cannot be given to mature people who do not seek them.

The surest way to lose an old friend or to alienate a new one is to force a spiritual idea upon him out of time. True guidance will never make this mistake, and unsought spiritual advice will remain the most odious thing in the world.

In this realm the law is: "Seek and ye shall find, ask and it shall be given you, knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). When a person is ripe to receive spiritual gifts he will seek them, and God's law within him will be apt to repulse every effort to force spiritual fruit upon him out of season. Those who are guided to violate this law will be falsely guided, the offering will be silently or openly rejected and the falsely guided person will be silently or openly repudiated.

Another mark of genuine divine guidance has to do with this factor of timeliness. If the guidance to help another is true it will synchronize with that person's corresponding need, the divine law of reception will

operate perfectly, and there will be no awkward doubts in the one to be helped and no inward misgivings in the one to render the help. The giving and receiving will be perfectly timed, and both the giver and receiver will be edified and redeemed, a mutual process of value appropriation. Unless we are sought for spiritual counsel we shall be repulsed by the persons we seek to serve. Hence we can be of little help to another where the point of readiness is absent.

It is this point of readiness which assures co-operation. When the student is ready the teacher appears. When the convert is ready the preacher appears. And no preacher can really convert a sinner who is not ready to be converted. If by a play upon the emotions the point of readiness is forced out of time, and the conversion takes place, its lasting quality is likely to be short-lived. Real guidance (in a minister) is more likely to offer an invitation at the end of the service, with no additional pressure of any kind. If any be ready they will accept and receive. This conversion will last forever.

But with a thousand possibilities of error in the field of guidance, we can always be fairly certain if we ask ourselves: "Is this help I'm urged to give according to God's point of view?" When this self-searching inquiry is faced with sincerity and earnestness in quiet prayer and meditation it will usually turn up the correct answer.

In my public work I have never been genuinely guided to use pressure to get results. Pressure advertising can create a false desire in people, and this will end

in a false result. For my meetings I use mail announcements which are conservative, but not unduly so. The necessary information as to time and place are given. The titles of the talks are listed in their order together with a brief description of each one.

My lecture campaigns have been planned under what I believe to be divine guidance; my campaign budgets have been estimated in advance; and all expenditures have been constructively and not wastefully disbursed.

Whenever I have been called upon for speaking engagements I have sought guidance and used discernment about money matters; for I am convinced that whatever is God's plan and purpose He will indicate it in a total way, not only by redemptive influence among people, but down to detailed matters of finance. Hence before accepting such engagements I always wait upon Him. I figure if my lecturing business is His business it will be revealed on six different levels:

1. There will be redemptive power loosed in the meetings.
2. A moral influence will be noted in the form of new courage and resolution in the hearts and minds of people.
3. Mental clarification concerning religious theories and spiritual abstractions will be made evident.
4. Financial supply will be forthcoming for all expenses without the need of applying the slightest pressure upon anyone.
5. Vitality will be available to carry on the program no matter how strenuous, even though the schedule may call for five or six lectures a day.

6. The demands for a widely varied social adjustment in such circumstances will be made possible.

When my public arrangements have been God's these six levels have all seemed to work together for a total good; but when I have lacked the clear guidance what success I have had has come through effort, strain, and struggle.

I therefore believe that once we understand this Jesus principle of supply, and are settled in its promise, we shall have put an end to the problem of fear concerning economic security, and this will release us to seek and cultivate the Kingdom of God and its security.

As for personal work in counseling I am seldom guided to seek another for the purpose of rendering spiritual aid. Those I try to help in personal ways are for the most part guided to seek such help, and this makes for mutual co-operation and fruitfulness.

"Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). This seems to be the first requirement in the conscious cultivation of divine guidance. First try to be sure that God is in it as the Initiator, the Prime Mover, and Fructifier. In the midst of an urge to assist someone spiritually it is always an excellent habit to take that impulse into the Secret Place of the Most High, expose it honestly to the penetrating searchlight of silence, and see if it is of God or of self.

Then, too, in seeking guidance on some personal problem, it is well to delay plans if agitation and anxiety are present. Get still first of all. "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him."

Become established through faith in God, settled in the truth of His promise. Achieve as nearly a perfect alignment with the Divine as possible, or until you feel that nothing can divorce you from His love and grace, in which there is nothing but harmony and rightness, and then listen passively, receptively, scarcely breathing, to the clear but subtle inspiration that passes softly across your mind.

This may come, and usually does, as a passage of Scripture, unmistakably apt and fitting, or it may come as an urge to look into your Bible where you will find a related passage now illumined for you. Or it may come as a clear direction impressed upon the mind.

The point is that when there is a genuine inner sense of tranquillity and peace the divine guidance will come to you. As Jeremiah so truly put it: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit." It is the Spirit that guides us into the realm of All-Truth. His inner promptings are ever soft and gentle, urging to edification and redemption. No force, no violent displays of emotional power, no abnormal exhibitions of personality behavior, characterize the actions of a sincere soul divinely led. The Spirit is peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, a wooing, persuading influence that leads to quiet ways and serene manners.

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Ps. 25:9). The meek, as I have said earlier, are those who are willing to defer all things to God's will and wisdom, and who are willing to abide

peacefully in the result. They are never religious exhibitionists, never loud and intemperant of speech in the assemblies. They never push forward quickly to the front seats to be seen of men. Their egocentricity has vanished. Therefore they are never dogmatically certain about their spiritual status. Only the ego is sure, and its certainty is the evidence of deception. The meek are sure about God's love and grace; but they are never sure about their own worthiness to receive that love and grace. God can give them the true judgment and the true teaching.

It is said that the late George Washington Carver could pick out the spiritual persons in a large audience. He could tell some others by the way they rushed forward to shake his hand and pay glowing, wordy tribute to his talk. The meek ones came along toward the last, and they could offer but a halting, brief "Thank you," or some similar comment. They were not good at words, but great at sincerity. "He will beautify the meek with victory." They are beautiful and they are victorious.

"*He guided my way in perfectness,*" declared the victorious Samuel because he had learned to wait upon God. "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." How many religious leaders fear the power of the wicked, and live in dread of each other's doctrines! The truly guided have no fear of the wicked and no fear of other people's religious conclusions. When we are truly guided we can go anywhere with-

out fear or favor in the eyes of men. And if we are guided to expose wrong conditions in the world and the Church, we do so not out of fear for men but out of love for them and for God.

The second requirement for divine guidance seems to be a constant stocking and restocking of the mind with the words of Scripture:

"*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet*" (Ps. 119:105). A practicing psychologist attributed his success to his Episcopalian background. As a youth he had memorized large sections of the Bible. The passages would come back to him just at the time for the right person. And he frankly confessed that his Scripture quotations were responsible for releasing more people from their difficulties than his secular suggestions. This has been my experience, too, and I have sometimes been amazed to find myself quoting a Scripture for a certain need which I didn't know was in my memory. These indeed are Spirit-guided moments in which it is given us to say the right thing at the right time to the right person.

Therefore it is essential for those who wish to be divinely guided to read abundantly in the Scriptures and to memorize those passages which have a special appeal at the moment.

Not only in rendering spiritual first aid to others is it necessary to be well supplied with Scripture, but when seeking aid and guidance for oneself, for it comes most frequently out of the Word of God. It flashes to the mind through the memory at just the right time to meet the particular need, for in certain circumstances "Vain is the help of man." These are times when "My

help cometh from the Lord" through guidance and inspiration. "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Can man's knowledge release us from our deep, psychic oppressions and subtle, unreasonable terrors? No. At these points the wisdom of man falls to the ground, and the wisdom of God abides. "For with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light." "The Lord will lighten my darkness." "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries will not be able to gainsay nor resist."

The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears (Isa. 11:2, 3).

"GOD WILL ILLUMINE YOUR MIND"

When we do not see what lies beyond us and have tried all the ways we know to receive guidance there are still two more ways by which progress may be made: one is to keep our eyes trained in the spiritual direction upon which we have set ourselves. Just to wait and watch patiently inevitably brings into view a glimmer of light on the path. This very exercise lengthens our vision. Secondly, we can yield ourselves to experienced guides who have traveled the path ahead of

us. I have discussed the work of counseling and being counseled at length in Chapter III, Part One. But as we advance we may be sure that at last we will come into sight of our goal—our span of vision will include the whole of life and we will be blessed with a sense of the meaningfulness of both this world and the spiritual one. Our seeking Truth and our guidance in Truth are rewarded with an understanding of Truth.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130). The key book in every world religion is an exhaustless source of knowledge and wisdom. To each reader it sheds light according to his capacity to receive. The most valuable interpretations of the Scriptures are not the static ones that are handed down by scholars and theologians. Rather the true value lies in an enlarging understanding that is constantly catching various facets of an abiding Truth, and making what Truth is comprehended applicable to the current events of daily living, as well as to the continuing development of soul.

The central light of Christ shines through the words he spoke and the things he did as they are recorded in those four small books that make up the Gospels. That light has flashed again and again through history as it has been caught up by theologians, scientists, philosophers, educators, ministers, teachers, metaphysicians, common laymen. The brilliance of that central glow is revealed in the human prism that catches and breaks up the wisdom of Christ and passes it on to any who are open to receive it.

He gives his illumination universally and therefore he gives it to you and me. The enlightenment that he gives to us is uniquely ours—it can be no other man's. We do not have to be receivers of any secondhand light. Let us look at it this way: The human family as a whole is a spiritual prism, and each person is an original facet in that prism, capable of catching and shedding his portion of the Central Light *directly from the Source*.

To be established in faith and strengthened in works is to be settled in light, not a reflector of other people's light, but a facet through which streams original light from its original Source. "Pin not your faith on another's sleeve."

When we cease depending on secondhand light and go to depending on the Source of Light our darkness will be removed and our own individual, original portion of this flashing central light will shine through us. Within the darkness of our minds the real light is always there ready to flash for us as occasion determines. "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1:5).

That Central Light any man can have, the simple soul as well as the educated man. It comes not alone as a reward for striving, but also for simple, childlike surrendering. This light is the light of the Indwelling Presence of Christ. And it belongs to every man and will radiate through every man who makes himself a prisoner of Christ, and who lives in, for, and by him, who was and is "that true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." For "we speak that

which we do know." The phenomenon of cosmic light I have experienced often: It is as the radiance of a thousand noonday suns all glowing at once. Its perspective is incredible distance and vastness. Yet even this phenomenon of cosmic light is as nothing to that light which shines through one when he says the true and right thing at just the right time to the right person. That is the Great Light that lighteth every man.

Illumination like all spiritual promises rests upon the observance of certain disciplines. It is promised to all men capable of wanting it, and it comes to all men who put themselves in the way of it, that is by abiding in its requirements. Says one proverb: "The way to see divine light is to put out thine own candle," for "The way to have the divine will is to surrender thine own will. For this light cannot shine through a smoky chimney." If you want Christ's light you must ever remember to be his lamp, with the wick trimmed by the sickle of constant discipline, the container filled with the oil of faith and obedience.

Moreover, though light has been shed by many and varied minds, true light of faith still "flourishes in solitude." Those who seek its enrichment should often be alone in prayer and meditation. For it is spiritually edifying to enter the secret room, there to expose oneself humbly to God and be searched by the divine light; thence after this divine treatment to show the light so received to others in need of its beneficial rays.

The light is easily extinguished by idle conversation, harmful speech and vulgar profanity. Inferiority is a confession of little faith, and profanity is but a confes-

sion of inferiority. "He distrusts his own faith who often swears." "Faith sees by the ears." It hears the unexpressed need and through hearing *sees* the Source of power and the method of fulfillment.

"Humble faith converts the couch of pain into a bed of roses." The invalids of the world have often attained that "meek (or humble) faith" and have so triumphed over pain that they brought the world to their door; bewildered people seeking out the physically handicapped, glad just to linger in their presence and breathe the perfume of their victorious lives.

"Much knowledge of things divine escapes us through want of faith." If we believe only that which comes through our physical senses, we can garner little real knowledge.

"Who doesn't keep faith with God won't keep it with man." We can deal freely with a man who keeps faith with God. With such a man verbal agreements are enough. All other men must be bound hand and foot in the suspicions of legal phrases and signed documents. A single loophole is their invitation to cheat, squirm out, and defraud.

Down the ages much light has been shed on the works of faith. "By the work we know the workman." Or as Jesus put it in effect: "We can know the tree by the kind of fruit it bears, and our claim to righteousness is judged by our fruits." "A work ill done must be twice done." Especially is this true of the works of little faith. "A work well begun is half ended."

"Good works will never save you, but you cannot be saved without them." The spiritually indolent are

prone to live by the first part of this sentence. Since they cannot be saved by good works, they deceive themselves into believing that passive devotion is enough. They wither on the vine, like fruit unfit to pick.

Light is promised to us all, but we must also develop qualities of character if we are to avoid the penalties for misusing the light we obtain. "Be established in the light of faith by all means," said St. Peter. "But at the same time strengthen yourself in the works of faith, lest you be consumed by the light you seek."

Where there is spiritual light, on the one hand, there is great darkness on the other. And the darkness is often tempting to those who have light; many a man has sold his soul by using his light for selfish ends.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. . . . And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:1-4).

Here lies the mystic secret of adequate living. Light is available now and always has been available. Many attain that light. Others have not attained. They are without true form and they are void; and darkness is upon their faces and reigns in the deeps of their souls.

But God is promising them all the time: "Let there be light, for there is light." That is, don't try to make light come to you. But get your little light out of your way and *let* God's light come in. Self-will makes the

things of self-will come to pass. But faith puts off self-will and lets the things of God come to pass.

When we make things happen our way they come in freighted with penalty as well as profit. But when God makes them happen through us we are rewarded in four major ways—described inimitably in the story of the Prodigal Son.

The Prodigal Son first said to his father, "Give me . . ." according to his self-will. This carried him to the last ditch of penalty and defeat. Later on he decided that he would say to his father, "Make me . . ." "Make me as one of thy hired servants." In this attitude of heart and mind he was received by the father joyously, and the father gave him four great gifts, the "fatted calf" of abundance; "the robe" of eternal love; "the ring" of perfection; and "the shoes" of understanding, light.

Faith says to the Father: "Make me Thy servant; strengthen me in Thy works; settle me in Thy love."

Self-will says: "Give me what belongs to me, so that I can go out and waste it on harlots and riotous living."

The Father can give us what belongs to us in safety when He can trust us with it. He can trust us and increase our strength when the trust we have is of the kind that lets light shine through us from Him who is the Source of light.

"Let there be light, and there was light."

Chapter VI

Eternal Fulfillment

POWER, HAPPINESS, PEACE! IF THE AVERAGE MAN BUSY about the daily task of living were asked what it was he really wanted, undoubtedly he would include one or more of these three in his answer. Those books on self-improvement, religion, and psychology that have come into the best-seller rank have been concerned with the attainment of these very gifts. These values, like those discussed previously, are virtues belonging exclusively to the spiritually minded. Power, happiness and peace that do not have their roots in the spirit cannot flourish genuinely in mind and body. No man can create such blessings for himself, nor can he obtain them if he goes after them as ends in themselves. They are incidental to the loving of God for Himself alone. "Make love your aim," wrote Paul, "and then set your heart on spiritual gifts" (I Cor. 14:1, Moffat).

GOD WILL GIVE YOU POWER

When Jesus commissioned his disciples to go forth as evangelists he gave them certain powers and among them was the one "to heal sickness, and cast out devils." We have only to look about us and we will see how much such a promise of power is needed everywhere. Men's bodies, minds and souls are sick.

The power to heal sickness and cast out devils operates in three planes of life today. On the physical plane the power functions in and through our medical sciences, which heal organic diseases and cast out organic devils in the form of microbes. Related to this plane, but using a different method are those healers who employ heat and light and manipulation, and so on, while in the mental sciences the power effects healing in the mind and emotions, and casts out the devils of fear and worry with all their strange brood of fixations and complexes. On the highest of the healing planes the power works in and through faith which is applied by the metaphysical and spiritual practitioners, and sometimes by direct contact with the healing Source by the patients themselves.

Specialized academic training in the arts and sciences and professions has resulted in the release of almost magic powers in these respective fields, especially in the field of science. And yet what has been released in the secular departments of the mind has but thrown into bold relief our abysmal ignorance. The more we learn in an intellectual way the more mysterious becomes the universe in which we live. We have learned in our healing sciences to heal the sick and to cast out devils, but we know pitifully little about the origin of sickness, less about its purpose, and we know practically nothing about the devils which haunt our minds and nervous systems.

It has been truly said that man has hardly scratched the surface of his mental and spiritual capacity. The human mind has been likened to an iceberg. That part

of our minds of which we have some knowledge is the intellect, a small fraction jutting out in the open. But hidden beneath the surface is the great sleeping giant of the mind, unknown, unexplored, waiting for some magic touch to awaken it, to stir it into awareness and life.

What is that magic touch? It is redemption, the new birth. How can it be attained? It comes in two ways, suddenly by a direct act of Grace, and gradually by an indirect action of personal effort. Until the new birth is achieved, until the personality has been redeemed, all but a small part of the mind must sleep on, and all but a tiny fraction of the soul's power must remain dormant.

There is a protective influence in the universe which withholds power, except in a few cases here and there scattered through the ages. An unredeemed person cannot be trusted with cosmic power. Even the little creative intellectual power with which man is trusted runs swiftly to mischief. On the whole the only sense man has is to destroy himself and others. Left to his own instincts he would soon wipe himself out of existence. But man has been preserved in spite of himself by a protective power he knows nothing about and of which he is only dimly aware.

Great power is granted to a man in the degree that he is able to purify his motives and acquire moral stamina. Purification of heart by the application of faith and works is God's assurance and promise of more and more redemptive power.

The unknown human mind! Deep down beneath the

surface this great sleeping mental giant contains countless dormant brain cells. They come to life when a man is ready. A man is ready when he can say with Paul: "There is no power but of God." He must not only be able to say it, but he must know it by virtue of an established faith that is untroubled by the entrance of a single fugitive doubt.

This kind of faith cannot be granted to the man whose moral life is shot through with immoral motives, except by grace or personal effort. A man does not know that all power comes of God if he is still operating from an egocentric base, for in this case he is incapable of using power according to the will of God. He may know intellectually that all power comes of God. But this sort of knowledge is worth little to him. The actual fact that all power comes from God remains a vague ideal, a nebulous theory, a lifeless, speculative abstraction. Thus while man is still capable of deliberate deceit and misapplication of power his mind must slumber in a faint awareness of the universe that lies all about him.

Yet we may be confident that God will give us power right up to the edge of our moral attainment. As we apply the disciplines of faith regeneration takes place. God's power comes to us increasingly as we overcome our selfish motives and relax increasingly to dependence on Him. Samuel, long before Paul, possessed his established faith, and so standing in his character of moral achievement could say: "God is my strength and power, and he maketh my way perfect."

Paul said the same thing a little differently: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The attainment of spiritual power is chiefly a matter of purifying the motives, which leads to a moral conquest of the uncontrolled, instinctual man. With purity of the heart comes a corresponding purity of the head and of the hand. When the heart is pure the head is God inspired and the hand is devoted to blessed ministry. A pure heart is honest, discerning, truthful, unselfish, humble, compassionate. With these motives there is a related power, a radiance of life, an awareness of beauty.

The secret of this attainment lies in an established faith, for "Verily, verily, I say unto you: He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also."

It is apparent that healing and freedom from destructive obsessions represent the greatest personal need of power on the physical, emotional, and mental planes at this time.

This power to heal the sick and cast out devils is inadequate as it flows through the partly open channels of orthodox science both physical and mental. We need to have faith in Christ's faith that we may appropriate his power to heal the body and liberate the mind. How we may develop such faith has been wonderfully well expressed in a paper written by J. R. Moseley, author of *Perfect Everything*. Mr. Moseley lists eight rules by which this healing power may be released:

1. Forgive everybody everything, and go to sending up

prayers for others in need, and go to radiating love and good-will and good-cheer to all.

Jesus says, while you are praying, if you have aught against anyone, forgive it. Forgive it to the limit, love to the limit and believe the promise of God.

2. Invite Jesus to come in and reign, and be all in all in the ALL of you; particularly in the most needy and diseased parts. He is knocking to do this, and only needs to be wanted and invited.

The insane have become sane after they were persuaded to ask Jesus to come into their minds and spirits and brains and bodies and affairs. There is nothing that He does not heal, if and when He is allowed to enter, control and use.

3. When you ask any good of Jesus, believe you are receiving it, and keep on believing until it becomes fully manifested in your experience. If you do not believe, you fail to do your part in receiving what the Lord is seeking to give.

If you go so far as to believe you already have it, and your belief is not strong enough to bring it into your actual experience, your temptation will be to become discouraged, but if you believe you are receiving, as soon as you ask in His will, you can keep on believing until you have evidence that you have it.

Just as soon as you desire anything in the will of God, it is already on the way. So keep on desiring, and keep on believing. Hold on and it will be yours in the certainty of experience.

4. Dedicate to seek, to find and give yourself to, the best of life, the best work and services you are here for. Your work, in God's will, when you are fully dedicated to it, is your life-preserver. . . .

We are not afraid when we know we are in God's will and dedicated to receive everything He sent us here to receive, and to do everything He sent us here to do.

5. Get two or three, or more, who are in touch with Jesus, to agree with you as to what to ask for. . . .

6. Stand on His promise to you and His promises in the New Testament.

7. Seek the special guidance of the Holy Spirit, as to how to pray for healing.

In this connection we find Jesus employing almost as many methods as there were individuals who sought him for healing. He spoke the healing word to some. He sent his word and healed them. He touched some. In one case he commanded. In another he chose. To some he asked questions and gave psychological suggestions. In each case he was guided by the Spirit to use the method best calculated to produce the totally correct result.

8. Take yourself, your problems, and those you would help to Jesus. Be sure you don't drop them on the way.

After you have turned All over to Him, don't try to take them back as your responsibility. Leave all to Him, and if there is any more help you can render He will let you know.

Mr. Moseley no doubt considers the use of divine power for personal healing to be of major importance, and he evidently looks upon all personal progress as related to the power of healing.

If we are healed of a certain vice, for instance, we attain its opposite virtue. Success is but the healing of

failure, courage the healing of fear, love the healing of hate, health the healing of disease, victory the healing of defeat, and on through the endless chain of opposites, until the greatest healing of all is accomplished, the new birth which is the total healing of everything pertaining to the old unregenerate motives of life.

Redemption is the greatest act of healing, and for its achievement the greatest degree of power is called into action, and is focused, not upon the part, but upon the total personality: body, mind, and soul. And this supreme power is available to all:

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:29 ff.).

We were made for dominion over all things which separate us from God, and being so made, the power to have dominion was likewise granted: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea" (Ps. 8:6 ff.).

We have the power to take dominion over the realms of nature. This power of dominion over the lower kingdoms, when perverted into exploitation of man, ceases to be dominion and puts one into bondage to the thing he exploits.

The law is: "Dominion over the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, but not over the human." Dominion over the human is the perverted rule of man. Its end is and always has been and always will be destruction, chaos, and unredemptive suffering. Demons rule through unregenerate men and humanity rots and dies. The human kingdom is based upon the law of redemption through co-operation. Exploitation and competition, backed with human intelligence, place humanity far below the level of the beasts. It is not human dominion but human defeat. Power that is not redemptive is force. Its virtues are also vices; its blessings are also curses; its profits in one direction give birth to penalties in another. There is no escape.

But established faith and the works of faith have the power of dominion. With this power there is no need to compete—only to co-operate under the will of God.

GOD WILL GIVE YOU HAPPINESS

"Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun" (Eccles. 8:15). As we examine the meaning of happiness and its sources we soon discover that it, like power, must emanate from God Himself. Of course, there are many shades and degrees of happiness. When the motive is mainly that of ego-gratification, happiness is more or less a delusion, a kind of crude reflection of the real thing. Anything that is pleasing to the ego is displeasing to the soul, and whatever is displeasing to the soul will sour and curdle, like milk whose sweetness is short-lived.

Fame, if it has been gained at the expense of the

soul, turns sour at the point of attainment. Wealth so gained will penalize also its owner. Even health gained and maintained for health's sake will be as an empty vessel. There can be no genuine satisfaction or happiness for him who serves the insatiable hungers of his ego before he serves the needs of his soul. To gain the whole world at the expense of the soul is to lose it, for it is to gain that which dry rots in the hands.

The quest for happiness through the catacombs of selfish living is the universal preoccupation of the world; and, despite the fact that no man has ever found happiness on this basis, the belief still persists that it may be done. This belief never dies. It is the ageless delusion of humanity.

All genuine happiness rises out of a liberated soul. Whatever, for the soul's sake, restricts the ego is a steppingstone on the path to emancipation. By the stripes of discipline inflicted upon the ego the soul is freed and healed. Wound the ego for the soul's sake and the soul will swallow up the pain in joy. A radiantly happy personality is a total personality which lives in, for, and by the soul. Two things, then, stand side by side: the restricted life of the ego and the total life of the soul.

Illusion and Reality! To serve the ego without reference to the soul is vanity under the sun. To serve the soul first is to lift the ego above the sun—yea, to the Son of God. "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me." By comparison, one minute of conscious soul liberation makes misery a lifetime of ego happiness. When the soul experiences even a moment's freedom

the result is veritable rapture, an ecstasy beyond description, uncontainable bliss, and the "peace that passeth all understanding."

Happiness implies zest and mirth, harmony and joy, radiance and peace. This is the kind of happiness that is promised in the Bible, and as the Wise Man says, "man hath no better thing under the sun." Such happiness is achieved in the world today by all those who are established in faith and whose works of faith are keyed to the highest interests of the soul. Methods for its attainment are also laid down in the Scripture, although it too is a gift and is incidental to man's search for oneness with God. We list some of the rules of happiness:

"Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." Here is happiness in the acquirement of an established faith. It is not self-dependence; it is not trust limited to the level of the ego, but a trust in God who is interested in our souls, and "happy is he" whose interest abides in God's interest.

It is trust in God and His promises, and the application of His laws and commandments. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love [promises], even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Faith, then, is the first rule. The second has to do with the disciplines of faith.

"He that keepeth the law, happy is he." Out of the application of the commandments, the laws of God, the promises manifest, and a real and lasting happiness is experienced.

There can be no question, of course, about the difficulty of applying the laws and commandments of God. There is a period when those who seek reality pass through a sober, overserious vale, as it were, which lengthens the muscles of the face, and gives them the appearance of unhappiness. But those lines also spell character. The inner conflicts through which the valiant pass leave their marks upon them, and these marks indicate to the soft and flabby creatures of the world a life of gloom and defeat.

I have shaken pretty, soft hands which were dedicated to vanity, and I have shaken those which were dedicated to service and God. The story of character or lack of it is all in the palm of the hand.

I could have told the sophisticated young woman who once complained to me of the serious faces of her religious friends a few things about her own future. Her search for happiness in illusion would soon end in disillusion and boredom. Her face would not become long and serious through putting up a good moral fight. It would become void and artificial by chasing after false gods and impossible pleasures. She would forfeit the highest response to life. She would garner a multitude of tainted reactions against life and character. She would become bored with the tawdry self she had to live with, repelled by her associates in delusion, lose all trust in herself and others, picking at their faults as a sparrow picks at its feathers.

Failures envy the successful. The weak admire but often hate the courageous. The nonreligious, ever in search for an excuse to evade the heroic demands of

the soul, always point an accusing finger at religious people in general and Christians in particular. One of the stock justifications of the morally bankrupt is as old a fallacy as life itself—the fallacy of the morally impotent seeking relief by condemning the morally strong.

Happiness, like love, cannot be successfully defined. Every person is different, and happiness means a different thing to every person. But let us get it into our minds once forever, that our happiness depends on no “if.” There is only *one* happiness and it is an unbounded gift of an ever-loving God.

“I could be happy—if only . . .” Who has not said this? Usually the “if” is followed by some mention of accomplishment or possession. Yet when we get close to those who have such accomplishments and possessions we do not observe happiness in their lives. They, too, declare: “I could be happy—if only . . .”

Nowhere is it possible to find an authentic, genuine happiness by achievements unrelated to the best and highest interests of the soul. Each accomplishment, alien to the soul, burns itself out by feeding upon itself. At the point of attainment nothing remains but a few smoldering embers on a bed of cold, gray ashes.

A famous movie actress said: “I worked day and night to reach the top. I had to go to the top to realize the bottom.”

The prophet Joel said the same thing a little differently: “For joy is withered away from the sons of men.”

Intellectuals and professionals who have nothing more substantial than talking shop are smart and brilliant and brittle, but “joy has withered away from their

hardened hearts." Those who discuss the inconsequential doings of personalities have not found happiness. "Joy has withered away from their feeble hearts." They soon weary of the trivial affairs about which they talk. But being vacant they press the empty void to the point of exhaustion. Slowly they sag in each other's presence, grow tired and suspicious, the wellsprings of joy dried up in their parched and arid souls.

Only the robust are willing to pay the price of an established faith and the disciplines of faith. In their quest they inflict lines upon the countenance and wounds upon the ego. Even if they fail to find the elusive prize of happiness, at least they have moved in the only direction where happiness can be found—the direction of a liberated soul. And this fact holds for them a permanent, abiding hope.

"Make me to hear joy and gladness." "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness." "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Those who can lift their conversation to the spiritual plane become increasingly animated and happy. The finest moments and most delightful experiences in life are centered in spiritual activity and fellowship.

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as noonday."

Surely these God-inspired and God-devoted ancients knew whereof they spoke. For the mutual exchange of spiritual ideas generates indefinable joys in the soul, which suffuse the entire personality, like a

light that had been obscure, a noonday brightness out of darkness.

But these real moments of joy are unknown to those who seek happiness at the expense of the soul. The law of the soul is liberty, and happiness is its fruit. It is the perfect law and the perfect result. Or as James puts it: "But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing."

Action is demanded, a faith that flows into corresponding works. It was to these Jesus spoke when He said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He was not the bestower of death but of life, and He continues to bestow even until now "that your joy might be full."

This joy goes to him who overcomes: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). The paradise of God is the home of happiness and harmony and tranquillity. It can be had here, for it is a divine promise whenever we set aside momentary joys for sake of eternal ones.

By what manner or means shall we overcome the allurements of the ego and the seductions of the flesh? By some austere program of self-improvement? By some unholy enforcement of the personal will? By some exalted system of suicide? By some elevated application of vanity? Or shall we overcome by the surrender of self-will? By a childlike faith in God? And by works that evidence such faith?

If we overcome and enjoy the happiness promised it will be on a basis of love and not hate—love not only for God and our neighbor—but also for ourselves. If we love our souls we shall not visit violence on our bodies, which are “temples of the living God,” which are mansions of our souls.

We shall overcome by righteous means. “In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.” “But the path of the *righteous* is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (the italics are mine).

“Thou hast put gladness in my heart.” Not in the head but in the heart. If it is released in the heart it will make captive the head and set in motion the hand. A talented woman was noted for her attractive personality. She was always laughing and smiling and the cares of life seemed far from her. But it was all in her head. It was not real. It concealed unhappiness. A seer penetrated her disguise, for upon his ear her laughter fell like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. “Your life is a splendid act,” he told her, “but your heart is far from gladness. Pretense delays the approach of happiness.”

“Rejoice in the Lord.” This rejoicing does not mean a pretense. And it will cease to be a pretense when the life of faith is established in the works of faith. It will then be a settled condition of the consciousness, abiding in and working through the total personality. It is our privilege still to avoid the promise of happiness, but not to destroy it. And still the generations go on seeking happiness by ego gratification and never

achieving it. Yet all the time the promise still holds true: he that loseth findeth—happiness.

GOD WILL GIVE YOU PEACE

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). We come now to the tenth promise selected from the many promises for you in God’s precious vocabulary—Peace!

These promises are not made toward the race as a whole but toward individuals comprising the race. When we look at the promises carefully we see that each one is aimed at each person and becomes for him an inside rather than an outside proposition. For it is the inner man of the soul who has a corresponding relationship with the source of life as a total undivided entity. He would be blind indeed who could not see in the promises of God a challenge to this outer man to work for the release of the inner man on the lines laid down in the divine plan of faith, works and love.

Apparently, then, it is not in God’s plan for men to look to the national or secular authorities for peace though much is being said about peace by the nations of the world. A warless world may be reasonably possible, but as this would have to be maintained by force it would not be peace itself, but a similitude of peace.

When nations speak of peace they refer only to the absence of war. And this kind of peace emerges from the nations themselves. However, real peace is not the product of man’s invention, nor does it come out of his intellectual ingenuity and political juggling. Real peace comes from above and not from below.

The divinely inspired men by whom the promises of peace have reached the world held out little hope for real national or international peace. To the world in general Jesus came not to bring peace but a sword, and there certainly has been a lot of fighting and blood-letting because of his double-edged Gospel.

Nor is real peace to be had through the instrumentality of peace organizations, as experience reveals. Peace comes from above, from the Holy Spirit. Freedom has been the one outstanding characteristic of His divine power. He goeth where He listeth. He refuses to be limited by the external trappings of organization, and no sooner does man organize a trap to catch and hold this divine power, no matter how lofty the purpose from man's point of view, than the Spirit immediately begins to take leave and the trap is left without power to unify and redeem. Thus the end for the organization is internal strife and warfare.

So peace is pretty well bound up only with the individual. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." And though the state may be in the similitude of peace, Jeremiah's words are still true of nations: "saying peace, peace; when there is no peace." How true it is today!

If, then, Jesus did not offer peace to the world on a mass scale, did he offer it at all? and to whom? The answer is: He offered peace to every individual of good will who would take up his cross, his discipline, and follow in his footsteps. But this peace of which he spoke was and is incomprehensible to the world man who must judge all things by observable appear-

ances. For these Jesus could show no peace, since the outer appearances of his life were observable only as conflicts.

Nevertheless, peace is for the individual whose first ruler and leader is Christ. Peace is definitely promised to and reserved for him who is in bondage to the Prince of Peace. His promise is to all who are willing to be his disciples, individual peacemakers among those who are capable of good will. These are the only ones who have real peace—peace within themselves even in the midst of outer and utter chaos. It is to such as these that he can say: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"Not as the world giveth." The world has no real kind of peace to offer unregenerate man. Nor can the world understand the kind of peace that Jesus offers to the unregenerate.

This peace is a personal proposition and an inside problem; its cardinal requirements personal dependence on God, faith in Christ, and the doing of his works among men.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." All the divine promises, then, including this final one, are aimed toward the individual, and to him Paul says: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

With this much settled in our minds, we may turn from the improbability of collective peace to the possibility of personal peace. And we can find an inner

collective satisfaction in the sure knowledge that only as we establish peace within ourselves can we contribute peace to the general mass society.

The promise is immediately available to the individual. It is remotely available to humanity, providing that enough peacemakers can be raised up to assume the responsibility of leadership and the obligations of public office.

The fruits of the spiritual life are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control, as listed by the Apostle Paul.

Peace, then, like power and happiness, is not so much a gift to be sought in itself as it is a reward for seeking and obtaining something else. It is rather a by-product, like happiness. Like happiness or any other fruit of the Spirit, it coexists with possessing and being possessed by the Giver of all good gifts. Peace comes not as a response to the prayer or petition, "Give me," but rather from the petition or response to the prayer, "Make me," or "Let me."

Both the "Give me" and "Make me" approaches to God are legitimate in the house of prayer, but their results are often diametrically opposite. The classic illustration of these two methods of personal petition is found in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Here the student of prayer can see clearly, as stressed in the last chapter, just what happens when God answers the "Give me" petition and the "Make me" petition. The father of the Prodigal answered the "Give me" petition of his son. But as the story shows, the answer brought no happiness or peace to the boy. Instead it brought

increasing conflict and confusion. "He began to be in want." The end was miserable defeat.

Through defeat and suffering he came to himself, the usual way of those who follow the "Give me" method of petition. He repented of his wrong way in requesting the father's gifts. Instead of "Give me," he would say to his father now: "Make me. Make me as one of thy hired servants." Here was the great prayer of submission to his father's will and wisdom. "Have thy way with me, Father. Just let me be a servant of thine."

With this the son started his memorized speech, but the father interrupted him with the bestowal of four precious gifts: Life, Love, Law, and Light. These were in answer to the petition "Make me" instead of "Give me." In all there were five gifts which the giver gave, and the first came first:

The Father first gave himself to the boy. Before the gifts the Giver of the gifts was given, because this time the Giver rather than the gifts had been asked for.

Five supreme gifts. Let us note the first one well, the Giver of the gifts Himself. Then in their order the minor gifts, Love, Law, Light, and Life. Within this group of gifts was all that any soul could yearn for and obtain. When the boy asked for the Father first on the basis of "Make me," submission to the Father's will, "all these other things were added unto him, for the Father knew that he had need of these things."

Herein, then, lies the secret of effectual prayer, the highest form of the personal petition. Ask first of all for the Giver of the gifts, or "Seek ye first the kingdom

of the Giver, and all these essential gifts will be added unto you."

It should be emphasized that both methods work. The difference lies in the result. Knocking, decreeing, demanding, the "Give me" method is approved, and the tense, violent process of insistence or importunity, as the Scripture calls it, does get results. The point is that those who employ this method seldom know what is good for them, and the getting of their will usually leads to unhappiness and defeat.

We have all seen this in our own experience. Through prayer we demonstrate the desire of our will, and then we find ourselves in bondage to the thing we demonstrate, instead of to the Giver of the thing. On the other hand, if we trust God's will and wisdom, and seek only Him, in simple, childlike submission, what He gives us will be the right thing at the right time, and this will cover not a mere portion of our selfish lives, but the best interest of our total lives.

When we are willing to surrender to God's will and wisdom we are promised, as shown in the parable, the Father Himself, and then His best gifts. In the midst of universal hate we shall have Love. In the universal chaos of broken, incompleted, and clashing laws, we shall have the perfected Law. In the midst of universal blindness and darkness we shall have understanding Light. In the midst of universal poverty of existence we shall have abundant Life.

And so we are persuaded that the God-inspired Peter was right when he passed along his three cardinal rules of the quest. Trust God's will and wisdom. Be

established in faith. "Make me as one of thy hired servants." Be strengthened in the Father's work, the works of faith. Be unconcerned about personal matters and needs, for God knows what we have need of, and we can rest, be settled in the assurance of His promises, with no need to take thought of what we shall eat and drink and wear.

To those who humbly and submissively depend upon Him, who have the second and perfect petition of the Prodigal—these are established in faith, strengthened in works, and settled in the love and promise of God. They have crossed over from the penalizing personal petition of "Give me" to the personal petition of "Make me," and theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, for they have negotiated a great gulf fixed, and have come into the Promised Land of full value.

But how can we "live in peace" as St. Paul urged us to do? To the cynic with myopic vision the words make nonsense, and he replies to the apostle: "Why didn't you live what you preached?" The answer is that Paul did live what he preached. While the appearances of conflict and confusion raged all about him, he nevertheless resided in a deep, undisturbed Center of peace. It was the same with his Master, and with his fellow disciples and apostles. For again Paul said: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." These things necessarily have to be spiritual works.

"Have peace one with another." When we react negatively against another our peace flies through the window and irritation comes in. The peace way is the

response way—a way of positive good intention. “Agree quickly” with the enemy or adversary. We can agree with his best, and for his hate we can respond with our love.

When irritations rise out of our association with another, then turn to the Father, put on His protective robe of Love, and gather under it the source of your resentment and anger. Instead of reacting with anger, respond with peace. “Blessed are the peacemakers.” “And *let* [note the LET] the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.”

“Peace, be still.” When the appearances of evil are most violent that is the most opportune time to seek the depths of your real Self, the soul part that resides in the untroubled Center of Life. Then when we seem most inadequate and helpless we are by this state called to the secret room. We are invited by the voice of our helplessness to withdraw to a quiet place and let ourselves sink into the Center of pure consciousness which knows no turmoil or vexation. Nor is this so difficult for those who really will to do it. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for there is a reward for the man of peace.”

The peace that is promised, therefore, is a reward for personal regeneration. National regeneration must remain a dim and idealistic dream, until enough individual members in that nation have been regenerated,

and this does not hold the prospect of immediacy—unless peradventure it is brought in with power by the return of our Lord.

Meanwhile we are aware that all nations are guilty of Godlessness despite their innumerable forms of institutional religion and piety, and this guilt infects the national body throughout. One nation may be willing to live in the semblance of peace, in the absence of war, isolationism, as a nonaggressor nation; but its national guilt will draw it into war so long as one aggressor nation is allowed to exist.

A group of strong nations may band themselves together and force obedience upon less civilized nations. This kind of international control of war is better than no control at all. But real peace can never be the product of force, and the force method will not necessarily act as a redemptive influence on the aggressor nations, unless at the same time a long-range program of peace education is envisioned and executed.

To the individual, if not the race, peace is promised and is immediately available. Peace, perfect peace in this dark world of sin! “Ye shall go out with joy,” says the prophet Isaiah, “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. . . . Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa. 55:12 and 26:3).

Appendix

THE TRANSMUTING POWER OF FAITH

A Collection of Personal Experiences in Counseling

During a period of many years I have counseled with thousands of people concerning their life problems. I have come to believe that when a person seeks religious counsel, and thus identifies the counselor with his most poignant need, God is in it, and if I accept the call to missionary service with humble faith, I am serving the Divine Plan.

I have chosen the following personal experiences from those in my files because these cases illustrate the bypaths that most commonly foil bewildered seekers after spiritual instruction, or because the incidents related offer tangible evidence of the power of faith to transmute despair into radiant living.

I. COMMON PITFALLS

Those that have to do with the ego. I place this category of difficulties first because the most detrimental

blocks to spiritual growth are thrown up by the ego. All of our energies need to be concentrated and pointed Godward if we are to span the gulf between the material and spiritual worlds. Honest egotism plays its part in the transmutation of the individual. It is behind the man who achieves great things in the world and he can get nowhere without it. A man must have faith in himself, and faith on the self level is egotism. Ambition is egotism used in a constructive way. So long as it is constructive and harmless to others, it is a virtue and God can use it.

The energy of egotism is not a force that we acquire. It is a natural force that is born with us, which begins to flower at the time of puberty. It develops in us through attention and exercise. Hence it cannot summarily be killed out by the human will simply because we come to the place where we no longer care for it. It is one old shoe that we cannot cast off in disgust after it has served us faithfully for many years. The drive of egotism, like all other instinctive drives, can be misused, but it can also be translated into a power that will serve the Kingdom of God. Untranslated, however, it slows up our spiritual progress as does any uncontrolled appetite. It may be thought of as the taproot for the many-branched tree of religious pride.

Such pride operates as a lock in a river dam. It cuts off the flow of water. When pride is absent the spiritual power can flow, but when it is present it shunts off nearly everything pertaining to the life of the Spirit. It is certain to establish deceit and dishonesty. These are two enemies very hard to overcome,

because they are so subtle and clever in their operations.

Self-deception is the first problem of the ego. It does no good to pretend we have no egotism. Pretense will work in the world after a fashion, but it will not work at all in religion. It dries up the central wellsprings of the Spirit, and this no doubt accounts for the arid condition of so many religious personalities.

In spiritual matters a man has not attained until he can say the thing he means, until he has integrity before God, whom he cannot deceive. Honesty is one of the cardinal commandments of the spiritual world. This quality is evident in all of the great spiritual documents, both ancient and modern. These writings have come from the minds and hearts of saints and mystics through the centuries. Two things are noticeable in them: first, the freedom with which they make use of the personal pronoun; and second, the absence of quotation.

Those persons who have come into a right relationship to their ego speak freely for they are not concerned with what men are likely to say about their offerings, whether spoken or written. They simply report on their findings without any desire for fame or fortune; they have no theological argument to defend. As one reads their works he feels the writer reports what he means and means what he reports.

A man began a long account of his problems to me one day with these words: "All our life we have aspired toward spiritual things. . . ." I have learned that the extreme egotist who deplores his egotism is

likely to say "we" when he means "I." He pretends modesty. I found that this man bore out my observations. Although he had aspired, as he claimed, toward spiritual attainment all his life, he refused the cultivation of self-honesty. His egotism remained unchanged, untranslated—and it defeated him at every turn. It kept him alien to humility, the absolute requirement, and kept him in pride, the absolute bar against life in the spiritual world. For this willful consent to deception he had to harvest a frightful consequence in every area of his life.

He deserted his church to become a kind of wandering religious vagabond, cruising all over the world for a religion that would condone self-assertion and self-importance—a religious organization that would dovetail with egotism and the illusion of grandeur. He searched in vain, of course, for a genuine religion of this kind, since no real religion will support an irreligious intellect.

The outcome of his failure was the development of a negative personality and an anemic character. These conspired against him, causing him to spend most of his time trying to elevate his own religious hotch-potch by denouncing the religion of others. He had become a subversive ranter and rabble rouser. As such he had destroyed the wavering faith in thousands of impressionable people, and especially had he imposed upon the faith of earnest but unstable women. For this he was compelled to reap a harvest of poisoned fruit.

However, underneath his false armor was a real man, the man who panted and thirsted and hungered

for the water of life. He was an intelligent, even brilliant man. And finally, after a determined facing up to the analysis of himself and the truth then revealed, he calmly said: "All right then. What do you suggest?"

The rest was easier.

"Just be honest about your life. God can now transform your problem if you'll only let Him have it. In frank, secret confession, with a genuine integrity, steadfastly release it to Him in prayer. Work toward the establishment of a true faith, and then do the works that build faith in others, instead of destroying their faith. "You will feel the sense of release through the making of amends; your difficulty will be sublimated into a true aspiration, and be changed from a curse into a blessing."

Finally I counseled:

"Get rid of the deceitful 'we' when you mean the truthful 'I' and leave the result with the Father of Lights."

You may think I have overstressed his egotism as revealed in his use of "we" instead of "I." Yet it is incontestably true that what this man failed to achieve in a lifetime he now accomplished in one year of honest discipline and steady surrender.

Akin to self-deception is the *savior complex*. It is met with in a variety of shades, ranging all the way from a Hitlerian world savior to a specialized savior of individual sinners.

The following is a rather exceptional case of the religious savior complex. It is not intended to be repre-

sentative in its result, but is selected because of the typical manner by which it became established.

The woman in question was in her early thirties, had no children and had recently suffered the loss of her husband whom she dearly loved. She was a devout Christian, but she had not experienced the grace of conversion. She was a beautiful woman, accomplished in music and literature. After her husband's death she had returned to the private secretarial work which she had once practiced, and was holding again an excellent position with a large business concern.

A new minister came to take over her church. His personality, his interpretations, his fresh optimism, and exuberant spirit strongly influenced her, and she always felt a sense of release and a deepened faith and aspiration after one of his sermons.

She went to him one day and asked him what God's will was for her. In doing this she placed a tremendous responsibility on the minister, which he immediately recognized. "Let us pray about it," he said. After they had prayed he felt guided to tell her that her religious work belonged among the educated classes, and he inspired her to believe that she could do God's will in this area of society.

Though she attempted a sort of individual evangelism among her cultured friends and acquaintances, she soon realized that her offerings were not accepted, and a kind of spiritual frustration settled over her spirit. For relief she began to read books about radiant living and she became specially influenced by the experiences of St. Francis of Assisi, after which the idea of

the practice of poverty took hold on her with a strange and persistent fascination. One night she reached a sort of crisis and made a decision.

If the people of opulence would not listen, then she would sell what she had and cast her lot among the poor. Here she would distribute all her possessions; being now a promoter of the Gospel, she would give up her job and live by the Gospel.

Her experience in the underworld gradually convinced her that the established Christian churches cared nothing for the poor, the outcasts, and the underprivileged of society, and she now severed her connections with organized religion, condemning even the missions to the underworld as being corrupt, as using sacred poverty for an excuse to beg money which was converted to selfish personal ends.

All this developed consciousness grew upon her by degrees. In time she began to feel herself alone among the castoffs, while still experiencing a heavy sense of responsibility for them; then followed the delusion that she moved among the shabby sinners as their savior.

Since she was not a real convert to Christianity and her experience of the underworld was that of a novice, she was like a lamb among hungry lions. Her money was soon gobbled up by those who pretended to accept her claims. And the dead weight of the underworld, instead of being lifted by her efforts, slowly but surely dragged her down to its sordid level. She now reasoned that if by yielding to vice she could save one of the degraded, then she would even yield to vice.

This new delusion became a fixed condition of her consciousness, and as she moved among the derelicts of life, some not quite so degraded, even sickened at her own degradation. By now she was in the very depths, a ragged crone, a sordid, unwashed, ugly, vice-ridden creature, a gray-dark ghost of the capable, beautiful woman she had been but three years earlier.

It was not until she was on her deathbed that my wife and I learned of her. She was then incoherent and conversation was almost impossible. But we took our position on each side of her bed, and did what we could. We took her poor, skeleton hands in ours and we had her repeat three times with us, "I belong to Christ."

Even as she did so a faint radiance came to her seared and sunken face, and we saw once again the Master's magic touch in our own time and generation. Presently she passed into a coma, and not long after, her spirit sped away to unite with the only real Savior of this world.

Another complex that grows out of untranslated egos might be defined as the *false conversion complex*. Here the individual thinks that he has arrived. This is a deadly delusion since it arrests spiritual growth and dulls the radiance of life. In sham conversions the victims settle down. This leads to spiritual self-satisfaction, hypocrisy, imitated piety, prejudice, pride, pretense, self-importance, a repulsive intolerant personality, an arrested soul and an unwholesome character.

One of the marks of real conversion is a recurring

uncertainty, a creeping in, as it were, of occasional doubts about it. The converted man is certain of the words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," and yet he is uncertain. Certain of the Master but uncertain of the adequacy of his own response.

A real conversion is only the beginning of religious conduct. From this point on there is a continuing adjustment to the new impulse upward. Conversion allows everything but self-satisfaction, denies everything that leads to conversion fixation.

One man said: "I'm going to be honest with you. I've sat for fifteen years in the same pew. I've made preachers and I've broken them, too. I've collected choirs and disrupted them. I've forced open doors to church offices and closed them. I've dictated and dominated and browbeaten. I've never been anything but right, while everybody else, at one time or another, has been utterly wrong. I have criticized and condemned. I have sat in pious judgment, wrapped securely in a cloak of self-righteousness. And through it all I have never doubted my own position, for I was absolutely sure of my own conversion. So positively certain was I that I could name the hour and minute I was totally and completely saved."

His confession interested me because of its rare honesty.

"What has made you change your mind?" I asked him.

Here was his revealing answer.

"My children did it. My girl is eighteen. She had been forced to go to church. On her eighteenth birth-

day she rebelled. There was liquor on her breath, a cigarette in her painted lips.

"My boy, twenty, refuses to go to church any more. A month ago he faced me with some facts that threw me into a violent rage. Since then I've been compelled to examine what he said, and the honest result hasn't been much in my favor."

Briefly the boy told his father that if he was an example of the Christian way of life, then he (the boy) thought the Christian way was the last word in the lexicon of deceit and self-centeredness.

This father was one of the many victims of a false conversion complex, which had suffocated the spirit of his long-suffering wife, and now alienated both his children. He said simply that he had been influenced by one of my books, and that he was now ready for discipline and Christian action. Defeat had brought him to decision, as it had brought millions before him, including myself.

When a man has suffered enough he will take up religious discipline, and when he does this he is halfway out of his difficulty. Together we looked at a few fundamental issues, which he took to heart and home with him. Action that corresponded with his expressed good intentions followed and was soon effective. There has been steady improvement in all the departments of his life, and he feels that real conversion is now taking place inside him. The age-old process of Christianity is at work within him. The burden of years of self-righteousness having rolled away at the Cross, he is

now on pilgrimage, being genuinely saved by His grace.

Another manifestation of the unredeemed ego is that of *religious superiority*—an assumption that one is the sole or unique recipient of God's truth and therefore has an irrepressible message to convey to mankind. Self-will marks such deluded leaders.

There follows a case of self-will versus God's will, of self-assertion versus self-submission. A woman of fifty had four children, all grown-up, all married except the youngest, a daughter, soon to marry. For years her home life had been unhappy, all because she had failed to convert children or husband to her peculiar religious views.

She was brought up in the Christian church, of which her husband was also a member. After her children were born she learned of a way to talk with God directly. Thereupon she took a correspondence course and found out, as she said, how to carry on a conversation with God. It was much like telephoning to a friend, as she explained it, except that God Himself was on the other end of the wire listening and commenting.

Possessing this accomplishment she no longer had need of her church so she gave it up. Her new approach to God's ear released a lot of missionary zeal in her, and she set out to convert her family first of all, to share with them her wonderful discovery of this private wire to the Throne of God.

They were either unreceptive to her message or were willfully stubborn about it. All that came of her

missionary home labors was religious disaster. The husband became sickened with all religion and no longer went to church. The children were permitted to have their way, and that way no longer led to Sunday school. The net result of her new religion was—no religion for her family. The family conflicts raged, and she became worn, haggard and neurotic, but still determined to save her own household.

Obviously this mother had the wrong god on her private phone. He could answer her and make her believe he was there all right, but was powerless to make her a successful mother and homemaker, or to restore the lost faith of her husband and children.

She had ceased to abide in the true vine, and His words had ceased to abide in her. Consequently her faith was misplaced, her prayers went amiss, and spiritual tragedy followed in all her ways. That she had faith there was no doubt. But that to which her faith was pinned was false, giving correspondingly false results.

She was advised to see a certain psychiatrist, which she did. She was treated, of course, for her mental and nervous condition, but the sum total of direction for her was a return to and faith in the God she had once worshiped in her church.

Problems Arising out of Misapplied Religious Practices. Growth in "otherworldliness" is a gradual development and comes slowly as a result of a steady yearning and effort to live the good life. The new aspirant in the spiritual life searches eagerly for those

methods of prayer by which he may come into a clearer understanding of God's will. There are many books of instruction as well as instructors in the ways of meditation. Methods of meditation are doubtless conducive to growth but it is essential to realize that some are true guides and some are misleading. Some are helpful to one temperament, some to another. Even if a right method is discovered, if the actuating method of the seeker is selfish, he will sooner or later get into trouble.

This is a case of a man of forty-five, in his very prime who used *wrong methods of meditation*. A member of a Christian church, he contributed to it generously; he and his family were regular worshippers. His attitude toward the Church resembled his attitude toward his club. It was a worthy institution without which no community could peacefully survive. It gave him a certain prestige and in various ways helped his business. However, the doctrines and concepts of religion had only a casual hold on him, and he gave little thought to the inner purposes and meanings of the Christian way of life.

He was economically secure, his family was provided for, his marriage was harmonious, his physical health good, and seemingly he was a contented man. However, he was miserable. His eyes were haunted with a nameless, subtle dread. His nights sleepless, his days were a brooding torment and battle against suicidal impulses.

His difficulty had begun when, at the request of a friend, he attended a lecture given by a Hindu re-

ligious leader on the advantages of meditation in the practical affairs of life. Immediately his interest had been aroused and captured. A class of evening lessons on the subject was announced and he enrolled and attended.

The teacher was no doubt sound in his methods, but he could have no control over the students after his class adjourned. How much of his technique they managed to absorb he could not know. Nor could he know their motives, or the manner in which they would apply his methods.

The result of the practice in this man's life was tragic. He had attacked the process with a businessman's zeal and strain. Day in and day out, at regular intervals, he forced himself into tense physical postures. In the evening he would withdraw from the fellowship of his family and strain at concentration. For hours he would sit in the dark apart, and by sheer will power would battle violently against the encroachment of mental distractions.

These tussles were naturally accompanied by a heavy suffusion of blood to the brain, causing congestion, and forcing an unnatural pressure on the sensitive brain tissue. By and by, after each meditation, he began to feel a sense of fatigue, a sort of numb, pepleless condition, which grew steadily worse until he found himself in a permanent state of mental and physical exhaustion.

Stubbornly determined to conquer these initial effects, he kept up the practice, until eventually he became the hapless victim of total inertia. His business

had to be transferred to a salaried manager, for he could no longer face the slightest responsibility or make even an unimportant decision. Yet the doctors could find nothing organically wrong with him, nor could the psychiatrists help him.

He was, and always had been, of the extrovert type; he had behind him a pure Western heredity; his social contacts and fellowships were and always had been of an exoteric or external nature; that is, concerned with the multitude. The meditation he was attempting to practice was suited only to the introverted temperament; it was purely Oriental, and belonged to the plane of esoteric society—the select few entrusted with the inner secrets. In a word, it was a system of self-realization which demanded that he reverse his entire nature, which, of course, was out of the question, and the inevitable result was exaggerated strain and ultimate disaster.

I made all this clear to him. I even told him that the way out of his difficulties was meditation, the very practice that had got him into difficulty. But now he was to employ a method suited to his particular constitution and temperament. And that method was Christian, exoteric or external in its approach, and without strain.

I counseled him to take three cardinal rules of Jesus, faith, works, and love, and begin to practice them, not on himself but for others, and he was to do it secretly. He was to keep everything secret, not even confiding in his wife.

He was to think in terms of Christian love toward

people as he moved about; he was to attempt feelings of trust toward people, silently and secretly, resolutely overcoming the habit of judging by appearances, and with his money he was to conduct secret charities that would not contribute to people's indolence and weakness but to their strength.

I told him to read his Bible in secret, and to hold at least three brief prayer periods each day, also in secret, but while in the company of others praying for them and not for himself.

To get this program really going it was necessary for me to spend two weeks with him. Afterward I asked him to keep in touch with me and report his progress from time to time.

Not two months passed before the inevitable began to happen: he reported such improvement that people were seeking him for advice concerning their spiritual problems. This, without any effort on his part to attract them. His old-time energy began to flow once more, and in a few months he was back in his business, a far better businessman; and back in his church, too—a far better Christian.

Here is a story of a woman of thirty-five who followed a *religious practice based upon self-getting*. When she came to me she talked incessantly, her mind running on and on, like a wound-up machine until, after hours of waiting on my part, she revealed to me the source of her trouble.

She had been a buyer for a large department store. She was efficient, good-looking, in the pink of health, with endless energy to travel, bargain and achieve.

Her job was safe. She made a large salary, owned her own home and car, and had no dependents save her mother with whom she lived. Unmarried, economically secure, apparently she had little to worry about.

As she approached thirty, however, she did begin to worry, not about the prospects of marriage, for she had settled that question on the side of single blessedness. But she worried about her age, and the possibility of being supplanted in her job by a younger woman.

To meet her seeming need, a meditation manual was casually placed in her hands. It told of mysterious spiritual powers which could be drawn upon to maintain youthfulness and vitality, and to assure a magnetic personality. The book introduced her to a strange process called "brain breathing," with a number of breathing exercises worked out in the text.

Now these breathing exercises for the purpose of gaining extrasensory powers are essentially Oriental, but they can be adapted profitably to Occidental natures. Unfortunately they can also be employed in a faulty way and bring speedy disaster to the unsuspecting novice.

The breathing exercises in connection with meditation, as practiced by the Yogi cults of India, do achieve the claims made for them. But even in the Orient where the practices are perfectly applied, and usually under the direct guidance of a teacher, there is a tendency toward physical and mental inertia, which is bad for social obligations and responsibilities. As a nation India has long gathered the decayed fruit of social apathy, indifference, and group passivity.

When we find these Eastern breathing exercises promoted in the West we invariably discover the root of selfishness. Their promoters appeal to the selfish strain in the prospective student, who is stimulated by the thought of getting something for himself. Any religious theory or practice which is based upon self-getting, instead of more adequate self-giving, is likely to end in tragedy for most devotees of the cult.

It was so in the case of this woman. She was an earnest but selfish student. She was persistent and diligent in her practice of controlled breathing. But in the main the human brain is an electrical organ, which can produce heat as well as light. The unwise pressure and unnatural tension imposed upon the brain by this devotee produced a condition she described as a sensation of fever. She had persisted so long in this fever-producing practice that her brain had been injured, and she faced not only a condition of intense inertia but possible insanity.

Here then, because of her breathing exercises, she had achieved just the opposite of the good things the manual had promised. Her job was gone, and she had no will to seek another. Her health was gone, and she was haunted with the conviction that she possessed a large assortment of physical diseases.

My notes show that I was in fairly constant touch with this case for a month before it was possible to suggest a program of correction and explain to her why these breathing exercises had immersed her in trouble.

I assured her that the exercises were not bad in

themselves but that the difficulty rose out of her wrong motives and misunderstanding, which accumulated tension and conflict instead of relaxation and harmony in her mind. True she had gained something in the practice, but the price was out of all proportion. One thing she had gained was a turning of her attention toward planes of higher possibility, a kind of selfish religion, while before she had no religious interest of any kind. She had been made conscious of the real importance of breath and she had gained a certain discipline of will in the practice.

It was pointed out to her that breath in its highest aspect was spirit and life, and she was told to study the first and second chapters of Genesis in this connection. Then she was advised to continue in her breathing practices, without strain and will-control, but instead of directing her breath, merely to follow it easily with the awareness that she was breathing in spirit, and the assumption that she was breathing out compassion. She was also advised to associate herself with a church or religious group and, wherever possible, assume some kind of leadership.

One evening, some weeks later, while she was practicing her exercise in this new way and with this new purpose, she had an experience which not only restored her equilibrium but had a transforming effect on her entire life. There was a sudden sensation, like an electrical shock, as she described it. Every cell in her body, she said, was suddenly revitalized and revived. Running through the entire physical organism there was a surge and thrill of new energies which she

had never experienced before. Her mind was illumined and her whole being seemed galvanized into purpose. The demand for action was immediate and irresistible. The faith state in her was instantly set free and now reigned supreme.

She received in experience the Spirit she had been attentive toward through practice. And now, instead of a mere intellectual idea of compassion going out on her breath, she felt a tremendous outpouring of redemptive love for all people, and a vivid awareness of the transcendent beauty and significance in all things. The experience was followed by a new and growing stability of character, a new and growing magnetic quality of personality which had a calming and redeeming influence on others.

Thereafter the acquisition of knowledge came easily, as did the unfolding and perfecting of several specialized talents. Her power of judgment was now good. And there seemed to be wisdom present with her rising needs.

This was also revealed in the fact that she married and settled down to the most important business in life, that of putting her skills and powers behind her husband and establishing a rounded Christian home, society's greatest and safest unit.

Another outgrowth of misapplied methods of meditation might be termed *religious hermitism*. Religious hermitism is good if its motive is pure, but it is tragic when it springs out of a selfish motive. In fact, it may be a form of exaggerated selfishness and yearning for spiritual attainment. Then it leads to idle daydream-

ing, delusions of self-importance, habitual mumbling and even a dangerous kind of conversational intercourse with the spirits of departed mortals.

A genuinely spiritual man is the offspring of unselfishness. He has a relaxed God-dependence on the one hand, and a deep concern for humanity on the other. He is not likely to develop a manner calculated to arouse disrespect in others, even though they may oppose his views. He will not appear inferior or superior, but normal. And his norm of conduct and behavior will probably be shaped on the pattern of Jesus. Any religious theory of practice which is based on self-getting instead of self-giving is likely to end in tragedy. This point is illustrated in the following case of a successful businessman of fifty years of age.

He had achieved success in his profession, but after several years of gnawing dissatisfaction, he had become bored and satiated.

He had been a Christian and an active layman in his church. Two tragedies occurred in his life, the loss of an only child and, years later, his wife. So far as family was concerned he was now quite alone in the world, and he began to know the deep, unshared pangs of loneliness. Into this void his church seemed unable to pour new wine.

The attachment he had had for his wife became greatly emphasized with her loss, and the very yearning he had for her, perhaps, brought him into contact with a famous psychic book. So he decided to close down his secular affairs, go into retreat—and seek communication with the spirit of his lost beloved.

He worked his program out in a methodical manner, putting it down on paper, a kind of blueprint. It contained in all six requirements, four physical, one emotional, and one mental. These were aimed at purifying and sensitizing himself so that he could receive and register the subtle motions from the spirit world, and thus contact his wife. His physical life would first rest on a rigid vegetarian diet. Second, it would be exposed to a great amount of sunlight. Third, it would be given an abundance of pure water within and without. Fourth, he would seek at least ten hours of sleep far above the monoxide belt of the earth.

He found an ideal location, which was drenched the year round by a beneficent sun. The air was clear, the stars low, the ground was deep and rich. There were no neighbors within three miles of his retreat, and a market was ten miles away, an easy drive for an occasional load of supplies.

Besides these physical requirements of his program he imposed the obligation of purifying his emotions and purging from his mind all worldly thoughts and interests—leaving an unobstructed entrance for his wife to impinge herself upon his consciousness.

He had been in his retreat several months before he had his first experience. While sitting in silence he felt that an invisible personality was getting through to him from the other world. This personality claimed to be his wife, and he was filled with joy.

There were other visits in rapid succession, and then some little details impressed themselves upon him which caused him to question the authenticity of the

experience or the identity of the personality, if she were indeed genuine.

As time went on he experienced the entrance of other personalities into his consciousness, and he began to make notes of these other-world happenings. In time he was convinced of the reality of it all. And by and by he began to receive what purported to be spiritual messages with a world significance.

At first these messages were beautiful, full of idealism and philosophy. But as he came more and more to accept them without question, they grew increasingly negative and ugly. From optimism they shifted over to outright pessimism, casting dark prophecies upon the screen of his mind. He saw great natural cataclysms in the offing, revolution, destruction.

Then he was shown alleged causes of it all. First he saw the Jews as the root of all evil. Next the Catholics were added to the gruesome list. Then along came the capitalists and politicians and the educators and the scientists and the publishers and film producers, and finally the Christians of every hue. He was subtly impressed with the idea that he himself was a chosen messenger and savior of humanity. He was now caught up in a vicious, subversive nightmare, by day and by night.

To all this was added eventually an attack upon his emotional life. Overwhelming sensual urges came upon him and for relief he was forced into onanistic habits that had always been repulsive to him.

He managed to pull out of the experiment before it was too late, and it was at this juncture that I met him

and began to survey his experiences and analyze them in the light of normalcy and sanity.

There had been nothing wrong with his program. It was simply the purgative way followed by countless saints and mystics before him, the unitive way of the great spiritual giants of all ages. The only difference between them and him was the difference of purpose. They had sought contact with the Spirit. He had sought contact with a spirit. They had found the one All-Spirit. He had found a vast assortment of spirits. They became conceived men. He became a deceived man. They had been possessed of the Spirit of God. He had become possessed of the spirits of the devil. They found a clean Spirit. He found an army of unclean spirits: the spirit of lust, the spirit of hate, the spirit of class and race prejudice, the spirit of intolerance, and so on.

Where he had been deceived and defeated was in the place to conquer. His program of bodily, emotional and mental purification was excellent, and he had the rare capacity to follow it. What he needed was a shift from a faulty purpose to a true purpose. The same program with a true motive, the desire to possess the Spirit and be possessed of Him, was the only needful thing for him.

As it turned out the result was spiritual experience, which bore rich fruit in the years that followed.

II. DESPAIR CAN BE TRANSMUTED BY WORKS OF FAITH

When we come right down to hard facts, we usually discover that most of our religious problems and other

problems, too, rise out of a feeble faith. When this condition is remedied and the faith state is permitted to function once more, we begin to achieve what had previously seemed impossible. For those who lack faith God's Kingdom comes through defeat. For those who have faith it comes through victory. The path of the faithless, however, is from frustration to frustration. The price paid for lack of faith is different for different people. For the woman I have in mind the price paid was prison for life. To her the Kingdom came through tragedy. Her faith was restored through the avenue of sorrow. But today, in her prison cell, she has more real life and riches than many a woman in a palace.

The following letter from her contains many quotations but it proves that she is really free, for she has the kind of freedom that overcomes the world:

"For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away His face from you, if ye return unto Him."

In these days of war and disaster many people are asking, "Has God turned away his face from us? Is he indifferent to our misery?"

Today we all want to make sure that God's face is still turned to us. The way to make sure is by keeping our face turned towards him. We know that in time the clouds will lift and the sun will shine again. Peace, love, and joy must return to the world as long as God has his face turned towards us. And it will be so turned so long as one keeps looking towards Him.

"The glory of God shone in the face of Jesus Christ." As we fight the good fight of faith we become stronger in his

faith. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed unto this same image from glory to glory."

When two people are closely associated for a long time, there seems to be an exchange of souls with bits of one soul appearing in the other. We see this among old people who have lived long together. They are much alike.

Carrying this idea into the realm of our associations with Jesus, it is thrilling to realize the possibility of changing our imperfect, human personalities into a likeness of him—if our associations with him are constant and cordial enough. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." We rejoice our hearts in Him. He forgives our sins and will purify our hearts through constant prayer. We shall grow stronger day by day, and become transformed.

An appraising look at your face in a glass may make you vain or humble. . . . And often one looks in vain for a beautiful face, for there is hardly one in a carload.

A face to be beautiful must have a redeemed and sunlit soul back of it. . . . A face that looks towards God, that belongs to a person who tries to do God's will, will capture a beauty and charm and serenity that cannot be bought, and cannot be acquired by artifice. It will develop grace and beauty as naturally as a flower.

A young man in prison who had lost his faith and had become disgusted with popular concepts of Jesus regained that faith and was born again. He wrote this vigorous description of the Christ child he had come to know:

Oh, he was born in a stable all right.

Men of genius, not quite catching the significance of

this fact, have used their artistic talents further to conceal it. They have put calcimine on the rough walls of the stable. Its rafters, festooned with dusty cobwebs, have been brushed and coated.

They have polished the flagstones with clean, fresh suds of home-made soap. They have forked out all the muck. The pungent smell of mice and the musty odour given off by little piles of mouldy feed have been generously supplanted by the sweet perfume of new-mown hay.

Art and devotion, working together, have made the stable worthy of the Purest Man who was born there. Even the animals of this renovated barn are on the verge of sprouting a halo.

It is a pretty stable, this re-created one. But it is not true to the stables round the Bethlehem of Jesus' day. They were not much like those of our modern dairy farms, clean enough for the stockholders to banquet in. The stable where Jesus was born was about the dirtiest place on earth.

It would be nice, of course, to have Christ born in a place of purity and virtue, where men think he should have been born. A King should be brought into the world by sterilized hands. His eyes should open to behold the masked face of a trained nurse. He should never be allowed to come into contact with germs, either physical, emotional, mental, or religious.

But I'm glad that the Christ I know was born in a sordid place. For if he had been born to purple he never would have found his way into this prison and I never would have found him, because the palace doors are barred to my kind, and they have armed guards on duty day and night to chase away all such human infection.

It has been my lot to share with many mothers in

wartime one of the deepest and most painful wounds of parenthood. Just how strict a parent should be with adolescent boys and girls of today, or how easygoing, is a question needing the wisdom of Solomon.

Experience taught me that our penitentiaries are not filled by men who were brought up in religious homes, and that our juvenile problem today is mostly a problem not of child delinquency but of parental delinquency.

Yet it is possible for religion to defeat its purpose in the home, especially if it is applied by the rule-or-ruin method.

The following is a typical case that occurred after the outbreak of war: The wound in this mother's heart was deep, her suffering tragic, for it was suffering inflicted by her thoughtless son.

"Where have I failed? How have I failed?"

With tear-filled eyes she asked these questions over and over.

The answer was simple: in her anxiety for her children she had preached too much. Just as simple as that. Her religion had degenerated into a process of nagging; it was not a gentle, continuous influence, but a domineering pressure; not an easy persuasion, but a pounding and shattering force. How many children or husbands, for that matter, can survive it but for the grace of God?

At the beginning of his teens her eldest boy began to show the normal signs of revolt. To the disciplines imposed by his mother he started to react unfavorably; gradually he ceased to respond to them at all. He

would point out that the home restrictions were not demanded at school, and were not imposed on other boys in their homes. Her authority over the boy vanished; and what obedience he did give was given against his will. As he resisted, so she persisted, and he lived and waited for the chance to escape. The war gave him that chance. It had snatched him, as he thought, from an intolerable situation. He was glad it came along.

He entered the army, not as a patriot, but as a *refugee*. His attitude was rather that of a convict whose release had only been made possible by war. But in his case enlistment meant escape from a home he had ceased to love—home that had become a prison house.

Once free of his mother and her fretful anxiety, of her spoken and unspoken accusations and suspicions, free of all her nagging and lack of trust, she existed for him no longer. He wrote her no letters, only an occasional greeting card in season. He was having his fling at freedom, and so he did not bother to come home on his furloughs.

She learned indirectly of his smoking, drinking and gambling, and her mother heart was broken.

"What can I do? What have I done? I love my boy!" was the burden of her heart.

I told her straight and simply to do just two simple things.

"If you feel you have made mistakes in the past—forget it. You love your boy. Of course you do. But it is a kind of overanxious, possessive love you have for him, that's the trouble. This kind of love generates

doubt and mistrust. Now you're a Christian woman, and you ought to act as a Christian mother. A Christian must have faith and believe in the promises of Jesus. So I want you to love this boy in a different way from now on. First you must cast your anxiety upon the Lord, where it rightly belongs, for He can use it by changing it to confidence in your heart. Stop loving him for yourself. But love him as though he were not yours, but God's boy. He is God's child, isn't he?"

"Yes, he is."

She admitted that one. Not always easy for a mother to do that.

"All right, then, let God possess him instead of you. If he belongs to God just be grateful that you have been allowed to share God's ownership of him. Begin to love him this way, as Jesus loves him. Do you really catch the vision and importance of this?"

"I think I do," she said doubtfully.

"Very well. That is the first step. Such love is edifying, it is redemptive and protective. You just add this kind of love to the hope that is already in your heart. This will give you two links in God's chain of salvation. Now there is one more link for you to forge into that chain. Do you know what it is?"

"Faith?" she queried with a look of further misgiving.

"Yes. It's the link of faith. Besides loving your boy—who is God's boy, remember—in the way God wants you to love him, you are to trust him entirely to God. Trust no longer in your own wisdom. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer . . . and thanks-

giving let your request be made known unto God . . . who will supply all your need according to His riches in Glory by Christ Jesus. . . . For this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.'

"Now let us enter into a conspiracy of faith through prayer, and agree together that God cares for your boy and is able to edify, protect, and redeem his life. Let us believe what has been stated: 'That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father in heaven. For where two are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.' As we now so agree He is in our midst. Can you trust Jesus Christ?"

I could see her changing, rising visibly to the challenge. And we prayed together, agreeing that God was able, that faith, hope, and love were the true mother's part in God's redemptive program for this boy.

Even as we prayed the silent influence went to work. For when this mother herself was edified and redeemed by faith, hope and love, her boy, who was a part of her, blood of her blood, flesh of her flesh, also became conscious of the redemptive influence, and there was at that moment a new bond established between mother and son.

By loving him as a child of God and by trusting him to Christ she had given him the freedom that binds without force or possessive restriction. Whom Christ sets free is free indeed, and whomsoever he frees he binds indeed. He is the bondage that liberates.

Prisoners within walls of stone and bars of steel, and

prisoners within walls of quivering flesh and bars of emotion—all have been opportunities for me to strengthen my own faith in the works of faith. How great has been my joy to watch the gift of faith recovered in those who had lost it, discovered in those who had never found it, and to rejoice with them all as they went forth into life and missionary service, working to restore and give faith to others.

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(Continued on back flap)

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