

SPIRITICITY, February 1956

THE WORLD OR GOD

By Nell Truesdell

"Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!"

Life as we live it in the world is an insubstantial dream. Some people seem to have good dreams in continuous succession throughout their lifetime; that is, by appearances, they display the successes and the good things of human existence without too many of the expected attending sorrows and disappointments to mar the pleasure of good living. Others appear to be caught in a succession of nightmares, wherein they are bedeviled by acute fears, anxieties, and other painful emotional disturbances. These distraught dreamers are generally either the extremely wealthy or the extremely poor. Their lives present either a surfeit of pleasure or an endless and meaningless struggle for existence. They may terminate their aimless living by committing some base crime and so forfeit their personal liberty or they may become atrociously wicked, cruel, ill-tempered, reckless.

The sages, saints, and wise men of all ages have said in one way or another that life in the world is not what man thinks it is: that it is maya, the means by which false effects are produced; that it is illusion, misinterpretation of appearances or of something imagined to be real; that it is delusion, the fixed and mistaken opinions and notions of the irrational mind.

Jesus Christ was very plain in His statements regarding the worldly life:

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

To His brothers who were taunting Him, Jesus said:

"The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."

Talking privately to His disciples, He cautioned:

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Whether you are a beginner in the study of Truth or a student of long standing, know that the world is set against your progress in Truth, for it does not wish to lose a valuable inhabitant. Whether you came into Truth because the conditions of your life were intolerable, or you simply drifted into a study of Truth, know that the battleground of the world will be a quiet plain as you walk sure-footed and free across its vast, vast stretches. Nothing will get in your way unless you invite disaster.

Just as a business organization or social club or any other group of human beings is sustained by the membership within it, so the world is maintained by the people who dwell therein. They contribute their resources, their thinking power, their very lives to the upkeep of the tremendous organization called the world. To keep its membership interested and earnest in supporting it, the world holds just out of the reach of every human being some bauble which it promises to deliver at a certain time - say, after a specific business or political or religious office is attained; or after a certain amount of wealth is accumulated; or after some art or science is completely mastered; or after some exploration is successfully concluded. The field of action is of little consequence because the result is always the same: disillusionment, discontent, and death.

But the activities of every person in the world keep the world alive and flourishing. Each person in the world believes (because he is mistaught to believe) that what he achieves in the world is important to his life. But no man's life was ever prolonged one hour or made happier or healthier in one degree by his efforts to accomplish something in the world. Only the world has benefited. And man sells his soul for the world's gain.

The eyes and heart of the Truth student are open to what is going on. With just a slight gain in insight, he ceases to work for a living and begins to live for a working; that is, he lives to understand the Principle of his Being - that he is the Image and Likeness of God expressed and expressing. He uses his job or his art or science as the means by which he moves upward in his chosen field of business. He appreciates his opportunities and uses them to advantage. But he no longer serves his work blindly, expecting it to move mountains for him or to turn everything upside down for his pleasure and advancement. He knows, too, that as he climbs to each higher level he need not turn back to go down after something he thinks he has left behind.

The world is a good thing, as the world. But it is not a good thing as a god. The world will invite your devotion, your service. It will roll out the red carpet for you any time that you give promise of doing it a favor or of furthering its cause. But the instant that the world is through with you, it will liquidate you in short order.

"Cruel!" you say. What else has the world proved to be? Has it not taken the life of everybody to date? And what life-expectancy does the world offer to you? A few added years of worthless physical existence?

What does Jesus Christ promise? "Ye are the light of the world." "I am the light of the world." "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. . . . I came not to judge the world. . . . I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. . . . Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The one way to escape the grasp of the world on your life is by a transfer of the attention of your mind from the world to God. After you have mastered this transfer, you will be forever free from the beguiling tactics of a realm devoted to its own purposes and you will walk upright in the knowledge that you are essentially a spiritual being and not a human being. No longer will you be tempted to spend your fine energies in trying to demonstrate some material

object. With your inner vision fixed steadfastly on God within and above you, you will be sure of having all your needs provided for before you ask. In fact, there will never be such a condition as need in your life; nor will you lack association with people of like consciousness, for you will draw, and be drawn unto, those of similar inclinations. There will be a joy in living that is never experienced in the world. There will be peace in the heart and calmness in the mind.

"My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Not in a life to come, but here and now.

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SPIRITICITY, February 1956

TEMPERANCE

By Alden Truesdell

"The fruit of the Spirit is . . . temperance."

In the study of Truth and in the hard practice of Living the life of Spirit, a way of moderation seems constantly to recommend itself, wherein man is privileged to choose a middle path between high and low extremes, between routine and riotous living. As is stated in Scripture, man is in his rightful place while walking humbly with his Lord, not trying to out-rule God, neither succumbing to a false modesty and sense of sin and martyrdom. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things," we are told. And in Ecclesiastes is found the advice: "Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself over wise." A good slogan is "Be not overly anything."

In the field of metaphysics and spiritual science there is a temperate middle way, which includes old-fashioned religion, admits modern new thinking, but adheres to the Christ Truth that was before religion began, the Christ Truth that will be after the new thinking dies out. The old-fashioned religion that is good enough for the singer of the song is not really old-fashioned enough to get back of all theology into the beginning with God; and the new thinking of the mental exponents is nothing new, but just seems different. Actually, only that which starts at the beginning and ends at the finish can be truly real and vital. And only Christ Truth can say, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

Temperance is a certain satisfaction that this beginning and ending and all the intermediate action are governed by God, and that all the good designed for God's creation must come under grace and in perfect ways. There is no reason for any bias in any direction, or responding to calls of "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" Like the young lady in Boston who had no reason to travel, because she was already there, one should stand still to let the salvation of the Lord overtake him.

The word temperance has become almost completely identified with abstinence from liquor, but this is not the original Scriptural meaning. The Scripture is plain-spoken and comes out definitely against drunkenness and brawling, but the instruction found in the Scripture advises temperance "in all things." This means work as well as play; it means thinking as well as acting. Today there is a great tendency to be immoderate in what we call "busy-ness."

Not that we would advise the opposite of busy-ness, which is laziness; but, rather, that one should encourage a temperate middle way. Those who are temperate in all things are never inflated on one hand nor depleted on the other. That is the charm of the spiritual way of life.

In the worldly way of life there is sometimes such intemperance in a certain direction that the pressure becomes unbearable. Here is where the temptation to suicide is found. But if one is willing to take his own life just to relieve a pressure - and almost everyone has picked up, or will pick up, the idea at some time how much more profitable it would be to relegate that life to its Spiritual Equivalent and Reality! There is a place for everything in the Divine Economy, but there is an intemperate way of life and a temperate one. In this case the way to dispense with an unbearable personal life is to deny it in favor of the perfect spiritual way of life; or, as Jesus said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." This is the only constructive and reasonable practice of the idea suicide. If a life is to be given up, let it be given up to God, that it may live.

So it is with all the violent purposes in the extremities of life. They may, through the temperate middle way, be made to yield high benefit. For the most part, people choose the violent, intemperate way. The middle way is always the profitable way.

The practice of temperance is a part of growing "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." It is profitable for the same reason that calm weather is desirable for an ocean voyage. One is enabled to make pleasant progress while steering a steady course toward the desired goal, "until we all come . . . unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

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SPIRITICITY, February 1956

TRUTH AND SCIENCE

By Robert Applegate
(Continued from last month)

Pure science is not the process of producing new gadgets or new techniques; it is the search for Truth. It seeks to answer the questions: "What is the universe? What causes the events that we observe? What can we know about the world in which we are living?" Science tries to find the answers to these questions by exact methods of observation; to verify the answers by experimentation; and to present them in an orderly, systematic manner. It never accepts anything on authority, but tries and tests everything. That it has been successful in systematizing its findings indicates, above all else, that the universe is an orderly, predictable universe.

Science has made many, many discoveries, which have profoundly influenced all of us. Yet every new discovery has met first with opposition and only slowly with acceptance. Since new ideas are frequently uncomfortable, they are adopted only gradually and reluctantly. Alan T. Waterman, director of the National Science Foundation, says, "A significant discovery is confirmed, tested, and accepted by leaders in its special field perhaps within a decade; it becomes understood and accepted by the general body of scientists in that field

within a generation; and some time during that century it will be generally accepted by literate mankind." Yet we do not need to wait for this slow process. We do not need to wait for a truth to be generally accepted by mankind before we are willing to acknowledge it.

It was stated last month that our basic ideas rule our lives. This is an obvious truth, which, nevertheless, we often overlook. It has been well stated by Robert Millikan:

"Mankind's fundamental beliefs about the nature of the world and his place in it are in the last analysis the great moving forces behind all his activities. . . . It is his beliefs about the nature of his world that determine whether man in Africa spends his time and his energies in beating tom-toms to drive away the evil spirits, or in Phoenicia in building a great 'burning fiery furnace' to Moloch into which to throw his children as sacrifices to his God, . . . or in Medieval Europe in preparing for the millennium to the neglect of all his normal activities and duties as he did to the extent of bringing on a world disaster in the year 1000, or whether he spends his energies in burning heretics in Flanders or drowning witches in Salem, or in making perpetual motion machines in Philadelphia or magnetic belts in Los Angeles or soothing syrups in New England."

Since it is true that our basic beliefs govern our lives, is it not foolish for us to be content with hand-me-down credos, which may be as false as the beliefs that men have cherished in the past? It is up to everyone of use therefore, to ask himself: "What do I believe? and what basis is there for this belief?"

We have already seen that most of our basic ideas are based upon the mechanical theories of the universe that were in vogue during the last two centuries. The mechanical and materialistic picture of the world seemed to be adequately substantiated by the great achievements of applied science and engineering that were connected with it. Therefore it won general acceptance, so that it is now a part of our mental make-up. Yet the scientists of this century have found that the mechanical concept is entirely misleading, and they have been able to make progress only by discarding it. "The childish mechanical conceptions of the nineteenth century are now grotesquely inadequate," writes Robert Millikan. The field of atomic research has opened up a whole new world, in which the known laws of physics no longer hold good. And here the scientists are dealing with the foundation structure of the so-called "material" universe, in other words, with the question of what the universe is. Here the discoveries have forced the physicists to reverse all their old concepts.

Atoms are the building blocks of the universe. They are composed of electrons, protons, and other particles, which are the ultimate substance of "physical" reality. Yet the scientists find that it is impossible to say what the atomic particles are. Their actions can be observed, but the process of observation changes their status, so that it is impossible to say what it is that is being observed. Further, it is impossible to say what any particular electron will do or where it is at any specific moment. The law of cause and effect seems to be in abeyance, for the scientist cannot assign a cause for the behavior of an atomic particle and thereby predict its behavior in the future. The scientists do not doubt that there is a cause for every atomic event; but their research reveals that this cause lies in a realm beyond space and time, where it cannot be observed or recorded by physical means. "Nowadays, . . . we find that space and time as we know them so familiarly, and even space and time as relativity knows them, simply do not fit the more profound pattern of

existence revealed by atomic experiments," writes one physicist. In short, the fundamental processes of the Universe take place in a realm beyond space and time. "There is simply no satisfactory way at all of picturing the fundamental atomic processes of nature in terms of space and time and causality." Space and time exist only in our perception of non-spatial, non-temporal reality.

Not only have time and space been found to be illusory, but matter itself has proved to be unreal. One of the basic points of Einstein's theory of relativity is that matter and energy are the same thing. Matter can be changed into energy (as is done, in small measure, in the atom and hydrogen bombs and, in larger measure, in the sun and other stars); and energy can be changed into matter. What we call "matter" is actually a condensed form of energy. Thus Sir James Jeans writes:

"Matter as ordinarily understood, the matter of solid objects and hard particles, has no existence in reality, and only appears to exist through our observing non-material things in a confused way - through the bias of our human spectacles. Such matter owes its existence only to our trying to force reality into a framework of space and time, just as the gods and devils of primitive man owed their existence to his trying to force reality into a setting of human emotions."

The material worlds then, which we regard as so real, is as imaginary as the demons and spirits which the savage fears and tries to propitiate. For if space, time, and matter exist only in our perception, then there is no objective world to which these properties belong. And if there is any objective reality at all, it is beyond the means of science to discover it. "Objective nature is at present beyond our purview," writes Sir James Jeans.

The present position of science is a complete reversal from its position of fifty years ago and also from our usual way of looking at things. In the last century the scientists were sure (as most of us are today) that the physical world, which we perceive through our senses, is real; and that our consciousness is formed by sense impressions received from this real (?) world. Now, however, the scientists realize that they simply cannot know what reality is. But their discoveries show that the physical world is unreal and they indicate that behind the appearances of the external world is a non-temporal, non-spatial, non-material substratum, which is best designated, as Mind; that, further, events in the world are determined by our observation of them and, in fact, exist only in our consciousness of them.

"Recognizing that the physical world is entirely abstract and without 'actuality' apart from its linkage to consciousness, we restore consciousness to the fundamental position instead of representing it as an inessential complication occasionally found in the midst of inorganic nature at a late stage of evolutionary history," writes Sir Arthur Eddington. And in another place he declares, "The idea of a universal Mind or Logos would be, I think, a fairly plausible inference from the present state of scientific theory; at least it is in harmony with it."

(To be continued)

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

FEBRUARY 1956

1. Be kindly AFFECTIONED one to ANOTHER.
2. BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.
3. Be of good COMFORT.
4. Let all things be DONE DECENTLY and in order.

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6. Now I EXHORT you to be of good cheer.
7. Where is your FAITH?
8. He GIVETH to all life, and breath, and all things.
9. God is the strength of my HEART.
10. Let INTEGRITY and uprightness preserve thee.
11. All that believe are JUSTIFIED.

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13. KNOW ye that the KINGDOM of God is nigh at hand.
14. LET us rise up and build.
15. MY soul thirsteth after Thee, O God.
16. Let us NOT fight against God.
17. Thou OPENEST Thine Hand and satisfiest all desire.
18. Thou hast also appointed PROPHETS to PREACH of Thee.

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20. By Thee we enjoy great QUIETNESS.
21. REPENT and turn to God.
22. SHOW how great things God hath done unto thee.
23. TURN THOU TO THY God.
24. I looked UP.
25. Abundant righteousness He (God) will not VIOLATE.

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27. Cause me to know the WAY WHEREIN I should WALK.
28. Where is YOUR faith?
29. Never flag in ZEAL.

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

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