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Cobb is eminently qualified to discuss religion and spirit from a universal point of view.

# RADIANT LIVING

Spiritual Keys to Vital, Happy  
and Successful Living

by

Stanwood Cobb

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A KEY TO HAPPINESS

Best wishes

~

Stanwood Cobb

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LIFE WITH NAYAN

# RADIANT LIVING

*BY*

STANWOOD COBB

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Dedicated

to

My little god-daughter, child of the New Age,  
innately possessed of incomparable wisdom,—  
SHIRIN BAHIRIH LEE. May this book be a guide  
to her when its author has moved on in further  
search of Truth.

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PART ONE

RELIGIOSITY  
OR  
SPIRITUALITY?

## CHAPTER 1

### The Creative Design for Man

Nature is the expression of the Divine creative will. The plant and animal world have life, sentiency, adaptability. In fact, the members of these two worlds are provided with every vital need and are endowed from birth with the capacity for perfect functioning. They live successfully without conscious effort. They need no five-year plans in order to prosper.

Only man is given the gift of self-consciousness, a gift which endows him with the power of creativeness. But this gift incurs also a new necessity, that of planning.

True, man can live in a savage state with very little planning. He can live as the animals live, instinctively. But the glory of man's dowry lies in his power of intellection; his ability to enhance his native instincts and acquired habits with a power of thinking and fore-seeing. It is this power of fore-seeing—the fructification of a consciousness which is almost divine in its potency—that enables man to progress and gradually to conquer and rule his natural environment. By

*motivation to higher levels  
left to free will*

means of this conscious power he can build splendid civilizations.

Together with self-consciousness—and as a natural corollary of it—man has been given an extremely dangerous gift, that of self-will or freedom of choice. Man is the only creature who has this gift. He alone can choose direction for his acts; and apparently he has an almost unrestricted freedom as regards these choices. Man alone of all creation is put on his own, and is launched by birth upon a career of which he is to be the manager.

Were it not for this optative freedom, man would be unable to function as an individual. And it is for the purpose of developing individuality that man has been created—a dual being, the animal half supplemented by a more important half that is cosmic in its nature. Man's earthly nature could function almost automatically, in the way of animals. But his cosmic potentialities can be developed only through the expression of his individuality in a life-journey fraught with the constant necessity for choices.

What a dangerous design on the part of the Creator, to launch into a universe otherwise entirely and harmoniously obedient to the Creative will this strange entity *man*, endowed with the power of self-determination and the privilege of self-direction! What was the purpose of this?

The purpose of creation itself is, and must so remain, considerable of a paradox to us. If, however, we are to perceive any plan in creation it must be found at its apex—man. And if this human apex has any meaning as distinct from the meaning of plants and flowers and the world of animals from which he has evolved—this meaning must inhere in man's unique gift of self-consciousness and freedom of choice.

Animals have personality, but they do not have individuality. They have no power of self-development and self-fulfillment. Without this power man, too, would be a semi-automaton. But man was not created to this end. His destiny is one of self-fulfillment.

From birth man proceeds, at every step, to fulfill himself. Youth is a period of self-discovery, a period of reaching out, of expansion, of expression of innate powers. To youth the meaning of life is the fulfillment of oneself. If often this "self" that is being fulfilled is egocentric, that is but considered as part of the game of life.

By the time maturity is reached a man's abilities, tastes and proclivities should have found some satisfactory expression and direction. Every impulse moves him toward victories of self-expression. When he ceases so to move forward, when he becomes static, he has ceased to be fully human. Always in life there is

something more, something to reach forward to, new powers to develop, added resources of our being to convert into action. Who shall set limits to this unfoldment?

(2)

YOUTH

The Life-Force, when in the course of evolution it reaches expression in man, has as its chief function that of individualization. In fact, the whole course of evolution is one of a variation that has led from homogeneity into a heterogeneity which culminates in man.

In man, individuality appears as a precious and intended gift. Spirit, in its descent into human form, becomes individualized. And in this individualization, let us repeat, lies the very purpose of creation. In seeking to find himself as an individual, therefore, man is not "against the gods", but is fulfilling his destined mission. That this seeking for fulfillment of the self is the cause of most of man's sorrows upon the earth as well as his joys; the cause not only of all human progress, but also of all the frictions and disharmonies that disturb both private and public life,—this is a problem that needs careful study.

In itself the pursuit of self-expression is not an evil. Yet there are great risks in the process of self-development. Youth impinges upon a world of limitless

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self-expression good yet  
be careful

horizons, experiences and adventures. Innumerable paths lie open before him—paths of pleasure, paths of creativeness, paths of ambition.

Youth faces indeed a kaleidoscopic world, a world capable of furnishing illimitable patterns for his choice. It is a dazzling world, but also a dangerous one. For its guideposts are such as youth in general are unable to read. The only language man fully understands is the language of experience.

That such-and-such a path leads only to a cul-de-sac; that another leads along the dangerous edge of precipices; that some paths may even lead into situations where he will be utterly deprived,—of all these risks adults may warn youth and the teachings of religion may counsel him, yet unavailingly.

One of the chief paradoxes man faces in his life is the inseparable concomitance of right and wrong, of good and evil. Yet it is evident that the power of free will—the privilege of being an individual free to express one's uniqueness—can be granted to humans on no other terms than those which imply also the freedom to err and the freedom to sin.

Individuality, becoming egoism, can destroy itself. In the process of unfolding his innate powers man can develop *hubris*, as the Greeks named it—a pride and arrogance which can lead even to the very defiance of the gods.

5

Individuality and the ego



And such Nietzschean defiance is fatal to man, as history has amply shown. Individuality, uniqueness of selfhood is a gift. But it is a gift that must be safeguarded. Selfhood must not develop into selfishness, into pride, into disregard of the right of others.

(3)

At some point in life, egocentric tendencies should begin to be reversed so that one's expression of the life-force becomes centrifugal rather than centripetal. Instead of trying to grasp and hold all, we should learn to find a new law of growth and development which involves the practice of giving out, of service, of unselfishness.

*This strange reversal of the process of self-realization is necessary for the reason that man as a separate individual does not exist—even though there is inherent in his individualism the feeling that he does.*

It is true, man exists. His awareness of this fact has become the basis for the contemporaneous cult of existentialism. Man exists. But he has much more to consider, in order to live successfully, than the development of his individual gifts and the satisfactions of his own predilections. Actually, a human being—from the day of his birth—becomes a part of a nexus in which his actions have little independence. In all that this

new-born individual is to be or even to think, he will be indebted to the pattern in which he lives and which gives viability to his own abilities and efforts.

“Who owns this universe?” asks Henry Miller in his *Story of Conrad Moricund*. “Who regulates it? Whose spirit informs it? Why is everything so difficult, so obscure, so unsatisfactory? Because we have made ourselves the center of the universe, because we want everything to work out as we wish it. What we need to discover is what It wishes, call It life, mind or God, whatever you please.

“Most of the ills we suffer under are directly traceable to our own behavior. Man can eliminate war, can eliminate disease, can eliminate old age. He need not live in poverty, vice, ignorance, in rivalry and competition. All these conditions are within his province, within his power to alter. But he can never alter them so long as he is concerned solely with his own individual fate. We are all members of one body, as the Bible says.”

Man acts his part on this planet Earth. But his role is cast also on a still larger stage, that of the universe itself. And this actor man, in order to fulfill himself, must discover, if he can, the nature of this Universal Stage and the nature of the role which he is expected to fill.

And as to the universe itself, is it to be spelled with a capital letter? Is it a friendly Universe? If friendly, what is its relation to man? And what is man, as mortal, expected to do in order to relate himself harmoniously with this Universe?

Centuries before Christ came to reveal to us the true nature of the Universal life, the Greeks arrived intuitively at a vital truth concerned with human behavior as related to that Superhuman Rule they felt prevailed over the universe. This truth, as expressed in the Greek tragedies, was that man could not safely defy the Gods. Excessive individualism, pride of ego, *hubris*, inevitably got its nemesis. There was not room in the Universe for a multiplicity of conflicting wills. The Titans, in their efforts to scale the parapets of heaven, were cast down. And human pride, in all of its manifestations, was disfavored by the gods.

Christ put this noble truth more definitely. "Love thy neighbor as thyself. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Overcome the selfishness of others by a supreme generosity, and defeat cruelty with love." The supreme role for which man was cast by the Creator requires the exact opposite of selfishness and egoism.

This law of love, this Golden Rule, is not only feasible—it is essential for successful living on earth. And how much more vitally important then it must be for

successful existence in that Beyond-world, which to be *heavenly* must be void of all that is frictional and disharmonious. "Only the peacemakers shall see God."

Salvation, as preached in all the religions of the world, implies this apotheosis of the self. It is the central theme of Christ's teachings. This losing of self does not entail any lessening of man as an individual entity. Actually it is a process of enlargement of man's powers, by bringing man as an individual into his destined relationship with that greater Whole which is the source of all life, of all wholesomeness, of all perfections.

When man attains this innate relationship with the Divine, his powers are increased. Such a consciousness penetrates to broad horizons. That drop which in isolation has little power, when functioning within the depths of the ocean partakes of the ocean's limitless force.

(4)

The attainment of selflessness is the only path to salvation. Self-will cannot be allowed to continue uncurbed indefinitely, else there would result a destructively chaotic condition in the Cosmos.

If existence were confined to this earthly plane the

conflict of egos unsubordinated to Order would be bad enough. But an existence that is continuous—as the soul's existence is believed to be—cannot adventure indeterminately in a progressive enhancement of powers, unless these powers are voluntarily dedicated to the greater Purpose and subordinated to the greater Whole.

Submission to a higher legitimate power, allegiance to something greater than oneself, even in human relationships, is seen as the road to the successful expression of one's individuality.

Take for example the conquest of Mexico by Cortez. This intrepid warrior, one of the world's greatest leaders of men, with four hundred faithful followers conquered a domain larger and richer in civilization than that conquered by Julius Caesar on the battlefields of Europe. His conquests were made possible only by the faithful allegiance of his followers who reposed all trust in him, subordinated their ambitions to his, and united their wills with his greater and more astute will.

As a result of this subordination of private individuals to a great enterprise conducted by an all-gifted leader, these adventurers—who apart from Cortez would have led mediocre lives—became themselves conquerers.

The lesson to be drawn is this: The subordination of man's will to a higher will by no means implies a lessening of man's powers, of his dignity, or of his individuality. On the contrary, such a subordination is the road to the most exalted development and achievement of which man is capable.

All creative people who have achieved greatness have done so by placing their gifts upon some altar of devotion. To haggle such gifts for sale at the marketplace is less than the perfect fulfillment. When our gifts are used on a plane above that of self-satisfaction, they acquire the potentiality of an extraordinary success.

Witness the miraculous transformation which took place in the lives of certain fishermen and other humble followers of Christ. These disciples of Christ did not, it is true, succeed in becoming completely selfless during their brief training of three years in His exalted company. But after Christ's death they did so succeed. And the achievement of these twelve men, most of whom were humble and illiterate, inaugurated a way of life which has changed the face of the world.

(5)

The Kingdom of God is operable only when its driving force is cosmic love. This love is both objective and

subjective. As objective, it is adoration for God. As subjective, it is a fructifying of one's heart and soul with that Universal Love which is the essence of Divinity, the cause of Creation, and the operative power of the Cosmos.

The love of oneself is a disappointing affair. He who bestows all his love upon himself loves something unworthy, illusionary, and tragically unrewarding. Whereas he who apotheosizes his love, who lifts his heart to the universal plane, then loves something all-rewarding. By this adoration of Perfection he tends himself to become more perfect; and by universalizing his love he attains a potency such as nothing else can give.

Thus man's approach to the universalization of his soul and to the subordination of his ego to the Infinite Being must be through love. Only this impulse of the heart can empower the change from selfishness to saintliness. The mind can arrive at some realization of truth; but the dynamics for living must be found in deeper regions of man's being.

As we have pointed out, human souls are free. They can create effects which cannot be traced to any cause outside themselves. Here, in this freedom of will of human beings, lies a dangerous potential, a dynamism which must somehow be regulated.

If God had not placed within man the capacity for love, He would never have ventured to launch man forth upon his unique creative career of self-propulsion. Love is the necessary factor of governance in this creative design.

**“Religion is the first and last, the universal language of the human heart.”**

**—W. Waldemar Argow.**

#### RECAPITULATION

It is apparent that the purpose of creation—or as we know it on this planet as differentiation—is a process of evolution which reaches its climax in man. Here individualization exists to a degree unknown on lower levels of existence.

Individuality is the precious dower of every human being. From birth he develops as an individual according to his inborn pattern. This development is his duty toward himself and it is also the duty of society to aid and abet such development.

But this process of self-development tends to become egocentric. The striving for success and the public adulation which success brings at every level tends to develop selfishness and vanity. How to manage that self-development which is the very essence of our be-

ing, and yet remain selfless and humble—this is one of the major problems of life.

It was to aid in such problems that the Founders of the world's various religions devoted their lives and their teachings. Their message was unanimous in declaring selflessness to be the spiritual goal toward which all men should aspire. And they envisioned a time to come upon this planet when humanity in general would achieve this spiritual requirement, resulting in a more perfect world planetary organization in which God's will would be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.

This spiritual voiding of self does not imply a lessening of man's powers. On the contrary, the voluntary submission of the individual to the Universal enhances his powers and aids him on reaching the ultimate development of himself both as an individual and as a social being.

Submission, the Key  
to Harmony

## CHAPTER 2

### Foundations of Faith

If it were possible to trace chronologically so intangible a process as the spiritual evolution of mankind, one would encounter a remarkable series of historical developments the concurrence of which seems to defy all logical explanation. In the middle of the first millennium before Christ there occurred a tremendous and almost simultaneous blossoming—in all quarters of the then civilized world—of man's philosophic and religious nature.

George Sarton, in his *Introduction to the History of Science*, says of this period: "One has the feeling of witnessing a real explosion of intellectual energy, and not only in one place, but all over the world—in Greece, in Judah, in Babylonia, in India, in China." How is it that the human seems to reach its maturity, a relative maturity, at about the same time in so many different countries, each so distant from the other?

Historians of 4000 A.D., looking back to today, may be inclined to make the same remarks concerning the phenomenal scientific and technological progress

which characterizes this century. There may be a good deal of truth in the German philosophical—almost mystical—idea of the *Zeitgeist* or Spirit of the Time.

At any rate, humanity effloresced in a miraculous way during the sixth century before Christ. In Greece creative minds were laying the base for “natural philosophy”, which we now call science. Thales, Anaxamander, Anaximenes, Xenophanes, and a little later Pythagoras, were boldly exploring the nature of the universe, discarding mythology. And for the first time in the history of the world men began thinking about existence realistically. These pristine thinkers were not only scientists. They were philosophers, poets, and seers.

In Judah the prophets—notably Jeremiah and Isaiah—were giving that ethical and Messianic slant to Judaism which prepared it for the advent of Christ.

In China two great religious teachers functioned contemporaneously—Confucius and Laotse.

In India Buddha was bringing a spiritual message which enlightened Asia and eventually influenced human thought the world over.

The Medes and Persians, inspired by the teachings of Zoroaster, irrupted into the Fertile Crescent from the hardy Iranian plateau and founded under Darius the world's first empire, which collocated the diverse cultures of Western Asia and thus bequeathed to the

later conquering Greeks and Romans the foundations of universal culture.

The flowering of religious thought in that phenomenal sixth century B.C. is all the more remarkable because—so far as we can tell—there could have been little or no contact between any of these seers and sages of India, China, Persia or Palestine.

This brilliant and philosophically fecund period marks a crucial point, not only in the progress of civilization, but in the awakening of man to his spiritual nature. For man, finding himself part of a cosmic organization of infinite scope, began consciously to subordinate himself to the authority of these teachings which he came to regard as Divine Revelation. The established mores such as had evolved through a system of trial and error were now to yield everywhere to this new Authority. Humanity had definite spiritual guideposts to follow in the form of the WORD.

From this epoch onward the vitality and dynamism of religion based upon Revelation became apparent. The Jews, of course, were no strangers to Revelation. They had the Torah and the Ten Commandments; and it was no small and insignificant force that had produced the Twenty-Third Psalm at a time when much of the world lived under the compulsions of lower or higher forms of animalism. But now, with the promise of the Messiah, Judaism was transformed from a tribal

religion to a lofty spiritual teaching which strengthened the solidarity of this ancient people.

A similar transformation took place in Southeast Asia where Buddha's teachings, preserved in the Dhamapada, created a culture of amazing gentleness and happiness. His influence reached even into China, where it produced, in combination with Confucianism and Taoism, the type of the "superior man"—the most perfect gentleman—and a civilization which by reason of its harmonious pattern surpassed in its duration all others in history.

With the dawn of Christianity it was the Revelation of God as seen in Christ which wrought the conversion of the Graeco-Roman pagan community and gradually brought to the uncivilized masses of Europe a higher order of existence with the promise of life "abundant and eternal".

And within a few centuries the power of the Koran, the sacred book believed revealed from heaven to the prophet Mohammad, forged a barbaric desert race into a true brotherhood and fired the Arabs with a missionary zeal which resulted in the spreading of their religion and culture from the gates of India to the Straits of Gibraltar.

(2)

Thus was civilization everywhere transformed as new truths were perceived and new values affirmed.

Yet it must be realized that this was no mere intellectual awakening. For, as we have seen, man is endowed with the capacity not only to know but to love. And no system of ethics and morals, no vague awareness of Divinity perceived solely through the intellect, could arouse in man those spiritual qualities which are nurtured by love alone.

The transformation, then, was wrought not so much by respect for these new teachings as by reverent devotion to the Prophet or Teacher—the Savior—through whom the Revelation was brought. Philosophers, perhaps, can purify their lives by abstractions. But mankind in general needs a living image as a fount of love and focus of faith. The noblest fruits of the spirit have been cultivated under religions of devotion—or *Bhakti* as the Hindus name it.

Historically there is striking evidence of the greater power of devotional religions focused upon a Savior than of religions developed philosophically without such focus. In Christendom it was belief in the Person of the risen Savior that converted timid and hesitant disciples into intrepid apostles and changed Paul from a persecutor of the Faith into its greatest missionary.

Paul, by forging Christianity into a religion of devotion—dying daily unto self in order that he might be reborn in Christ—achieved what Greek and Roman philosophy could never have accomplished.

The development of Buddhism gives further testimony of the human tendency to concretize religion. Guatama Siddartha, the historic founder, became transformed in the Mahayana doctrine into the Lord Buddha, Savior of Mankind; into the Bodhisattva, the Redeemer who will not accept Nirvana so long as a single soul remains unredeemed on earth; into Amitabha, Lord of Compassion, who would return to complete his task of human redemption.

The personality of the Buddha was thus apotheosized into a cosmic figure of the same dimensions as Christ of the Western world—"infinite in love, wisdom and power . . . an absolute being transcending time and space and manifesting himself in order to save all sinful beings". In short, out of the absolute Buddha (Buddha the Lawgiver) has the Buddha of salvation appeared.

The rise of Krishnaism—out of the welter of ritual and philosophic spiritual developments which characterized India at the beginning of our Christian era—is yet another example of the greater potency of devotional religion. The worship of Krishna as the Adored One became the source of the inspired and inspiring Bhagavad Gita, high point of Hindu religious thought which is today read with devotion in the Occident as well as the Orient.

It is in close association with the Savior—the Christ, the Buddha, the Lord Krishna—that occur the

spiritual phenomena of saintly lives. For such devotion helps in that process of detachment from the ego which we have seen to be the most important factor in man's spiritual fulfillment.

Love is the essential power, as it is the essential teaching of the Savior. And His example as well as His doctrine produces a powerful and transforming effect, as nothing else can, upon the heart of the believer.

Not only do all the founders of these devotional religions preach the same gospel of love and saintliness. They also prophesy a "return". Zoroaster made such a pledge in Persia millenniums ago. The return is inseparable from the Christian consciousness. Lord Krishna declared that he would return when the pillars of religion weakened and morals decayed. And in lands where Buddha reigns the greatest praise a father can give for good behavior of a son is to say: "May you live to see the coming of the Bodhisattva!"

Such are the foundations on which have been built the religious heritage of modern man. We shall go on to examine in more detail the similarity of these basic beliefs, in which spiritual man through the centuries has found his purpose for living and his promise of fulfillment.

"The Word is the fire of God, which, glowing in the hearts of the believers, burns away all that is not God," says Bahá u'lláh.



Sociologists in this secular age are inclined to look upon religion as an expression of the epoch. But the contrary is true of revealed religion, which declares lofty truths and principles that inspire nobler living *and create epochs rather than being created by them.*

Humanity needs the Revelator, not only as a path-shower but also as an object of devotion. The truths the philosopher teaches do not compel and mold humanity. But the truths the Revelator teaches do impel and mold humanity, because of the loving devotion and loyalty aroused in the hearts of all, even the illiterate and unlearned.

Man needs to find something greater than himself to look up to, to adore and to motivate his impulses toward self-improvement. Josiah Royce, Harvard philosopher, gave inspiration to the world in his little booklet "The Philosophy of Loyalty", in which he says that the individual does not reach maturity until he finds a Cause to which he can devote himself and in which he can lose himself.

History shows that of all causes that can win and hold men to more selfless living, the Religions of Devotion have been the most potent. Nothing can rival or compare with the ethical characters and the fruits of action created in the course of time under the ægis of the revealed religions; whose central theme is love, whose manifestation is love, and whose fruit is love.

All prophets have come not only to teach man the knowledge of God, but to lead him into the practice of the presence of God.

**"The great end in religion is to awaken the soul, and to bring understanding, conscience and heart into earnest vigorous action, to excite and cherish the spiritual life."**

**—William Ellery Channing.**

#### RECAPITULATION

It was a momentous epoch in the evolution of mankind when the Revelator appeared, almost simultaneously in every quarter of the globe.

Man at this point had reached his apotheosis as an evolutionary form. His body was perfectly evolved, also his mind. But his moral life was little above that of the animal—an assertion of the will-to-live, the will-to-prosper regardless of the needs and rights of others.

The Founders of the world's religions gave this evolving creature MAN authentic moral rules of behavior and a new vision of God as the Living Father.

All these world religions agree fundamentally in their moral and spiritual teachings: That man should

be considerate of others; act with justice and, even more than that, with compassion; regulate his actions by a golden rule of behavior befitting him as a being "made in the image of God".

It is these various religions of the world that have awakened man to the reality of his spiritual nature and taught him the rudiments of a new science—the science of the knowledge of God, and the ways in which to find an intimate relationship with Him.

All the religions agree that the fundamental aim of religion in the life of man is to help him lessen the hold of the lower self upon his motives and actions, while ever strengthening the innate struggle of his soul to achieve that pattern of Godliness for which he was created.

For the first time in the history of the planet man now had a definite spiritual chart to go by. That he has not become spiritually more perfect in the course of the last two millenniums is not the fault of the religions cosmically bestowed upon him.

*Now man upon this planet stands at the crossroads. Either he advances spiritually, in faithful and continuous effort, toward the Millennial goal destined for him; or he descends more and more into perdition toward those cataclysms always consequent upon grave immorality and harmful psychism.*

## CHAPTER 3

### The Manhood of Humanity

The spiritual ferment that literally exploded into the world during the first millennium before Christ played an ameliorating role in the life of man, aiding in the rise of great civilizations and educating mankind in the awareness of righteousness, though not in its complete and wide-spread practice.

Thus by the twentieth century all of humanity—with the exception of one percent in the heart of Africa that is still pagan—have become attached to one religion or another. Virtually all the peoples of the world have become *religionists*, accepting the authority and carrying out the external practice of ritual of their respective faiths.

*But this does not mean that all humanity has become spiritual. Far from it.* Though religion has been the means of lifting and widening the vision of humanity, of ennobling its motivations and of improving its morals, yet even in the present era of enlightenment a very small percent of humanity are truly spiritual.

Man, up to date, has passed through the primary grades so to speak, of his spiritual education. In it he has acquired the belief in a Supreme Being and the use of symbols which convey to him and keep alive in his being his belief in God; partial consciousness of the Divine; and intermittent use of prayer.

*But the spiritual life requires much more than this. It requires a constant realization of Deity; a prevailing love of God and man; and the ennobling of all man's thoughts, motivations and actions.*

"Religion has largely lost its significance for many areas of human activity," says the American Council on Education. "Politics, business and industry, and the broad patterns of group behavior are no longer responsive to religious sanctions. This is the expression of secularism in recent history. It is not a denial of religion, but a denial of its relevance to the major activities of life."

Humanity was ready, two thousand years ago, to enlist eagerly under the banner of this or that revealed religion and accept its lofty truths. But humanity was not ready at that time to put these truths into universal daily practice. It was not yet sufficiently evolved. Only the priesthood could read. Books and libraries were rare privileges. And the mentality of the masses was suffused—and remained so suffused—with all sorts of superstitions. It was therefore not to be expected that

the lofty teachings of the prophets could transform the lives of the masses—so prone to ignorance, selfishness, cruelty and lust.

What religion did for humanity was to bring it gradually under the sway and potency of revelatory precepts of ethical behavior. It was the task of the priestly caste to instruct, guide and coerce—as far as was possible—this illiterate and carnal mass of humanity into some semblance of a religious brotherhood.

But today the situation is far different. The mass of humanity is far more refined than at the dawn of the Christian epoch. Education has overcome illiteracy and spread far and wide the blessing of the book. The masses do not have to rely only upon the priesthood for their religious instruction and their spiritual ideas. Nor are they dependent only upon the church ritual for their spiritual upliftment. Inspirational and sacred literature is always at hand, available for their own study and meditation and daily inspiration.

*As the end of our second Christian millennium approaches man is ready to take an important step forward in his evolution, a step-up which would convert religiosity into spirituality.*

New ideals of world brotherhood are being literally forced upon the world by the demands of the times.

As regards man's individual life, there are men and women everywhere who are willing, even yearning, to ponder earnestly on those spiritual values which give such promise in the direction of inspiring, of transforming and uplifting every aspect of our daily life. *Religion means nothing if it does not mean the application of these values to our daily existence, the enrichment of our living by spiritual truths. The world is rapidly becoming prepared to contemplate these truths—truths perceived by the world's mystics down through the ages.*

Mysticism is not in reality a thing apart from life. It is rather a state of being, that—by means of penetrating to the very essence and inner nature of things—increases man's power to control events instead of being controlled by them.

He who does not know why he acts, or how he should act, is prone to be controlled by forces outside of himself such as eternally are impinging upon him. That man only who has begun to understand himself and his true relation to the world outside himself is able to free himself from events which might bring chaos into his own life and the life of the world.

When we have discovered the mystic secret of saintliness we can then begin consciously to apply it to human living. Such was the hope of Pitirimi A. Sorokin,

Harvard sociologist, as expressed in his *Reconstruction of Humanity*.

“Genuine creativeness (in the religious life) demands something more than the operation of our conscious egos. This ‘something more’ is the inspiration or intuition of the superconscious. It is unimportant how we designate it, as the ‘superconscious’, genius, the grace of God, divine madness or whatnot. Whatever the name, it is something irreducible to any ‘unconscious’ factor or even rational consciousness.

*“What is needed is a concentration of humanity's efforts on unlocking the secrets of the superconscious as the realm of the most powerful, most creative, and most ennobling force in the entire universe. The more man becomes an instrument of the superconscious, the more creative, wiser and nobler he grows; the more easily he controls himself and his unconscious and egoistic conscious energies; the more he comes to resemble God as the supreme ideal. Here lies our main hope, the road to humanity's promised land of peace, wisdom, beauty and goodness.”*

As in the classic Graeco-Roman age humanity was prepared to become religious, so in the present age humanity is prepared to become spiritual. There are signs of this at every hand. But this spiritualization of humanity will be a gradual process, just as the religionizing of the planet was a gradual process. It will be,

perhaps, a bit of spiritual fire burning here, and a bit there, until the conflagration becomes universal.

Far from being depressed by the fact that after centuries of religious life so few of mankind aspire to the spiritual, let us have assurance that upon the foundations that have already been laid throughout the world, humanity will now press forward to evolve a truly spiritual pattern of living.

(2)

Humanity faces today a crisis which can plunge it into disaster or usher it into a new epoch of planetary unity and progress. Maturity is called for—emotional, intellectual and spiritual—a condition such as Count Alfred Korzybski, founder of semantics, called “the manhood of humanity”.

Science, more than religion, is necessitating a mature development. It is slowly but irresistibly forcing upon us a world unity which in time will become completely comprehensive. Already it is pressing us forward into unity in the fields of communications, world health, and technology. And the influence of science upon religion, though disintegrating in its initial stage, will eventually bring about an effective unity in the spiritual life of the world.

When the thought life of the world was not as connected as it is today, a thousand different creeds could

exist side by side with no attempt at synthesis. One person could believe in creed A, another in creed B, and so on down to Z; and no one questioned how all of these creeds could differ and yet be valid. Even today one takes one's choice and saves one's soul as best one can. Fundamentalists damn all the world but themselves. Liberals work out their individual beliefs and leave the rest of the world each to its own creed.

But this attitude cannot long prevail. It is not satisfying to man's supreme intelligence. Somewhere in the midst of all this doctrinaire of religion there must be a residual truth.

No world thinker has done more than Toynbee to make us conscious of the correlation that exists between the rise and fall of civilization, and the rise and fall of spiritual dynamics in a people. In his viewpoint civilizations live or die in proportion to the amount of zeal which burns at the altars of devotion in the national life.

Thus Toynbee sees the need of a universal religion to animate and dominate the coming world civilization. He hopes that Christianity can broaden and universalize its doctrines sufficiently to fulfill this need. But he isn't certain that it can. In lieu of this, some new religion such as Bahá'í, he says, may arise to accomplish the task of joining the world in a spiritual faith which shall be as universal as its scientific faith.

William Ernest Hocking, Professor of Philosophy Emeritus of Harvard, and dean of American philosophers, in his *Coming World Civilization*, challenged us to realize the meaning of the present world situation and to weave our individual lives, and that of our country and our religion, into a pattern as wide as the planet itself. Our future, he said, will be shaped by the present vision and courage of mankind. Our vision must be worldwide, and our motivations must be spiritual if we wish to build upon firm and enduring foundations.

The dilemma of humanity today lies in the inability of its present creedal faiths to dominate national and international affairs and to weld humanity into that spiritual unity which is a necessary ingredient of a world civilization. *Religion needs to be reconceived in order to meet the demands of modernity.*

The problem facing every religion today is the problem of modernization, of making religion relevant to life as it is currently designed. As Tillich points out, "The social forces and thought forms that governed life for the past few centuries are in disintegration. The problem of the church is that it is so closely identified with the decaying society that it faces the real possibility of dying with the old order."

*The world is now for the first time at the threshold of a search for a spiritual truth that shall be universal*

*and that shall comport with science. The time is ripe for humanity to come of age. That is, to realize its place and function not only in the world but also in the universe itself; and especially to learn how to operate in harmony with, and through the aid of, the universal God. This is the common need of all religions—the awakening of the common man to the uncommon destiny which the Universe affords him.*

Man on this planet has not reached maturity merely because he has attained the power of navigating the air, communicating through space, or weaving cloth out of air and water and coal. Not even because man has penetrated the momentous secrets of the atom or the infinite reaches of outer space can he truly be called man. *We reach adulthood only when we realize ourselves as spiritual beings and learn how to enter into daily conscious communion with the supreme Source and Sustainer of our existence.*

(3)

If this Divine Power is important to man as an individual, how much more important it is to man as an element of collective society. World peace and world unity cannot be fully achieved by materialistic and utilitarian means. There must be forged out a will-for-peace such as develops in the spirit of man when breathed upon by the Universal Spirit. As a govern-

ment can rise no higher than the quality of its individual citizens, so the perfect civilization can be established only through the spiritualization of the individuals who compose humanity.

Tolstoy, greatest mystic of the past century—who after much spiritual searching and agonizing reduced religion to the formula: “God is love, and where love is God is”—came to the happy conclusion that the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth need not await the total spiritualization of humanity. If and when the *leadership* of the world became spiritualized, the rest of the world would passively, if not actively, adapt to the spiritual framework set up by their leaders.

“Civilization is the gradual unfolding of the comprehension of the nature of God and the process of nature working out its complexities of effects under the one law of love,” says Walter Russell in his *Divine Iliad*. “Civilization progresses in the measure of this comprehension exemplified in its great men. Its great men are those who know God and interpret His law.”

It is the realization of this fact that has given birth to vitally spiritual movements within Christianity today, a new and dynamic evangelism issuing not from the pulpit or the platform of the revivalist but from the laity. Significant among those movements is International Christian Leadership, which gathers together

leaders of business, industry, professions and government in many cities of the world for weekly prayer-breakfasts and discussion of the spiritual life. Its remarkable success owes not only to the vision of its founder, Abraham Vereide, but to the contagious quality of the spiritual life itself.

Other religions are putting forth new energy to meet the needs of the times. Zen Buddhism, which notably exemplifies the power of spiritual development to control events, is winning a constantly growing following in this country, especially among college youth.

Hinduism is penetrating America to establish Yogi health routines and systems of meditation. The publicity which Maharishi gained, with the aid of the Beatles, for his system of meditation is a symptom of a universal craving for the release from the ego which spiritual practice brings about.

The Bahá'í Faith—which both Tolstoy and Toynbee praised—holds great promise for the world. Founded a century ago to establish world peace, world unity and brotherhood, its emphasis is on the spiritual development of humanity.

“I came in order that mankind may be regenerated,” said Bahá'u'lláh. And the Bahá'í effort throughout the world is, without the benefit of clergy, to train its participants spiritually in preparation for a new and bet-

ter world order—the establishment of a divine governance on earth.

The Bahá'í Faith, in its recognition of the validity of all the world religions, has an effective approach to proselitization. In order to win converts it does not have to claim other religions to be false. The assertion that this new universal religion is the fulfillment of the ancestral religions enables Bahá'í to win converts from Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

Thus the Bahá'í Faith seeks to eventually unite all religions in one universal spiritual truth dominating both thought and action over the planet, perfecting both the individual and the collective life of humanity.\*

(4)

It would indeed seem that eventually spiritual truth will establish its unity over the planet as thoroughly as scientific truth is doing. There is no provincialism in the truths discovered and practiced in the name of science. What is established as true in science for one country is true for every other country. The same situation will eventually prevail as regards spiritual truth.

\*For a fuller description of this Bahá'í New World Order see Chapter XX "The Coming World Civilization".

Religions differ to some extent, having appeared historically to meet the needs and conditions of both time and place. But Spirit exists above time and place.

Spirituality in its essence is of one kind, the planet over. Being experiential, as is science and technology, its phenomena hold an impregnable unity. Just as quinine treatment will cure malaria in whatever clime or country, so valid spiritual experience will be found the same the world over.

Spirituality, being essentially an experiencing of the Divine love, is no more fragmented than is the experience of human love. Just as human love is one and the same the world over, so is the mystic union of the individual with the Universal one and the same the world over.

Such spiritual unity will become a necessity, as other unities—those of technology, science, culture, economics and politics—establish their hold upon the planet.

*It is apparent, then, that the ultimate and prevailing unity will be the spiritual one. From such a spiritual fount great benefits will flow out to humanity as a whole, as well as to each individual.*

It is this spiritual evolution which is the final goal of man, as Chardin pointed out. Nothing short of this



will serve the purpose. Good intentions, altruism, idealism, humanitarianism—these can palliate but not cure the ills of society. *These ills—being basically unspiritual—can be cured only by spiritual means.*

(5)

It is not a mere coincidence that religious movements conducted wholly by the laity have excelled in character formation. Quakers, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and Bahá'ís have no clergy. If they seem to enter more fully into the reality of the spiritual life, it because they have no framework of ecclesiasticism to assume spiritual authority for them. Each individual is a priest before God. Each individual is called to saintliness, not by clerical authority but by the voice of his own conscience.

*Men whose lives are God-centered and whose motivations and practices are unselfish—these men are saintly, no matter of what religious faith; and their aims for humanity and their deeds of service are similar one to another. In this sense an incipient Spiritual unity already prevails on this narrowing intercommunicating planet.*

“The several next centuries may not impossibly have the potentiality of developing a cumulative spiritual enrichment, an insight into the nature of reality,

the only reality that ultimately matters—of man as man and his inevitable destiny—surpassing all that has preceded and comparable with the present one-sided inroad into the mysteries of external physical nature. Surely this, or else collapse, the great holocaust.”\*

**“God asks only one thing of you; that you dethrone the creaturely self and let him be God in you.”**

**—Meister Eckhart.**

#### RECAPITULATION

In the first millennium B.C., as we have shown, a remarkable spiritual development took place in all civilized quarters of the world.

The twentieth century has shown a similar explosive development in the fields of science and technology—a development which promises ultimately to create a new type of human, superior to the prevailing type of *homo sapiens* as this type was superior to the *homo erectus*, animal-like yet veritably human, that prevailed from indeterminate times down to the ice-ages.

The mental ability of the human race seems indeed assured of a transcendent rise in both range and pow-

\*J. E. Jacoby. *Across the Night*. Philosophical Library.

er. But what about man's spiritual potentiality? Will it also burgeon forth and blossom, producing those fruits of the spirit that are so essential to happy living upon this planet?

We may have faith that this, too, will happen; and that the intellectual maturity of the human race which we are witnessing on every hand, far from destroying man's religious impulse, will purify it and prepare it for a fuller and more rational awareness of our necessary relationship to the Universal.

## CHAPTER 4

### A Scientific Approach to Religion

Strange as it may seem, the spiritual values and satisfactions which are available without price are the least made use of. Is this because we are blind? Is it because the human race is still little evolved past the stage of the beast? Has the intellect—first instrument of the soul to assert itself above the sway of the senses—become too dominant a factor in our lives?

Of all the satisfactions of life the spiritual are the most real, the most abiding. They stay when everything else flees. They deserve our serious, consistent study and pursuit. We do not have to be theological in order to be spiritual. We do not need sectarianism in order to lead us to the joys of the spirit.

*These spiritual values have to be gained not so much by belief as by practice. We do not need church or bells, but we do need aspiration. In order to find celestial joys we must look upward. We must strive. We must experiment.*

The life of the spirit does not imply the abandonment of other satisfactions. It does not necessitate

asceticism. On the contrary, the spiritual life means the full life, the more abundant life.

The spirit is the key to all life's superior satisfactions—to faith, love, harmony, patience, appreciation. The key to health, to happiness and success. It is a magic world, worthy of our venture and exploration. It is not a myth. It is not a chimera. How can we prove to ourselves its validity? Only by trying it out!

(2)

Man's spiritual life should be studied scientifically. Up to the present time this has not been done. Spiritual laws have been accepted on the authority of the Prophet or of the theologian. They have been accepted but they have not generally been lived up to—chiefly for the reason that no proofs have been given either of their validity or of their value in the daily life.

Religion as taught by the theologian has been purely theoretical—a set of doctrines put forth as the way to salvation. What salvation is, has not been described. Nor has the “way to salvation” been proven out on the basis of experience.

It is no wonder that religion has been steadily losing ground before the onslaughts of science. Science proves all its statements, often by reproducing the

natural process which it has correctly analyzed. For example, chemistry states that it has discovered the molecular constituents of rubber. But the chemist does not remain content with having made a scientific declaration. He proves the correctness of his analysis by actually creating rubber.

Science has not won its hold on humanity simply by making dazzling declarations. It has proved at every point these declarations. The power of science lies in its experimental and experiential quality. The science of medicine has slowly grown experientially throughout the ages. And so with all the physical sciences.

It is time that religion asserted itself experientially. If the life of the spirit has such high values, as constantly asserted, let us set to work to prove out these values. Actually, the spiritual life is an experiential life. It is an adventure, such as the “Forty-niners” set forth on when they quested for gold.

“Thar is gold in them thar hills”, was the exciting slogan of the Gold Rush.

“How do you know?”

“Jim Foster found a lot, and so did Ned Jones. Why, man alive, they're coming down from the hills all the time, loaded with it.”

Thus words were backed by experience, and discoveries of gold continued to be made. Unfortunately

this precious store was not inexhaustible, like the gold of the spirit. But while it lasted it was vivid, it was solid, and its value was indisputable.

*What we hope to do in this book is to prove that there is a spiritual gold in inexhaustible supply ready for the ardent questor.*

(3)

How can we prove the validity of spiritual claims and values? Here, as in the social sciences, theoretical proof must be sought chiefly by means of case study. History now affords us a vast panorama of spiritual lives, of spiritual phenomena taking place under the aegis of one or the other of the great world religions.

We can now consider these dramatic, and often mysterious, phenomena as in any other area of study—by collecting, verifying, analyzing and classifying them to the best of our ability, in an endeavor to find some common cause or common ground. This study, if successful, will encourage us to experiment in pragmatic fashion, endeavoring to use to our own advantage, and the advantage of society, the unusual powers that seem to result from spiritual development.

Pitirim A. Sorokin, (previously quoted Harvard sociologist), who was condemned to death but finally

banished by Communist Russia, devoted a whole book, *The Reconstruction of Humanity*, to this argument:—that the world is in dire need of reconstruction, and that the best way of starting to reconstruct it is to make an exhaustive scientific study of man's spiritual life as revealed in the past and present; isolating those factors that could be successfully applied to the construction of that ideal character in man which has characterized saintliness and dynamic idealism in the past.

Sorokin searched throughout all the world religions to analyze the process by which earnest religionists have sanctified their lives, thereby rising to a new, more potent and more altruistic plane of living which he calls the plane of the *super conscious*.

The first step in this spiritual rise, he found, is the complete, categorical subordination of man's biological impulses to the requirements of the super conscious. The whole "sensual part of the soul" must die in order that the divine part may live.

"The first reason for their success is their rule: complete subordination of all values, norms, goals, and egos to one *absolute* value, God, Nirvana, Brahman, union with the Absolute. This supreme singleness of value for transcending all relative values is exactly the right formula for integrating a multitude of antagonistic egos, with their relative values and norms, into

one harmonious system of *super conscious self*, with its absolute, unquestionable, universal value and norms. *There is no other constructive way out of this mutually contradictory multitude of egos.*

“These great systems for the transfiguration of man unanimously demand *the liberation of a person from all forms of egoism; the development of a love for the Absolute, for all living beings, for the whole universe; the refraining from causing pain to anybody by thought, word or deed; and the dedication of all our powers to unselfish service, devotion, and help to, and sacrifice for, others.*”

This is not the exhortation of a revivalist, but the stern findings of a scientist whose line of work and life experiences cause him to be also a moralist. All that he states above is in the terms of scientific findings, such as we have been advocating. Sifting down through the course of history in the lives of philanthropists, creative leaders and spiritual geniuses, he analyzes and correlates the causal factors in their lives leading to their attainment of perfection of character and of unusual powers of achievement.

Sorokin applied these principles to the life of the ordinary individual, of you and me, expounding from the point of view of spiritual science the invaluable benefits that such spiritual development promises to all who will experiment and adventure in this strange,

mysterious, almost unbelievable field of the transcendent, of the super conscious.

“The practice of kindness and love,” Sorokin concludes, “is one of the best therapies for curing many mental disorders; for the elimination of sorrow, loneliness, and unhappiness; for the mitigation of hatred and other antisocial tendencies; and, above all, for the ennoblement of human personality, for release in man of his creative forces, and for the attainment of union with God, and peace with oneself, others, and the universe.”

(4)

The German philosopher Rudolf Eucken comes to the same conclusion, that only by the dominance of the spirit does man come into a unity of being. “Natural man is a mere part of the world; but spiritual man is elevated above all particularity to something more than human, to something cosmic. Our relation to the spiritual life is seen to be the fundamental problem that must precede all others.”

Eucken points out that “the value of religion depends essentially upon the content of the spiritual life which it serves. In a life of mere blind devotion little of value is attained. Even an honest religious attitude of a formal kind can go together, on the one hand, with

spiritual emptiness and blindness, and on the other, with hatred and passion.

“The desire to give greater stability to our life in opposition to the never-ceasing flow of appearances that constitutes our immediate existence, compels us to realize the importance of the spiritual in life. . . . The power to see life as a whole is offered only by the spiritual life, which, transcending man is also immanent in him.

“If we are to take part in the building up of our inner world, a spiritual creative activity must be operative from the very foundations of our being, uniting all our functions and applying them as means and instruments.

“Spiritual history is concerned with that which through all human activity and endeavor reveals a self-conscious inner life, and which, as such a revelation, is valid not only for a particular age but through all ages and independently of all ages. Spiritual history would be impossible unless there is active within us an independent spiritual life which first realizes its content through the historical process.”

A modernist, Bert Heason, in the little magazine “The Layman” says: “Science as it stands today cannot find God. Yet He will appear again in all His glory when a new age science is here—a science which will

explore the inner world. . . . The way in which science can pass beyond the so-called ‘physical level’ is opening out, as scientists start to study man’s inner world and proceed past the illusion to the reality. So near is this breakthrough that one feels the New Age pressing so forcefully that at times it can overwhelm.”

This is an important point. *Scientific investigation of man’s spiritual life must proceed past the illusion to the reality.* Only when this is done can religion stand on sound foundations. The illusionary must be distinguished from those cosmic realities of the spiritual life which are as real and as valid as the power of sunshine to nourish life upon this planet.

**“The mystics are those who believe themselves to have an immediate apprehension of a larger life encircling theirs.”**

**—James Bissett Pratt.**

#### RECAPITULATION

The dynamic values that inhere in the life of the spirit are demonstrable in practice. This is what is meant by *a scientific approach to religion*. There are certain principles that will bring man’s experience into the area of spiritual practicability. These principles will be detailed and described in the second part of this book.

Charles Steinmetz, famous inventor and research engineer, once wrote: "The greatest discovery of the next 50 years will be along spiritual lines. Here is a force which history clearly teaches has been the greatest power in the development of man. Some day the scientists of the world will turn to the study of spiritual forces. When this day comes, the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has in the past four."

This is the kind of science the future ages will disclose—the science of spirit. The material sciences have produced a marvelous facility of living, but they have no power to produce felicity of living.

The final evolution of mankind will see the attainment of spiritual powers such as now would seem incomprehensible. But this evolution will not come of itself, as biological evolution has done. It must be attained by deliberate spiritual effort, struggle and growth.

## CHAPTER 5

### Practical Steps for Spiritual Development

If you have read the book up to this point it is because you are interested in the Life of the Spirit and in the precious values it bestows. But it is one thing to appreciate values, and another thing to attain them. What must we do to grow and develop spiritually?

The first requirement is desire. Nothing can be accomplished without intense desire. The chief purpose of this book is to awaken spiritual desire by bringing to the reader awareness of the marvelous potentials, the infinite values that accrue to man's spiritual life as compared with man's natural life. In order to grow spiritually one has to use the resources of revealed religion, just as in order to grow in secular knowledge and attainment one has to employ the customary means of secular education.

The ordinary development of material civilization, the evolution of man in his physical, neural and mental aspects—all this has no power to apply in the field of spiritual development.

*Biological evolution produces, and culminates in, sentient intelligent man. But it does not produce spiritual man. Biological forces have no power over the soul. Evolution as we know it ends when it has produced "homo sapiens".*

How, then, is the soul of man—which tends to attain spiritual perfection, as his body tends to express the perfection of matter—how can the soul be empowered to progress toward its spiritual goal?

There is only one way in which the soul can progress, and that is by making contact with the Divine. Just as sunshine is needed to stimulate, nourish and evolve all physical life upon this planet—so the rays of the Spirit are needed to stimulate, nourish and empower the soul in its development.

The purpose and goal of revealed religion is to make man aware of his spiritual potentiality; to give divinely inspired directives for living the spiritual life; and, most important of all, by means of the revealed Word to inspire man with spiritual desires and activate him with cosmic potency.

It is by feeding upon the Word of God daily that we grow spiritually. For the Word of God is the food of the soul, just as much designed and destined to fill this need as the physical nourishment which the earth affords is designed to feed man's body.

"Man is dependent in his spiritual existence upon the Word of God. All good attributes and lofty qualities are of the Word. The Word is the fire of God, which, glowing in the hearts of people, burns away all things that are not of God. The minds of the lovers (of God) are ever aflame with this fire."\*

(2)

If the first step toward spiritual development is desire, the second step is definite practice. Potency in any direction is attained only by definite and continuous practice. Nothing is achieved, either materially or spiritually, by mere wishful thinking.

Spiritual practice consists of daily use of prayer, scripture reading and meditation. Moslems are in general more pious than Christians because of their requirement of daily prayer.

Prayer should be more than an occasional fulfillment of spiritual obligation. It should be a willing and joyous daily communion with the Divine. And all prayer should be heartfelt. In fact, we should carry with us throughout the day the spirit of prayer in our hearts.

Combined with prayer and spiritual readings should be some moments of meditation, a period of quiet-

\*Bahá'u'lláh.



cence, of receptivity for the Spirit. It takes time and effort to win human love. How much more time and effort does it take to win God's love! This is not because He gives His love grudgingly, but because we must earnestly condition ourselves in order to receive and appropriate this divine gift—*the very essence of existence.*

As we grow spiritually it becomes easier for us to contact the Divine, even in the midst of a busy day. Unless we take daily spiritual exercise we shall not develop spiritually. Only exercise makes a strong body and a strong mind. And only exercise can make a strong spirit.

For the sake of this daily prayer and meditation it is important that we have a quiet spot to retire to. Somewhere in each home should be such a shrine. Or at least, the privacy of one's own room should be privileged and respected for this purpose at stated times.

The busy materialistic life of the Occident is detrimental to the life of the Spirit. It is not enough to seek spiritual refreshment once a week, on the Sabbath day.

A man from Pakistan told me that his native habit of daily meditation for upwards of an hour had gradually evaporated in this country. If one who already had established habits of prayer in his own country

lost them in busy America, how earnest must be our desire and effort if we wish to build up such habits here in the despotic demands of our technological civilization!

In India there are "ashrams" in which one can "retreat" for a day or a week. Glenn Clark established in this country a similar institution in his "Camp Furthest Out"—where men and women congregate for brief periods of time to discuss and live the spiritual life.

But we can establish our own "ashram" in our own home or garden. For 40 years the writer has had such a spot for meditation and contemplation. This spot is under a flowering plum tree on his lawn, an elevated spot from which he can view with inspiration not only the flowering of his own garden but also the delightful landscaping of many neighbors. Strangely enough, this spot is never invaded by others although it is in plain sight. It seems to be understood that this is a spot of retirement.

In this same way everyone who so desires can establish an intimate spot which will become his "ashram", and which as the years pass by will hopefully become impregnated with the vibrations of the Spirit.

(3)

Many of us need a jolt to motivate and activate our

spiritual climb—some personal misfortune, some tragedy striking a loved one. But why wait to be thus forced upward, when the possibility of the spiritual climb is always open to us?

It is true that when all goes smoothly in our lives we are apt to forget God. We don't feel that we need Him. In order to forestall such spiritual apathy we should make it a daily practice to feel grateful, and to inwardly express that gratitude to God.

"Thank God for each new day, for each fresh opportunity to achieve." That is how Allen Lefferdink rebuilt a profitable enterprise that had been ruined. "It's what you do in the morning that counts. I thank God, that He gives me a new day every day. Every morning I have a new set of facts. And I tell myself that with God's help I can take this set of facts and make something wonderful, something creative of it."\*

Be thankful for our health and the health of our loved ones; for our daily living; for the friends that cross our path and make life happier. Let us be thankful for the beauty God daily showers upon us,—beauty of clouds and sky; of trees gracing the horizon; of the spring flowers, shrubs and blossoming trees that adorn

\*Norman Vincent Peale. "Foundation for Christian Living." Pawling, N.Y.

our own and our neighbors' gardens, beautifying every suburban route to town.

This feeling of gratitude is much more than mere sentiment. Appreciation of our blessings serves as a magnet to draw more such to us. More important still, it is a form of spiritual communion with the Giver of all Gifts, bringing us into joyous communion with Him.

Especially recommended for spiritual inspiration and guidance are the letters of St. Paul, the great psychologist of man's spiritual life. This Graeco-Jewish scholar was vividly aware and cognizant of every side of human nature. Deeply learned in the Jewish and Greek culture, he brought all his power of intellect and newly awakened spirit to bear upon the supreme task of spiritualizing the new converts to Christianity, constantly urging and aiding them to transform their lives into the image of Christ.

*There is no time for spiritual negligence or dilatoriness; let us exert ourselves to the utmost, day and night, to qualify for a position of honor at Christ's side, when His reign begins:—this was Paul's message.*

In his personal preachments and in his epistles Paul gave those willing and zealous Christians complete directives for their spiritual development. He led the way by citing his own self-directive: "I die unto myself daily, in order that I may live in Christ."

This quality of evanescence, of annihilation of the self is the very core of man's spiritual growth. We must put off the old in order to put on the new. Man cannot serve two masters. Self-seeking and self-service must be subordinated to new cosmic responsibilities and potentialities.

These early Christians, in their triumphant expectation, worked earnestly to perfect themselves; to replace worldly with spiritual qualities. They felt an urgency, and they responded to it nobly.

Is there not an urgency today for self-perfectioning? Have we any alibi for postponement? Are we putting off our spiritual regeneration to some convenient time in the future? Or until events force us to turn Godward, like people on a sinking ship?

(4)

Let us keep on hand a supply of spiritual literature. Our own Bible is not the only source of spiritual inspiration. The *Bhagavad Gita* (The Lord's Song) has a great spiritual message. Gandhi fed upon it, and upon the Sermon on the Mount, and thereby generated a spiritual power which shook the British Empire to its foundations and helped free India.

The Tao-teh-King of Laotse has great spiritual wisdom hidden in its cryptic depths. This scripture of an-

cient China, much more spiritual than the teachings of Confucius, is more read today in the Western world than at any previous time. It has a message for all of us.

The writings of Christian mystics have a unique power of stimulation, distilled as they were from lives fervently and consistently devoted to the Spirit. Thomas à Kempis, Meister Eckhardt, Boehme and others can exert a potent influence upon us.

Then there are the little booklets for daily spiritual readings issued by various denominations. Of all these, the *Daily Word of Unity*\* seems to the writer to be the most inspired and inspiring. Its readings throughout the month have a message for almost every human need. Here are some of the subjects: Creative Living, Never Upset, Integrity, Center of Love, Self-Confidence, Renewal, Power to Heal, Compassion, Enthusiasm, Spiritual Being, The Presence of God.

The monthly pamphlets sent out free of charge by the Foundation of Christian Living, Pawling, N.Y., are also very helpful, giving evidence of how the power of the Spirit can interweave, deploy and guide rightly all our thoughts, emotions and actions.

The Bahá'í Faith has a wealth of literature to foster and aid our spiritual growth. The "Hidden Words"

\*Available from Christian School of Unity, Lee's Summit, Missouri.

and "Seven Valleys" of Bahá'u'lláh stand foremost amidst the world's scriptures in their dynamic spiritual power. Countless prayers have been revealed also by the Founder of this Faith. Bahá'ís point out that although Christ revealed only one prayer, Bahá'u'lláh revealed hundreds.

The Bahá'í requirement of daily prayers is a powerful stimulant to spiritual growth. There are several such prayers, some long and some short. One of these must be used daily by Bahá'ís—who, not having a priesthood, must make their homes a daily sanctuary and house of prayer.

"The Divine Art of Living", a compilation from the Bahá'í Scriptures, contains a wealth of material to aid spiritual development, and is used daily by many who are not Bahá'ís.

These Bahá'í scriptures repeatedly urge the development of love, humility, selflessness, nearness to God; they emphasize the fact that "the days of mere lip-service and ritual are ended. The time has come when naught but the purest motives, supported by deeds of stainless purity, can ascend to the throne of the Most High and be acceptable to Him".

(5)

The first step in meditation is to throw overboard, discard all matters pertaining to the lower self. That

self has to be stilled. Our higher self it is that becomes one with the Divine. And this higher self has nothing to do with the affairs of the lower self. As long as we act as business manager for the lower self and its demands, we will be entangled in objectivity, in concrete matters.

We must escape all these entanglements as we meditate. The purpose is to leave behind the world of objectivity and to escape from the particular to the Universal. If we are successfully meditating, we will feel ourselves merged with the Universal. There will be no want, no desire, no regrets, no attention to worldly details. Only a feeling of Oneness and happiness. This Oneness, this merging into the Universal, leaves certain benefits that remain after the period of meditation. One benefit is serenity—a habit of tranquility and joyousness which abides with us throughout the workaday world. We also carry away from these sacred moments a sort of enlargement of our being. We lift our lives somewhat from the paucity of the lower self to the plentitude of the higher self.

"When man associates himself with the Word of God this association of the part with the Whole endows him with the Whole; and this union of the particular with the Universal makes him all in all."\*

Meditation is one of the paths that lead to God. But the spiritual powers gained by this means must be ex-

\*Abdu'l-Bahá. Bahá'í Scriptures.

pressed in action in the form of selfless service for others. It is this very selflessness, this spirit of loving service which distinguishes spiritual attainment from all manifestations of the psychic plane.

The tremendous interest shown today for the psychic world, its fast growing popular appeal, may become a helpful step toward interest and search in the higher plane of the spirit. Within its own limited and peculiar field psychic development is inadvisable, and the psychic world is a dangerous one.

Psychic powers, unlike the powers of the spirit, are as amoral as is electricity. Here are powers that we know very little about; powers that, instead of aiding our spiritual development may do just the opposite. For these powers, gained without the necessity of selflessness, may tend toward the exaggeration of the ego rather than toward its evanescence.

Hitler undoubtedly developed, in the course of his amazing career, a tremendous psychic power. With this power, which increased with usage over the years, he was able to arouse, and at the same time control, action which was violent, cruel and successful. His power reached such a point that his very generals were afraid of him. His piercing blue eyes caused downcast looks from others, forestalling all opposition.

What was the outcome of all this psychically generated power? The outcome was what it will always be

and must always be—a cosmic crash. *For the Cosmos will never permit continuous and progressive development of self-seeking power on the part of any human being.*

It is very unsafe for unspiritualized man to play with these strange powers. We should strive first to develop spiritually, then gradually these powers will unfold in us. Spiritual development is slower and more laborious than psychic development, but is far safer. *It is the only road, in fact, to cosmic success.*

(6)

If we could only once realize the tremendous gifts of the Spirit, we would make spiritual attainment the chief object of our lives. We would not rest day or night in the pursuit of it.

Spiritual values in the daily life, this is what we shall describe in the second part of this book, these we all should be striving for. The time has passed when spiritual life is the unique practice of the church and monastery. These spiritual values are attainable by every one of us. Their attainment is not a visionary goal, but the only practical one. Life takes on a different meaning and is endowed with higher efficiency when it is geared to the cosmic vibrating power of Spirit.

We are not presenting mere theory. This is something to put into practice. Religion is more than the-

ology. It is a way of life. It is something that happens to us and through us. It can be made a constant art and practice in life—a power that builds for health, success and happiness.

In this field of human effort, as in all others, we learn by doing. And nothing succeeds like success.

Religiosity is on the way out. Modern man is unwilling to live by theology. He has become pragmatic. He wants values, not words. This does not mean that religion will die out. Religion can never die out. In man's endeavor to harmonize himself with the Universe, religion will always be his primary vehicle of search for security.

Men in the future will demand proofs of all religious claims and they will themselves seek these proofs in the various forms of religious experience described in the following chapters. Religion will become experiential, validating itself by weight of experience. *In other words, religiosity will evolve into the next step forward, spirituality.*

No longer will this spiritual development be the prerequisite of the few. It will become the universal goal of mankind. We are at the dawn of a new epoch which initiates the gradual spiritualization of all humanity, with its consequent creation of a world society based upon a universal religion.

Perhaps the Bahá'í World Faith will accomplish this planetary task, with its insistence upon spiritual regeneration of the individual and the coalescing of all humanity into a viable brotherhood based on mutuality and peace and dedicated to continual progress of civilization toward distant ideal goals.

**“Religion is man's effort to harmonize himself with the universe.”**

**—Wu Ming Fu.**

#### RECAPITULATION

Let us explore the spiritual life, adventuring in it, testing its validity and values. With St. Paul, we can “try all things and hold fast to that which is good”. For the spiritual life is not theoretical but experiential. It is a life of pragmatic experimentation and practice. Its validity, for us as individuals, lies in its fulfillment; in its fruitage in our lives.

We learned that quinine cures malaria because scientists observed its curative power among the Indians of the Amazon Valley. Therefore, we try it, and we continue to use it as long as needed because we find it works.

In the same way, let us try out the spiritual techniques handed down from the past. Let us be scientific explorers in a vast domain as yet too little explored.

PART TWO

SPIRITUAL VALUES

IN

THE DAILY LIFE

CHAPTER 6

Spiritual Factors of Well-Being

When the body is impaired the mind suffers also, and perhaps the soul. In our spiritual climb the body should not be sacrificed. Rather, it should be so attuned to the Universal as to maintain always a normal power of functioning.

The primary responsibility of a human being, then, is toward his body. If people were as solicitous and efficient in the daily care of their bodies as they were of their automobiles they would be happier; and they would be more able to bring happiness to others.

The first step toward good health is to be born normal and healthy. This, unfortunately, is not within the province of the individual. But it is within the province of each generation to improve in every possible way the conditions surrounding pregnancy, so as to insure physical normality at birth.

The physical, mental and emotional states of the mother during pregnancy are of importance. What achievement is more important than that of infolding,

nourishing, and giving birth to a human being—hopefully in a normal and healthy condition.

There is another aspect of pregnancy as important as physiological precautions. This is the emotional attitude of the mother toward the conception and birth of the child. The unwanted child suffers handicaps certainly from birth on, and perhaps accumulating even before birth. It is important, in every way, for the well-being of the infant that it should be surrounded with love from the moment of its birth. It should realize constantly the overshadowing of love, the protection of love. If possible it should be breast-fed instead of being relegated to the impersonal administrations of the ubiquitous bottle.

The danger threatened to the world by population explosions is not the only factor suggesting birth control. The individual child suffers a penalty when born unwanted. *There will be a great improvement in the quality of children when all births are planned and desired.* Such a situation will guarantee the child at birth every advantage that heredity, prenatal care and maternal love can contribute.

Therefore, the first step toward physical well-being is the solicitude of each generation for the physical quality of the next generation.

As the human race matures in wisdom and tender-

ness, the role of the mother will take on new significances; with the result that the general health of humanity, from the moment of birth, will surpass all present achievements of medical science.

The health of the child is a parental responsibility that is spiritual and cosmic in nature. It is not only the individual child that benefits by parental solicitude and care. Humanity itself benefits, in the way of future dividends of health. Every gain in the creation and raising of children is cumulative. These gains are passed on to the next generation, to be nurtured and increased as they are again handed down.

It is a spiritual as well as a physical duty to take care of our bodies. "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" Our body is loaned to us as an instrument for our earthly use; and our intellect, marvelous instrument of precision and creation, is very dependent upon bodily conditions. Not only do we ourselves gain from the maintenance of good health but good health also aids in our contribution to the family and to society.

"An ideal state of society could be produced if all humans on the earth were positively valuable—living a life such that the earth tends to become at least a somewhat better place to live in. *But, to do this, man must have good physical health, and must maintain that health at the highest possible level; and he must desire*



to be useful. In fact, he must be determined to be positively valuable. This must be his life purpose, and he must subordinate everything else to this.”\*

(2)

To maintain good health at top-notch level, more than physical means are necessary—more than food, exercise, fresh air and sleep. The emotional and spiritual attitude during the day must be poised and harmonious.

Great advances have been made in the elimination or subdual of diseases that once endangered health and life itself in this country. Longevity has been increased. Vitamins can add to our vitality and energy. But while we have conquered nature in one direction, we have lost ground in another. In this age of urbanization and technology we have become extremely susceptible to psychosomatic diseases—diseases that are due to a disturbed state of mind.

It is considered in medical circles that from fifty to eighty percent of modern man’s illnesses are due to psychosomatic causes. Such illnesses are hard to cure, so long as the mental and emotional causes still persist.

These diseases are of a spiritual nature. They are derived from unspiritual emotions. The negative emotions of fear, anger, hatred, resentment, desire to “get

\*“The Value of a Human Being”. M. H. Mothersill.

even”, anxiety, greed, excessive self-seeking, will-to-power,—all such emotions have no place in man’s spiritual development.

These irritable and irritating emotions pour poisons into the blood stream, throwing it out of chemical balance. Such chemical imbalance causes illness. Such imbalance can reach even the embryo in the womb of a severely disturbed mother and affect the future health of the child.

It is easy to say: *avoid these negative emotions for they are injurious to health.* The trouble is, such emotions are very difficult to avoid. They overcome us upon sufficient provocation. They are part of nature’s protective organization. In the animal they flare up swiftly and subside as swiftly, leaving no serious after-effects. *Animals do not, like man, nurture a dismal past nor apprehend an unfortunate future. Therefore they live always at the top notch of vitality and energy.*

It is only man—gifted with self-consciousness and ego—who can harbor a collection of dislikes, hostilities, apprehensions such as can seriously impair his natural vitality.

What is the solution to this? We cannot expect man to return to that realm of the unconscious which the animal so exuberantly exhibits. Yet we, as humans—with a self-consciousness that constantly thwarts happiness—we too would like to live as healthily and vital-

ly as animals. *And we could do so if we could clean out at one Herculean sweep the Augean stables of the ego.*

Other than spiritual means will not suffice for this task. Man cannot emotionally control his instinctive nature. It is possible, but difficult, to control these emotions by the power of the mind. There are those who can do so, but such wise souls are in a small minority.

Natural man, so long as he remains natural man, does not and cannot control these harmful emotions. But spiritual man can and does control and sublimate them.

By spiritual means—desire, faith, prayer—fear is changed into confidence; anger into patience; resentment into forgiveness; hatred into love. “That was not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual,” says Paul. Spiritually developed man finds himself living an entirely new life. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away.” It is indeed a new life for man when he finds himself able to counter injury with forgiveness, and hatred with love. It is a new life, indeed, when he too, like Christ, can rise above all insults because of his freedom from the ego.

(3)

We speak of man as being “carnal” or “spiritual”; as

being a triune of body, mind and spirit. But in reality he is a single entity, and as such his whole being responds to causes affective on any one of these planes. The state of his mind can affect his health and his spirit. The state of his body, as in a fever, can affect his mind and his spirit. And the state of his spirit can powerfully affect both his mind and his body.

This last fact is of extreme importance to our physical well-being. Health should be maintained by recourse to spiritual as well as to physical means. Spirit can so motivate us, can so inspire, guide and empower us that we daily live above the usual causes of disease. By bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of the spirit we become almost immune to disease.

Even when through some unpreventable cause we become ill, spiritual power may be drawn upon to supplement medical care for our healing and revitalization.

How important it is to realize that nature itself is always operative in our bodies to build and to rebuild. Great are the recuperative powers of all living entities—miraculous at times, it seems. Nature will restore health if we give it a chance. Our bodies are constantly rebuilding themselves. Cells are dying and being replaced every moment of our lives.

Let the old cells die! Why worry? Rather, let us put our thought and mental energy into the type of cells

we want to have built. A conscious attitude of hope and faith can help that "unconscious" which controls the automatic processes of our bodies.

"The 'solar plexus', or the brain of the subconscious mind, is a central point of distribution for the energy which the body is constantly generating. *When this solar plexus is in active operation and is radiating life, energy and vitality to every part of the body, the body is filled with health.*"\*

This sympathetic nervous system is very suggestible. It will obey suggestions of health and vitality put to it. Furthermore, this solar plexus is the center where spiritual forces contact our nervous system. These spiritual forces are the creative energy of the cosmos; and they can be drawn to us through concentration, prayer and faith to operate in such a way as to increase our supply of vitality and health. This is the secret of all spiritual healing. This means of energizing and revitalizing ourselves is available to us all.

My own life experience vividly supports this credo of health. I was delicate as a child, had pneumonia three times before I was ten, was so low in health and vitality that our family doctor advised that I stay home for a year before entering high school. How much I owe to this good family doctor! How I enjoyed roaming the fields and woods, or walking a mile to the Post

\**The Master Key System*. Charles F. Haanel.

Office for mail and bringing back each Monday my copy of *Harpers*—so full of fascinating short stories and serials. This year of loafing added to my health and undoubtedly to my longevity.

Again came a period of ill health at the end of my college course. I had worked my way through Dartmouth (summers were no holidays to me), and had studied hard. Four years of work and no play were too much for me. Serious kidney trouble and a slight breakdown caused a two-year period of inability to carve out a career.

Yet all this was gradually overcome. My age and health today at 88 give evidence that these conditions, like most conditions in life, were only temporary. Perhaps it is even an advantage to be frail in youth. For this frailty causes us to give more concern than others are apt to do to the upkeep of that physical engine upon the efficiency of which depends our careers, our fortunes and our happiness. Many men, delicate in health in youth, have had a similar experience. Stricken by disease or weakness, they have struggled to their feet and lived to carry out a career of great achievement.

Theodore Roosevelt was weakly as a youth, but achieved vibrant health by living the life of a Western cowboy while tutoring for entrance to Harvard. The agonizing but successful struggle of Franklin D. Roose-

vult to recover from polio has become a legend and an inspiration to all who become invalidated.

Let us realize, then, that most conditions of ill health can be overcome. Nature is very versatile. If it can create it can also recreate. Almost every weakness of the body can be overcome.

(4)

Life is rhythmic. Our life force has its ups and downs. One of the "downs" of life for the male is apt to occur in the decade of the fifties. At this point man—if he has been overexerting for years and has been living under strain and anxiety—falls prey to serious illnesses which are liable to carry him off. But there is a bright side to this picture. If one lives carefully throughout this decade, conserving as much as possible his energies, one can enter around the age of sixty upon a new plateau of vitality, energy and health which can continue well into the eighties.

This preservation of health and energy has sociological and spiritual implications. The two decades of the sixties and seventies contain much potentiality both for the individual and for society.

For the individual, these decades offer opportunities for a rich fulfillment of one's abilities and cultural development. Life becomes more tranquil in this period, at the same time that one's powers to observe, con-

ceive and create, become richer from the mere course of time.

Goethe said, at the age of eighty, that his enjoyment of nature and art were greater than ever. He composed the first part of Faust in his late fifties and the second part in his late seventies. His greatest sequence of lyrics, expressing his love for Marianne von Willemer, was published when he was seventy. Had he died before the age of sixty, as so many writers now do, he would not today be established as one of the world's great geniuses.

(5)

All the way through life we should forestall sickness by both material and spiritual means. Why wait to get ill before resorting to the healing power of spirit? Let us use it as a sort of preventative medicine. Let us use prayer and faith daily to build up a spiritual resistance to disease, just as we use food and vitamins to build up our physical resistance.

A few minutes of retirement, of prayerful repose and expectation, of faith-practice, will send a glow of vitality throughout our whole body. Such a daily practice as this is the best preventative of sickness.

Edison had an enormous capacity for work, but he knew how to replenish his vitality by taking brief naps

at any time the need came. After middle age a daily nap after lunch was recommended by Bogomoletz, the Russian geriatrist reputed to be the world's greatest authority on old age. Truman's physician had him undress and go to bed for one to two hours after lunch. We are not all of us free to take such a nap, but we should take a rest period at this time of day—a period of complete relaxation, concentrating on healing and rejuvenating encouragement to our sympathetic nervous system.

Even when riding in the train or bus or automobile to and from our daily work, we can put ourselves in a mood to allow the Cosmic Energy to flow into us in the form of vitality. *Energy is a form and expression of Spirit.* Therefore let us seek, back of energy, the source and cause of all energy—Spirit. Relaxed and without strain, let us allow this cosmic vitality to flood our innermost being.

A buoyant nature throws off fatigue and other incipient causes of illness. Such a person has disease defeated before it can get a foothold. Some people are fortunate in being born buoyant. *But we can all learn to achieve buoyancy by means of daily spiritual exercise. Some time should be given each day to thinking and feeling health in spite of weakness or fatigue.*

There is a vast quantity of spiritually inspiring material that can reinforce our own will and effort to rise

above discouragement. Some of this material should be memorized—brief passages from the world's scriptures and from other spiritual writings—so that we may have at hand under all occasions and in all environments, ammunition to dispel the negative forces which tend constantly to pull us down.

(6)

Lastly, and above all, let us learn how to utilize the mysterious power of sleep nightly to recreate. Let us avoid excitement at this time and approach the bed with mind freed from the anxieties of the day. This can be done by the use of prayer. Let us ask God to give us a healing sleep. These wonderful hours of the unconscious can revive and recreate us, for better service to ourself and to our fellow men.

When we awake, let us lie still awhile and consciously absorb into the center of our being that Cosmic Energy which is the essence of all life. Conceive it as pouring into you, flooding your arteries and nerves. Then face the day with thanksgiving.

Let us eat a good breakfast tranquilly and start off for the day's work serenely. This practice will do more for daily health than anything else can do. It will constantly revitalize and renew.

We humans shall never attain to balanced and radiant health until we realize ourselves as more than hu-

man. By realizing ourselves as spiritual entities, and by concentrating on and operating on this basis, we can bring Spirit more causally and creatively into our lives, into our minds, into our very bodies.

*Spirit becomes directly creative in us when we are conscious of it.* Actually, spirit is the very essence of our being—body as well as soul. Our very life-force, our breath, our blood, our heartbeat is of God; is God-in-action as the creative, sustaining and directive Power of the universe and of our individual lives.

We need to graduate from the false concept of dualism in order fully to benefit from the forces of spirit that are always at hand to help and bless us—physically as well as spiritually.

When we think of our body as merely a material organism, we are thereby shutting out the radiative power of spirit. Spirit is causal, creative, radiative, vitalizing, ever-renewing.

When on the other hand we live consciously with Spirit, when we learn to know ourselves fundamentally as spirit, this consciousness can be applied and should continually be applied to inspire, refresh and replenish the body.

Spirit can be called on, can consciously be brought into the physical processes of our body in order to relieve it of fatigue, to strengthen it and to heal it. "Be-

cause thou has known the Lord, thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle; thou shalt walk and not be weary; thou shalt run and faint not."

It is wise to use all possible material remedies; to treat our bodies as wisely and carefully as we tend to a costly automobile. It is wise to plan and carry out a regime that maintains health. But let us add to all this the conscious call to Spirit to aid us in our need; to refresh us when exhausted; to renew and invigorate us for further service.

O that we might fully know the power of Spirit! Perhaps we shall never be able fully to comprehend and avail ourselves of this power while on earth. But we can make an effort to turn faith into knowledge and conviction; and having proved by trial and error, discover assured laws of the operation of spirit in human affairs, even to the last minutiae of the physical body.

So, with this power of the Spirit confirmed in our mind and soul, let us pray for recovery when we are sick. And let us pray when we are well that we may stay well. Let us pray for daily strength to serve. Prayers of request and prayers of thanksgiving.

Let us take as our axiom: *If God can create, He can also recreate.* God is operating throughout our whole physique with that radiant power that throbs throughout all existence — the PULSE OF LIFE.

We know that it is there, out there in the Cosmos and here upon earth; causing things to move, causing things to grow. It operates daily, momentarily—or nothing would exist. It can operate as an extra help when we have both need and faith.

**“Knowledge of the creative force is a growth in the experience of the soul, of the mind, of the body, that gives expression of that entertained there.”**

—Edgar Cayce.

#### RECAPITULATION

Spiritually developed man lives more healthily than others, for many reasons. In the first place, he avoids dissipation, realizing his grave responsibility to the body that God gave him. Secondly, he avoids friction and inharmony in dealing with his fellow beings, thereby escaping psychosomatic ills. Thirdly, his faith in the Divine and his application of that faith to the art of living assures him a serenity and buoyancy which greatly contributes to physical well-being. And lastly, he knows how to draw to himself—by faith, prayer and concentration—the healing power of the Cosmic Spirit whenever illness threatens him.

#### CHAPTER 7

### Finding Happiness in Our Work

Our daily work occupies half of our waking hours and more than half of our energy and thoughts. How important it is, then, that our work be harmonious and cheerful.

Creative people love their work and are happy in its achievement. Somerset Maugham once said that creative work brought him his greatest joy, surpassing all else in life.

Most professional people enjoy their work, provided they have chosen a profession that suits their abilities. Carlyle said, “Blessed is the man who loves his work.” Elbert Hubbard put this in modern terms: “Lucky is the man who does what he wants, and gets paid for it.”

To such a man his daily tasks, because of their inner satisfaction, hardly seem work at all. His life is made buoyant and dynamic because of his work. Such was the life of Thomas Edison, who had to be called to meals and who often went several days at a time

without sleep. Such was the life of Madame Curie, in her creative investigations. Such are the lives of all who are deeply engrossed in their work.

The people thus described are fortunate, for they have found their work. How greatly our happiness in life, and healthiness too, depends upon our choice of a vocation. Educators, realizing this, do their best to guide youth in this choice. Industrial and commercial organizations give vocational tests for the sake of re-locating discontented personnel; for they realize that such discontent is bad for the worker and bad for the concern he works for.

Even with all these precautions, daily work in an industrial civilization tends to be monotonous and boring. How can this be prevented? It can be prevented only by infusing the whole situation with a humane spirit. What often makes labor tedious is the machine-like atmosphere which surrounds it. Psychological experiments prove that people work not only more happily but also more effectively in a sympathetic atmosphere. Praise and appreciation on the part of the employer or manager accomplishes wonders. Personal consideration for the employee contributes to his contentment and good will towards his work.

In the past, when so many concerns were family affairs, Quaker-owned establishments especially were ideal in this employer-employee relationship. Here not

only justice reigned, but also love. The proprietor took a kind and fatherly interest in all who worked for him. In return, the workers rendered returns in honest and faithful labor.

These familiar days have gone. Enterprise passed from family direction to the impersonal direction of the corporation. Yet it is possible, even here, to give sympathy and warmth to daily working conditions and atmosphere.

Labor unions can force upon industry higher wages, safeguards of health, pensions and other privileges; but they can not, with all their collective bargaining, force upon industry such conditions as will make the hours of work pleasing to the worker. This must be accomplished within each industrial unit. It is a problem of labor management, which is primarily the responsibility of the employer.

Within the same industrial or commercial fields conditions may vary greatly. For instance, in Washington one can observe a great difference in the spirit and efficiency in a branch store of one national grocery chain, and a nearby branch of another chain. In the first the checkers are alert, efficient, and apparently happy. In the midst of their checking they still find time to chat with their customers, to smile, to wish them a happy weekend. Many of these checkers are part-time workers, some of them college students earning their tuition.



For such, these hours of work can be far from tedious or boring. They enjoy the contact with their clientele, some of whom might be in foreign diplomacy, some in the State Department, some just back from Asia. Daily contact with such as these can be pleasant and stimulating. I have never seen signs of overweariness or boredom in these workers.

In the second store a different situation prevails. There is less efficiency, less appearance of enjoyment of one's work, more evidence of boredom and fatigue. Why is this? I do not know, but it is evidently a matter of labor management. For both stores are in the same general neighborhood, have the same kind of clientele, and the same facilities for hiring and training labor.

A similar difference exists in two suburban restaurants of Washington. The first is poorly managed. The hostess has to be hunted up and, when found, looks querulous. The waiters look tired, and often they are inexperienced. This restaurant does not seem to be a happy place to work in.

The second restaurant, of a different chain, has a much better atmosphere. The hostess greets you on arriving, is pleasant and smiling. The waiters and waitresses are efficient, and they seem contented. Some of these are students working their way through college. They are glad to earn this money, happy to get their meals without cost. They enjoy serving their customers.

(2)

Often a change to another kind of work can bring happiness. Personnel management in large corporations is always on the lookout to change, if need be, the employee into a kind of work to which he is better adapted and in which he can be happier. But sometimes such changes may not be satisfactory. What is needed, maybe, is a complete change of vocation.

It takes courage to change one's vocation after being established in it. But such change may be a good investment, both for success and for happiness. A friend of mine recently told me how in middle life he changed his profession. His father, a Russian immigrant who rose from poverty, destined this son for the law as a profession that confers "status". But Ben Goodman never enjoyed his legal work. It constantly went against his grain. The unethical practices frequently employed disgusted him with this career. So at the age of forty, with two children and a wife on his hands, he took a degree in education and secured a position as a teacher of high school history. Later he got a doctorate. He is now an assistant professor in a small college, where he teaches evenings as well as conducting his high school classes. He tells me that his whole life, both at work and at home, is far happier than when he practiced law.

Another acquaintance of mine switched in middle

life from opera to university teaching. As an opera singer—the career for which he first trained—he came to realize he would never achieve first rank. So he took degrees in education and history and wound up as a successful professor of history at Columbia University.

Robert Frost made a bold decision when he sold his farm in Derry, N.H., and went to England with his wife and four children in the hope of establishing himself as a poet in this new environment.

Frost was 37 years old at this time, had not succeeded in becoming known as a poet, and had no hopes of being so recognized in this country. He had up to this time found publication for only three or four of his poems. He was making a bare living on his farm, supplemented by teaching at Pinkham Academy. This double work took all his energy; so that in addition to failing to find publishers he was also failing to compose.

He resigned from his position at Pinkham Academy, sold his farm, and on the meager proceeds of this sailed for England with his family. In three years there he became famous. The British appreciated the homely down-to-earth poetry of Frost and taught America to appreciate it. And so Robert Frost—vagrant and unsuccessful in his youth—died full of honors and left a fortune behind him (some \$500,000), a financial success with which few poets of the past can vie.

Had this man—"born to be a poet" as he once confided to me—not satisfied his restless craving by risking a transatlantic move he might have died unsung, a wasted genius.

(3)

*If we do not find the work we like, we must somehow learn to like the work we have found.* This can be done. It can be done by putting our hearts into it; by doing our level best daily; by studying ways to work more efficiently and with less strain; by being cheerfully resigned to the work we are temporarily doing.

One's attitude towards one's work, like one's attitude towards one's health, can be productive of good or bad results. If we are querulous about it, we distort our necessary daily labor into a form of activity that is injurious both to our morale and to our health. But if we do our cheerful best at each daily task we shall learn how to work without undue friction, without wear and tear on the nervous system, and without stomach ulcers.

*Actually, any work is better than none.* Erosive discontent and boredom affect those who have no regular call to duty. Work takes us out of ourselves. Work is the chief avenue for self-escape.

A wealthy lady of my acquaintance—part owner of a very prosperous restaurant in Washington—works as

a clerk at the dry goods counter of a Washington department store. Why does she do this? It is a form of escape which has proved very beneficial for her, helping to lift her out of a devastating tragedy that had come into her life. She has found in her daily work a consolation, as work indeed is to many; as it can be to all of us, no matter how humdrum the type of work may be.

(4)

Work can be a consolation. It can even be an inspiration. There is a certain spiritual reward to any one who does useful labor. Such is, in fact, our cosmic duty. Zoroaster made this one of his chief tenets. "All those who do needful work," he declared, "are helping Ahura Mazda. He who plants a single apple tree is helping to make a better world."

The modern prophet Bahá'u'lláh has declared that "work done in a spirit of service is equivalent to prayer".

This is the fundamental secret of finding contentment in our work—to realize it as a form of service. It matters not what kind of useful work we do, whether high or low, it is a service of some kind.

Henry Ford looked on his work as a service. He built low-priced cars; not only in order to make money,

but also in order to bring the magic of swift transportation within the reach of all. This he accomplished. He also accomplished several other important things. Ford's low-priced car proved a tremendous factor in the development of social democracy in America. The Ford car, by its ubiquity, helped also to bring about good roads, paved roads which could withstand the suction of tires. Thirdly, Ford created an entirely new kind of industrial production, mass production. A novel system which has swept over the world.

We can't all be Henry Fords. But we can all see our work as a call to service, as well as to earn the necessary income. Our daily work need not be a treadmill operation. We can transform it by our own attitude. In this respect, every working man or woman is "the maker of his fate, the master of his soul".

Conceiving our work as a form of service is not a mere stretch of the imagination. If our work brings us income, we can be sure that it is useful or it would not be thus financially rewarded. If our work deserves and earns pay it also deserves respect, on our own part and on the part of others. We must learn how to lift our work out of the category of mere drudgery.

(5)

And let us help all those who in one way or another serve us, by expressing gratitude and bestowing a

smile. We can make the lives of all who serve us happier by letting them realize that we appreciate their services.

One afternoon the writer was eating lunch at the restaurant of a famous chain of motels. The tables were crowded, and evidently the restaurant was short of help for I saw the manager helping to serve once or twice. At the end of the meal I called the manager to me and said, "Well, I've had a fine meal!"

How surprised he was. "I expected another kind of comment," he said. "We are short of help, and I have had to do some serving myself."

"Yes, I saw you doing it. Well, I have had a fine meal. Thanks."

The manager's face lighted up. "God bless you!" he said as he hurried away.

Let us have a heart for all who labor for us. This appreciation will lighten their toil. It will establish a camaraderie between those who serve and those who are served. It will humanize all human toil.

This appreciation for all service given us lightens the labor of others. I recall one night driving through a small town after midnight. I was relieved to find a café open. "You are a lifesaver," I remarked to the waiter as he served me.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Why, what would we do if we couldn't find food when we're hungry?"

This caused his face to light up as he went about his work.

A friendly conversation can lift work out of the commonplace. Taxi drivers in Washington enjoy greatly their chats with customers. They never know whom they are serving. It might be a United States Senator; it might be an important business man; it might be an educator or writer. With these customers the taxi driver often enjoys an enlightening conversation appreciated also by the passenger, for a taxi driver gathers much fundamental wisdom as he rubs elbows with the world.

Many a helpful word can be thus given to those who cross our path in the course of the day's work. A sympathetic attitude, a comradely exchange of words with those we meet in the course of the day can make work more attractive to all concerned.

Thus work never need be wholly monotonous. Wherever human beings meet together, as they do in most occupations, one's work can be interesting.

(6)

It is a joy to find people who greatly love their work.

Such a man is Edward Clark, who has for years, as well as his father before him, trained performing bears at North Woodstock in the White Mountains. He told me that he loved his occupation so much that it did not seem work at all to him. Yet many things he does would be disagreeable work for others, such as cleaning out daily the cages of the bears.

From the age of six he has been accustomed to feeding and caring for the performing bears, all of which are born, raised and trained on the place. So accustomed is he to dealing with these intelligent beasts that he seems to read their minds. Occasionally they read his. With two of his bears he is able to communicate telepathically. Before he is ready to give the command for the next trick he has been deciding on, they rush to do it, apparently reading his mind.

Like all who deal intimately with animals, Clark loves his pets even when they are in disagreeably *bearish* moods. He never scolds them. He never hits them with a club or lead pipe, as some do in bear training. He goes amongst them totally unarmed, his fist the only defense in case of need. A sharp blow on the bear's snout will cause him to retreat.

The secret of Clark's training is to reward faithfully every success. He not only rewards the bears. He verbally thanks them. And he says "Please" when he

gives his directions. The bears seem to understand the simple language he uses.

Love brings success to Clark's work with animals. Love will bring similar success to all relationships in the work-a-day world.

(7)

If all other methods fail to alleviate our toil, why not take God into partnership with us in our daily tasks? This is what Brother Lawrence did. He was happy every hour of his day as kitchen worker, because he was conscious always of Divine Presence. All monks, in fact, were expected to attain by spiritual discipline the power of toiling happily at humble tasks.

Monastic life in the Dark Ages was far from being one of inactive withdrawal from the world. During these restless mobile centuries it was the monks who cut down the forests, drained the swamps and patiently tilled the soil. It was chiefly their labor that extended the area of arable land beyond the Rhine and made northern Europe habitable and productive. They were happy in their work, because they worked both for the sake of their fellow men and for God.

Even in modern times we can find some whose toil is thus lightened by their spiritual faith, upliftment and

God-consciousness. Some years ago I was for a brief while connected with a tiny church in Brockton, Massachusetts, composed mostly of humble working people. Their spiritual earnestness not only inspired their worship with a deep sense of reverence and nearness to God, but it brought contentment into their daily lives. Like Brother Lawrence, they were as happy in their working hours as in their hours of rest. One was a night watchman for the railroad; one drove a baker's team; several worked in a candy factory,—and so it went. These simple people did not have to wait to escape from work in order to feel happy. They were happy in their daily work, because in the spirit of true service they made their work divine.

And so we can all be happy in our work. If we don't have the work we like, we must somehow like the work we have; adapt ourselves to it, find contentment in it, take God into it daily as our partner. He who finds contentment in his work has conquered half of life's battle.

**“The perfect man does his work reverently and with joy, because he knows that he is, by so doing, serving not only man but also the universal.”**

**—Sage of the Sacred Mountain.**

## RECAPITULATION

Put your heart into your work. No matter what it is, it is of some value to humanity, or you would not be getting paid for it. Try to realize that high station attributed by Bahá'u'lláh to work done in a spirit of service. Take God to work with you. That is what George Washington Carver did, and with God's help invented hundreds of marvelous ways to use the peanut and the sweet potato.

Never allow yourself to go grudgingly to work. In order to approach your day's work in the right way, get up early enough to begin the day with a prayer, to eat breakfast leisurely, and to leave the home in tranquility. If you start the day in this way your work will be more likely to unfold itself harmoniously from hour to hour. How futile life would be without tasks to engage our energies and thoughts.

Our whole life is necessarily committed to service in one form or another. We earn our living only by performing services that are of advantage to others. All work is indeed a form of service. This work-a-day service, involuntary and recompensable, is our very life routine.

But there is a higher kind of service, voluntary, seeking no recompense, bestowed with love. This kind of service—an expression of man's altruism—lifts ac-

tion to the plane of spirit and manifests spirit on the plane of action.

In this work done consciously as service we are acting cosmically. Within our own limited capacity we are acting as God acts, and our recompense for this is happiness.

*There is no good deed, no altruistic action, no loving service but what is rewarded with a glow of happiness.* For in so acting we are making ourselves one with the Cosmic Purpose. "In as much as ye have done it to the least of my servants, ye have done it unto me."

## CHAPTER 8

### Harmony in Human Relationships

Since over half of all man's troubles are due to frictional relations with other humans, it is very important to learn early in life how to get along harmoniously with others. In fact, this is the active side of religion, the successful expression of spiritual development. We do not live unto ourselves.

So important is this problem of human relations that all large industrial firms have departments of personnel management to help the interrelationship of employees to employers and of employees to each other. Industry and business thrive best on harmonious relationships.

As for individual benefits, harmonious relationships have an important bearing on health. Inharmonious relationships produce nervous strain, indigestion, hyperacidity, stomach ulcers and a host of psychosomatic ailments.

We cannot go further in the discussion of man's life upon this planet without pausing here to discuss how

to attain harmony in all of our human relations. This problem, tremendously important and acknowledgeably difficult, must be faced by us all. It can be faced victoriously. Every inter-human problem can be solved successfully when we bring intelligence, kindness and spiritual power to bear upon it.

(2)

On October 23, 1967, a tragic event occurred, unparalleled in the history of hate killings. Rancors over a long period of time caused Leo Held—for 21 years an employee of the Hammermill Paper Company in its Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, branch—to go berserk and shoot to death seven people who had incurred his hatred.

The police were at first puzzled as to what motivated him in these killings, for they were evidently individual deliberately sought-out targets, not a case of insane mass killing.

Leaving the paper plant after shooting five dead and wounding four, Held drove to his home town of Logantown 17 miles away. There he sought out and killed a neighbor against whom he had held a grudge. Surrounded then by police, he was fatally wounded, dying two days later unrepentant.

Psychologists, studying this strange series of killings, have come to definite conclusions concerning the moti-

ations. The life story of Leo Held, as unfolded by them, presents a dramatic preachment on the value and necessity of harmony in all our human relations.

Held, described as a man who loved to pick quarrels and who at sessions of the school board of which he was a member always voted "No", was creating for himself over the years an emotional state so full of rancor and hatred that it can only be described as "hellish".

Leo Held, at the age of 39, was a disappointed man. He had not been successful. Others were being promoted over his head. He particularly resented the promotion of his brother-in-law, two years younger than he and with less seniority in the company, to a higher position than he held. Hatred then began for his brother-in-law and for the superintendent.

Greater still was his rancor when he had to take orders from a man seven years younger than he who was moved in above him from another division of the company. These people, together with another superintendent, were marked down for future vengeance.

Then there was his car pool trouble. When two members objected in vain to his over-fast driving, and consequently dropped him from the pool, their names were entered on his hatred slate.



There was also a neighbor with whom he had quarreled over putting out the garbage, and another neighbor whose disposal of dead branches he had objected to. All these foes of his psyche were slated for death; and get it they did, all but one, from the barrels of a .38 revolver or a high-powered 44 magnum.

(3)

Let us study this incident from the point of view of spiritual psychology. All the things that rankled in this sad man's heart were things truly unpleasant to face if one had no spiritual resources. The accumulation of them led to paranoia—the delusion of grandeur—that ego-supremacy which sees every obstacle to its will as a form of persecution.

To unspiritual man, such a series of events brings first severe disappointment, then bitterness toward Fate and toward all who stand in the way. In most cases this bitterness and rancor remain as an inner festering sore, ruining only the composure and happiness of the individual.

What could have been the spiritual alternative to these rancors? If a man, through no apparent fault of his own, fails to advance in life, it is necessary for him to practice patience and submission. It is also wise for him to find some hobby—some outside interest—preferably some service he can do for school, church

or community, the engagement in which will bring him contentment and a satisfying sense of achievement.

The Moslem is trained by his religion—the very name of which is “Submission”—to remain contented and serene even in adverse conditions. The Buddhist, realizing from his religious teaching that the cause of most suffering is desire, learns how to cease desiring things that are not possible of achievement. Earnest Christians, following Christ's teaching to take no anxious thought for the morrow, can meet all untoward circumstances with serenity.

In a situation such as failing to get promotion while witnessing promotions of others, spiritual man avoids jealousy as he would a plague. *It may not be within his power to control events, but it is within his spiritual power to control his attitude toward events.*

Quarreling with neighbors? This is a fatuousness in which spiritual man never indulges. For he knows the dangerous consequences of such friction. One can change one's car pool, one can change one's place of work, one can change one's church. But it is usually impossible to change one's neighbor. There you are, both of you, stuck together side by side. What a fatality, to let friction lead to cumulative rancor and hatred! The slightest sign of friction must be alleviated, negated. Conversely, every effort should be made for a good relationship. The law of spiritual harmony, the

law of love, can always establish a pleasant and often affectionate neighborliness.

The case of this paranoic has been studied at length because it amply demonstrates the spiritual law that earthly man is subject to unforeseen events and likely to be overcome by them. Spiritual man, upon meeting the same kind of events, is empowered to ride over them successfully. *No event, no chain of circumstance could induce a truly spiritual man to hate another fellow being.*

Until we reach this inner spiritual mastery of life we have not really begun to live: not, at least, that kind of normal life intended for us by Destiny.

Spirituality, in thought and action, lifts one to a new dimension of existence. Such is the theme of this book—a theme which will be repeatedly announced and demonstrated throughout these pages.

(4)

Spiritual development will in general forestall frictional and inharmonious situations with our fellow beings. Mere common sense, however, will enable us to avoid letting such situations go on developing until they reach disastrous proportions.

Whenever we find any friction arising, the wise thing to do is to look within ourselves to see if we ourselves

are in any way at fault. It takes two people to make a quarrel. Let's begin with Number One, and see if we may not be a partial cause of the trouble.

Years ago when teaching at the U.S. Naval Academy the writer became aware of a growing hostility on the part of two fellow teachers who ate daily at the same place that I did. In this private home excellent meals were enjoyed at a large table seating some ten men, two of whom were becoming aggressively unfriendly.

I finally analyzed the trouble as originating from myself, due perhaps to the fact that in the discussions that frequently took place at the table I was perhaps often too domineering. These two men were reacting unfavorably to the situation. Gradually an animus was building up.

That seemed to be the situation. What was I to do about it? Sensibly, the thing to do was to diminish my own part in the table talk, avoiding at all times any overbearing attitude. And this I proceeded to do.

Meanwhile one of the two men fell sick from the flu and was transferred to the Naval Hospital. Here was a golden opportunity. I paid him a visit at the hospital, taking him a basket of fruit. This kindness completely dissolved the previous animosity and we became good friends.

As for the other man, no course of action seemed able to change his hostile attitude. But as I was meditating whether to change my meals to a place where I could eat in peace, the problem became suddenly solved in a most peculiar manner. On returning to Annapolis after a weekend in Washington, I noticed after a day or two that my antagonist had been absent from the table.

“What’s the matter with C———?” I asked. “Is he ill?”

“No”, someone replied. “He quarreled with the landlady and she evicted him!”

(5)

All troubles can be ended, all problems solved if we are willing to do our part in solving them. The world would be a much happier place to live in if we could learn how always to live harmoniously.

Those men who rise to high places in industry, business and government know how to control themselves in such a way as to avoid, or wisely manage, difficult situations that might arise from a clash of personalities.

In Canada last summer I found myself chatting with the personnel manager of the Montreal branch of a large international corporation. He was a dynamic man

who had previously served for ten years in the Canadian Mounted Police. When I asked if, among other things, he did not have at time problems arising from personal friction between employees, he told the following interesting incident.

“You might laugh,” he said, “when I tell you that astrology helps me in these problems! Certain signs of the zodiac are normally antagonistic to each other, and I try to keep such people apart.

“A couple of years ago we took in a new executive manager, and I found his astrological sign was adverse to that of the sales manager. So I warned both of them that they must be careful to keep up a cordial relationship, or there would be trouble. But the new executive did not heed my warning. And sure enough trouble came, chiefly from his unduly prodding the conscientious and efficient sales manager.

One day this situation came to a head. “If you keep on prodding the sales department you will lose a good man some day,” the sales manager exploded.

“Who, for instance?”

“Me, for instance. I resign as of this moment.”

The next day the chief executive tried to smooth the matter over. He called in the sales manager and said

somewhat apologetically, "I guess we went too far yesterday. What can we do about it?"

"You can do nothing," said the sales manager, "except to see a psychiatrist!"

This closed the deal! The personnel manager fortunately was able to transfer the sales manager to another branch of the company, and a year later to reinstate him when his adversary, the chief executive, moved on to another position. So all ended happily.

(6)

Common sense, however, or even uncommon sense and self-restraint, cannot always solve these human relationship problems. We need to cultivate a higher power than that of mere intelligence or mere good will. This power which we need, to apply to all human intercourse, is the power of the Spirit.

Spirit, the Creative Power, is synonymous with Love. Creation, constantly occurring, is a constant act of love. That power which causes the coherence of atoms into molecules is love, and the same power regulates the movements of planets and of the solar system.

Religion teaches us not only how to overcome, how even to avoid inharmony. It also teaches us how to cultivate and emanate the power of cosmic love to such

an extent that friction in our human relationships becomes almost impossible.

This is a positive condition of the human soul attained by means of communion with the Oversoul. This generates a loving warmth such as can melt all opposition.

A legend tells of two men who successfully lived above hostility. One of them wore a shining armor which repelled all the arrows of attack. But the other one did better still. He radiated such a power of love as to completely disarm all opposition.

(7)

At the dawn of Christianity Paul told his followers that love is not only the greatest of all the spiritual qualities, but is all-inclusive. For where Divine love reigns also will be found faith, guidance, serenity, harmony in all relationships, and joy such as nothing else can give.

He presented love as the spiritual factor which gives vitality and validity to all other excellent qualities. Without love eloquence is as sounding brass, he says. And though one had the gift of prophecy and had all knowledge, it is as nothing without love. Without the dominance of love, even such faith as could remove mountains falls short of spiritual perfection. And if

one devoid of love's promptings gives all one's gold to feed the poor, it profits him nothing.

Where love is, there is found also patience, kindness, radiant acquiescence. And where love reigns there is no room for envy or the conceit of pride. Love does not think evil. It is impossible, of course, for love to perpetrate evil. Love can endure all things, because it is sustained by cosmic power and its faith is unshakable.

Love never fails. Other qualities may come and go. Everything in existence is fluctuating, except love. Other things are but in part, but love is existence in its very essence.

Faith, hope and love—the trinity of man's spiritual perfection. Faith is a power; hope buoys up life with radiant expectancy; but love is the greatest of the three. Such was the doctrine of love which Paul expounded to the little group of Christians in the Grecian city of Corinth, and his description of love's values has never been surpassed.

What Paul was trying to describe was a new aspect of being brought to humanity by Christ. The pagan world had never known this love, nor had the tribes of Israel.

"Love your friends and hate your enemies:" this was the gospel of the ancients. "Do good to those who do

good to you, or even do good first. But requite injustice with vengeance."

(8)

The thirst for vengeance was strong in the pre-Christian world. It was strong even among the Hebrews, clearly to be traced in the frank narratives of the Old Testament. Even though these Israelites were taught by the Mosaic Law to put their vengeance in the hands of Jehovah, still they craved vengeance and pursued it. And in their prayers they called upon Jehovah (God of war as well as of peace) to "smite their enemies, hip and thigh." Vengeance was sweet to them.

The later prophets ameliorated this concept of Jehovah, presenting Him as the loving Father. They initiated the consideration of the quality of love as an important factor in man's spiritual nature.

Christ so amplified the spiritual doctrine of love that there could be no doubt as to its meaning. Our love must be so great, so cosmic, as to include in its orbit even our enemies. "Bless those who curse you, respond only with love to those who injure you."

This doctrine was at first incomprehensible. How can we love those who injure us? Christ's disciples were far from perceiving and fulfilling such a law of love. They longed to see Christ exercise a supernatural power to smite those who persecuted Him. Peter raised

his sword in anger and cut off the ear of a Roman soldier who started to seize his beloved Master.

After Christ's crucifixion, and from the historic descent of the Pentecostal Fire, the apostles seemed endowed with a new spiritual power so that they radiated love to all whom they met. This love was contagious. Their converts became inspired with it.

It was this love, more than anything else, which made the early Christian distinguishable from those around him. There were other noble doctrines circulating in the Roman Empire—Stoicism, Isis worship, Mithraism—but none of these empowered their devotees with the all-embracing, all-forgiving love which characterized the Christians.

Many a humble Roman slave was able, by the expression of such unearthly love, to win to Christ members of lordly households. For this love, when fully released, is arresting and compelling. It has a magnetic quality such as draws all to it, as flowers are drawn toward the sun. All men long for love. *Man is not complete until he learns not only how to win love but how to give it.*

These Christians had an example of the practice of a forgiving love in the life of Christ Himself. All through His brief career He both taught and practiced this perfect all-embracing love. The Cross became, and has remained, the symbol of all-suffering love.

Buddha also taught a gospel of love. "As a mother watches over her child, her only child, at the risk of her life, so turn with love to all mankind. The devotee, in meditating, sends love to one quarter of the world. Then he turns to the second quarter with a heart of love, and so to the third and fourth. Thus does he pervade the whole globe with thoughts of love."

Laotse said: "To those who do good to me, I do good. To those who do harm to me I also do good, so that from such treatment they will also learn to do good."

A century later than Laotse the philosopher Mo Ti proclaimed a doctrine of world peace through love. He urged all rulers not only to avoid war, but to avert war by a positive spiritual attitude. This astonishing preachment was far ahead of its time. It is a radical point of view even for today.

Even if Mo Ti's teachings were neglected, somehow they worked themselves into the broad stream of ethical and religious thought—Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist—which came to control Chinese character and behavior and to make China, until recently, not only the most pacific country in the world, but the most stable.

Abdu'l-Bahá in expounding the Bahá'í Faith in this country in 1912 emphasized this Divine love as the

goal of human attainment and the primal requirement for the establishment of the New World Order. "In truth, the fruit of human existence is the love of God, for this love is the spirit of life, and the eternal bounty. If the love of God did not exist, the hearts of men would be dead, spiritual union would be lost, the light of unity would not illuminate the world. . . . This love will make all men the waves of one sea. This love will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of true unity."

(9)

Spiritual love is more than the absence of hatred. It is a greater power than good will or affection. It is something far removed from the complex and often harmful patterns of those so-called loves that have a physical origin; loves that are basically ego-centric, that can harm as well as help, and that can so easily turn into hate.

Other things may fail, but love "never faileth." For there is a cosmic principle about it that endows it with *the essential quality of life itself, the essence of existence*. This cosmic quality in love is Divine Creativeness. The act of creation is an act of love. The sustaining power of all creation is the continuous, universal outpouring of pulsation of this creative Love into all matter.

The great educator Maria Montessori said: "Let us try to comprehend the nature of love. Let us think of what the prophets and poets have said about it, for it is these who have given the best expression to the great energy that bears this name. This force that we call love is the greatest energy in the universe. It is more than energy, it is creation itself. I should put it better if I were to say, God is love."

Animals, as well as humans, instinctively feel love and are governed by it. *White Fang*, one of Jack London's best short stories and based on fact, describes how an engineer in the Yukon saved the life of White Fang—an ill-treated animal half wolf, half sheep dog. White Fang did not respond to this new kindness. He had only hatred for humans, his experience with them having been one chiefly of cruelty. The new owner was on the point several times of shooting this savage wolf-dog that seemed dangerously incorrigible. But pity, patience and love prevailed to bring about White Fang's salvation. He became the loving and devoted follower of his master, and was on one occasion the means of saving his life.

The Yogis and holy men of India are reputed to be protected by the flow of this cosmic love from attacks of tigers, snakes or other dangerous animals. They sleep in the open, or sit in meditation with no fear of the wild life around them. And they are never molested.

If love can tame wild animals, it can also tame humans. This love can even be projected. A remarkable account of the power of love so developed and transmitted is described by Starr Daley in his book, *Love Can Open Prison Doors*.\*

Starr Daley (a pseudonym) was at the age of thirty-five a confirmed criminal. He was serving his fifth prison term—this time for fourteen years and with no hope of parole. The parole board had been offended by the violation of his last parole and the chairman told him: "There will be no more parole for you! You will serve out your fourteen years, less what you can earn by good behavior."

These were not good prospects for a bright young man. But a piece of good fortune fell his way when he was put with a cellmate who had achieved a spiritual station little short of sainthood; who years before had committed a murder of passion but had so changed in character that the authorities would now have dismissed him. This man would not accept a pardon, saying that he could do more good in prison than out.

Such was the man who taught Starr Daley the gospel of love; convincing him that love is a power, that it can solve problems and improve situations. He encouraged his young cell mate to try out this power of love.

\*Harper & Row.

The first experiment Daley made was concerned with the chaplain's censorship of a magazine that the prisoner had subscribed to, on the grounds that it was pantheistic. Daley, under ordinary circumstances, would have cursed out this pettifogging chaplain and held resentment against him. But with his new enlightenment he acted differently, holding himself back from any blame or criticism. The chaplain, he said to himself, was doing his duty as he saw it.

But Daley did more than merely avoid a hostile attitude. Every day he sent positive thoughts of love toward the chaplain. Within two weeks the chaplain came to the cell with a bundle of magazines in his arms.

"I have been looking them over," he said. "You may go ahead and read them. They are all right."

The first experiment had been successful. The next was more difficult—the task of nursing a man sick in mind and body who hated everyone and bitterly rejected all care and love. His language and behavior to the nurse was so violent that Daley was substituted for her. Now he faced the most difficult test of his life. How could he give love to this hateful, viciously rebellious man!

In spite of every provocation Daley held nothing but love in his heart as he tended the patient. His love



failed to triumph until the last moment. But at the approach of death Daley put his arms under the man's head, and with great love raised him up. With silent prayer he smiled at him.

The dying man returned the smile, said "Thank you," and died with peace upon his face.

Daley was so experienced now in the use of the power of love that he was ready to put it to the supreme test. He began to send thoughts of love daily toward the chairman of the parole board. Within a month Daley was called before the board and paroled from the prison. Since then he has written *Love Can Open Prison Doors*, and he has become part of Billy Graham's evangelistic team.

This application of love for the solving of human relationship problems is not a mere mode of circumventing or hypnotizing the person to whom the love is directed. It is not a concentration of human will-power to make the subject do what is wanted. It is rather the projection of a force of cosmic love toward a tangled situation so as to act as a universal solvent. No particular solution is sought, simply a harmonious outcome.

(11)

Edward Buller, Florida real estate broker and writer interested in psychic and spiritual phenomena, gives a

remarkable instance of the power of a concentration of love as practiced by him from indoctrination of Christian mystics.

"In my studies and reading, particularly concerning the Christian mystics, I rapidly learned that any difficulty may be overcome by the introduction of love. 'If you can see your enemy with the love of God, he can no longer be your enemy.' I do not know whether this principle (or truth) is spiritual or psychic, but I do know that whenever I have tested it, it has worked." In his article "Psychic Dividends" in the January, 1968, issue of *Fate* he tells how by means of this projection of cosmic love on a jury deliberating on a claim for injury in which he was the defendant—it brought in a verdict which surprised all the lawyers concerned in the case.

This legal case, completely unfair to Edward Buller in the claim for damage, was of such a nature that it was generally expected that the jury would award some damages to the female plaintiff. While the jury sat there hearing the case Edward Buller looked at each one of them in turn, and projected love.

The verdict was returned surprisingly soon, in 20 minutes. The lawyers on both sides were so surprised that they cornered the jury foreman and asked, "How did you happen to decide as you did?" Buller happened to be near, and heard the answer.

*Love is the answer to all our problems.*

"I honestly don't know. We all meant to give her at least enough cash to pay for the damages to her car, but we took three ballots and every one awarded no damage at all. *Each time I meant to write down an award but I didn't.* It was the same with all of us. We just had to vote as we did."

Buller goes on to say that similar success has come on other occasions from this projection of cosmic love. Obstacles have melted away.

(12)

It is hard to realize, until one learns by actual practice, the magic power of this cosmic love when concentrated upon another human being. How is it possible to love unlovely people, or to endure people when they are unendurable? The first "prison doors" we must open are the prison doors of the self. We must quell all emotions of resentment, of injustice and of antipathy.

This is only the first step. The next step is to take some time each day to concentrate the power of cosmic love on the person and on the situation. It is not by our own power that we are acting now. It is by becoming a channel for the divine love to flow through us that we are going to work this desired miracle.

Daily we concentrate, as Starr Daley did, upon the object of our need, projecting love in that direction. The process is perhaps the same as that by which

spiritual healers are able to heal at a distance. The sun shines always, with a lifegiving cosmic power. When we concentrate its rays by means of a lens, these rays can start a conflagration.

In the same way the spiritual concentration of love projected into any frozen situation will thaw it out, just as concentrated sunshine will change that frozen condition which we call ice.

Since reading Starr Daley's *Love Can Open Prison Doors* the writer has experimented in this direction with amazing success and is deeply grateful to Starr Daley for his tutelage. We wish everyone who reads this book would buy a copy of *Love Can Open Prison Doors*, study it deeply, and then put it into practice. *This technique of love as a solvent, if properly applied, can never fail, any more than sunshine can fail to cause ice to melt and plants to grow.*

**"When we are aware of the love of God at work in us and make a sincere effort to pour forth this love to all persons and all situations, we have the sure cure for any problem."**

**—Unity Daily Word.**

#### RECAPITULATION

True religion means not only getting along rightly with God, but also getting along rightly with our fel-

low men. It takes spiritual development to do this. Naturally, we respond adversely to disagreeable qualities in others and disagreeable actions on their part. But natural as such reaction is, it is dangerous; for it is the beginning of an inharmonious relationship that can become disruptive.

Spiritual man knows not only how to immunize himself against such disconcertions. He knows how to resolve them by the power of a love that is greater than human, the Cosmic Love.

No one can travel far on the spiritual path who has not learned how to immunize himself by the power of love; and not only how to immunize himself but how to bless all those who cross his path.

Let the power of love reign in your lives—the power of Cosmic Love. Since this power is the creative and regulating force of the Cosmos, once you learn how to channel it out to all who come within your orbit, you are employing a force that can harmonize all known relationships; and by so doing help to make your earthly life heavenly.

Learn how to draw to yourself and express to others this power of love. It can solve all problems that arise between you and other human beings.

## CHAPTER 9

### The Art of Finding Guidance

We can be in good health, happy in our work, and congenial in our human relations. Yet there can come times when we are faced with the necessity of making important decisions—decisions that may affect our subsequent success and happiness.

How wonderful it would be if on such occasions we could consult an all-wise counsellor! That is just what we can do if we learn how to tune in on the Cosmic Mind.

How can this be done? It is the purpose of the present chapter to describe the technique for finding guidance—a technique that has helped many to whom we have taught it and has been proved beyond a shadow of a doubt. It cannot fail, if properly applied.

Animals are in closer communication with the Infinite Intelligence than are humans. Their lives are controlled by what we call instinct or intuition. They are wonderfully endowed with a strange sixth sense. Horses, for instance, are able to scent danger, such as

that of a frail bridge which they refuse to cross, or of hidden enemies to their master. Many a man's life through the ages has been saved by the extra-sensory powers of his horse.

The dog is similarly endowed with a prescience or a clairvoyance which has proved invaluable to his master in the life of the wilds and in the pastoral life of flock-tending. Dogs, and cats as well, have an uncanny sense of finding their way to great distances in attempts to locate a lost master.

Animals and birds have a mysterious built-in sense of time. A cat, mascot of a certain ship, when given shore leave never failed to turn up just before the ship was about to leave port. The favorite dog, if his master is accustomed to take a walk at a certain time, will always be on hand at this moment. Birds fed by kind housekeepers arrive at the window exactly on the hour. Animals in the zoo know their feeding time as well as if they had clocks to warn them. The reef heron, though living many miles inland, appears to know when low tide will occur and leaves home each day just at the proper time to take advantage of it. The return of the swallows to Capistrano on the same day each year is a well known phenomenon.

The life of the insect is even more miraculously guided. The termite boring a passage that must not deviate from its course near the surface of the beam,

continues its course around obstacles with the accuracy of an engineer. The activities of the beehive—the bee's search for food, and its ability to fly in a "beeline" home—defy all explanation.

Not only in mute animals are these powers inherent. Many uncivilized savages are intuitive and prone to strange psychic phenomena. The Hawaiian natives, and the Polynesians from whom they were derived, have an instinctive sense of direction. You could set them down in the ocean far out of sight of land, but you could not lose them. This is a capacity they have brought down through the ages with them.

The natives of Hawaii also have a clairvoyant power of becoming cognizant of local difficulties of their people miles away. World traveler Baird T. Spalding says: "I have seen forty or fifty of them go across the island to find that some of their people were in trouble there. Sometimes their friends across the island would come in turn to them when needed. They never missed in these things. They were in constant touch with each other all the time, without benefit of telephone."

Similarly, the Australian bushmen are able to communicate by telepathic methods. When officials of the government visit their encampments, they are amazed to find themselves expected. In some way the natives have been notified, but not by signals or messenger.

These powers we call instinct. But that is only a designation for something we do not understand. We can use the same term to describe the mysterious and often inexplicable life of the plant. What does it all mean? It means that animals and savages alike, whose lives are at the mercy of their environment, are endowed with extra powers for their protection and guidance—powers of intuition and clairvoyance.

(2)

Why, then, are these powers not currently perceptible in civilized man? Has he lost them? Has he lost them for good? It would seem that man—in the process of civilization, urbanization and intellection—has little by little inhibited these powers. But these powers fortunately are still innate in him and recoverable.

We would not suggest here, by any means, that the life of the bee-hive is an invariable state of existence; or that the flawless efficiency of the anthill is something to be desired by man. If man were to so far abdicate his powers of self-direction as to be guided in the manner of the bee or the ant, he would be not a man but a machine.

This is the paradox imposed by freedom of will. Man is to a large extent a free agent, the director of his own destiny. He can, if he will, fumble along on his own individual powers. *Or he can, by means of this*

*same gift of will, choose to put himself under the guidance of the Universal.*

Actually, civilized man throughout the ages has sought with varying degrees of success some higher guidance outside of himself. Joseph consulted his golden divining cup. David somehow got guidances from his ephod, the tribal breastplate. The Babylonians frequented astrologists, soothsayers, and magicians. In Greece the oracles, especially that of Delphi, played a unique part. Individuals and whole communities consulted oracles on important occasions.

Pausanias tells in detail how the oracle of Hermes in Pharae was consulted. The consultant came in the evening to the statue of Hermes, lit the bronze lamps attached to the altar, placed a piece of money on the altar and whispered his question into the ear of the god. He then departed, closing his ears with his hands until he was out on the street. From the first human speech he heard, after withdrawing his hands, he was supposed to find some sign of guidance.

Christians up to this day have the habit of sometimes "cutting" the Bible—that is, opening the Bible haphazardly with the expectation that the first verse to catch their eye will constitute some guidance. There is in this practice, however, always the danger of the kind of guidance one such seeker is said to have received. The first verse he saw was, "And Judas hanged him-

self." Feeling sure there must be some mistake, he tried again. This time the guidance was, "Go thou and do likewise!"

However foolish or futile might seem these devices for obtaining guidance, they demonstrate the importance humans attach to the awakening of the intuitive power. This human trait is fundamentally sound. For man's own judgment is limited. And in times of danger of great need one realizes this fact and earnestly endeavors to find directives from some higher wisdom than his own.

Socrates unfailingly heeded that "daemon" or inner voice he said always guided his life in times of emergency. In fact, it guided him to his martyr's death, which he evidently felt was his divine destiny for he took no pains to avoid it. He frankly told his tribunal that even if they should release him on condition that he would refrain from teaching, he could not make any such pledge; for his "daemon", which had been his lifeguard, caused him to feel that such teaching was his spiritual duty. Furthermore, he stated that he would not accept exile as substitution for the death penalty. So the court, as embarrassed as Pilate was later to be at the trial of Jesus, was obliged to impose the sentence of death. Socrates firmly refused to be rescued. The real cause of Socrates' refusal to let his life be saved was his persistent inner guidance, and the peace of mind which continuously supported his decision.

Evelyn Underhill describes in her *Mysticism* the extraordinary guidances which St. Theresa received throughout her whole life. "They advised her in small things as in great. Often they interfered with her plans, ran counter to her personal judgment, or commanded something that appeared imprudent or impossible. They concerned themselves with journeys, with the purchase of horses. They warned her of coming events. She seldom resisted them, though they frequently involved her in hardships and difficulties. And she never had cause to regret this blind reliance upon decrees which she regarded as coming direct from God, and which certainly did emanate from a life greater than her own, in touch with transcendent levels of consciousness."

(3)

America was founded and guided chiefly by men who knew the value of spiritual guidance. Washington was daily upheld by it throughout the bitter exigencies of the Revolution. When the colonies, at last free, met to formulate a constitution, this guidance became a factor of success. When the Constitutional Convention, after days and weeks of incessant argument, was on the point of foundering and dissolving, Franklin suggested that they hold an hour of prayer. At the end of this hour opinions seemed more naturally to flow together, and the greatest single political document

ever conceived by the mind of man stood ready to be signed.

Lincoln turned frequently to prayer for guidance. He told a friend that he was often on his knees because he didn't know anywhere else to go. All through the war he spent hours in his inner room seeking from God some answer to his pressing problems—problems of warfare as well as of state. For Lincoln, often lacking able military leadership, was in fact as well as in name Commander-in-Chief of the Union Army. As such he made many intuitive decisions of importance to the final victory. The great decision of the war—the Proclamation of Emancipation—was resolved upon by means of prayerful guidance without any consultation with his cabinet.

Again, and in more recent times, we have the example of a leader of men who was himself led by the Spirit. Gandhi did more than any other single man to free India. By the time he entered upon the stage of political affairs in India he had acquired an extraordinary sensitivity to spiritual guidance. On occasions of important decisions he drew his guidance not from the counsels of men but from the Universal. In all his decisions and actions in his long campaign for the freedom of India, Gandhi was magically guided by his spiritual intuitions. He came to trust implicitly in these guidance. For, as he stated, "My instinct has not betrayed me once".

Nehru and other leaders of the Indian Congress were often appalled at Gandhi's unexpected political tactics. Once Nehru wept, saying: "What frightens me is your way of springing surprises on us. Although I have known you for fourteen years, there is something unknown about you which I cannot understand."

That which Nehru could not understand was Gandhi's extraordinary inner guidance. Gandhi could not understand it either. "Yes," he said, "I admit the presence of this unknown element, and I confess that I myself cannot answer for it, or foretell where it might lead."

(4)

The world does not understand as yet the full nature of those guidances that come as almost a normal procedure to men of heightened perception. But as Paul reminded the Corinthians, one must be spiritual to comprehend that which is spiritual, that which must be "spiritually discerned".

✓ It is certain that there is one absolute precondition ✓ for true guidance: utter selflessness. A strongly ego-centric individual is immune to guidance, whether from another human being or from a higher source. Such an individual, like a runaway horse, takes the bit between his teeth and dashes on to his own self-chosen goals.

It is also certain that in order to be receptive to guidance one must be of open mind and open heart. The first step is to abandon, for the moment, the attempt to find a so-called practical solution based upon the intellect. If the problem could be solved purely on logical grounds, there would seem to be little reason for seeking other guidance. It is rather the problems which the intellect cannot solve—when the scales seem to weigh equally on either side—that demand such help.

✓ Secondly, we must void ourselves of all desire in the matter pressing for solution. If we still retain desire, what we take to be guidance may be really the promptings of our own conscious or subconscious wishes. It is best, if possible, to delay our decision until all emotion is removed from the problem. ✓

✓ Finally, it may be stated that a true guidance takes the form of a firm conviction. There is no wavering of the spirit. Psychically and spiritually we feel at peace. When we abandon all pride and follow wherever we may be guided, we rest in a serenely concrete assurance that we are, indeed, led by the hand of God.

(5)

Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahà'í World Faith, spoke frequently of the need we all have of guidance

when beset with problems. "We all have problems," he said to one visitor, Ruth Moffatt, "and we wish help with our problems, so perhaps we may be able to help with this magical vision and key". He then gave the following five steps for seeking guidance:

- 1—"When you have a problem, **PRAY AND MEDITATE.**" He did not indicate prayer only, but prayer and meditation.
- 2—Then he said, "**DECIDE:** and without any doubts **HOLD TO YOUR DECISION.**"
- 3—"Have a determination to carry out the **DECISION.**"
- 4—The fourth step, (and not until the fourth step did he put this one in). "Have confidence then that the Power will flow through you, the gate will open, the right door will be opened for you, the right book, the right message, the right thought, the right principle will be given to you, at the right time. Have confidence, and the right thing will come to you in your need."
- 5—Then he said: "**ACT.** Act as though it had already been answered. **ACT** with tireless, ceaseless energy. And as you **ACT**, you yourself will become a magnet which will attract more power into your being, until you become an unobstructed channel for the Divine Power to flow through."



(6)

Conrad Hilton, creator of the world's greatest chain of hostelries, attributes his phenomenal success to his ability to heed these strange inspirational flashes of guidance—defined by Webster as “the knowledge obtained without recourse to inference or reason.”

“I’ve been accused more than once of playing hunches,” Hilton tells us in his autobiography *Be My Guest* (Prentice Hall). “Since I suppose I do and it sounds so mysterious, and since I believe most people have them, whether they follow them or not, I’ve tried to figure out what’s in a hunch. I think the other name for hunch is intuition, and I think intuition can be a form of answered prayer. You do the best you can—thinking, figuring, planning—then you pray. It’s no use praying, ‘God do this for *me* and let the other fellow hold the bag!’ But it’s perfectly fair to ask: ‘What is the right answer?’ Nor is it selfish. Everyone else has the same right. But the key to intuition is not in the prayer, but in listening intensely for a response.”

In the acquisition of the Stevens Hotel in Chicago, Hilton had one of the most definitely successful hunches of his life. He was bidding for the Stevens Corporation, which the Government was disposing of, after taking over the hotel itself for the use of the Air Force in World War II.

Hilton’s first bid was \$165,000. He was just about to seal the envelope and mail it, when another figure kept popping into his mind — \$180,000. “This felt right. I changed my bid to the larger figure on that hunch. When the bids were opened, the closest bid to mine was \$179,800. Thus I got the Stevens Corporation by a narrow margin of \$200! Eventually the assets returned me two million.”

Later on, the possession of the Stevens Corporation helped Hilton to acquire the Stevens Hotel itself, then the largest hotel in the world.

\* \* \*

An amazing instance of guidance in the life of David is that narrated in the thirtieth chapter of the first book of Samuel. David had, at the invitation of Achish, king of Goth, settled with his Robin Hood band of six hundred adventurous youth and their wives and children in the village of Ziklag. Here David’s roving band—ever in flight from mountain cave to mountain cave under the relentless pursuit of Saul—found sanctuary, a quiet home and the possibility of domestic happiness. Yet this was not to last long. A war broke out between the Philistines and the Israelites, and Achish, as ally of the Philistines, commanded the services of David and his men.

When the band returned to Ziklag—unexpectedly rejected by the Philistine leaders who feared treachery—they found the Amalekites had invaded the land of

Achish, burned Ziklag and carried away its women and flocks as booty. "So David and his men came to the city, and behold it was burned with fire; and their wives and their sons and their daughters were taken captives. Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. . . . And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning of him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters."

Never before or after was David in such a predicament as this. Everything was lost and his life was in grave danger from the blind headstrong grief and anger of his boisterous braves. Then David turned to his God for help and guidance, sending Abiathar the priest for his ephod.

And David inquired of the Lord: "Shall I pursue after this troop?"

"Yes," the ephod replied.

"If I pursue them shall I overtake them?"

"Yes!" came the answer with great certainty.

So David and his men pursued with such fury that soon a third of his band had to drop back, exhausted. But the rest pushed on, until at the brook Besor the trail failed. At this juncture they happened upon an Egyptian slave of the Amalekites, left to die and now

unconscious. They gave him to drink, fed him and revived his spirits. And he in return for their kindness gave them full information and agreed to guide them to the Amalekite troop. They found the Amalekites "spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil they had taken."

Then David and his men smote them, destroying all but four hundred who escaped on camels, and recovered everything which the Amalekites had carried away, including his two wives. Furthermore, he won much booty that had been taken from the Philistines. And he and his young men marched back to rebuild Ziklag.

This, however, they were never destined to do. For in two days word came to David that Saul and Jonathan had been slain in battle. David's fortunes now loomed large. Again he sought advice from his precious ephod. "Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?"

And the answer was, "Go up!"

He went up, he and his young men. And the leaders of Judah welcomed him and anointed David king over Judah—and "There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger and the house of Saul waxed

weaker and weaker". And in due time he became king of all Israel.

The day of David's greatest disaster and gravest danger had proved the turning point—thanks to his intuitive guidance—in one of the most eventful and fruitful lives history has recorded.

\* \* \*

I have a friend in Washington who is a writer, organizer and publicist. He tells me I am the only friend in Washington to whom he can talk about his mystic experiences, of which he has many. He believes that there is such a thing as guidance, and he follows guidances when they come. He even seeks them at times. He is a man of noble character, always ready and even seeking to serve his friends and acquaintances in any way possible to aid their own career or progress, or to help them in difficulties.

One night as my friend was driving home from work he asked himself, "Is there anything I can do to be of help?"

The answer came to him quite definitely, "Yes, go around and see Miss N———," a young lady to whom he had been of some assistance, trying to find her a position and even lending her money.

When he reached home he telephoned Miss N——— and asked if he could call and see her that evening.

She answered in a rather strained voice, "Well, it won't do any good because I can't pay you what I owe you."

"Oh, I don't want to see you for that purpose. I just want to make a social call."

At this she was greatly relieved and glad to have him come. During his visit with her that evening he found that she was in a very depressed mood and had been contemplating suicide. He cheered her up, loaned her more money, and in effect saved her life.

\* \* \*

Some years ago I met in Washington at the Congressional Woman's Club a Miss Hayes, the daughter of a Congressman Hayes from a western state, who told me the following remarkable story about her grandmother, Mary Hayes Chynoweth, who from a very early age had a remarkable power of intuitional guidance and of healing. She was a schoolteacher as to vocation, but practiced healing outside of her teaching hours, giving it as a free service to those in need of it. She had developed such faith in guidance that she never refused to follow what the Voices told her to do.

One winter night, for example, in the midst of a blizzard she woke up at midnight and the Voice directed her to hitch up her team of horses and drive as guided; that there was a life she must save. (Imagine obeying such a guidance, getting up from a comfort-

able bed and driving out in the cold and dark on a bitter freezing night with no more certain goal than that afforded by an inner voice!) She drove twenty miles and was guided to the cabin of a lonely old woman on the mountain side who was seriously ill and would have died but for her ministrations.

This young lady married, had two sons, and moved to Wisconsin. Her sons went through college and became successful lawyers, practicing in Madison.

Then came the Voice speaking to their mother. It said: "You have served me all these years faithfully, freely, and without price. Now you shall be rewarded. I am going to bring you riches in such a way as not to take from the wealth of others, but to increase the world's wealth."

And the Voice went on directing her to buy up the stock of an abandoned iron mine which state geologists had reported on so unfavorably that no further attempt was being made to work it and the stock had fallen to a very low point.

She communicated this guidance to her sons who, having acquired considerable faith in their mother's power of guidance as evidenced over a number of years, used what savings they had to buy up the stock of this abandoned mine and start operations. They discovered one of the richest veins of iron in the world and became millionaires.

At the time this story was told me, one of the sons had become Congressman from California; and the other editor of one of the leading newspapers of California and subsequently governor. Their mother used her share of the wealth to establish a religious institution for teaching spiritual truth.

(7)

Countless are the ways and means of guidance. The important fact is that everyone can learn to receive guidance through intuition. That is what the intuition is for, to consummate a wisdom and a vision that is lacking to our limited mental powers. *Man's intuition, eagle-pinioned, can reach heights debarred to man's intellect.* This invisible partner of ours is clairvoyant and clairaudient. It can solve problems at which the intellect despairs. It can even penetrate the future in ways that give safe guidance amidst perplexities and perils.

How can we cultivate the art of guidance? First, we must have faith that we can get guidance. Secondly, in quiet moments of meditation or deep thought, we must give an opportunity for our silent partner to get the message to us. This deep-self of ours is ever ready. It is we who are unready, who fail to offer the essential requirements for guidance.

How shall we know the guidance when it comes? We shall know it by the psychic force of conviction it brings with it, and by the clarity with which it operates.

There is one kind of guidance that comes to us all at times, unsought—the warning, from the sub-conscious depths, which seeks by psychic disturbance and unrest to deter us from an unwise or dangerous course of action. A tenseness, a feeling of unease, of vague apprehension, a nervous tension at bedtime and upon awakening in the morning,—these efforts of our invisible partner to deter us from unwise decisions or to save us we should never disregard.

How does such warning come? *It comes as a strain and disturbance in our solar plexus. This is the point at which spiritual forces contact our nervous system.* This is the place where Spirit is able to communicate its warnings to us by a constant feeling of unease, especially at sleep time and upon awakening.

(8)

May the writer give a striking example of this from his own life? In 1931 I was invited to Honolulu to lecture on progressive education in the middle of February. There was no fee attached, but all expenses were to be paid. I welcomed this opportunity to visit Hawaii, and on the way to visit the West Coast where I had relatives. I had managed also to secure two modestly paying lectures en route.

All this was arranged and decided upon early in December. It was something in my professional life to look forward to. Yet strangely enough, early in Jan-

uary I began to feel those psychic qualms and warnings such as on a previous occasion I had disregarded to my misfortune.

I had learned by this time the immense value of these strange attempts of Destiny to communicate with the soul; and I also had learned how to ascertain its authenticity and validity.

The first step was to see if this apparent warning persisted. It did, morning after morning, night after night.

The second step—in order to make myself a channel for true guidance—was to eliminate all desire in connection with my lecture plans. I had to stop thinking about the professional advantages; about the visit to my relatives in California; the eagerly anticipated swims in the ship's pools en route to Hawaii; and the anticipated charms of this lovely semitropical island. *All desire must be stilled and the soul become clear of any ripples of desire.*

All this had been accomplished in utter isolation from all human counsel or advice. As the feelings of unease definitely continued, I one day made my final decision. Coming down to breakfast I said to my wife, "I am not going to Hawaii."

"Why not?" she asked in surprise. "What, not going after all your splendid plans? And you were looking forward so to going. Why aren't you going?"

"I don't know. The reason will be shown later," I said.

And right here is an important point about these guidances of our *daemon*. If we knew the reason, if we had some adequate logical reason for thus breaking our plans, it would be very helpful. We would not then seem ridiculous. *But if we had before our intelligence all the factors for decision it would not be guidance.* It would be the normal process of intelligent decisiveness.

It is at this crucial point where a change of plans seems ridiculous that we must stand firm. I had learned from the previous experience already mentioned, that one must not let pride stand in the way of guidance. It makes no difference what our fellows should think of us at this point. The only thing of importance is, what does our *daemon* wish us to do? Once we get that message clearly, it behooves us to obey it or the consequences may be disastrous.

In this case it was not difficult to cancel all plans. Since I was not being paid a fee to speak in Honolulu I was not really obligated in the matter; and just at this time bank closures caused my two paid lectures en route to be cancelled.

But why was I prevented from going? One reason soon turned up. At the very time when I would have been on the steamer returning from Hawaii I came

down with acute appendicitis. There was only 24 hours to spare for operation before the appendix would be perforated, an event which before the days of penicillin was 50 percent fatal. Apparently this was enough to justify my warning and my strange decision. At least, it justified it in the eyes of my wife who often looked back with wonder at this strange event.

But I feel there was a deeper cause than this—a spiritual cause. It had been a bit of selfishness on my part to indulge in this enterprise in the first place. The five or six weeks I would have been away would have placed far too great a strain on my wife, as my substitute in running the school.

Actually, I do not care just what the reasons were. We must not call on Spirit to render proof. Spirit deals with intangibles. If we wish to reject Spirit and live and act only in the world of the tangibles, it is our privilege to do so.

The most important relationship we can establish with the Universal is this of guidance and inspiration. The history of human affairs has demonstrated over and over again the possibility of such a relationship. The lives of great men who have been leaders of humanity; the lives of those who have created most superbly in various forms of the arts; the great scientists and inventors whose discoveries and inventions have transformed our daily lives,—all these have

achieved greatly because of the greatness of their inspiration.

We do not have to be geniuses to partake of this beneficence, this exaltation of our powers in contact with the Cosmic Mind. We, too, can seek and find guidance in all our affairs—large or small. We can draw inspiration for our work and for our wholesome pleasures and joys of life from the infinite Source of all good.

*It is a sad thing that so few of us have learned how to let the Infinite play its creative role in our lives. Christ both taught and demonstrated this great truth. But how few apply it!*

This destined relationship of the individual to the Universal is not theoretical nor haphazard. It is as scientific as any subject which absorbs the intelligence of man, It is more important for his welfare than material science, which can miraculously improve the outer aspects of our daily living yet fail lamentably to establish peace within. To such a degree does material science fail us, that those countries which provide the highest standards of living have also the highest rate of alcoholism and suicide. It is time that humanity sought seriously the higher satisfactions of the spirit—fulfilling one's desires with that "water of life" which quenches all thirst.

Other remarkable instances of such warning guidance could be given. But there is another important kind of guidance, that which can aid us to choose wisely between two different courses of action open to us. Suppose we stand at the point of two diverging paths, a situation poignantly described by Robert Frost in his poem "The Road Not Taken". We face a choice between Course A and Course B; or perhaps between Course A and Not A. Our choice may be pregnant with destiny, may be irrevocable. How important to choose wisely!

Let us say that we have used our best powers of mind to analyze the advantages pro and con. We have consulted with others. Yet we cannot in our studied judgment make one side of the scales outweigh the other. What should we do at this point? If the intellect has reached a cul-de-sac, let it rest and turn to the intuition, to the Unconscious for the answer.

There is a definite technique we must follow at this point. We must relax, stop straining the intellect. We must void any and all desires connected with the matter—making our souls, as it were, an unruffled lake that can reflect the stars. *We should stop discussing the matter with anyone.* Then if every time we think of A as our choice we feel uncomfortable in the solar plexus and every time we think of B we feel at ease, this is our guidance. At night when we retire and in the morning

on awakening are the two periods of the day when we are most sensitive to such guidance. Gradually by this process we shall build up an assurance, a firm unchangeable conviction. *We have at last found our guidance.*

The simplicity and effectiveness of this method of finding guidance is evidenced in the experience of the daughter of my summer neighbors in Eliot, Maine. Some years ago, when she was perplexed about her choice of a future profession, I expounded to her the "solar plexus" way of getting guidance.

I had forgotten all about that incident, but recently I was talking to the mother and asked how Catherine was getting on.

"Do you remember the advice you gave her years ago, how to find guidance? Well, she was then in a quandary whether to continue taking courses for a medical career, or to shift to physics which had of late attracted her greatly. The premedical year she had just finished had somehow caused her to lose her enthusiasm for the career of a doctor.

"She was at that time quite worried about the situation, so worried that she eagerly followed your directives. Every time she thought of becoming a doctor she felt uneasy and squeamish. But every time she thought of taking up physics she felt at ease and happy.

"This decided her. She dropped medicine to special-

ize in physics. The result has been extraordinary. She is now the only woman engineer in IBM's largest plant near New York; she has been promoted three times; her salary is fabulous; and she is very happy in her work. She has always been grateful to you for your help."

"Tell her to be grateful to her solar plexus, and to the Power that operates through it," I rejoined.

We humans do not have to wander hapless through the mazes of existence. The same Power which unerringly guides bees and birds in their flight can guide us, provided we duly seek such guidance.

Since we have free will, our destiny is in our hands. But our success in thus managing our own affairs depends partly upon our ability to make wise decisions. When our own minds fail to tip the scales of decision we need help from the Cosmic Mind, which is always at hand to lend its prescience to our ambivalence.

**"When our need is for guidance and we must make decisions that will bring forth satisfying results, let us seek the wisdom of God."**

**—Unity Daily Word.**

#### RECAPITULATION

Some aspects of our spiritual life are vague and mysterious—not always clearly understood. But the



technique of guidance as set forth in this chapter can absolutely be relied upon. It is not seeking something which if obtained will deprive others. This art, this process of tuning in to the Cosmic Mind when we are otherwise unable to solve our problems, is a spiritual attainment intended for humans. It is a conscious reaching out for that Cosmic guidance in our affairs which plant and animal life receives gratuitously, and the savage also to some extent.

*Such an application of our spiritual functioning in daily life can be guaranteed success. Try it out, and your experience will corroborate this statement.*

But be sure to take all the necessary steps. The soul, when in perplexity seeking to be guided from a Higher Power, must give up all attempts to guide itself. All desires must be quenched. No discussion with other people should take place. There should be quiet moments when the messages can take place.

When the final guidance is felt, there will be a feeling of peace and contentment that is unmistakable.

If these conditions are met the message will come, just as surely as messages from the other side of the world can be received by radio.

The author would appreciate hearing from any readers of this book who receive important guidances by successfully following the above directives.

## CHAPTER 10

### Ours for the Asking

The Biblical narrative of Adam and Eve suggests that man's first conscious desire was to possess some magical power by which he might change the course of his life. "Ye shall be as gods," said the serpent. And countless souls since that day have been lured from their fruitful Edens by the promise of such power.

Man has also dreamed of finding for himself some inexhaustible source of wealth which would supply all his needs. The legends and lore of the ages reflect this passion with countless tales of buried treasure and gold at the end of the rainbow. The alchemists of old sought in vain for the magic formula. And many a modern Midas has abandoned all else to continue the quest.

We might say man is not amiss in seeking these goals. For in seeking power we are, in a sense, acknowledging our limitations. In seeking prosperity we are recognizing the abundant provision made by a friendly universe for our pleasure and comfort.

Yet what strangely circuitous paths we have taken in pursuit of these things, when in reality they can be

ours for the seeking. "Ask, and it shall be given you," said Jesus. "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

How simple it all sounds! But in saying this Jesus knew—as we must know—that it is not in clutching fingers nor in clenched fists, but in reverently clasped hands, that God places His inestimable gifts.

Those who have discovered this truth have found in prayer a source of power and wealth which unfailingly supplies their deepest needs and sincerest desires. "Prayer is a force as real as terrestrial gravity," states a noted surgeon. "As a physician, I have seen men, after all other therapy failed, lifted out of disease and melancholy by the serene effort of prayer. When we pray, we link ourselves with the inexhaustible motive power that spins the universe. A constant, quiet miracle takes place hourly in the hearts of men and women who have discovered that prayer supplies them with a steady flow of sustaining power in their daily lives."\*

Here is power indeed. To think that man is able to approach the Infinite, to enter the Eternal, to bind his being to the Source of all being, even for a brief moment of prayer! This power, though rejected by many, is denied to none. On the human stage individuals may move in various strata of earthly position.

\*Dr. Alexis Carrell. *Prayer is Power*. Reader's Digest Association.

But when they are on their knees before God there is no difference in their stature except the degree of humility and faith expressed.

Here also is wealth. Spiritual treasures and worldly supplies will be given freely to all who earnestly seek them. Through prayer, and prayer alone, we can know the abundant life of which Jesus spoke; and which the Psalmist must have experienced when he said, "I shall not want."

(2)

All the religions of the world have taught the use of prayer. There are prayers for escape from danger and for the supply of material needs. There are prayers for guidance. There are prayers that earnestly seek divine help in spiritual growth. And there are prayers which ask for nothing more than to dwell momentarily in the presence of that creative and sustaining power we call God.

Important as prayer is to humanity, it is an area of human life full of perplexities. How should we pray? Why do so many prayers seem to be unanswered? What kind of prayer is assured an immediate answer? Do answers to prayer depend upon our own attitude of faith and upon our earnest persistence?

These and other questions continually confound the thinking of both the experienced and the inexperi-

enced. But the problem which really prevents us from engaging in meaningful prayer centers largely around our conception—or rather our misconception—of the essential nature of God.

For many, there is a feeling that God is too remote from the human sphere to be involved intimately with man. In a recent drama based on the Biblical character of Gideon we hear Gideon cry in utter frustration, "God, you're too vast a concept for me." And indeed, many find it impossible to imagine that a God so vast as to control the universe could concern Himself with the petty problems which perpetually plague mankind. The difficulty in such a conception of Deity is that while it affirms God's power, it denies God's love.

On the other hand, there are many who are unable to conceive of God in other than finite terms. As one clergyman puts it, "They have a debased idea of a god who is a sort of glorified human; a celestial errand boy or a sanctified Santa Claus; a doting parent who indulges his children, who pampers us in our whims and fancies."\*

A god of such limited dimensions could hardly be expected to hear the quiet murmurs or the anguished cries that pour forth from millions of human hearts each instant. Nor could we approach such a god with any certainty that his wisdom would be sufficient to

\*Russell C. Stroup, D.D. Sermon. "A Faith for Maturity".

meet our myriad needs. A faith so narrow, while it may acknowledge God's love, denies both His wisdom and His power.

If our converse with God is to have meaning, it must consist of something more than mechanical mouthings offered up to whom it may concern. True communion is possible only if we bring to the practice of prayer the positive conviction of God's power, God's love, and God's wisdom.

Nothing more is really required. For if we believe in the power of God, how can we doubt that He hears? If we rest in the certainty of God's love, how can we question His concern? And if we trust in God's infinite wisdom, we are assured of an answer according to that Will which alone is perfect. It was based upon this kind of faith that Christ told his disciples, " whatsoever things you desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them."

(3)

Christ also taught that we should pray urgently and persistently if our need is impelling. This He did by means of the quaint parable of the good man to whom a guest came late at night. There happened to be no food at hand, and the shops were closed. So the host went to borrow bread from his neighbor. He knocked

at the door but got no answer. He knocked a second time, louder than before. This woke up his neighbor, who sleepily asked what was wanted. When he learned that it was only a loaf of bread he called out, "Go away and let me sleep".

But the laws of hospitality were all compelling. The good man must at any cost secure food for his guest. So he knocked again louder still, until the neighbor reluctantly got up and gave him the bread—"for his very importunity's sake". Thus should we beseech God when we are in dire need—this was the advice with which Christ ended His parable.

Sometimes the answer to prayer comes so swiftly and so specifically that even the most serious sceptic could not attribute it to coincidence. Cases such as this occurred in our own family life, one of which is presented as indubitable proof of the power of prayer.

My father was an artist, well known in his native city of Boston, where he painted portraits and landscapes over a period of fifty years. As with all artists, his income was precarious. To add to his financial difficulties, he had indulged in what phrenologists of that day called "philoprogenitiveness". In other words, he loved children and had acquired seven of them. In addition he helped support a twin brother and his family of five children.

It was hard enough for any artist to earn a living in the city of Boston—where culture ran high in values of appreciation but not in lavish purchases of art. To make a bad situation worse Father delighted in conceiving huge historical paintings which seldom found a market. He often found himself in serious financial straits. Speaking about this to me in later life he said: "My boy, I never went to sleep at night without putting my hand in the hand of God." I have often thought, was not my father's unusually buoyant nature partly due to this habit of prayer? This is an investment that is certain to bring dividends.

We fortunately had enough food to eat, thanks to credit generously extended us by the village grocer, who was content to get paid every now and then. Chiefly then.

Cash ran very low at times. I can recall occasions as a boy when to suddenly demand five cents, say for a much needed pair of shoe strings, would bring the distressed response: "Well, boy, can't you wait until tomorrow?"

These temporary states of insolvency never distressed us children. But they greatly distressed our mother, who had to carry not only the task of raising a large family but also the daily worry concerning the wherewithal of keeping us sheltered, clothed, and fed.

Mother had great faith in God and in prayer. From the events of her life I should say this faith was amply justified. It was indeed miraculous at times how rent would be met, clothing be contributed, or a much needed supply of coal become available.

I could cite many instances in our family of such answers to prayer. But I will describe one—the most striking of them all—which in its corroborative details proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, not only that the answer came soon after earnest prayer was made, but also that *the answer came because of the prayer*.

It was in the winter of 1888 that a very severe and prolonged cold spell caught us desperately short of warm bedding. Other cold spells had been short in duration. But this one hung on. Day after day skies were leaden. The ground, palely lit, was unwarmed by an ineffectual sun. Water pipes froze. The telephone wires sang a desolate tune to wintry winds that found their way through closed windows into our bedrooms, only one of which was heated.

The need for more bedding became imperious. But this was one of Father's periods of insolvency, when he walked five miles to the city and five miles back because he did not have the price of a train ticket. There was no money to buy blankets or quilts. And no friendly neighborhood store to supply credit in this line, as in groceries.

So Mother took it to the Lord in prayer. And when I say prayer, I *mean* prayer. She did not pray by halves. She wrestled with the Lord, as Jacob did with the angel. But when she finished her prayers and sank into a well-earned sleep, she was certain that an answer would come.

The next afternoon a village friend came to call on Mother. After a friendly chat she said as she arose to go: "Mrs. Cobb, don't take it amiss if I ask you whether you could use a couple of quilts. I have several on hand that I have made as a hobby; and it occurred to me that in your large family you might be able to use a couple."

"Take it amiss!" my Mother exclaimed, bursting into tears. "This is an answer to prayer!" And she told her friend the whole story. And here comes the most remarkable part of the episode—the most detailed confirmation and proof of prayer that has ever come to my attention.

"Well, to tell the truth," the friend replied, "I knew you needed bedding, and that is why I came to see you. Mother Cobb (Father's mother, who had recently died) appeared to me in a dream and told me you needed bedding, and to take you some."

So the prayer was answered and the need supplied, like manna of old.

On another occasion a new carpet was desperately needed for our home but there was no money on hand with which to purchase it. So again prayer was earnestly resorted to. The very next morning a fellow townsman approached father on the suburban train to Boston and said:

“Darius, I’d like my mother’s portrait painted, but I don’t feel like putting out cash for it. Is there anything in my store (a furnishing store in Boston) that you could take in exchange?”

Upon hearing of our need for a carpet, he said: “Have your wife come in tomorrow and pick one out.”

What a quick answer to prayer, and how free from red tape! No forms to fill out, no credit standing to look up, no waiting in line for delivery of the goods!

(4)

Perhaps the world’s outstanding proof that prayer can produce remarkable tangible results is evidenced in the life of George Mueller of England. His life of prayerful achievement has been and still is an inspiration to many.

George Mueller (sometimes spelled Miller), a hundred years ago was a newly ordained clergyman in the suburbs of London. What he saw of the life of the poor and especially the ill treatment of orphans (this was

the period of Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*), convinced him of the need for an institution which could give loving care and treatment to orphans. He formed a project for such an enterprise, but before entering upon it he prayed earnestly for guidance. The guidance came as positive. And his project was confirmed by his finding two adjoining buildings and a suitable staff.

Soon the two buildings were filled and they looked about for larger quarters. Eventually their orphanage was expanded to the capacity of two thousand children and so conducted for some forty years.

It is not remarkable that such an enterprise should succeed. Other similar enterprises have succeeded. But what is remarkable in this case of George Mueller is that *throughout his life he never solicited a single penny for his charity.*

“God is my treasurer,” he once said. He had such supreme faith in this Treasurer that he never asked aid from anyone else. The greater his need, the more he prayed. At the lowest point of the institutional fortunes, Mueller and his wife held five earnest prayer sessions in one day. He stated to friends that he thanked God for letting him face such emergencies, for it increased his faith in the power of prayer.

A close sequence between need, prayer and supply is cited as occurring one morning when he found upon awakening that he had neither food for the orphans’

breakfast nor money to buy it. Mueller and his wife knelt earnestly in prayer. It was just at this same time that a banker who had made some donations to the orphanage was himself eating breakfast, and the idea came to him to go to the orphanage and leave a donation before taking the train for London. After breakfast he started to do this. But as he walked along he thought that he might arrive late at the bank and that it would be better to make his donation upon returning from the City. So he turned and walked toward the railway station. But he did not get far in this direction. Something seemed to compel him to carry out his original plan. Going to the orphanage he gave Mueller two five-pound notes. Similar instances occurred during this remarkable career.

At the age of seventy Mueller decided to make an evangelistic trip around the world, despite advice to the contrary from friends familiar with his "loose" financial arrangement. But this extraordinary philanthropist carried out his intentions. And for twenty-five years—up to the time of his death at ninety-five—he circumnavigated the world in behalf of Christ, never lacking for funds either for his orphanage or for his travels.

(5)

How is it that in the case of the banker answering Mueller's prayer for breakfast food, and in the case of

our own two family prayer needs the exact and immediate answers came?

It is time that we stopped thinking of a kind personal God manning a watchtower, receiving requests from all over the universe and assigning to agents the duty of fulfillment. Such an idea is the childish creation of that ancient geocentric world for which the sun was created to light us by day and the moon by night.

Now we realize, or at least we are told by the astrophysicists, that the universe contains a billion galaxies as large, or larger than our Milky Way; and that the Milky Way contains a billion suns as large, or larger than, ours. That means a billion times a billion suns in the universe. It is therefore estimated that there must be hundreds of millions of planets which are the seat of intelligent life.

There is no central citadel of this universe in which God resides. If we are Monists, we must believe that the entire existence is an expression of the Cosmic Mind which creates and sustains it. We may consider that this Cosmos (a Greek word meaning "an ordered universe") is a spiritual continuum. There is no focal spot in it to which our prayers must find their way, and await a relayed answer. The Cosmic Intelligence and Cosmic Love inhabits it, and inheres in every area of Its creation. Our prayers, therefore, do not have to

travel any distance to reach this Spiritual Continuum which we call God. The Power to Attend surrounds us day and night. The Power to Answer is continuously at our very side.

The Universe is essentially Spirit. So it behooves us, as intelligent beings, to form some comprehension of the immense availability for aid which lies in this surrounding Spiritual Continuum. In order to grasp this truth we have need of symbols. That of the Loving Father which Christ gave us cannot be improved upon.

While we are encouraged by the teachings of religion to pray for material needs, there is an evident limit to the help we can expect from this kind of prayer. *Success will not flow to us regardless of ability.* Prayer cannot help us to market an unworthy product, or to win in a competitive enterprise for which we have little talent. Nor can even earnestly religious persons expect to achieve economic security simply through prayer. The work of the world would come to a paralytic stop if prayer could accomplish these things.

The problem of why we are often disappointed in prayer can best be understood by considering the kind of prayer that never disappoints. "One great thing I have learned," says a minister whose life itself is a kind of prayer. "Material gifts may be given me or may be

denied when I pray. But spiritual gifts are always bestowed—always! And here is my deepest need. I need forgiveness: God always forgives. I need freedom from fear: If I pray with faith my fear vanishes. I need liberty from anxiety; I need courage in danger; I need strength, spiritual strength for life's burdens. I long for peace of mind, I long to know the truth, to experience beauty, to know happiness. I need more faith, I need more hope, I need more Love."

Such are the gifts God freely gives if we but ask. And these things we may rightly covet for ourselves. For however abundantly we possess them, we do not impoverish our neighbor. Nor must we practice frugality in order to retain these gifts. Indeed, the more lavishly we pour them out into the world, the more certainly our own supply will be increased.

There are occasions when we must not only persist in prayer, but must endure delays without losing faith. In fact, all great enterprises require such faithful endurance. Why should we expect the use of prayer to be less demanding upon our energy and faith than is the conduct of our secular life?

There are also occasions when our prayers are answered in a different way than we expect. Doubtful souls may feel that unless the answer comes in the affirmative their petitions have been disregarded. It



does not occur to them that sometimes the answer may be *No*, for God's own good reasons.

H. G. Wells, for example, narrates an incident in the life of his parents which he said helped to make him an agnostic. His mother, a woman evidently of superior character who had been the favorite maid in an aristocrat's estate, married the gardener, a man of jovial but rather weak character. The couple then proceeded to invest a few hundred pounds inheritance in a small crockery and notions shop. This establishment was always on the verge of failure. Neither of Wells' parents had adequate business ability for the task of making such a shop successful.

Wells' mother, who was very religious, prayed continuously for a success which never came. No one could have been more assiduous in prayer, or more earnest in her daily work. It not only grieved H. G. to see his mother toil for such long hours unsuccessfully; but it also destroyed any belief he might have had in a kind of Deity who heard and answered prayers. Of course the trouble was that while Wells' mother gave great effort to her work she had no ability for it, and his father even less.

If Wells had used a little more perception he would have known that his mother's prayers were ultimately answered, to all essential purposes, in the easy financial

circumstances which characterized the later years of her life. For Wells, becoming quite early in life a successful and prosperous author, took joy in building a little cottage for his mother next to his own home. And there she lived for many years in complete comfort and happiness.

Our faith must be sufficient, not simply to ask of God, but to recognize and accept the answers which ultimately and unfailingly come. If we rest in the assurance of God's love and God's wisdom we shall know that even if our petty demands are not satisfied, our prayers have indeed been answered with gifts infinitely more precious than any we might have imagined. Such was the experience of the Confederate soldier whose words are a profession of faith that can be ours as well.

"I asked God for strength that I might command: I was made weak that I might humbly learn to obey. I asked for health that I might be able to do great things: I was given infirmity that I might know compassion for suffering men. I asked for riches that I might be happy: I was given poverty that I might learn content. I asked for power that I might know the praise of men: I was given weakness that I might feel my need for God. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life: I was given life that I might enjoy all things. I got nothing I asked for, but everything I truly hoped for. Almost despite myself, my prayers were answered, and I am among men the most blessed."

(6)

One thing we must avoid in our prayers is to fix a plan in our own mind and then ask God to carry it out. Prayer is not a form of magic to compel the gods. It is a request for help. The way this help comes, and the form it takes, depends upon the Divine Wisdom.

A prayer given out a hundred years ago by that extraordinary spiritual figure, the Bab—precursor of the Baháí Faith—has been used with great success by people all over the world. It has proved so helpful to the writer that we should like to quote it here, for the benefit of any who might care to use it.

“Is there any remover of difficulty save God? Say, praise be to God, He is God. All are His servants and all are abiding by His command.”

This prayer can be repeated until it is felt that some answer is assured. Why it is in general so powerful, who can say? *But it is powerful.* And it is worth trying, just as anything is worth trying that might bring us nearer to God and bring God nearer to us.

This “removal of difficulty by prayer” can be used by us to help others. Recently a friend, formerly a teacher of ours and now married to a lawyer, found herself in a sad predicament. Some \$30,000 worth of

antique furniture which she had inherited from her grandmother in New Hampshire was on the point of being put up for auction because of a \$2400 storage debt. Betty's husband at this time was real estate poor and could not meet this storage bill. He assigned to her two real estate bonds connected with a new suburban development project, but no bank would loan her money on these.

This was the predicament that Betty confided to me, half in tears, over the telephone. This magnificent furniture sold at auction would realize little more than the storage debt. There were the bonds, but they seemed not to be negotiable. Was there any way I could help, she asked? At the moment I could think of no way out, but I said I would pray.

This was on a Tuesday, and the furniture was to go on sale at Sloans on Saturday. I proceeded to give very earnest prayer to the situation. The next morning I woke up with an idea. The name came to me of a real estate broker who dealt in second trusts and other marginal loans, and who had assisted me in the past. I phoned Betty, gave her the name and address of Mrs. S——, and told her to ask this broker to recommend someone else if she could not handle the loan. And I continued to pray.

Mrs. S—— could not handle the loan and sent her to another broker who also could not handle the

loan, but who sent her to a third broker who willingly loaned her \$3000 on the bonds.

Everything looked wonderful, but I still felt difficulties connected with the affair, and difficulties did develop. Sloans demanded the payment of \$500 for handling this furniture and demanded its removal by Saturday, a thing very difficult, almost impossible, for Betty to effect.

It would seem that at the very time when I was praying earnestly for "removing of difficulties" Sloans' agent suddenly made a turnabout, withdrawing the demand for \$500 and permitting the furniture to be moved three days later than previously demanded.

The effect of all this on Betty was not only greatly to relieve her anxiety, but also greatly to renew her faith and happiness in life.

"Why, it has made me happy again! Everyone should know how to use prayer! Why don't you put this in the book you are writing!"

So here it is—the dramatic incident, the faith, the praying, and the change that prayer can make in people's lives; the renewal of confidence it brings; the serenity in the midst of apparent trouble.

The use of prayer in man's spiritual life consists of much more than merely requesting God to aid us in our daily life. This kind of prayer is legitimate, and it is bound to bring results of one sort or another. But the prayer that is most important for man's spiritual growth is the prayer of communion, *the prayer that seeks to bring us near to God and to suffuse us with His Spirit.*

This is the habitual prayer of the mystic, a contemplative prayer seeking to unite the believer with the Adored One. By such prayers the mystic arrives at "the immediate sense that God is with him. All the mystics bear testimony of the absolute assurance that they have come into conscious connection with a Larger Life near to and surrounding them and continuous with theirs".\*

"In this embrace and essential unity with God," says Ruysbroek, Dutch mystic of the 14th century, "all devout and inward spirits are one with God by having immersion and melting away into Him; they are by grace one and the same thing with Him, because the same essence is in both . . . . For what we are, that we intently contemplate; and what we intently contemplate, that we are; for our mind, our life, and our

\**The Psychology of Religious Belief.* James Bissett Pratt. Macmillan.

essence are simply lifted up and united to the very truth, which is God. Wherefore in this simple and intent contemplation we are one life and one spirit with God."

It is important to develop the intellect to the point where we can enjoy the complexity and glories of the universe and the dramatic quality of human life upon this planet. How much more important it is to develop the spirit in us to the point where it can contemplate and respond to that Universal Spirit in which we all inhere and by virtue of which, alone, we all exist.

This is the aim and goal of the mystic, consciously to enjoy and be grateful for that Power which creates, governs and guides all existence. Whether those created are aware or not of this Creator, they have to exist, anyway. An extra power is derived to aid this inescapable finite existence when it is realized as part and parcel of the Infinite Existence.

"The association of the part with the whole endows it with the Whole; and the union of the particular with the Universal makes it all in all," says Abdu'l-Bahá, referring to the values gained by seeking through prayer and reading of the Word an intimate connection with the Divine.

Emerson, with his unique power of stating great spiritual truths in a homespun pragmatic way, de-

scribes the experience of the mystic as being universal and native to every soul:—

"From within, or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the Light is all. . . . As there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins. We lie open on one side to the depths of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. . . .

"Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul. The simplest person who in his integrity worships God becomes God; yet forever and forever the influx of this better and universal self is new and unsearchable.

"I, the imperfect, adore the Perfect. More and More the surges of the Everlasting Nature enter into me."

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Walt Whitman's self-sacrificing devotion to wounded soldiers in the military hospitals of Washington during the Civil War (many of them dying in his arms) brought on a stroke and partially crippled him for life. But it also induced in him a remarkable spiritual change, a spiritual awareness which raised him far above the earlier singer "of the body electric". Toward the end of his life his poetry becomes at times deeply mystical:

“Ah more than any priest, O soul, we too believe in God.

Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,  
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me  
all over,

Bathe me, O God, in thee, mounting to Thee,  
I and my soul to range in range of Thee,

O Thou transcendent,  
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,  
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, Thou  
centre of them,

Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the  
loving,

Thou pulse—Thou motive of the stars, suns,  
systems,—

How should I think, how breathe a single breath,  
how speak, if out of myself,

I could not launch, to those superior universes.”

**“Cosmic intelligence and force are continually standing by to fulfill man’s needs.”**

**—Anonymous.**

#### RECAPITULATION

Prayer is a means of concentrating on the subjective, spiritual aspect of existence. There is no distant heaven to which our prayers must reach. Divinity sur-

rounds us, is immanent in our very beings, and transcends us with Its power and love capable and willing to help our every need.

In a way, prayer is almost as automatic as the force of electricity. In distant galaxies with their innumerable planets, is God an absentee? Does He hear only prayers of religionists upon this planet, favoring those belonging to certain religious creeds?

Or is His love and favor as universal as the life-force of Nature itself—that Cosmic elan which spins suns out of star dust, planets out of suns, and sentient beings out of planetary elements?

That Power which hears our prayers is Universal. But in order to give wings to our prayers we may best look upward for our help; look Heavenward; concretize this Mighty Power, for the sake of our own feeble understanding, as the Loving Father. We need this symbolic assistance to vitalize our prayers.

“As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.”

No amount of astrophysics, no amount of material science will ever obliterate this precious and much-needed concept of the loving Fatherhood of God. For it is one aspect of a great Cosmic Truth.

Let us then call upon God as confidently as we would call upon a father. But let us at the same time realize the Cosmic Greatness—the infinite, the ever-present and invading Cosmic Potency of the One we are praying to.

Let us pray, *believing*. For faith is the channel through which Power flows to us.

## CHAPTER 11

### Intuition As A Creative Power

The same spiritual perception which makes it possible for us to receive guidance in the mundane matters of our daily lives can also enable us to possess that divine gift which artists and creative innovators know as Inspiration.

Jacques Maritain says of this gift: "Creative intuition depends on a certain natural freedom of the soul. It cannot be improved in itself; it demands only to be listened to."

All creative people testify to the magical help they get from this mysterious area of intuition. Stevenson said his "little brownies" wrote his stories for him. Kipling, after carefully planning his short stories, let his "daemon" write them for him.

Thomas Paine once said: "There is no one who, being occupied with the progress of the human mind, has not observed that there are two distinct classes of ideas: those produced in ourselves by reflection, and those which are precipitated into our minds. I make a

rule of welcoming with politeness these unexpected visitors, and of determining with all possible care if they are worthy of attention. I declare that it is to these strange guests I owe all the knowledge I possess."

In all fields of expression the performance is best when it is handed over to the unconscious—that is, when inspiration takes the performer out of the limitations of himself. *And strangely enough, work done under such inspiration is characterized not only by perfection but also by immediacy and ease of production. The effort flows unconsciously in accordance with the conceptual potency of the project itself.*

One of the world's greatest novels was written almost in a trance. "The Lord Himself wrote it," said Harriet Beecher Stowe of her *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. One Sunday at a communion service she suddenly saw sweeping before her vision the dramatically stirring scene of the cruel flogging of Uncle Tom. As clearly as if she had been there, she saw an old slave being beaten to death by a white overseer. Upon reaching home she went to her bedroom and wrote out the vision as she had seen it. It may be added that none of her subsequent literary works achieved the same greatness as did this inspired novel.

Richard Wagner once said to Humperdinck, "I wish to say that inspiration is a very evasive, a most elusive subject, which is not easily defined, and about which

we know very little. Few indeed there be who know how to tap the source whence it flows, and this undoubtedly is why there has been so little written about it. I am convinced that there are universal currents of divine thought, and that anyone who can feel these vibrations is inspired, provided he is conscious of the process and possesses the knowledge and skill to present them, be he composer, architect, painter, sculptor, or inventor."\*

Handel is another striking example of a composer who, while issuing an enormous volume of musical work that was technical and mediocre—the absorption of the musical formulae of his day—yet was capable of the great inspiration and lofty work of sheer genius. At the age of fifty-seven he was almost a beaten man in London, when the libretto of the *Messiah* happened to fall into his hands and inspired him to the supreme musical creation of his life. Into this composition he put all his powers. It was composed under fiery inspiration, with prayer; and was completed and fully scored within twenty-one days.

Johannes Brahms told his interviewer Arthur M. Abell: "I always have a definite creative plan in view before seeking inspiration from the Muse. Then, when I feel these higher Cosmic vibrations, the musical ideas that I was consciously seeking flowed in upon me with such force and speed that I could only grasp and hold

\*Arthur M. Abell. *Talks with Great Composers*.

a few of them. They came in instantaneous flashes and quickly faded away again, unless I fixed them on paper. The themes that will endure in my compositions all came to me this way.”\*

James Gordon Bennett, Jr.—one of the world’s greatest newspaper publishers—organized the *New York Herald* into the most successful journal of its day. “In addition to his exceptional capacity for business,” says Ian Construther, “Bennett had one touch of real genius. In the realm of world events he was able to divine what and where something was going to happen long before any other person suspected it. Of all the secrets of journalism this is the greatest, and Bennett possessed it to an uncanny degree. Over and over again on a whim or a hunch he would send a correspondent to some remote quarter of the globe, and the very day the man arrived there something extraordinary would happen.”

(2)

The magical power of intuition is necessary in all kinds of science and invention. Even in the field of mathematics, which is so exact in all its operations that it would seem only the conscious mind could be entrusted with its workings, the case is quite the opposite. Practically all the great mathematical discoveries, the

\*Arthur M. Abell. *Talks with Great Composers.*

solutions to great mathematical problems, have been made by means of intuitional flashes.

“Discovery in mathematics is not a matter of logic,” says the eminent mathematician Professor Marston Morse in his *Reflections on Evaluations in Mathematics and the Arts*. “Rather, it is the result of mysterious powers which no one understands and in which the unconscious plays an important part.”

There are innumerable instances of mathematical and scientific problems solved in that intuitional flash which often rewards the hard work of the conscious mind when followed by a period of relaxation.

Einstein once stated that when he had a problem to solve he applied himself to it earnestly with all the powers of his conscious mind, then relaxed and left the responsibility to his subconscious mind. Later the solution might come quite suddenly while taking a walk or doing something else quite unrelated to the subject at hand. “Ideas come from God,” he said.

Jules Henri Poincaré—noted French mathematician—had a similar experience. His creative ideas did not arrive while he worked at a desk. Solutions would flash into his mind as he walked along the street or seashore in a relaxed mood. One problem was solved in a magical way: “One day just as I was putting my foot on the step of a bus, there, all of a sudden, was the solution ready for me.”



The greatest physician and medical scientist of the Middle Ages, Avicenna, made the following statement about his medical ideas and discoveries: "In my home at night I read and wrote. When I fell asleep at last, I often found on waking that I had solved the problems which had puzzled me the night before."

The concept of evolution came to Darwin while he was riding in a carriage. Suddenly, with no premeditation, the meaning of all his biological researches came to him: the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest by the process of natural selection.

Joseph Rossman, American patent lawyer, studied the creative thinking of several hundred inventors and found that their hunches appeared in relaxed moments following hard work. Creative ideas came to one inventor while he was half asleep, or daydreaming; to another, while he was dressing, shaving or bathing.

Von Helmholtz—German philosopher and scientist who made important contributions to the science of optics and transmission of light and sound—made a patient study of his own creative thought processes. He found that his creative ideas came as a result of prolonged conscious effort on the problem at hand, followed by a period of relaxation. After such a rest the flashes of inspiration might come. *But they never came while his conscious brain was fatigued.*

Lou Eggleston, a friend of the writer, once told me of a flash of genius which came to him while taking his morning bath, and which solved an important problem for a leading radiator manufacturer with whom he was employed. A rival firm had an invention which Eggleston's firm was obliged to buy, for it met an important need in thermodynamics. A conference was held of the leading engineers, including Eggleston, in order to find some way to solve this problem without being dependent on the rival firm.

Two days had been spent in earnest discussion without arriving at any success. On the morning of the third day, while taking a bath, the solution flashed through Eggleston's mind as clearly as if delineated in blueprints. At the morning conference he submitted this plan, and it was immediately accepted as the complete and perfect solution.

(3)

George Washington Carver is the greatest example in history of a creative person who let the Divine Mind do his creative thinking for him. In doing so he contributed untold wealth to the South by his discoveries of manifold ways to put to dietary and industrial use the sweet potato and the humble peanut. The secret of his success was his complete forgetfulness of self, his utter humility. Other inventors have been compara-

tively selfless in their dedication to scientific discovery. But no scientist, no discoverer and inventor in practical fields has so filled his life with that sense of union with the Infinite which we call God-consciousness as did Carver.

In showing the writer Glenn Clark around the laboratory which he called "God's little workshop," Carver pointed out the lack of bookshelves. "No books are ever brought here," he said. "And what is the need of books? Here I talk to the little peanut and it reveals its secrets to me. I never grope for methods. The method is revealed the moment I am inspired to create something new. I gather specimens and listen to what God has to say to me. After my morning's talk with God, I go into my laboratory and begin to carry out His wishes for the day."

"I discover nothing in my laboratory," Carver once said. "If I come here of myself I am lost. But I can do all things through Christ. I am God's servant, His agent, for here God and I are alone. I am just the instrument through which He speaks, and I would be able to do more if I were to stay in closer touch with Him. With my prayers I mix my labors and sometimes God is pleased to bless the results."

Carver believed that still greater discoveries waited upon humanity's ability to be led by God to utilize the earth's hidden resources. "God is going to reveal

things to us that He never revealed before if we put our hands in His.

"The thing that I am to do and the way of doing it come to me. I never have to grope for methods; the method is revealed at the moment I am inspired to create something new. Without God to draw aside the curtain I would be helpless:"

Carver contributed his discoveries to humanity without money and without price. Living on his small academic salary he refused to patent his discoveries, and he promptly returned all payments sent him by industrialists whose biochemical problems he had helped to solve.

Yet this saintly genius who was contributing so much to the wealth and progress of the South was daily martyred as he travelled about the country to share his knowledge with audiences of agriculturists and scientists. Often his energy was depleted by hours of search for a place where he could eat or sleep. In trains and buses he was given the humiliating treatment customarily accorded his race. He tried never to give way to hatred. "If we sow hate and wrong doing in our lives, we must expect to reap the awful results."

Once, when a group of clergymen offered to help to produce better race relations, he replied: "Your actions speak so loud I cannot hear what you are saying. You

have too much religion and not enough Christianity—too many creeds and not enough performance. This world is perishing for kindness.”\*

Carver thus expressed, in a life rich in fruitful action, the preachment of that greatest of medieval mystics—Jacob Boehme: “Ego-centric reason should not be the energizing force. Man is to rule his life not through the external light of reason—this is all very good—but he should sink himself down into the deepest humility before God and employ the spirit and will of God at the beginning of his investigations, so the light of reason can see through God’s light.”

Inspiration, then, is clearly the result of some impingement upon the individual of a greater intelligence. Since this Intelligence operates from a higher plane of vision and wisdom than man is capable of, It can—and does—bring to human living an enhanced power of both guidance and creativeness.

(4)

Research laboratories are becoming aware of the importance of intuition; and in order to create the conditions and atmosphere under which it can flourish they

\*We are indebted for these quotations to a book everyone should read. *George Washington Carver*. Rackham Holt. Abingdon Press. Mrs. Holt spent four years in intensive research and interviews with Dr. Carver at Tuskegee, and through long personal association gained a great insight into his character and purpose.

are allowing their researchers more self-direction and more leisure from routine.

So important appear these creative principles that the General Electric Company founded for its staff of engineers, physicists and chemists a School of Intuition, believing that the intuitive power can be developed by the following practice:

1. There must be physical passivity, in which the body is completely relieved from tensions.
2. Reach a state of mental alertness with concentration upon the subject, but a concentration that is without tension.

Dr. C. Y. Suits, research director, claimed that those who have been given a thorough training in the use of the intuitive method are three times as productive as those who have not had that training. “Intuition,” he says, “is the means of opening a treasure chest of ideas.”

The employment of the power of intuition by business and industrial organizations was until recently unheard of. Yet it has always been practiced under the name of “common sense,” said Chester I. Barnard, when president of the Rockefeller Foundation and General Education Board and chairman of the National Science Foundation. In his book *Functions of the Ex-*

ecutive, (Harvard University Press), he described the way in which intuition comes to the executive as an added power for decision, after logical processes are exhausted.

“The correctness of decisions depends upon the effectiveness of the mental processes of the type that can handle *contingencies, uncertainties and unknowables*. Such non-logical or intuitive processes run all the way from the nonreasoning determination not to put the hand in the fire twice, to the handling of a mass of experience or a complex of abstractions in a flash. We couldn't do any work without this kind of mental process. Some of it is so inexplicable that we call it 'intuition'. A great deal of it passes under the name of 'good judgment'. Some of it is called 'inspiration' and occasionally it is the 'stroke of genius'.”

In the case of the business or industrial executive, while logical reasoning processes are necessary, these are disadvantageous if not in subordination to highly intuitional processes.

In the field of medical discovery and medical practice, the intuition plays an important part. Significant discoveries in new drugs and medications have resulted from it. In the art of diagnosis it is a relevant, often crucial, factor. In the practice of psychoanalysis and psychiatry the intuition is of prime importance.

In the art of warfare intuition gives to certain gifted generals a great advantage over their enemies. Napoleon rode to conquest by means of this power.

Abraham Lincoln, who was very psychic, had an intuitive guidance which helped win for the Union the all-important Battle of Gettysburg. When Lee, in 1864, was successfully invading Maryland and Pennsylvania in a strategy which was extremely threatening to Washington, General Hooker, who was in command of the Union army, decided to make a counter-attack upon Richmond. But Lincoln, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief, vetoed this plan and ordered Hooker instead to “follow Lee upon his flank and shorten your lines as he lengthens his”. It was this strategy which won the Battle of Gettysburg and drove Lee permanently south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

General George S. Patton, Jr., fiery warrior whose only aim was to win, has testified to the remarkable part that intuition played in his victories. He departed from the battle maps, defied logistics, even disobeyed his superiors. And his intuitions led him to strange victories. In 281 days of combat, his Third Army advanced farther in less time than any other troops in history. In this attack they liberated 82,000 square miles of territory in six countries, killed or wounded 163,000 of the enemy, and took 1,200,000 prisoners.

Yet this "Old Blood and Guts" was a man of prayer, humble before his God, seeking guidance from the invisible always for his strange and devious campaigns.

(6)

For the average person the question is, in relation to this subject of intuition: "How can I make use of it in my own life? How can I avail myself of intuition in order to solve my professional or personal problems?"

A helpful book has been written on this subject by G. Polya—*How to Solve It*, (Princeton University Press). Here the author, in his concluding statements, sums the matter up as follows: "Whatever may or may not be the merits of the theory of subconscious work, it is certain that there is a limit beyond which we should not force the conscious reflection. There are certain moments in which it is better to leave the problem alone for a while. 'Take council of your pillow' is an old piece of advice. Allowing an interval of rest to the problem and ourselves, we may obtain more tomorrow with less effort. But it is desirable not to set aside a problem without getting the impression of some achievement; at least some little point should be settled, some aspect of the question somewhat elucidated when we quit working.

"Only such problems come back improved whose solutions we passionately desire, or for which we have

worked with great tension; conscious effort and tension seem to be necessary to set the subconscious work going. At any rate, it would be too easy if it were not so; we could solve difficult problems just by sleeping and waiting for a bright idea. You must deserve the gift of a correct solution by work, or at least by a fervent wish."

**"The spiritual force is the energizing factor in the life of man."**

**—Abdu'l-Baha.**

#### RECAPITULATION

The advantages of intuition are limitless; and its operations, like those of electricity, are characterized by immediacy and perfection. Those persons achieve the most immediate success in life who can lift their work up to this plane of the intuitional and inspirational.

An important fact to realize in connection with the intuition is that this power can never be forced. The intellect can be forced to the point of strain, but not so the intuition. We must be in a relaxed and yet vital condition to become a channel for this strange power. It can not be commandeered.

It is this inexhaustible, unwearying Power which we should learn to seek and to use in all our work and all

our endeavors. In the future, even more attention must be paid to the development of our intuitional powers than to our intellectual processes. For man as a purely logical creature has already been superseded by the "electronic brain" he has created, which is capable of accumulating and dispensing knowledge to a degree never attainable by man himself.

But ever beyond the province of the machine will remain those gifts of higher wisdom conferred on man alone; the wisdom of intuition and inspiration which enables man to see visions and dream dreams and to know himself as a creative son of God.

This wisdom is available to us all. There is no need of going through life lamely when we can pass through it on winged feet, so to speak. Let us begin today to cultivate that child-like spirit in which alone our intuition and all our higher powers can function and flourish.

*intuition, no limits is  
unlimited - not limited  
to a few.*

## CHAPTER 12

### At Home in Nature

The flight to the suburbs is modern man's way of returning to that nature with which we so much need daily contact. Anteus, son of Mother Earth in Greek mythology, was only defeated by Hercules when he was held up and away from the Earth long enough to lose his strength. We, too, lose our strength when we are too much urbanized.

City parks are not enough, occasional golf is not enough, to give us that replenishment which nature freely offers. In the suburbs every man can be surrounded with green grass, shrubs and trees. He can take delight in a flower garden if he will devote but a little of his spare time to it.

Of all cultivated flowers the rose is in many ways the most rewarding of our toil. Once successfully planted the rose bush needs little care, beyond that of mulching and occasional fertilizing. Ever-blooming varieties, in the temperate climate of Washington for example, continue to delight us from May to November.

The rose is undoubtedly the queen of flowers. Its full beauty is not disclosed at once. From the first opening of the bud to its full flowering it passes through various stages of gradual unfoldment—lovely at every stage, mysterious and inviting. Especially is this true of the Peace rose—which subtly combines so many tones of cream, of lemon, of crimson and of pink.

Every morning I greet each rose on every bush as it opens up to disclose its beauty to me. I have chosen nine different bushes so that I have a constant variety budding, opening up, and maturing to full bloom. Then, before they reach the unattractiveness of overbloom, I snip them off to make way for new arrivals.

These roses have become, in the course of the years, each and all of them my very dear friends. I greet them one by one as such. Perhaps they are aware of my love and solicitude, for they bloom yearly in rare forms of beauty.

Looking at and admiring them is more than the mere enjoyment of the beautiful picture nature paints for me. These flowers are not just spots of pigment laid on canvas. They live and breathe. And in becoming one in spirit with them, I become one with the Universal Spirit that inhabits them. Their vitality becomes also mine, and their "joie de vivre" invades my very soul.

(2)

By means of extra space and extra fertilization I am able to plant and raise numerous bulb flowers amidst the rose bushes. The advantage of this procedure is that thus my garden begins to produce beauty at the very dawn of spring, and continues with the bulbs until the roses are ready to appear. Of late I have even added chrysanthemums in the background to lend their color to the sober autumn days.

The snow has hardly left the ground when the yellow crocuses peep out. Then come blue crocuses and hyacinths, followed by daffodils. The tulips begin to appear before the daffodils go, and keep blooming in several varieties for some weeks. Lastly come the iris and the tiger lilies.

Each morning is an adventure with flowers. What new ones have blossomed? What do those new points of green just above the ground signify?

And now comes April, when shrubs and blossoming trees decorate the landscape on every hand,—peach, cherry, plum, apple, and dogwood. The five-mile drive into town presents a kaleidoscopic stream of beauty, each resident vying with the neighbors in profusion of bloom.

It is not necessary to go to Washington's tidal basin in order to enjoy cherry blossoms. Certain areas in the suburbs present an overarching fairyland for block after block.

It isn't enough just to grow flowers. One should take time to sit out in the sunshine and enjoy them. Up and down the suburban street one can enjoy also the neighbors' landscaping.

What would life be worth if there were no lawns to mow in spring and summer, or leaves to rake in autumn? Fresh air, sunshine, closeness to the soil,—these are the necessities for happy living.

(3)

The Oriental has for millenniums known how to find in nature a priceless, and in fact costless, source of happiness. Nature is tranquilizing, so their sages discovered ages ago. The wealthy surrounded their residences with magic gardens where they could relax. The peasant, living and working upon the soil, kept always thus a healthy contact with nature—a contact the subtle values of which Pearl Buck has immortalized in her *Good Earth*.

How ardently the old Chinese poets and artists loved nature, and how near to her they lived. Every flower

and bird, every stream and hill, seemed to have a presiding spirit with whom they desired to have communion. They loved to climb a mountain and rest in the shade, listening to the music of the wind blow gently through the pines. They were fond of boating on moonlight nights or picking flowers in foggy vales without thoughts of home or dinner. They often retired to a secluded monastery of an afternoon, to chat with the abbot or join him in meditation.

Nature tranquilizes us because she herself is tranquil. From his study of nature Laotse derived the religion of the Tao, or "Way of Nature." How to achieve without strain, how to win without fighting, how to remain at peace in the midst of difficulties:—such was the philosophy of Taoism—a philosophy which profoundly influenced the character of the Chinese, was a factor in their temperamental serenity, and which is now beginning to cast its magic spell upon this country.

Nature suggests not only tranquility, but also power. The repose of nature is far different from mere quiescence. *On the contrary, it is a poised vitality which is vibrant with life.* And this vibrancy—this immense and unconquerable vitality—unconsciously buoys us up by suggesting to our subconscious a peaceful and poised power within ourselves.



If we take time to really contemplate nature—to seek and explore its inner essence and find the source of its immeasurable vitality—we shall end as Laotse did by seeing nature as a direct expression of that force which he called the Tao, and which we call God.

In other words, nature has far more to offer us than a mere physical influence, a soothing or pleasing sensation. If we penetrate into the inner core of nature as Spirit, our own spirits will respond to the Cosmic Spirit. Thus nature can exert a spiritual influence on us, an influence which can revivify both body and soul. Nature, used to its fullest advantage, can thus become to us an unfailing source of happiness and health.

We must indeed learn to rise from the particular to the Universal. Let us realize the creative force stirring in every leaf and flower, shining on fair waters, painting the sky with the bright glories of sunsets and with golden galaxies of stars. Until we learn to see the Universal actuating all this, we do not truly know Nature. We thereby miss one of the most unalloyed sources of happiness and serene ecstasy that life has to offer. *We must constantly see matter as spirit in disguise.*

An unknown author states in the following lines this vivid sense of “oneness with the universe”: “I believe in my oneness with the universe,” he says. “I cannot escape it. At times I forget it in a careless moment of

case. It draws me back with startling flashes of beauty, with plaintive calls of the night; it holds me with a sense of the eternal presence of God.”

(4)

Many souls down through the ages have evolved for their spiritual comfort what we might call a “religion of Nature,” such as David in his Psalms has exalted to a poetic degree.

In the forest fastnesses of India, early in the first millennium before Christ, forest hermits evolved the beginnings of those religious philosophies which have become the foundation of India’s major religious systems. In the Aranyakas and Upanishads are recorded for all time these forest meditations on the nature of existence, on man’s essential being, and on his relation to the Cosmic Atman (Oversoul).

Emerson, for America, raised the “religion of Nature” to the plane of a cult. His philosophic and spiritual influence has been enormous. To many, his essays are a sort of bible. Dissatisfied with even the freer theology of Unitarianism, he abandoned his clerical profession and discovered in the midst of Nature a new religion for himself.

In an address to the senior class of the Divinity School of Harvard Emerson for the first time publicly declared this new faith, a faith "that should blend with the light of rising and setting suns, with the flying clouds, the singing birds and the breath of flowers".

Working casually on his Concord farm, strolling the woods with Thoreau and Alcott, or simply watching the play of light and shadow and of wind-ripples on Walden,—he elaborated his cosmic philosophy of Nature, of man, and of the Universal: "The First Cause (as expressed in Nature) deluges us with power; we are filled with it . . . When I see the day break, I am cheered by the moist, warm glittering, budding, melodious hour, that takes down the narrow walls of my soul and extends its life and pulsation to the very horizon . . . Here is a sanctity which shames our religions . . . Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the City of God."

A scientist who after years of religious scepticism found a spiritual meaning and comfort in Nature was the noted and beloved John Burroughs. His life is a striking example of the modern intellectual who takes a critical and sceptical attitude toward theology and the dogmas of orthodox religion, yet is spiritually overwhelmed by the inescapably potent impression made upon him by the infinite complexities and mysteries of Nature.

Burroughs could not pledge his faith to what he saw as irrational creeds. But it was just as impossible for him to accept "an explanation of life phenomena that savors of the laboratory and chemism". His last book, *The Breath of Life*, was published when he was seventy-eight. It is an amazing personal testimony of a trend away from scepticism to a sort of spiritual affirmation. Let us hope that this remarkable literary and spiritual epilogue of a great scientist, published by Houghton Mifflin in 1915, will be reprinted. It has a message which will not be outmoded as long as there are thoughtful readers.

"As life nears its end with me," he said, "I find myself meditating more and more upon the mystery of its nature and origin . . . I crave and seek a natural explanation of all phenomena upon this earth, but the word 'natural' to me implies more than mere chemistry and physics. I content myself with the thought of some unknown and doubtless unknowable tendency or power in the elements themselves—a kind of universal mind pervading living matter and the reason for its living, through which the whole drama of evolution is brought about."

Nor is Burroughs the only scientist who was unsatisfied with the chemical and physical analyses of the "drama of evolution". Pierre Teilhard made it his life's work to reconcile the material and the spirit-

ual interpretations of the nature of matter. "In the eyes of the physicist," he said, "nothing exists legitimately . . . except the 'without' of things." But Teilhard saw, as Burrough did, a "within" of things; a force which creates unity from diversity; a spiritual energy which literally holds the universe together. Where others have hesitated to define it, Teilhard—intrepid spiritual explorer that he was—ventured to give this power a name. He called it *Love*. "Driven by the forces of Love," he said, "the fragments of the world seek each other so that the world may come into being." Here, perhaps was the chief testament of a life devoted to truth.

(5)

As the world around us is the constantly unfolding manifestation of this ever-creative Power, the simplest step toward union with that Power is to lose ourselves in Nature. Relaxation, quietude, meditation in the midst of the beauties and charms of Nature are a form—the most basic form—of communion with God. One step further is to attain, while relaxed in Nature's midst, a conscious realization of what Nature really is: a veiled beauty expressing yet screening that Spirit behind it.

**"The ecstasy of love is in knowing that all things, animate or inanimate, are of God; and in feeling the pulse beat of the universe in a flower, a tree, and all we call nature.**

—Lao Russell.

#### RECAPITULATION

No university training, no theological indoctrination is required in order to enjoy communion with Nature. Nature speaks a language all her own. To sensitive people it is a divine language that speaks to the soul as well as to the senses. The mystic book of Nature is open to everyone. That which inspired the Tao of Laotse, the Psalms of David, the Upanishads, the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, the poems of Wordsworth, Burns and Whittier, the Conversations of Alcott and the Essays of Emerson,—this same Nature can inspire us.

Anyone who thus seeks the Eternal in Its visible expression will never lose the joy of spiritual communion with God through Nature. For here is a never-failing source of serenity and inspiration. Even a single tree in leaf, a single bird carolling in the morning sunshine, clouds billowing silver glory athwart the sky,—this is enough to lift one's heart to God and to put one "in tune with the infinite".

Having once attained the awareness of ourselves as an integral part of the Cosmic design, we shall find re-

pose in an inviolable faith that the Universe is not our enemy, but the expression of Divine Beneficence; not an awesome infinitude, but the home of that creative and sustaining Power which if we but follow leads us into green pastures of spiritual abundance and beside still waters of peace.

## CHAPTER 13

### Escaping the Tyranny of Time

The great art of life is to learn how to live most fully and effectively in *this very present moment*, which is Divine in the sense that it is the gift of God to us. This much of time we do own. It is subject to our will, servant of our desire, rich in blessings if we know how to find them.

To live in time, which is transitory, is to be subject to the tyranny of time. But life in the everlasting NOW is impregnable. It has the vast unchanging quality of Infinity. It is like a house built upon the rocks, compared to a house built upon the unstable sands of future contingencies.

Let us attempt some mathematical illustrations. The extraordinary growth of anything by continually doubling it is vividly portrayed in the case of the man who asked as his reward only one cent, provided it was doubled every day for a year. The total value at the end of the year would be incredibly huge, as anyone can discover by working out the answer.

This formula is symbolic of all anticipation, of all our plans and living for the future. These plans are excitingly alluring. But they are all provisional, subject to hazard and loss as well as gain. This futurity, involving as it does an inherent insecurity, keeps us in a state of anxiety and apprehension.

Let us compare with this another mathematical formula, as follows: one equals one. Here we begin as before with the basic unity, but instead of mortgaging the future we stay within this state of unity. Here we are as impregnable as the Rock of Gibraltar. We are safe from the ravages of time and the exigencies of life.

Let us consider this oneness, this unity, to represent what life is for us at any given moment. If we can lose ourselves in this NOW that is ours as an inviolable possession, we shall be conscious of a peculiar rapture—the rapture of a calm which no winds of fate can dispel.

Actually we know this experience at times when we relax in the midst of nature; or when we are possessed by the aesthetic emotion aroused in us by great music, great literature or drama. This, in fact, is one of the chief purposes of art, to lift us above the vagaries and afflictions that time occasions for us. We find this cosmic escape from earthbinding-time also in the fascination of creative work. To Edison, for example, time or

hunger or fatigue did not exist when he was in the midst of an experiment.

This absorption of an Edison is the common experience of creative minds in all the arts and sciences. Truly creative work can be carried out only by immense concentration—a concentration which becomes subconscious and involuntary as it merges into a sublime absorption.

Even more certainly does time stand still in the presence of romantic love. All lovers have experienced this sacredness of love. How its rapture lifts one to a plane of timelessness, to a region sacrosanct to lovers. In these moments space as well as time is annihilated. Nothing exists except the presence of the beloved. Herein do two separate individuals find a unity, a oneness, an escape from self which has the essence and the promise of Eternity.

The art of living in the everlasting NOW is plainly an art of that deep absorption which can momentarily lift us above time and give us a glimpse of Eternity. And there is no other Eternity than this. For the life of the immortal is not to be conceived in the same terms as mortal life. *Immortality is not staged in time as we know it. Eternity is not a mere succession of years. We could hardly imagine a thousand years spent in this way; still less a million, a billion or a trillion years as we know years on earth. Even such eons would be*

only a miniscule beginning of *an eternity of time*. The mind staggers at such thoughts.

*Immortality is not, then, a duration, but rather a state of being. Eternal life is a quality of the soul, rather than a vast continuance of time.*

If this be true, then the nearest that human beings in their earthly state can get to Immortality is found in the rapture of the everlasting NOW. This experience extinguishes everything except a unique awareness of identity with something outside the self. This experience of identity with the Universal bestows a sense of freedom from all that customarily trammels or afflicts the soul.

Deeper even than by means of mortal love does the religious devotee penetrate and live at times in the everlasting NOW. In these moments of rapt devotion the world slips away and its limited horizons expand to Infinity. The exigencies of time melt into that timelessness of which Christ spoke when He said, "Before Abraham was, I am."

(2)

The mystic would give all his life over to this rapture of adoration, this sense of unity with all existence which releases him from the confines of the self. Hence

the amazing growth of monasticism in Christianity; of Sufi-ism and other dervish movements in Islam; and of the cloistered life of Buddhist monks.

Lofty as are the spiritual motivations for such retirement from life, such seeking for Eternity in the midst of time, is there not a flaw here? Actually no such separatist pattern was designated by the founders of these religions. Certainly it was not Christ's purpose that His disciples should remain forever enrapt in the cosmic spell of the Transfiguration. They had to accompany Him from the Mount to the midst of the multitude. They had to endure the agony of His trial and crucifixion; and even more tragic, their own yielding to denial. They had to go forth into the world to spread the Gospel among all peoples; and in doing so to incur imprisonment, beating, and martyrdom.

Similarly the Buddhist looks to Nirvana as a rapturous goal. But Dharma—the sacred law of duty—is the road the novitiate must travel.

Laotse taught his followers how to lose themselves in the divinity of nature. But he gave them also the Tao, the Way of daily living in the midst of men.

Let us return to our mathematical illustration—one equals one. This rapturous unity, this invincible oneness which so tempts the soul to turn away from mundane life, this state of being is but a gracious phase, a

prescience granted us of a subsequent maturation of the soul. It is not a state of being which is continuously applicable to this life.

The formula of growth and expectancy represented by the continual doubling of one—this is more nearly our formula for earthly living. The single amoeba-like cell impregnated in the womb increases by this arithmetical progression until from this cosmic potency is formed the most advanced form of life we know—a palpitating, intelligence-endowed human being. All nature breathes this aura of expectancy, of multiplication and newness. This hope and urge for growth is inherent also in the spirit of man. Progress in fact is the ground law of our material existence.

The Orient in the past yielded unduly to the spell, the intoxication of the everlasting NOW. Consequently they have failed to progress. Their great need today is to learn how to fulfill their nature as creative beings endowed with the God-given power to govern and improve their natural environment. This ambition, already being fulfilled in Japan, will gradually change the psychology of Asia. The Orient needs progress.

The Occident, on the other hand, has surrendered too much to the fiercely competitive pressure for progress; to ambitious strivings which leave too little place for repose or for absorption in areas of beauty, of contemplation, of the life of the spirit.

If any people need to learn the lessons which an experience of the everlasting NOW can give, it is we Americans. More than any other people in the world we have destroyed our tranquility; have shattered that shelter designed for us as a means of retreat from the corrosiveness of perpetual activity.

Life does call us to achieve for human welfare. Yet through all these progressions of urgent activity the vision of Eternity may be recalled, enabling us to transfer the focus of our attention from the trepidations and attacks of time to the calmness of spiritual absorption and the cosmic joy and freedom it bestows.

In the ever-increasing interflow of life and thought throughout the world, the ideals and habits of every people will undergo a harmonization and a transformation toward that perfect pattern which some day will bring about the Kingdom of God on earth.

No one can be unhappy today, no matter how difficult his lot, who realizes himself to be a part of a great epochal advancing movement of humanity, the very confusion and chaos of which is a symptom of the vast cosmic energy impelling world developments. Our part is but to see clearly; to envision the desirable future of the human race; and to hold fast to those principles, ideals and measures which may bring to pass the perfect world civilization—a civilization spiritually as well as materially perfect.

**"In a moment, on a sunset hill  
By thrush-choraled thicket crowned,  
Life discovers how it can stand still—  
All cares, all sorrows drowned—  
While earth and heaven the charmed senses  
fill,  
And eternity stands close around."  
—Sage of the Sacred Mountain.**

#### RECAPITULATION

We can begin in a very simple way, by learning to lose ourselves daily for a few minutes in something that absorbs our attention: a beautiful sunset, an enthralling piece of music, an exciting drama, a masterly novel, conversation with brilliant and likable people, an inspiring sermon.

All these aspects of vital living possess in themselves a magical power to hold our attention. We should actively lend ourselves to, and participate in, these magic moments.

We can increase our enjoyment of a gorgeous sunset by conscious effort to appreciate all the subtle preciously changing values of this aureate phenomenon. We can linger over it, giving ourselves to it more fully until it absorbs our whole being—physical, mental and spiritual.

In the same way we can give ourselves to a beautiful piece of music, following every subtle variation of the one compelling theme until all that is responsive in our own nature is stimulated to thrill and compel our inmost being. Our absorption must be such that not till the music ends are we able to breathe again freely and live again in the world we left behind us when we took this astral journey.

In all that thus fascinates and enthralls us there is a threshold of enjoyment to which the limited powers of our emotional nature condemn us. The Eternal Now is realized, in our experience, to be but momentary. We cannot stretch it out indefinitely.

"It is the lark, the harbinger of morn," says Romeo as the night of love is about to be dissolved by sunrise, and an episode of the Eternal Now is about to be devoured by Time. "No, it is the nightingale!" says Juliet, trying to prolong their timeless ecstasy.

\* \* \*

We must practice daily this art of completely giving ourselves to something of absorbing power. By doing so we shall gradually learn how to retreat from the world without going to monasteries.

Outdoors with the vital stimulations of nature, or indoors in the privacy of our chamber we can volun-



tarily and by exercise of will lose ourselves in complete contemplation.

When we have learned how to thus command Time, how to lose ourselves in the rapture of the Eternal NOW—life will be very different. We shall have pioneered our way to a new and magical world.

## CHAPTER 14

### The Secret of Serenity

Perhaps one of the most enviable characteristics of all truly spiritual persons is that elusive quality we call serenity. One of the greatest exponents of serenity in history was Epictetus, a Greek slave in the days of the Roman Empire. His discourse on how to attain serenity in spite of unfavorable conditions is still an inspiration to the world.

The egotist is never serene, because he never attains all that he is striving for. Nietzsche, the historic example of egotism run rampant, ended up his life in an asylum; and his teachings led Germany sadly astray. The man whose sight is turned inward never finds peace. What treasures he finds upon looking within himself only the egotist could explain. But he does not find the treasure of peace.

A Sufi mystic once remarked that he was perfectly happy because everything happened in accordance with his will. When asked how that could be he said, "I will only what Allah wills, and so whatever happens to me is the desire of my heart." The Moslem knows

that the secret of serenity is the gift of radiant acquiescence to the will of Allah. That is the essence of the Islamic gospel.

The Buddhist finds serenity by suppressing desire. Buddha's great "illumination" brought him the conviction that although life was necessarily full of suffering, there was a magical way to escape unhappiness. This magic formula is the overcoming of desire.

The application of this Buddhist formula to life is very simple. Suppose an individual longs for something to add to his satisfaction. There are two ways in which he can maintain peace of mind in such a situation. One is by satisfying his wants, the other is by overcoming the desire for them. There is nothing inherently wrong in such desires if one can legitimately fulfill them. But if one cannot fulfill them, the part of wisdom is to control the desire rather than to fret.

But even in legitimate desires there is always a flaw. That flaw is *the insatiable nature of desire itself*. Desire tends to keep life always restless. There is a place in life for that divine discontent which leads to progress. But there is also a place in life for serenity.

"Nothing is too early or too late for me," said Marcus Aurelius, "which is not too early or too late for Thee, O Universe." The serenity which comes to one who is living above self is not one of mere relinquish-

ment. It is a positive emotion based on faith, a calm which comes to one who is gradually learning how to live above space and time.

(2)

Modern man has a sound philosophy in his doctrine of improvement. Are things going wrong? Then try to improve them. Don't submit to difficulties. Fight against them. Every difficulty can in some way be overcome.

This dedication to progress has become an overpowering influence in modernism. Its achievements are so palpable, so astounding as to command the admiration and allegiance of the whole world. Technologicalization has become the contemporaneous religion.

The dangers of this worship of technology are somewhat similar to the dangers in the time of Israel of worshipping the Golden Calf, symbol of earthly prosperity. Such a worship tends to be destructive of spirituality, hence of serenity. *Serenity is impossible without some degree of spiritual vision.*

Serenity comes from having faith in the Universe; trust in Its unfailling law and order; true understanding of Its essential benevolence. Or, to put it another way, having faith in God.

We have pointed to the serenity which has characterized Islam and Buddhism. It is not a quality peculiar only to these religions. It is a quality inseparable from all true religion. Christianity also has endowed its faithful adherents with the gift of serenity down through the ages. Up to this twentieth century the pious Christian has found consolation in his Bible—in those inspired and inspiring spiritual songs known as the Psalms; in the words of Christ, of the Apostles, and of Paul.

Unfortunately this piety has largely vanished. We do not live in "the best of worlds". Voltaire exploded that theory long ago. Today a full third of Christendom has entirely repudiated Christianity as being a soporific, and has substituted for it the dynamism of Communism. The remaining people of the Western world, while retaining Christianity, are more dedicated to the dynamism of technology than they are to the discovery and development of spiritual virtues and powers which would qualify them for citizenship in the Kingdom of God.

This dedication to materialism is not bringing men happiness. It is not bringing them serenity. On the contrary, it is bringing strains and tensions which induce heart disease, stomach ulcers, nervous and mental ills,—in fact, all sorts of disorders.

The very leisure which technology makes possible for us fails to be used for the sake of tranquility. The

average housewife finds herself always busy, even though her housework is cut in half by modern appliances. Why is she then still so over-busy? "What happens of course," says Eugene D. Fleming, "is that the more appliances a housewife has, the more time she spends doing things she wouldn't otherwise do."

The leisure time is there, but we do not know how to use it to re-create ourselves. Americans motor at top speed to visit the White Mountains in the summer. But they will not stop at special turn-off places in these mountains in order to drink in and absorb the glorious vistas spread before them. Instead, they rush through curio shops to buy souvenirs and mail postcards to their friends. Why do they not stop by the side of a friendly mountain brook to eat a simple picnic lunch and dream away an hour under speckled sunshine? They are ill trained for such enjoyment.

*Trained for enjoyment?* Yes, there must be a training. Sensitivity to beauty does not come by accident. It is the result of specific spiritual training. It does not come to humans merely by maturity of years, nor by maturity of intellect. It is an acquired taste and an acquired power.

(3)

Serenity does not need retirement from life. It is important to learn how to do our daily work serenely.

This is an art that requires spiritual perception and practice. Laotse made it the basis of his teaching of the Tao.

"Nature never strives to do anything. Therefore she accomplishes everything." Taking Nature as a model Laotse expounded throughout his Tao-teh-King the doctrine of "effortless action". Action of all kinds should be without strain, for strain vitiates perfect action and also unduly wears us down.

Taoism combined with Buddhism produced Zen, a religious practice that trained in medieval Japan the most perfect swordsmen and archers in the world. How did this come about?

Zen trained its followers to act without strain by letting It, the Cosmic Mind, direct their actions. By giving over the responsibility of their actions to It, Zen archers escaped strain; by escaping strain they escaped fatigue; and by escaping fatigue they escaped that deterioration in marksmanship which inevitably follows fatigue. This was not an easy training. The self had to be subdued—had to be vacated in order to make room for the Cosmic Mind. Zen archers became matchless by following this training. And the same thing was true of Zen swordsmen.

There are those who study Zen today in order to learn how to do their daily work without strain. One

such was the manager of a busy Washington bookstore who, when I had to do business with him, seemed always tranquil in the midst even of the daily rush.

"How do you keep so tranquil?" I said. "You must practice Zen, or Tao, or something."

"Don't you think all successful executives practice something of this kind?" he smilingly asked.

Americans more than any other people need a gospel of tranquility, such as can come only from spiritual assurance. The same Cosmic Power that made perfect archers under Zen can, if we will let It, validate all our goals and empower all our actions.

Tranquility is one of the fruits of the spirit. It is one of its most important fruits. Without it life constantly harasses us and wears us down. Dedication brings serenity, because it lifts our actions from the plane of self to the plane of the Universal.

(4)

We need to practice the art of meditation, of contemplation; to exercise our spiritual faculties as we do our physical and mental equipment. Some part of the day should be set aside as a devotional period, in some spot held sacred against interruption.

Who can say that his life is too busy to set aside such a period? It need not be long. Ten minutes well applied is better than no meditative period at all; and a long period can defeat its purpose by too much effort in an activity which requires a type of concentration beyond and above the quality of any other life activity. For the purpose of such spiritual exercise, it is well to have at hand spiritual literature of an inspiring and helpful nature.

The advantage of training one's mind and soul to an immediate responsiveness to inspirational religious thought is that, as a Hindu mystic points out, "The current induced during meditation can be kept up by habit, by practicing to do so. Then one can perform his work and activities of the day in that very current itself; there will be no break. *Thus the time will come when one will discover that there will be no difference between meditation and external activities.*"

A friend who has faced deep trouble writes regarding her successful spiritual life: "There is a new wonderment and enchantment in the days. Hours at work and at home are punctuated with unsolicited questings and fragments of prayers floating into my consciousness at odd moments. Suddenly, I become aware that I am in prayer while working or carrying out duties. Also, sudden surges of thrilling happiness. Nothing

made the happiness. It just came. Little mysteries and happy encounters."

This is life lived on the highest plane. A life of which the spiritual element is as natural as breathing. There is nothing unnatural about the spiritual life. It is reality. The unnatural life is that which is lived deprived of spirit.

**"Serene, I fold my hands and wait, knowing my own will come to me."**

**—John Burroughs.**

#### RECAPITULATION

It is as difficult to acquire serenity merely by striving for it as it is for the proverbial camel to pass through the eye of the needle. Serenity cannot be secured as an end in itself. It is acquired as a by-product of man's spiritual life—the natural result of faith and the practice of that faith.

Serenity is not normal to youth. It should, however, have become developed to some degree in the maturity of manhood. It should, as life progresses from middle age onward, grow to full flower as man's spiritual life develops and his ego-desires diminish.

That man who is in tune with the infinite will be enabled to practice serenity in even the most unfavorable circumstances. On the other hand, those who live in and for the ego will never escape turmoil of some sort or other. The more self-centered one's life is, the more troubles one will incur; for the very nature of egoism creates friction as its by-product. But spiritual man attains to an invulnerable serenity.

## CHAPTER 15

### Cosmic Horizons of Happiness

"The man and the woman in the street and I appear to be worlds apart," once said a famous actress, "but are we really so different? What do they want out of life—and what do I want out of life? Happiness! That's what everybody wants."

It is a scientific fact that all plant life turns toward the sun. And the great biologist Jacques Loeb proved, by placing animalculae in large jars partly shaded and partly exposed to the sun, that animal life also has the tendency to turn toward sunlight—a characteristic which he called "heliotropism".

Just as instinctively, all humans seek happiness as a means of psychic warmth and nourishment. While happiness is not the goal of existence, it is a test or evidence of the successful expression of life. It may be considered to be a by-product of normalcy.

It is in the pattern and purpose of the Creator that life—all life—should be happy. Witness the superb clan of animals when in normal health; the songs of

birds; the radiant happy beauty of flowers (if we choose to regard them with mystic vision). "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," says the Bible.

In fact, pleasure (which is one aspect of happiness) is destined by the very structure of our beings to attend every normal physical activity. The taking in of food, and even its opposite, is a source of momentary pleasure. When one is healthy it is pleasant to fall asleep; and after sufficient sleep pleasant to wake up again. It is pleasant consciously to breathe, especially the pure air of the mountains. That appetite which Nature plants so deeply in men and women in order to insure the perpetuation of the race, if not abused, affords untold gratification.

These simple facts of nature suggest that happiness is intended to be an integral part of life; a partner to all wholesome functioning; a gracious concomitant of our earthly existence.

But where shall men find happiness if and when normal channels are obstructed by invalidism or other serious misfortune? Is it possible to maintain joy, or even tranquility under such conditions?

It is evident that a happiness dependent upon external influences cannot long remain stable. For situations may change daily and even hourly. A contentment resting on the ever shifting sands of circumstance

will surely slip away. Moreover, even if outward circumstances do favor us—if health, wealth and success smile benevolently upon us throughout our lives—happiness is not thus assured.

Consider the "idle rich" of our time, whose only pause in their pursuit of pleasure is the hour they spend on the psychiatrist's couch; whose search for happiness leads at best only to boredom, at worst to despair, and often to suicide. Nor is this a condition of modern life only. The decline of countless civilizations has been attributed to the selfishness with which the wealthy and ruling classes attempted to amuse themselves, *and always to no avail*. The inevitable satiety which resulted from their reckless indulgences stifled not only their happiness, but their very will to survive.

No. The formula for happiness must contain spiritual ingredients. For these alone are not subject to shifting eventualities. These alone are in abundant supply and remain constant and enduring. Spiritual treasures are inexhaustible. The more we give, the more we receive. And the more we learn *how* to receive, the more we *shall* receive.

(2)

Let us look at the strange life story of Edward Sheldon, once a famous Broadway playwright but for over

twenty years lying paralysed and blind in his New York penthouse—his creative career ended at the prime of life. What could be considered a more tragic and joy-dispelling situation than this? Yet this apparently ruined man seemed not to need consolation so much as to bestow it. He had found a way to tap some unseen source of joy which irradiated his life and shone from his face.

“He had the most uncanny powers of perception,” says Anne Morrow Lindbergh. “He seemed to have developed senses of apprehension unknown to the normally endowed individual. The minute you walked into his room he knew all about you, inwardly and outwardly. He saw you whole, and in his presence you felt whole. . . . Seated beside him in the heart of the world’s most hurried and high-pressured city, no one ever had a feeling of hurry or pressure. The sense of eternity in which he lived was passed over to the people who sat with him.” Such spiritual beautitude as Sheldon attained is founded on something deep and fundamental in the universe.

“We can find our right place in the Being that envelops us” said Albert Schweitzer, “only if we experience in our individual lives the Universal Life which wills and rules within it.” Who knew this better than Schweitzer, who found in a life lived for others the rewards which inevitably accrue to those who give themselves in loving service.

Here, then, is the key to it all. It is the self-transcendency which psychologists term “the sublimation of the ego,” and which Christ commended to us two thousand years ago in that simple admonition which surpasses in wisdom and clarity all the creeds and catechisms devised by man: “He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life . . . shall find it.”

How unfortunate that the emphasis of this eternal truth has often been wrongly placed on the negative virtue of self-denial, when in reality it is intended to direct us toward the positive path of self-fulfilment. Christ did not suggest that we simply throw ourselves away, or consider ourselves as worthless creatures. What he did say was that in order to *find* ourselves we must lose ourselves; lose the self-important “I” in order to find that higher Self which is the plan of the Creator for us.

Here is a secret which the great souls of the centuries have learned and learned well:—because they have given of themselves, given love, consolation and happiness to others, they have daily acquired these same spiritual riches for themselves; and this in spite of the external conditions which seemed often to prevail against them.

(3)

Abdu'l-Bahá, Oriental sage and leader of the Bahá'í Faith who was imprisoned for forty years, describes



how he found happiness even amidst the dismal prison life of Acca. "No one can imagine a worse place than the barracks of Acca. The climate was bad, the water no better. The surroundings were filthy, the treatment of the officials unbearable, and we were looked upon as the enemies of religion and corrupters of morals. No one was allowed to talk with us, and we were not allowed to talk to each other. We were all imprisoned (about eighty-four men, women and children) in two rooms with no furniture at all. Everyone got sick, and there were neither provisions nor medicine."

Malaria, dysentery and the dread typhus spread among the prisoners until only five were left standing on their feet. Among these was Abdu'l-Bahá, who lovingly served the sick by day and by night. "Yet," he asserts, "I lived there with the utmost happiness." He was happy because during the day he was serving others; and by night he found time to read the Holy Books and meditate.

Once freed from prison, he travelled the world over in the cause of world peace and world brotherhood. From morning until night he received visitors who came to seek advice, consolation or inspiration from him. To all his visitors his customary greeting was, "Are you happy? Be happy!" Although many shed tears at this unique greeting, realizing their actual unhappiness, they unfailingly left with happy and radiant

faces, wrapped up in that atmosphere of spiritual serenity which Abdu'l-Bahá daily taught and lived.

It was from another prison cell—this one in a Rome oppressed by the mad dictator Nero—that Paul could write to his friends in Philippi, "I have all and abound . . . I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Though behind bars and under sentence of death, he had been released from the prison of self, that most confining of all jails. His heart had found the "peace of God which passeth understanding"; and his mind rested in those thoughts which he commended to his friends in the following enduring and matchless advice on positive thinking:—"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Here, indeed, is food for thought.

In any discussion of happiness and joyfulness, it would be impossible to overlook St. Francis of Assisi, surely one of the gayest spirits the world has ever known. Anyone who associates the spiritual life with grim, dour asceticism should take a long look at this remarkable figure who so influenced medieval life and thought.

Though having taken a vow of poverty, St. Francis was never impoverished. For he had gained access to

the limitless wealth which is the essence of spirituality. Far from denying the world, he drank deeply of the wellspring of life; claiming intimate kinship with all creation, savoring infinite sweetness in the simple song of a bird, or marveling at the majesty and radiant splendor of the sun.

He had trained his physical powers of perception to a degree which enabled him to see and feel and hear what others missed. But more important, he had trained his heart in ways of love and service and selflessness such as are reflected in a prayer familiar to us all, a prayer which cannot be repeated too often:

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, harmony; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light. Oh Divine Master, grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive. . .”

It is in *giving* that we receive. St. Francis knew—as all the saints have known—that enduring happiness comes only as a by-product of our spiritual wealth. If we pursue pleasure as an end in itself it will surely elude us. The person who imagines he is sitting on top of the world is in a precarious position if his world is

built solely upon material foundations. A plunge from such heights is disastrous indeed.

The material world is not so constituted as to guarantee happiness. *But the spiritual world is so constituted.* That inner buoyancy which comes through man's relationship with the Universal is as abiding as the rhythmic vitality that prevails throughout nature. For such buoyancy is an expression of spiritual and creative forces. These never diminish, except as man—through spiritual neglect—becomes separated from the Source of his being.

(4)

Fortunately, we do not have to be saints in order to live happily. Happiness is to some degree an attitude toward life, an art that can be acquired. It is an appreciative response to the daily adventure of living, working, and resting; of sharing the love of family and friends; of enjoying the beauties of nature and of art.

A friend of ours who lived happily to an advanced age practiced the art of happiness. It was her trained habit to appreciate everything. She never allowed herself to dwell on unpleasant things. She simply refused to see them, or she translated them into something likable. For instance, when she was at a luncheon party with us, upon seeing it begin to shower she did

not complain of the rain, but said, "Aren't those silvery drops of rain beautiful!"

Let us all similarly acquire the daily habit of appreciation and of looking always on the bright side of things. We can learn to be happy simply in an ingenious way that means no deprivation to others.

Let us learn to utilize appreciatively every slight occasion for enjoyment—the shape of a cloud, a glorious sunset, butterflies hovering over flowers, the sounds of a church bell, a recorded symphony, the reading of a poem, an hour with congenial friends, etc.. *The point is, to be aware and conscious of these innocent pleasures life affords us.*

This kind of happiness costs us nothing, nor anyone else. It does not deprive others of happiness. In fact, it sometimes by the power of example adds to the happiness of others.

Man was made to be happy. Not by hunting for something around the corner. Not by neglecting duties. Not by taking from others. But simply by consciously connecting oneself happily with each event.

Everything in the cosmos moves to rhythm. When we attune ourselves to this rhythm we are happy. Why is this? Perhaps it is because the core of Existence is joy. When we really exist we are joyous. The secret of

happiness, then, is to learn how to really exist. How to make every moment one of sincerity. How to live fully in each moment as if it were eternity.

**"I reached a cry into the high heaven for the secret of happiness here on earth. The answer came in a single word—'harmony'."**

**—Wu Ming Fu.**

#### RECAPITULATION

Man was created to be happy. Happiness is, in fact, the normal condition of life. It is not dependent upon things, events or other people. The springs of happiness lie within ourselves.

When we are in tune with the Infinite we are happy; doing so we momentarily rise above the contingencies of life, the anxieties men are prone to, the discontent that is the corollary of ambition.

We may be amply supplied with everything that life can offer and yet not be happy. For happiness is an internal condition, an attitude toward life; and, as such, it is subject to our control.

Once we realize this momentous truth, we can train ourselves to respond to almost every event with some degree of happiness.

Above all, let us realize that just as life itself is rhythmical and all existence is rhythmical, so is happiness. It is not a constant. It may come. And it may go. Realizing this law of rhythm, we learn how to wait patiently—when happiness momentarily departs—sure of its rhythmical return, provided we do our part.

Happiness is our birthright. But it is a treasure that we must deserve and guard. It is not guaranteed us. It is only offered us.

Let us be grateful when we are happy. And let us be grateful even when we are not happy. This is the law.

## Spiritual Rejuvenescence

The desire for earthly immortality has intrigued humans for thousands of years. It was one of the goals of ancient alchemy. It became one of the chief factors in that magic of Taoism to which the noble doctrines of Laotse became lamentably degraded. In all these quests, what humans were really seeking was not so much endless existence upon this earth as a means of perpetual rejuvenescence—a way of avoiding that decrepitude which can render joyless and gloomy the last years of human life.

Animals know how to avoid this tragedy of weakness in the declining years. As soon as their normal powers fail they retire, or are retired, unreluctantly from life. Primitive man, living an animal sort of existence, went through a similar cycle.

Now that we have discovered the art of living longer, we face a new problem almost as grave as that of death itself. It is the problem of how to live on healthily and happily, after one has begun to defy the Biblical stricture of three score years and ten. For it is not of much

use to live long if one cannot still live ably and abundantly.

The main problem of the twilight of life, then, is how to maintain a sufficient degree of vitality for happy living; how to remain eager in mind and spirit; how to be able to look forward to each coming day with enthusiasm rather than reluctance. In other words, how to remain youthful in spirit, even though the strength of the body diminishes and the tempo of life is necessarily slowed down.

The latter years of life, if spiritualized, can be the happiest of all even if not the most vigorous. For in this period the peaks and valleys of life have usually leveled off. The intensity of desire which, according to Buddha, is the chief cause of unhappiness, is somewhat remitted. The contacts with life over the course of the years have brought wisdom. The mind, constantly expanding with accumulations of knowledge, has grown to be a more efficient instrument for analyzing and judging people and events. And best of all, the heart has grown more mellow and attracts others to us in a more harmonious way than ever before.

Walt Whitman calls those latter years "Halcyon days".

"Not from successful love alone,  
Nor wealth, nor honored middle age, nor victories  
of politics or war;

But as life wanes, and all the turbulent passions  
calm,  
As gorgeous, vapory, silent hues cover the evening  
sky,  
As softness, fullness, rest suffuse the frame, like  
fresher balmier air,  
As the days take on a mellower light, and the apple  
at last hangs indolent-ripe on the tree,  
Then for the teeming quietest, happiest days of all!  
The brooding and blissful halcyon days."

(2)

Fortunately for society it is that type of person who is most valuable to civilization, the brain-worker, who for some reason tends to live longest and with continuation of his vital and creative energies.

The list of such achievers who have maintained their creative powers into the eighties and even the nineties is well known. Philosophy's great trio, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian; Voltaire and Goethe,—all are creators who paid little tribute to the years of their age.

Titian continued to paint until his death at the age of ninety-nine. If Voltaire had died at sixty, his literary work would have been of little value. It was what his facile and mature pen poured out on paper from the age

of sixty to eighty that has justly won him world fame. The decade between seventy and eighty brought this thinker of clear vision his greatest rewards in the acclamation of love of his fellows.

If Goethe had died before the age of seventy-five his greatest work, *Faust*, would never have been finished.

A remarkable instance of vitalized longevity was that of Charles W. Eliot, who retired from the presidency of Harvard at the age of seventy and began then what his biographers note as the most creative and universally potent period of his life, which ended at the age of ninety-two. It was in this last period that his writings and public pronouncements became of world importance and he stood forth as an intellect and character of planetary significance. The writer had the great privilege of calling upon this venerable scholar when he was in his ninety-first year. Dr. Eliot showed himself then in full possession of all his mental powers, a man able to function not only with the wisdom of accumulated experience, but also with the vision, the creative enthusiasm and the daring of youth.

A career just as remarkable as Dr. Eliot's is that of George Bernard Shaw who continued his creative work until after the age of ninety. No genius since Titian has shown such a prolonged creative vitality and activity. He did not like to have his birthdays ob-

served. Why stop to count time when one has work to do!

Men of intellectual and professional interest keep young because they never catch up with their goals. They always find future objectives to work toward, and this keeps their powers fluent and transitive. This continued activity, this daily meeting and overcoming of obstacles, renews and reconstructs brain and nerve cells which tend to atrophy as do our muscles when not in constant use.

Senator Green, who attained to the highest point of longevity ever to sit in the Senate, was a phenomenal example of mental and physical vigor at the age of ninety. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee he for years filled ably a position of great importance to this country and to the whole world. He travelled officially each summer in Europe, often tiring out younger members of the party by his exhaustless energy.

"Is it true, as I read in the press," we once asked him, "that you walk two miles to work every morning?"

"No," he smilingly corrected. "One mile."

"And is it true that you still box?"

"No, the papers made a slight mistake. I don't box. I wrestle."

And this at the age of eighty-eight!

Casals, the world's greatest cellist, in his nineties proved that age does not need to lessen clarity, purity and vigor of tone. He still retained a strong bow arm and a warmth of tone matched only by his intense desire for world peace. Casals realized that: "People grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. There is in the heart of every human being the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars, the undaunted challenge of events."

(3)

A most interesting case of vigorous, active and happy longevity is that of Gertrude Clarke Whittall of Washington, donor of the Whittall Music Fund which has for years contributed greatly to the musical culture of Washington; and subsequently, donor of a Poetry and Literature Fund to stimulate public interest in what many consider the chief of the arts.

Mrs. Whittall's ninetieth birthday was celebrated at the Library of Congress on October 7, 1958. How to keep young? This happily smiling lady had found the formula, if ever anyone has. In this public exercise in her honor conducted in the Coolidge Auditorium, she showed no signs of age. Her short speech at the end of the program stole the show! Bright-eyed, smiling, still avid for life, Gertrude Clarke Whittall seemed ageless. To what did she owe this unfading exuberance?

The writer, in an intimate friendship of several years with this remarkable woman, took particular note of those personal characteristics of Mrs. Whittall which seem to have been conducive of her longevity, energy and happiness. Her rules of life were as follows:

1. Don't dwell on the past. Don't live in melancholy meditation on unhappy events of the past. In fact, don't live in the past at all.

2. Cultivate the present moment, the NOW, which is the living core of time. Make plans for the future, so that there will be something for you to look forward to daily. Don't drift, just because you are in your latter decades and can drift if you want to. Forge ahead, even if you cannot do so with the speed and energy of former years.

3. Keep busy. Have something to work at. Make new friends. Get out and about as much as you can.

4. Do not harbor irritations or grudges. Be tolerant of others' faults. Never get angry if you can help it. If you can't avoid occasional anger, get over it as quickly as you can; dismiss this angry situation from your mind and dwell on pleasant things.

5. Cultivate a smile. It does something for you as well as for those you smile upon.

Gertrude Clarke Whittall was not in youth as happy as she learned to be in her later years. She was given, like many sensitive people, to temperamental ups and

downs. One day, when as the domestic chatelaine of her widower father she showed unusual kindness to a hungry tramp, he turned to her upon departing with well-filled stomach and made a remark which influenced her subsequent years.

"Lady," he said, "it is too bad that anyone as kind as you are can't be happy!"

"Can't be happy?" she repeated to herself as the tramp disappeared from sight. "Well," she thought, "I'm not as unhappy as I may have looked to him. *I really have every reason to be happy. So I must learn to look happy at all times.*"

How well she learned her lesson is evidenced by an incident she loved to tell. One day as she was walking along a city street a lady accosted her with the words: "Madame, you do not know who I am, but may I ask you an important question? Will you kindly tell me how you look so happy?"

This evidence that happiness was an art which she had been able to cultivate became for Gertrude Clarke Whittall a continual inspiration. She died as the result of a fall at the age of ninety-six, in full possession of her powers.

(4)

The world's most striking example of supreme energy and vitality combined with supreme greatness of

character in old age was that of the world's most famous exponent of altruism, Albert Schweitzer. At an age well into the eighties, this self-chosen surgical apostle to darkest Africa carried on a gruelling day's work which would seem formidable even at the prime of life.

Up at dawn, he began his operations in the coolness of the morning hours. After dinner, at the end of a long day of often heart-rending work, he spent his evenings doing creative writing, playing the organ or composing music. At midnight he retired to find in sleep recuperation for the following day.

In addition to the supreme task of restoring health to the diseased natives of the tropics, Schweitzer had also the perplexing problem of acting as host not only to the patient who was to be operated on but also to the family who had travelled to the hospital base to await the outcome of the operation. These people had to be housed and fed. Their fears, as well as the fears of the invalid, had to be allayed. Their gratitude was frequently expressed by stealing Schweitzer's chickens and pulling up from the graves of unsurviving patients wooden crosses to use as fuel for cooking their food.

The irritations normal to such a life would give an ordinary man stomach ulcers. But Schweitzer was not an ordinary mortal. His spirit was upheld by a miraculous serenity and vitality.



Shirley Duncan, writer and lecturer who visited Dr. Schweitzer for a week during her tour of Africa, described to us her impressions of the amazing agelessness of this world-famous man.

"My meeting with Dr. Schweitzer was a unforgettable experience. He came bursting into the dining room, marched up to me and shook me warmly by the hand as he welcomed me to Lambarene. His bright blue eyes twinkled and his face was alight with smiles.

"I was astonished to find that this dignified, brilliant man was so full of sparkle and humor. He was vitally alive and spoke eagerly of his plans for the future growth of his hospital, which he was constantly enlarging and improving. He kept himself informed of all the world's events and was greatly concerned with its problems. He used every minute of his day constructively, sleeping only six hours each night.

"Talking with Dr. Schweitzer, one completely forgot that he was eighty-eight years old, as his mind and his spirit were so young. He had maintained his enthusiasm, his keen interest in people and the world around him, and his sense of fun. Even his gestures were quick and youthful. Kindness and goodness radiated from his face and he had a spiritual quality which is impossible to define. It has been said that Dr. Schweitzer could not be described. He had to be experienced."

If intellectual powers and activities can help to sustain the vital energies throughout a prolonged life, how much greater aid to a vital longevity can flow from spiritual powers and activities. Years bring wisdom. And wisdom, especially spiritual wisdom, when applied to life removes friction, avoids follies and excesses, increases often the creative potentialities. Therefore spiritual men and women will age but little. In many ways their powers will even increase. *For with years of practice of the spiritual life they will have learned how to draw to themselves—more fully than in youth—those cosmic and spiritual forces which can constantly renew and invigorate both spirit and body.*

If intellectually creative man keeps virile because he has ever fresh goals to work for, spiritually creative man has even greater incentives for a life rich in years and in service. For the spiritual horizon is infinite as to goals of development and of service.

The man dedicated to services that benefit his fellow beings has neither time nor inclination for growing old. Shall we say that his noble tasks support him? Or that some occult vitality flows into him to invigorate and sustain?

Here is a field hitherto unexplored by science. The fact of a longevity due to intellectual activity is well

evidenced. But enhancement of longevity and of vital powers through spiritual means has not been studied enough. This is an important field for future study—as to whether the lives of deeply spiritual individuals reveal a spiritually endowed longevity.

For those of us, even, who do not merit and earn this spiritual subsidy to living, there is one sure recipe for keeping young as we grow old. That is to realize ourselves as unaging—to realize ourselves, in fact, as ever young. The Real Self in us does not age. *Insofar as we can become conscious of our Real Self, we shall never feel old, no matter how old we grow.*

Benjamin Franklin, that essence of practicality, bore witness to what an attitude of mind can do to keep us young when at the age of seventy-four, in Paris, he wrote to his friend Thomas Bond: "I do not find that I grow any older. When I arrived at seventy and considered that by travelling further in the same road I should probably be led to the grave, I stopped short, turned about and walked back again; which having done these four years, you may now call me sixty-six. Advise those old friends of ours to follow my example. Keep up your spirits and that will keep up your bodies."

The Self within us does not realize age. It realizes only that it continues to mature, to add knowledge to knowledge and wisdom to wisdom. And so in man's

latter years there can be ever more power of steady enjoyment of life as a result of broader and deeper vision into life.

The ideal is a life that grows richer with each ensuing year. And this is possible to us all if we reach out beyond ourselves, turn a heart of love to all, and cast no melancholy eye upon the past but live hopefully and vividly for the future.

**"Life is a wrestling match with destiny, in which man either throws or is overthrown. But he who persists until dawn will always prevail."**

—WU Ming Fu.

#### RECAPITULATION

Medical science is prolonging life and biologists theorize that the normal life span for man might be well past the century mark.

As mankind grows more spiritual, more attuned to the cosmic currents, more restrained in his physical habits, more harmonious and kindly toward his fellow men,—by these means he will tend not only to have more of life but to have a better, happier quality of life.

If life is to be prolonged, there must be goals to live for. The most potent goals to vitalize our powers and prevent decay are those goals pertaining to human welfare, service to others either direct or indirect.

There is always plenty of such service to be performed. As long as we feel we are needed, we cling to life with zest and enjoyment.

There is a special advantage in longevity accruing from the fact that man's later years tend to be wiser, and more mellow and richer in content. Knowledge and cultural tastes are cumulative. They grow with the years. Always there is something new to learn, something more splendid to enjoy.

Strangely, and fortunately too, the extremes of youth and age form happy companionship. Age has experience, wisdom and directives to impart, sympathy and aid to give to struggling youth. And youth with its zestful and hopeful struggles becomes an inspiration to age.

Let us try with every passing year to live more closely to the Divine Reality, floating as it were on the Universal currents of existence. In old age there is no need for strain. Life should be serenely flowing. It should also be fluorescent.

## CHAPTER 17

### Service as the Way to God

We have been discussing so far in this book the values that accrue to the individual from the development of the spiritual side of his being.

But individual man is also social man—an indispensable part of the society in the midst of which his life is cast. He cannot live alone, even if he would. Inextricable ties of the most complex nature connect his life with the lives of those around him, and in subtle ways even with lives far removed from his sight and cognizance.

How are we to react to this human social nexus? The non-spiritual way is to seek to exploit our human environment for the benefit of ourselves. But spiritual man lives for the sake of beneficence. He seeks primarily the welfare of others. He dedicates his life activities and all his powers to SERVICE. This is the spiritual path, and there is no other.

The divine connection reached through prayer and meditation, the spiritual uplift and rapture and power

attained by Union,—this must be expressed in that benevolent form of action known as SERVICE.

Man's spiritual life is not solely a centripetal process of self-perfectioning. This very self-perfectioning, this spiritual realization of the individual implies also outgoing activities, a centrifugal force which gives us both desire and ability to aid our fellow men. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

It must not be considered, therefore, that our spiritual development is purely an individual thing, a nursing and nourishing of the soul in a sort of spiritual vacuum. No. Spirituality is as much an expression of togetherness as of uniqueness.

(2)

Every religion teaches the obligation for altruistic action; the necessity of coming down again from the spiritual heights to walk among the paths of men; rendering service as we may; soothing the sorrow-stricken and binding up wounds.

The Transfiguration of Christ was so glorious, so rapturous, that Peter exclaimed: "Oh Master, let us abide here! Let us build tabernacles for you, for Moses, and for Elias."

But Christ replied, "No, we have work to do down there," pointing to the town below them. There a great

multitude gathered around Him, questioning Him. One of the multitude brought to Christ his son, suffering from birth from an obsessive disease. Christ said to the grieving father: "All things are possible to him that believeth!" And the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief!" Then Christ took the lad by the hand and lifted him up cured—thus exemplifying to his disciples the life of the spirit, inspiration fulfilled and expressed as benevolent action.

All of this, and more, Christ sums up in His parable of the Good Samaritan. As the merchant, who had fallen among thieves, lay wounded and helpless on the pavement, a priest walking by enrapt in meditation crossed over to the other side in order to avoid disturbance to his serenity. So did a wealthy Levite who, glancing at the dirt-covered bleeding victim, judged him to be a worthless fellow. But a passing Samaritan, having compassion on him, bound up his wounds, set him on his own ass and took him to an inn where he provided fully for his care.

This story Christ told to a wealthy lawyer who had asked Him how he could inherit eternal life. The lawyer, upon being quizzed by Christ as to the spiritual Law, quoted the famous commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."

Christ said, "Thou hast answered right. This do, and thou shalt live!"

But the lawyer could not help a bit of cross-questioning on his own part. He asked, "But who is my neighbor?"

It was at this point that Christ told this parable of the Good Samaritan—one of the most famous parables in all history—a parable that has undoubtedly shaped and instrumented human benevolence more than any other group of words on record.

An even greater effect than this parable in enjoining service upon His disciples and upon the world was obtained in Christ's action at the Feast of the Passover in bathing His disciples' feet. This was a very menial task, considering the amount of dirt of all kinds which accumulated around people's feet in the filthy streets of that period. It was so menial that Peter cried out in dismay, "Master, Thou shalt never wash my feet!" But when Christ told him he would have no part in the Kingdom unless he submitted to this service of love, the impetuous disciple said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and head!"

At the conclusion of this ceremony Christ said: "Know ye what I have done to ye? Ye call me Master and Lord and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you

an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Thus Christ exemplified and put into action His message of love and service.

(3)

There can be no real spirituality that does not express itself constantly in action.

The message of service and the practice of service was indoctrinated in the early Christians by Paul and the other apostles, until the Christian community became outstanding—in the midst of a selfish and often cruel pagan society—for its many community services; its hospitals and charities; its solicitude for each and every person, not matter how humble; its service committees whose duty it was to explore the needs of the community and satisfy them from the central purse.

Thus began what is known as "Christian charity"—a complete innovation in the pagan world. It was chiefly this altruism, this love expressed in service that caused the spread of Christ's doctrines throughout the Roman Empire.

What a magic world it would be if we all were motivated by desire to serve instead of to exploit. Actually, all life is inherently a form of service and the result of service. The sun freely serves our planet and as a result endows the torpid earth with living forms. There

is no life upon this planet but that which is due to the sun's beneficence.

Next, it is the earth's turn to render service. It offers its soil to be plowed, to give nourishment to plants, to humbly support the tread of humans. Then the plant life sacrifices itself to feed animals and humans.

Human life, and animal life as well, goes on from generation to generation only by means of that maternal service which biologists look upon as the primary expression of altruism upon the planet.

Marriage is intended as a form of reciprocal service. The family and tribe exist only by patterns of reciprocal service. The citizen owes loyal service to his government; and the government has recently recognized, in social welfare, a universal obligation of service to its citizens.

All forms of employment are also forms of service. No one is paid to do absolutely useless work. This subject of work as a means of service has been amply treated in a previous chapter and needs no further comment here.

Since our very existence is bound up and implicated in forms of service, where is the necessity for religion? *The value of religion lies in its power to motivate service; to endow the individual with a generous, compassionate, altruistic psychology.*

Service is demanded of each one of us, as members of the human race. But service can be subtly evaded or shifted onto others. It is within the power of the individual to become a drag upon society; or worse still, an exploiter of society.

Man in his selfishness can grasp more than he gives. Greed invalidates many business transactions. Self-seeking and egoism can wreak havoc in the social pattern.

M. H. Mothersill, M.D., in his *Value of a Human Being*, states how as a country rural teacher walking to his school and back through the country side, he began to question, "What is the greatest thing in the world?" And as years went by he gradually came to the conclusion that *the most important thing in the world is the value that each human being has to mankind as a whole.*

"An ideal society could be produced if all human beings on the earth were positively valuable. . . . In order to be positively valuable, a human being must desire to be useful. In fact, he must be determined to be positively valuable. It must be his life purpose, his moral purpose, to be valuable regardless of what it may cost him in work or in personal sacrifice.

"What would be the religion of the people of this ideal state of society? It would necessarily be a type of religion that builds in each individual a determination to be positively useful to society."

This keen writer on the problem of service, although a physician and not a religionist, realizes that religion would have to play a part in the evolution of a human type universally dedicated to service.

The fact is that man by nature is ego-centric in his drives, even though he exists in a social nexus where reciprocity and mutuality are demanded.

It has been the purpose of all religions to diminish the ego in man, to liberate him from himself, to increase his spiritual motivation. There is a strange, almost magical reality in the spiritual doctrine that the more you give the more you will have.

Unfortunately, the idea prevails that the more one seizes the more one will possess for his personal satisfactions. As long as the belief holds that the surest way to success is by means of the exploitation of others, this planet will remain in a turmoil of greed, violence and crime.

The strange truth is that, since Love is the Divine Dynamic, we prosper best when we ourselves are forever seeking the well-being of others. The more we give away—of ourselves or of our substance—the more we receive back to advance our own well-being—provided we do all the giving in love.

“When, through love, faith, dedication and prayer we open our souls to the Universal, every aspect of our minds, personality and experience becomes more

awakened, and the gifts we all possess flow into practical expression.”\*

(4)

Edgar Cayce often gave spiritual as well as material prescriptions to his patients. In one such reading he points out that selfishness is not the way to health and happiness.

“Let the entity (the patient) magnify that innate force in self to do and be and to give of self to the betterment of those about self. *Ever know and learn that the riches of heaven and earth consist in the ability to give rather than to accept.*

“Each individual is made in the image of creation, and unless ye are a creator in such, ye are taking from it.

“The attitude of ‘Gimmie, Gimmie’ leads only to miserable failure in the long run. If you would have life you must give it. If you would have friends you must be friendly. If you would have love you must yourself be lovely. And in so doing you will discard the selfishness and pessimism that is so much a part of thyself.”\*

Abdu'l-Bahá, leader and expounder of the Bahá'í World Faith, had much to say about the need of ex-

\*Brother Mandus. “The Crusader.”

\*\*“Be Still and Know”. Edgar Cayce. Edgar Cayce Publishing Company Virginia Beach, Virginia.

pressing spiritual love in action. When the writer visited him in 1908 in his prison-home in Acca, Palestine, he spoke one evening at the dinner table about the relevance of love to its fulfillment in action.

“What would think of a mother,” he said, “who looked fondly at her babe and said ‘Oh how I love you!’ but would not give it milk.”

“The highest station man can reach on earth,” Abdu’l-Bahá said, “is that of complete consecration to the loving will of God. In that spiritual state man finds supreme joy in serving God by serving God’s creatures. ‘As ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me.’”

“All our soul-powers, our outward self, our inward self, must be consecrated to God in love and sacrifice. If we have not reached this station of nothingness we have not attained to real obedience to the will of God. . . .

“When you really love God you will be willing to sacrifice everything and submit yourself entirely to His will. Consecrate yourself wholly to Him. His will is everything. His service is paramount.”

Abdu’l-Bahá himself was the personification of service, as his name “Abdu’l” (servant) implies. During the long years of his imprisonment he lovingly met and cared for the needs of all visitors, holding all followers of the Bahá’í Faith close to his heart by means of tireless personal correspondence.

After his freedom in 1908, due to the Young Turk Revolution, he traveled throughout Europe and America spreading and explaining the Bahá’í teachings of world peace and world brotherhood. All doors were opened to him as he travelled across America in 1912. Many were the people in all walks of life who sought him out for interviews. Day after day he served in this capacity, from early morning until late at night. And this, in spite of the normal weakness of advanced age and of afflictions stemming from his 40 years of imprisonment.

In Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence one felt in the presence of Cosmic Love personified. In those loving arms which swept so many into his embrace one felt absorbed into the Universal. His love was all-embracing, and remained thereafter always with one, as did his farewell words to the writer: “BE ON FIRE WITH THE LOVE OF GOD.”

(5)

Inayat Khan, Sufi mystic and teacher, points out four stages in man’s altruistic and spiritual development. In the first stage he is thoughtless and inconsiderate, interested in only what he wants and what he likes, blind to the needs and wants of others; in the second stage he is kindly and considerate when this does not interfere with his own interests; in the third stage he is more concerned with another’s desires and



needs than with his own, and this altruism is the beginning of spiritual perfection; in the fourth stage this person entirely forgets himself in doing kind deeds for others.

This chart of altruism is a good way to test our growth in spirituality, which is synonymous with our growth in selflessness. High ideals, spiritual striving, longing for oneness with the Universal,—all these are but steps by which to reach that spiritual altitude of perfect selflessness which is equivalent to perfect saintliness.

There are degrees in this ascent toward perfection. We cannot expect to reach the 100th degree here upon this planet, but that is our goal. We can always test our degree of spirituality by our degree of selfless service to others. *This is the acid test.*

Every step of perfection in the evolution of the soul is possible of achievement; and like every other normal achievement, is accompanied with joy. It is not as difficult as it seems, to serve others with selflessness. It becomes, little by little, a joyous habit. And it brings a magical return. For love begets love. And service to others induces in them, in the majority of cases, a reciprocal desire to serve us. Instead of being in constant friction by trying to defend ourselves against the self-seeking aggression of others, life becomes a living reciprocal exchange of glad and willing service.

“Those who find in the smallest ways evidences within themselves of concentration upon themselves, and exclusion, indifference, ill-will to anything around them, are being silently and subtly tested to see how great is their power of love. The selfish ego must be harnessed and led by the higher self to work for the good of mankind. Each victory over self-will, and each deed of thought for others, brings out the essence of love. In this sense, life is a great adventure wherein each moment of the day brings fresh opportunities for union with God, and where each gift or action or deed, freely motivated by love and selflessness, carries the heart close to the Christ within.”\*

**“We find God only to the degree we expend ourselves unconditionally in love towards everyone whose lives touch ours in every possible way.”**

**—Brother Mandus.**

#### RECAPITULATION

There are those who say—claiming direct authority for their statement—that life in the next world is characterized chiefly by loving service. That type of person whom we call *angelic* here—not by any means the prevailing type on earth—is the norm in heaven.

In fact, those souls who go over there with little altruistic development find themselves extremely dis-

\*“The Essence of Love.” Cornelia Bagarotti. *The Layman*, Oct. 1966.

advantaged, to say the least. They are not at home in this angelic society. They need a lot of training and loving angelic service before they are able to function in a heavenly society based on love.

For all practical purposes we can appreciate, however, that "other-world" considerations are not needed in order to bring to us a realization of the serenity and joy to be found here in those rare and small earthly societies in which love prevails and service is expressed.

If we conceive of such ideal societies as being magnified a thousandfold on earth, we can form some idea of what life in general will be like when the planet has become spiritualized. Incredible as this may seem, it is within the blueprints of Destiny.

When the Law of Service is fulfilled—when the individual fully consecrates to the Divine Purpose for the sake of the advancement of his fellow men—then he has reached the supreme station of Man.

The Law of Service is the highest and most perfect law by which to guide effort. Those who work and achieve according to this law will be divinely aided to success.

This is the way of perfection. Achievements that are utterly free of self merge into the cosmic harmony as part of that great onward universal movement sponsored, motored and guided by Him Who alone independently exists.

## CHAPTER 18

### The Good of It All

When all is going well with us we do not ask the meaning of life. It is sufficient then just to be alive. In the enjoyment of health, activity and successful achievement existence is taken for granted and enjoyed for its own sake—just as are beauty and love. As Emerson has said, beauty is its own excuse for being. And so is life when it is zestful and joyous.

But there come into every life periods of depression, of frustration, of struggle against seemingly overwhelming obstacles. Periods of ill health, of over-work, of strain, of anxiety, of misfortune. Then it is we ask: what is the purpose of existence? What is the good of it all? Has life any meaning or is it only the capricious gift of a fortuitous universe?

That life is an immense struggle no mature person will deny. Yet we dimly perceive, even in the midst of it, something of meaning. In retrospection, as they say a drowning person sees his life pass before him, we can sense the purpose of it all—*that purpose being growth.*

Life means opportunity for growth on the part of the individual. We grow only by means of activity; or, as psychologists call it, purposeful activity. Not to be active is to stagnate, atrophy, crystallize. Movement is the sign of life. It is even more than that. It is the essence of life.

Life, from one point of view, is simply a succession of inevitable exertions. If we did not start out on a career of purposeful activity the moment we came into the world we would never learn how to walk, how to talk, how to use our hands, how to think.

After the infant period is passed, we struggle through an education. Here too we attain growth only by means of mental and manual activity. At its best education is a struggle—an arduous endeavor which has its strains, its anxieties, its obstacles, its frustrations. All of these scholastic difficulties of growing and developing youth could be avoided simply by not receiving an education. But even with the possibility of such a simple solution to our pedagogic difficulties, no sane person would avail himself of this way out of intellectual struggle. We wish an education, with all its strains and difficulties, because we wish to grow and develop intellectually. We may at times envy the savages who bask indolently in the sunshine of the South Sea Islands; but we are really never desirous of exchanging such a mentally idle career for the intellectual training of the modern technological world.

When the struggle and strain of education is over, can we then relapse into a life of ease and supineness? Not at all. The real effort of our life is now just beginning. We face a career. This calls for every ounce of energy in us. Here again we meet with difficulties, with strains, with disappointments and bitter frustrations. All the trials to which humanity is heir seem to be concentrated in the human environment of the business world—a Scylla and Charybdis through which the individual must carefully steer his bark if he would reach successful havens.

Meanwhile marriage beckons from afar. This seems in prospect like a halcyon cruise amid Elysian islands. But in actual experience we discover that marriage has been but the portal to more struggle and effort. One of the most difficult things in life is the human adjustment rendered necessary by marriage, if marriage is to result in any kind of harmony of living. All those pampered qualities which as son or daughter were deemed charming peccadillos in the eyes of adoring parents, appear now as inexcusable faults which must be sloughed off before married life can rise to a successful stage. Those twain are indeed fortunate who in this marital struggle attain a permanent harmony and happiness.

To marriage is eventually added another factor of difficulty, progeny. If the individual has faced anxieties before, they are as nothing to the anxieties met and

faced in child raising. What difficulties of child health, of child development, of child training! What financial strains and stringencies! What unforeseen disturbances to the normal tranquility of life!

And now when life has run its course and the physical vehicle is too worn out to further convey the soul on its journey, does death have its way without a struggle? Not at all. This universal event is often accompanied by pain, by agony, by intense struggle—just as the event of birth. The soul seeks to maintain its hold upon the body, while the body seeks to shake it off. This tragic struggle can end, of course, in only one way. So why the wrestle, the struggle, the strain? Why not just go to sleep and fail to wake up?

All these struggles, these obstacles which have been thrown before us, have been enormous aids to our development. We have become very different individuals because of the struggles of education. Again we have grown enormously through the struggles inherent in married life. Parenthood we have found a great field of development; for while we were training our children, they were training us. And in pursuing a career we have attained undreamed heights of certitude and power.

We cannot avoid struggle. But we can meet struggle as an opportunity for growth. We can suffer obstacles and frustrations to be merely a misfortune; or

we can utilize them as aids to our development. If growth is attained, the struggle seems well worth the while. If growth has not been attained in the course of struggle, in every case I think it is safe to say the fault is our own.

Growth, however, is not an end in itself. It is a means to achievement. The greater the development of the individual, the greater his power of achievement. To grow, to achieve,—this is to perform our part in the universe. When we do this we have become creators. We are expressing the native genius which is within each one of us.

And miracle of miracles, achievement causes further growth. So that we have here an infinite cycle, like the mythological symbol of the snake swallowing its tail. There is no end to this process of achievement by means of growth, and growth by means of achievement. Achievement, therefore, becomes both the means and the goal of growth. And since growth is life itself, we must conclude that achievement is the evidence of a constantly expanding existence.

Could any scheme of things more wonderful than this be conceived? Within the hands of every individual has been placed the complete means for achieving growth, and for expressing that growth in terms of achievement.

We might depict existence in the form of a diagram. At the center is the Self—radiating out into the world of matter, and expressing itself by means of growth and achievement. At the perimeter, which we may call Existence, we find struggle leading into growth, growth leading into achievement, achievement leading to more growth, and so on to renewed struggle et cetera, ad infinitum.

(2)

Life forces struggle upon us at all times. Sometimes one wonders why so many obstacles must arise between the conception and the accomplishment of a project. Why is matter always obstructing life?

The farmer and his toil is a symbol of the difficulties that face all purposeful activity on a material plane. To get the earth to bear for him the farmer must first plow it. This necessary process meets with obstructions at every step of the way. When the earth is at last thrown aside and reduced to submissive furrows, the planting must be done. But this is not the end of the matter. Constant cultivation is necessary. The elements present new dangers almost daily. As if that were not enough, the insidious attacks of the insect world call for incessant battle if these foes of man are to be conquered so that healthy crops may grow. To bring about

a successful harvest is a long drawn out task, requiring infinite patience, industry and wisdom.

So it is with all thought of man toward achievement. The idea, the plan, may come with a rush of joyous inspiration. Here on this inner plane all is clear smooth sailing. But between the idea and its accomplishment appear a thousand obstacles, once a thought-form enters upon the plane of activity.

This is so characteristic of life that we must accept it as a law of existence:—*achievement can be reached only over the barrier of innumerable obstacles.*

Why is this so? Is it, perhaps, because if our ideas could be transformed immediately into realities we should become magicians and demigods—a veritable danger to the universe? For we are not isolated individuals when we come to the plane of action, as we were on the plane of conception. In the world of the idea we can erect dream castles ad libitum without in any way interfering with other people's dream castles. But when we come to deal with the phenomenal world, our plans and efforts must somehow fit in with the plans and efforts of others. They must harmonize with the organization of humanity and with the universal scheme of things. All such plans can be achieved only in competition with the plans of millions of other individuals, in a medium of matter which itself opposes obstinately the will of man.

If we understand these laws, we shall not be so impatient at difficulties in our career; at unexpected obstacles in the working out of projects and ideas.

One thing that we can do is to make certain that what we are attempting to accomplish is reasonable—is worthwhile not only for ourselves but for the world in general; and that it is in line with our own abilities and strength. Much of the struggle in life is unnecessary and avoidable. It is due to the unwise endeavor to accomplish impossible enterprises—things not meant for us.

When Napoleon, in the intoxication of his titanic vanity, undertook to invade Russia, his rashness and lack of wisdom had already guaranteed failure. For there were insuperable obstacles to the accomplishment of his plans. Never before had his military aims been impossible to achieve. Always his power of will and military genius had enabled him to overcome any obstacles which existed. But here, for the first time, Napoleon undertook a quixotic enterprise. Here was an undertaking in which his genius would not suffice for victory, for it was not simply a case of defeating the enemy on the field of battle. For the first time Napoleon found himself up against insurmountable odds.

Therefore we must always consider carefully everything we undertake, realizing that quixotic quests meet with difficulties and possibly end in disaster.

If we find ourselves obstructed in the course we are taking; if we find obstacles hemming us in on every side; or if we find ourselves plunged into misfortune,—our first step should be to analyze the situation. See where the trouble is coming from. Perhaps it really flows from ourselves; the fault may be in us. Or, if it comes from without, let us see what causes it and move out of the danger if possible.

Nature has planted in even the humblest and lowest of creatures the instinct to analyze danger. Touch a caterpillar with a stick and it will immediately curl up and “play dead”. It senses danger and is using its insect intelligence to escape from that danger. So must man use all of his human intelligence to escape from situations that hem him in unfavorably. First think, and then act, in such a way as to get out of difficulties. Every difficulty, be sure, can in time somehow be overcome.

We must not rebel against life and the universe because of the necessity for daily struggle. How would progress and evolution get on if there were no obstacles to strive against, no difficulties to overcome? Where there is little need of striving, life degenerates. Evolutionary progress has resulted from overcoming obstacles. Only by biological striving has there been evolved a nervous system, a backbone, and a brain.

We cannot avoid struggle. It is the law of nature. What we can do is to utilize the necessity of struggle

as a means for growth. We can allow a misfortune to be merely a misfortune, or we can turn it into progress.

We must see to it, therefore, that our trials and sufferings become a means for growth; for otherwise they are black tragedy indeed.

The creative person knows well how to utilize misfortune as a stepping stone to higher forms of expression. Whatever comes into the artist's life is so much grist for his mill. A trial, a sorrow, a tragedy, by means of the alchemy of art becomes a sonate pathétique, a painting which blesses the world, or a noble tragedy which refines and inspires the heart of man.

What the artist does, we can also do. We can forge out of our misfortunes a golden coin to pay our way through life. We can make stepping stones of our dead selves and rise to higher things. It is our own fault, after all, if we do not turn struggle into growth; and growth into achievement.

(3)

A great comfort in times of stress is the knowledge that the hardship will pass in due time, and it will seem as if it had never been. In the struggle of life there are periods of respite, a truce to battle, a time for rest and recuperation.

Nature obeys a sublime law of rhythm. In the plant world the periods of activity, of rapid growth, of harvest, are unfailingly followed by a period of brumal rest which is a time of preparation for further expansion and growth. So it is in the life of man. We have our periods of zestful activity, of thrilling achievement. These may be followed by periods of weariness; of depression; perhaps even of failure and frustration. But development goes on, even in "the winter of our discontent." For we too, like the plant, are being prepared (though we little know it) for further and greater achievement. In these periods of retirement we can grow mightily, gathering our forces for renewed and more successful struggle.

What a great lesson came to Milton in his blindness: "God does not need my service," he discovered: "Thousands at His bidding speed, and post o'er land and sea. They also serve who only stand and wait."

Into the life of Lincoln came a period of disappointment, of inactivity, after his enforced retirement from Congress. For some five years his growth in character was mostly in the silence of his own meditation and ruminations. He spent hours in his office writing, reflecting, and studying the stupendous and baffling problem of slavery. At the end of this period of political retirement he was much nearer to being of Presidential calibre than he had been during his Congressional period.

We too may be but gainers from moments, from years even, of frustration. For during our enforced rest from strains of achievement and success we learn our dependence upon God.

We learn to give up our own will to that vast Cosmic current which bears us toward more glorious harbors than we even know of. This is not loss, but gain.

**“The energies with which the divine bounty hath endowed the reality of man be latent within him even as the light is potentially present in the lamp. But until a fire is kindled the lamp will never be ignited.”**

**—Baha’u’llah.**

#### RECAPITULATION

How could animals realize that the pain, the terror of life was to drive them higher up? How could cave men of ancient Europe, basking in a semi-tropical climate, realize that the icy breaths of descending glaciers from the polar regions were to drive them into effort which would make of them a finer, more intelligent race? From cave men we have forged our way to the man of the twentieth century with his powerful intellect, ungoverned emotional nature and almost completely undiscovered powers of intuition. Struggle still is necessary, also privation and suffering, in order to train us to govern the emotions and to utilize that marvelous spirit of intuition which is ready to do our bidding. Man has risen upward for eons past—through struggle, privations and sorrow. Upward he is still to rise, for progress must go on. And the end is above all sorrow.



PART THREE

THE WORLD  
OF  
THE FUTURE

CHAPTER 19

The Coming World Civilization

Far from being discouraged by the difficulties which face the world today, there are those who believe we are at the dawn of a great and worldwide spiritual development of humanity—an age in which the individual will sincerely seek to develop spiritually rather than to give mere lip service to religiosity.

We must not be discouraged by the failure of the church to hold man's earnest interest as in the past. Science has given a knockout blow to the hold of theology upon the credence of modern man. This is a benefit, rather than a disaster to society; for it forces all of us to dig down to the fundamental concepts of spiritual life and prove these concepts by experience.

Modern man is beginning already to do this. And as this experimental aspect of religion continues to be sought out and practiced, the everyday values of man's spiritual life will be proved beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Bystanders were sceptical of the cure Christ wrought upon the blind man of Bethsaida. But this scepticism had little effect upon him who had been healed. "I don't know what you are talking about," he said in effect to these sceptics, "and I don't care, either. All I know is that I was blind, and now I see."

This kind of direct experience in man's religious life can be sought and found all over the globe. Religion everywhere can thus be used to lead man to the Reality of things. And that Reality, once found and proved in experience, will never be disturbed by carping doubts.

Religion will take on a new power of directive in the lives of men, a truly spiritual power. Gradually the whole human race will become entirely re-formed and re-generated by spiritual potencies such as have been described in this book. Just as humanity now enjoys the marvelous fruits of the development of intellect, so man in the centuries to come will enjoy still more marvelous fruits of the spirit.

In this Advent of the Age of Spirit, America will play a leading part. Involved as it is in material progress and prosperity, this country—founded so largely in the name of religion—is still earnestly religious at heart. Indeed the 19th century saw America playing a more active part than other countries in the creation and earnest application of new religious forms.

Here was born the religion of the Mormons, now numbering four million believers and operating potently in many quarters of the world—producing in the lives of its followers an outstanding integrity. Here was born both Christian Science and Unity, which in spite of sceptical denigration have been responsible for many wonderful healings and for much serenity and happiness.

Here was born, in the city of New York, the movement called Theosophy which has exerted a wide influence among intellectuals the world over. Here too, in the state of New York, was born Spiritualism, a belief and practice which has attracted many seeking valid proof of the continued existence of the deceased and has given comforting and valid assurance to many bereaved ones.

Here Unitarianism, originating in England, came to full flower; producing that most remarkable and potent spiritual philosophy, Transcendentalism—best known through the writings of Emerson. And here in this country arose the Universalist denomination, now merged with Unitarianism.

It was in this country, rather than in any other country of the world, that that remarkable religious leader Abdu'l-Bahá chose to preach in 1912, from coast to coast, the Bahá'í gospel of world peace, world unity and world brotherhood.

(3)

How the centuries, the millenniums, have flown by since man first walked erect, became a tool maker and user, and began to think! How different the settled agricultural life—with its city state, its alphabet, its metallurgy, its arts of civilization—from the life of the cave man and forest hunter. How different the life of today—with its widely diffused and advanced education, its ability to think, its scientific power, and its ethics based on authoritative religious foundations,—how different all this is from the daily life of the pagan world previous to the coming of Christ. But more important than all this will be the gains made in the coming millenniums. These will be gains in character as molded under spiritual influences prevailing upon the planet. As 20th century man differs from the cave man, so will future man at his maturity differ from the man of today.

To form some concept of what people and their daily life will be like in this millennial epoch, let us recall those moments, hours, days when our human association reached its apex of friendliness, harmony and delight; when we were part of a human group in which no friction existed, but which was dominated by love; in which we happily exchanged ideas and ideals with other humans in an atmosphere characterized both by sympathy and intelligence; a group from which we departed with singing hearts and vibrant memories.

Such groups, such human life exists today though rare. *This highest reach of human development, illumined and motivated by the spirit, will become the norm in the future.* And what is now the norm—self-seeking, with all the human friction it entails—will have become a rarity, an abnormal expression of the human spirit.

Instead of self-seeking with its corollary exploitation, service will be the daily rule of conduct. This service will be given with love and will win loving appreciation. Spiritual man of the future will know the practice of that cosmic law which provides that the more one gives, the more one has. A strange law—not comprehensible to man's earthly intelligence. A law which transforms life, once man himself has become transformed.

Does all this sound chimerical? Then Christ was chimerical. And Buddha and Mohammed and all the prophets of God were chimerical. No. They were not chimerical. They made it their mission to bring about this elysium; this Kingdom of God on earth; this reign of Spirit in the affairs of man.

As surely as God reigns above, so surely will He some day reign on earth for the sake of man's felicity.

(4)

The solution of every major problem that faces

humanity today must find its dynamics in the plane of spirit. For spiritual forces alone can release man from the innate egoism, selfishness, greed and cruelty that complicates and invalidates all secular attempts at reform. The coming world civilization can be perfected only by men and women imbued with spiritual principles and motivated by pure ideals of service. World unity can be achieved only by spiritual potencies.

"It is for us to consider how we may educate men that the darkness of ignorance and heedlessness may disappear and that the radiance of the kingdom may encompass the world; that the nations of men may be delivered from selfish ambition and strife, and be revived by the fragrance of God; that animosity and hatred may be dispersed and wholly disappear, while the attracting power of the love of God so completely unites the hearts of men, that all hearts beat as a single heart; that the arteries of all mankind may pulsate with the love of God; that contention and war may utterly pass away, while peace and reconciliation lift their standard in the midst of the earth and men become enamoured of one another; that the joys of spirituality may prevail over material pleasures; that East and West may delight in one another as lovers, and North and South embrace each other in closest affection; that the visible world may be the mirror of the world of the kingdom; that the image of supreme concourse may be reflected in all gatherings of men; that the earth may be changed into the paradise of the

Glorious One, and the Divine Jerusalem embrace the terrestrial globe."\*

## (5)

Man does not live for himself alone. Spiritual potencies, as has been shown in previous chapters, can enhance the life of the individual. But spirituality demands more than self-development. It demands dedication to the common good. The more spiritual man becomes, the more he will tend to devote himself to the welfare of his fellow men.

Spirituality expressed as service is the goal of human perfection. Doubtless this is equally so in all other inhabited worlds. For this is the law of the Universe. Group cohesion is the fundamental nature of existence. And there are those who say that the cohesive force throughout the universe—in miniscule and major scale, in atom and in man—is *love*.

Josiah Royce, greatest philosopher Harvard has produced, stated in his *Philosophy of Loyalty* that man as an individual does not reach maturity until he finds a cause to which he can devote himself and in which he can lose himself. Man as an individual is feeble; but as a loyal adherent to a great Cause he partakes of an infinite courage and strength. Movements of reform

\*Abdu'l-Bahá. "The Promulgation of Universal Peace."

and progress only are effective when they enlist supreme loyalty on the part of their followers.

It is not difficult for us to see today what goals are worthy of our striving.

First and foremost is the achievement of world peace, world disarmament and effective world federation. Few question the imperative authority of these goals, because it is evident that until they are achieved civilization itself is imperiled.

Another goal which all admit—and at least pay lip-service to—is the overcoming of prejudice: social, racial and religious. Nobody ventures to defend prejudice. Why then does it continue to exist? It is because prejudice cannot be overcome simply by intelligence opposing it. The overcoming of these deep-seated and often instinctive predilections of humanity requires more than intellectual perception. It requires a spiritual force. Mere negation will not accomplish the task. Only the positive force of spirit expressed as love can accomplish this.

Next on the list of planetary goals is the overcoming of poverty. This task is a formidable one, even in countries of prosperity; and in countries of general backwardness and poverty the problem is immense. But poverty can be solved when it is tackled by a planetary exertion of good will and technology. Our earth can

provide for all, when properly cultivated. For what the earth cannot supply we may turn to the oceans, which contain some 90 percent of the biological resources of this planet.

Next to overcoming poverty, and intimately related to it, is the overcoming of illiteracy and ignorance. Education is so important a factor in all human progress that it was made one of the chief principles of the Bahá'í World Faith, wherein it is stated that it is the foremost duty of parents to train and educate their children. Not to do so is a sin before God.

Last but not least of planetary goals is the establishment of the reign of justice. Love is the general principle that should empower all progress and procedure. But justice is more specific. It must be applied to every exigency of life. Where justice is applied, in the spirit of love, friction ceases and harmony reigns.

(6)

The specialization in science that threatens to divide the intellectual and scientific world into departmentalized thinkers will be succeeded by an age in which the synthesist is dominant—the thinker who brings all knowledge into one comprehensible orbit. These synthesizers—or philosophers of the intellect—will control education and institute methods of study which

will enable the average intelligent student to grasp in simple outline all knowledge, just as today the entire history of human progress is intelligibly summed up for the layman in volumes of universal history and anthropology.

*It is axiomatic that there can be no body of knowledge created by man which men, in due time, will not be able to understand and digest.* For as human inventiveness, creation, and accumulation of knowledge progresses, so will man's mind progress and expand in ability to comprehend and absorb. But it will be the spiritual aspect of man's intelligence, his intuitive power, which will achieve this.

Does not all this sound like the coming of the millennium? The establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth? That is exactly what it is. These glorious strides of human progress can be attained only by spiritual motivation. Spiritual development in man can only truly be envisioned in terms of his relationships to other men. Spirituality as a lonely lighthouse existence is illusionary. Our spirituality is only really tested in our attitudes and our relationships to others. Such human relationships have achieved loyalty first in the family, then in the clan or tribe, then in the nation. The last and greatest unity is that of humanity itself; and the greatest loyalty is that which is world-embracing.

Humanity, as has been frequently pointed out in these pages, is now ready to begin in earnest and in all devotion this planetary task—call it the establishment of a perfect world civilization or the establishment of the “Kingdom of God” on earth. Herein religionists and non-religionists can join forces toward the same universally acknowledged goal. Everyone over the face of the globe who is committed to, and working zealously for, the achievement of this more perfect world civilization,—all these are brothers, no matter what their creed, race or affirmation. It may be in this respect that agnostic yet truly dedicated scientists are nearer to God's purpose than religionists who have not been set on fire by a vision of millennial progress and perfection.

(7)

The world has progressed greatly in the last 10,000 years. This period has seen the rise of agriculture and the beginnings of settled village life—eventuating in the city, with its stimulation of the arts and civilization. It has witnessed the development of still larger units—the nation, and the all-embracing empire which brought together many races and cultures and welded them into a functioning whole.

This period has seen the creation of the art of writing, which by its power of recording human thought,

enterprise and invention has made possible the steady progress of science and invention culminating in the miracles of modern technology.

Only one-fourth of this period of progress has seen the world living and working under the directives of religions which have by now grown to embrace all humanity. These religions, united as to their ethics and essential spiritual doctrines, have trained humanity in loyalty to concepts of behaviour which have greatly ameliorated our planetary life.

We are now at the dawn of a still greater development, a development directed by spiritual as well as intellectual convictions and practices. No longer will it be deemed sufficient to be a mere religionist. Religion must bear fruit in action—"the fruits of the spirit", as described by Paul.

Only by this spiritual development can the goals longed for and envisioned by humanitarians be attained. Only spiritual foundations can bring about a durable world peace. So, also, only spiritual motivations and forces can achieve an effective organization of international affairs. Harmony and stability in the economic area equally depend upon the refinement of man's motivations to the point where greed is subordinated to integrity and to ideals of justice and service.

*When a spiritual conscience dominates human affairs the dreams of the poet and the visions of the seer*

*will be fulfilled. Then, and not till then will an ideal civilization function on this planet.*

(8)

Judaism anticipated this millennial perfection, which her prophets set forth in glowing terms. Christianity further defined this hopeful event as the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Shoghi Effendi, leader of the Bahá'í World Faith, gives us a glowing picture of the coming world civilization as seen from the Bahá'í point of view:—

"The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples.

"A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may rise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world intercommunication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvelous swiftness and perfect regularity.

"A world metropolis will act as the nerve center of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language, a world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind.

"In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of con-

tending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated.

"National rivalries, hatreds, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and cooperation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear.

"The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race.

"A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its un-



imaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation—such is the goal toward which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.”\*

**“Pride not yourself on this, that you love your country; but rather on this, that you love mankind . . . He is indeed a man who concerns himself with the progress of the human race.”**

—Baha’u’llah.

#### RECAPITULATION

The ideal civilization described in this chapter will not come of itself. It depends upon the spiritualization of humanity. We are due to progress from the present brilliant age of the intellect to a still more dazzling age of the Spirit.

When the influence of spirit is felt in all men’s affairs, when motivation and behavior become spiritual,

\*“A Pattern for Future Society”. Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 110 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Ill. 60019.

then life on this planet will become paradisaical and the Kingdom of God will be established. From this inner spiritualization of humanity will flow outer perfections and beneficences,—world peace, world brotherhood, the equitable solution of the economic problem, world-wide prosperity, and the spread of a universal and felicitous culture.

But all this depends upon you and me. The spiritualization of humanity in general consists of the spiritualization of its individual members. It is only as you and I progress spiritually that humanity progresses. Therefore a heavy responsibility rests upon every one of us who see the vision, to help make it a reality by striving day and night to perfect ourselves spiritually and to help others spiritually.

The time has come for all of us to strive earnestly to give a spiritually sluggish world an awakening and a bath of spirit. Be assured, no such effort of the spirit goes unfulfilled. Every step we take, every enrichment of spiritual value in our own lives will reach out—like ripples moving centrifugally in a pond—and affect our whole environment.

Material advancement is not enough. We must strive day and night to perfect ourselves spiritually and to help others in their spiritual advancement.

We cannot help receiving life—we have no choice. But we do have a choice as to what we shall make of our lives. It was successfully to fulfill this choice that we were placed upon this planet. The meaning of life—of all life—is development. This is within our power—both individual and planetary development.

Such development is not an assigned task—it is a privilege. Development, with Divine aid, is not a burden—it is a joyous expression of the Self.

## CHAPTER 20

### What Will Tomorrow's World Be Like?

Creators of Utopias, such as Moore and Bellamy, have the advantage of working in an area in which their assertions cannot at the time be either proved or disproved—an area in which the imagination can have full sway. The creative imagination, if scientifically trained, can arrive at astounding success in foreseeing the future, not by clairvoyance but by a sort of extrapolation or conjectural furthering of existing curves of progress. Bellamy's *Looking Backward* is a striking example of this.

Today one can readily prophesy that war will cease upon this planet. Most of humanity—for both idealistic and pragmatic reasons—is dedicated to this goal. For it is realized by all that we must choose between planetary peace and planetary destruction.

One can predict also some sort of international government and control. The world has already expressed its will for such organization in the League of Nations and the more functional United Nations. Further evolution of humanity in this direction is inevitable.

One can also safely predict the establishment of a universal auxiliary language. Its need is quite apparent, and this need is being discussed in our Congress and our press. There are psychological as well as practical reasons for the establishment of a universal auxiliary language. Differences in languages separate people, while oneness of language helps to create a psychology of oneness. Wherever unity of language has prevailed, unity of culture has prevailed and due to this the arts and sciences have been advanced.

The Arabs, by enforcing their language over all countries under their sway, created that great civilization known as Arabic-Islamic which led the world from 850 A.D. to 1400 A.D.. This great rise of medicine, mathematics and other sciences was made possible by oneness of language in all the courts and schools of the Islamic world, from India to Spain. Scholars could carry on their studies or their teaching in any part of the Islamic world. A youth, of whatever race, showing genius in a Samarkand could reap the fruits of his development in a distant Cordova. The whole world lay before scholar and merchant for their exploitation.

Europe developed a similar unity of culture under the sway of Church Latin—the language of educators and scholars throughout Europe up to 1500. Thus scholars could flock from country to country, university to university in search of knowledge. It was Rich-

ard Boyle's visit as a youth to Gallileo in Italy which started in England the development of mechanical science leading to the discovery of steam.

The need today of a universal auxiliary language is apparent. This need could be met in a single generation, but for the jealousy of nations. Germany and France, prior to the World Wars, were both runners-up with the English for this prize of universal medium. But the outcome of these wars has annihilated Germany's world ambitions; and it has greatly weakened those of France, which at the turn of the century linguistically dominated Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

Today English is a universal language in the major part of the world. It is the only language which has ever united India. It was the only common means of oral communication in China for years. It is now out-rivalling French as the international language of Europe, the Americas, and Africa.

No rivalry now exists to the claims of English as the world's coming auxiliary language except the claims of Esperanto and other artificial languages. These have the advantage of neutrality as regards world politics. But they have no extant literature, and their language has no emotional warmth or richness of acquired connotation.

English has in itself, regardless of how wide-spread it is, several advantages as a world language. As regards the evolution of language it is linguistically the most advanced, having sloughed off almost all noun and verb forms. Except for its irregular pronunciation it is very easy to learn. In addition it possesses, in original creation and in translation, an immense library, far greater than has any other language in the world.

But whatever auxiliary language is chosen, the time will come when all major works of literature will be published simultaneously in the native and in the universal auxiliary language. The issuance of all scientific works in this way would speed the progress of science and technology.

After a few centuries of dual linguistic practice—native plus international—the international language would rise to priority in all countries and the native language become secondary. At such time education would become world-wide in form and practice, as in past monolingual epochs. A world curriculum would gradually take form, the application of which would bring mankind into closer and closer unity until we indeed become one race, one family upon the planet.

(2)

Education of the future, instead of expelling religion from the schools, will give spiritual teaching a fore-

most place. Since spirit is the Creative factor of universal life, how stupid to study only phenomenal existence and neglect the spiritual! The spiritual development of children and youth will be given the importance it deserves, and a better humanity will be the result.

There will be no "lost generations". By means of spiritual inculcation the daily life of the individual will be guided from the earliest years into ways of greater normalcy, harmony, happiness and success. Spiritual development, as intellectual development is today, will be viewed as the norm toward which all aspire.

Methods of instruction will change. Instead of the present system of knowledge-memorization and regurgitation, students will primarily be inspired to want to learn and will be trained in the best methods of learning. Research based on individual desire and choice will occupy a large proportion of the school day. Attention will be given to the development of taste and of a sense of values. The love of the beautiful will be universally developed. And above all, each individual will be taught and trained to live harmoniously with his fellow men.

Even into the process of knowledge-acquisition new spiritual motivations and energies will be introduced. Students will be awakened to realize the spiritual value

and duty of all studies that pertain to human progress. Such knowledge is a tool that will continue in the future, as it has in the past, to help develop humanity into better ways of living.

Youths will therefore approach the portals of knowledge with reverence and a sense of spiritual duty, and this attitude will enhance their eagerness and ability to learn. Higher education will be realized as a privilege and responsibility, and education will become more eager and joyous when thus inspired by desire.

The acquisition of knowledge will not stop with the university. It will continue throughout life. No one is ever too old to learn. As long as one has curiosity, one remains young. When one ceases to be able to learn here, one is ready to move on. But whether here or over THERE, learning will never cease.

Attention will be paid to the development of the intuition, so important in man's creative life. This silent partner helps man in his discoveries, his inventions, his work in the arts,—in fine, in all creative work he lays his hands to. The intellect can acquire and apply techniques. But for all creative work the aid of the intuition is needed—that spark overflowing from the Celestial Fire.

At present the intuition is suspect in learned circles. It is a mysterious power which only the few dare to

trust and use. But in the future intuition will be put into universal practice—in the work of educators, physicians, scholars, artists and scientists.

Whereas the work of the intellect is laborious and prone to error, we have shown in a previous chapter how the intuition has immediacy and 100 percent correctness.

The universal development and use of the intuition will make a magic change in all human operations. But this power of intuition will remain dormant in people until they sensitize their natures through diet, refined habits of life, and spiritual development.

In course of time all humanity will become more sensitive. Diet will change. Less meat, perforce. More fruits, grains, nuts and vegetables. The diet today is much less coarse and heavy than that of the Middle Ages. The further refinement of diet will produce a more refined race, a change that will be aided by the complete voidance of alcoholism.

(3)

The world of the future will see a phenomenal development of planetary travel. A cheap power will be used—whether nuclear, electricity drawn from the atmosphere, or whatever—which will facilitate travel

by air. Huge leviathans will convey tourists to all quarters of the globe. An international system of non-profit hostels or inexpensive tourist hotels will be developed all over the world for impecunious travellers. This low priced travel and lodging will attract people of medium income who are obliged today to forgo trips to distant places. The universal auxiliary language will facilitate such world travel, so that the tourist will be able to converse intimately and pleasurably with anyone, anywhere on the planet.

Climatic changes of residence will also be sought. Inhabitants of cold and energizing climates will seek relaxation in warm climates. Sea level dwellers will seek elevation for part of the year. Those in the tropics or semitropics will go to northern climates to refresh and invigorate their native indolence.

The leisure derived from automation will give the working classes time and opportunity for travel. Their lives will thus be enriched and lifted out of the drabness which characterizes the days and years of many manual laborers and artisans.

(4)

There will be a tremendous growth of culture, which will also change life for the masses. Inexpensive books, public concerts and museums will bring the

inspiration of art to all. In time the very consciousness of class will disappear. *The worth of every individual will be in accordance with his character.*

Of all the arts, music will stand foremost in the spiritual development of mankind. Its influence upon the emotions is intense—whether for excitement or for serenity, for sensuousness or for spirituality. As this influence becomes fully realized, the world's leaders will undertake to utilize the values of music much more than at present, for the awakening and enhancement of man's spiritual consciousness.

Spiritually inspiring music—such as we now know in Palestrina, Bach, the Gregorian chants and the Russian liturgical music, yet even more ethereal and heavenly—will be publicly broadcast. Morning, noon and night exquisite music will briefly float upon the air like echoes from some celestial plane—a universal public liturgy lifting humanity daily to the gates of heaven.

(5)

The art of medicine will be more preventative than curative, and the average health will be greatly improved. A more wholesome, nutritive and easily assimilated diet will prevail, and the high intelligence of future man will insure better health precautions. The

advance of medical science will eliminate or control most of the diseases that are current today. Spiritual development will eliminate most of the psychosomatic illnesses caused chiefly by friction and by worry. The spiritual man will know how to live harmoniously—with himself and with his fellow men—and his faith will tend to lift him above worry.

A spiritualized humanity will know how to fortify its health and vigor; and how to help recover from any illness that should chance to occur, by consciously drawing in an extra supply of that Life-force which is the essence of all vital existence.

(6)

An important development of future civilization will be the rapprochement between the East and West. Here are two entirely different forms of culture, each possessing great values. The Occident has been, and still is, the focal center of that technological advance which has contributed so much to man's material progress and welfare. The Orient—behind in this respect and stagnating in a standard of living which has hardly changed in five thousand years—is the originator and creator of all the spiritual values that have enhanced the life of humans and lifted them above the native inborn pattern of animalism.

Every world religion has been born in the East. In the East men have discovered the secret of serenity,

of simple enjoyment of nature, of a natural piety which sees God in every event. Here the spiritual emphasis in life seems as natural as it seems unnatural in the West. In the East religion is a frequent source of conversation. In the West such discussion is disfavored.

Each of these two great cultures is greatly lacking, in that it emphasizes only one important half of life. When joined together and coalesced, these two half-cultures will create a perfect world civilization.

Travel, intercourse, interchange of cultural mediums will bring about a mutual interplanetary respect. Occidentals will cease to patronize the Oriental. They will come to respect those Oriental qualities of quiescence, serenity and deep appreciation of life-values which alone make existence worthwhile. As Edward Carpenter once said, "The West has conquered everything except the square foot under its hat." An appreciative study and application of Orientalism will enable the Occidental to master this as yet unconquered territory.

The writer can testify to a magic transformation wrought on him by three years in the Orient, as teacher at Robert College, Constantinople. An intensity of desire which had been disadvantageous to the nervous system gradually died away, until disappointment as a negative emotion seemed hardly to exist. So much did values shift that upon my return to America it seemed as if this country, rather than the East, was strange and

inexplicable. Why all this unnecessary rush and strain? For what purpose? What does it gain? Effort without strain—that is the lesson the Orient would teach us.

Abdu'l-Bahá, himself an Oriental, speaking on this mutual admiration and coalescence, said that the day would come when the East and West would embrace as brothers. It is but natural that the opposite polarities that now prevail should strongly attract each other; and the extreme differences that exist will become a source of charm as is the case between the two sexes.

The Orient—quiescent and charming—represents the feminine; and the Occident—strong-willed and aggressive—represents the masculine. The perfect world civilization will eventuate from the unifying of these two diverse natures.

(7)

All these favorable characteristics of future life on the planet presuppose, as has been previously stated, the development of a more spiritualized humanity. This spiritual evolution of humanity will not be *en masse*. No evolution is. There are always the vanguard, the middle group and the laggards. Such differentiation is of the very essence of existence. It always has been and always will be. How could the strong learn sympathy, if there were no weak to aid and comfort? What would superior intelligence oc-

cupy itself with if there were no lesser intelligences to teach and train? And how is spirituality best practiced, except by lifting other souls toward heaven?

Just as there are innate differences in physical stamina and in intellectual ability, so there will be innate differences in spiritual susceptibility. However strange, however apparently unjust this may seem, it is the law of the universe.

The corollary of this law, however, is the obligation of the strong to help the weak; of the brilliant mind to devote its abilities to the less gifted; and of those who are more advanced spiritually to dedicate themselves to the progress—both material and spiritual—of the rest of humanity. In that day when the leaders display true leadership, the less spiritual will gladly and loyally avail themselves of the stimulative and directive influence of their leaders. Thus harmony will reign in all human affairs.

**“Come up hither, and I will show thee things that must be hereafter.”**

**—Revelations.**

#### RECAPITULATION

It may seem chimerical thus to picture to ourselves the nature of the future humanity. But the use of our



imagination as well as of our rational powers in forecasting the world of the future has the definite value of committing ourselves to the working out of such a perfection.

*Where there are no ideals, there is no progress. The greater and more inspiring the ideals, the greater will be the progress and the more magnificent the consummation. Idealism is a yeast in that heavy dough which spirit can raise to become the bread of life.*

We are able today, as never before, to look ahead and forecast the future. The average person has become a world citizen, vitally interested in progress and development in every quarter of the globe. All over the world definite forward-looking planning is taking place—five-year plans, ten-year plans, etc.. That these plans are partly impossible of complete fulfillment does not lessen their value in the field of human progress. It is better to have a target higher than we can reach than one below our powers. "Shoot at a star", said Emerson.

A better world to come, a more spiritual humanity, a more equitable and happy civilization,—this is all on the blueprints of Destiny. No effort in this direction, not even the slightest, that each one of us can make will be fruitless.

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