

I AM THANKFUL

By Cora Mae Jackson

Dear Lord, I am so thankful
Thou hast granted life to me.
For tender mercies, and the
Peace of mind that makes me free,
I thank Thee, Lord, I thank Thee.

Dear Lord, for generous bounty poured;
That I may praise the Risen Lord;
That Thou hast taught me how to pray
For precious light upon my way,
I thank Thee, Lord, I thank Thee.

To know Thy loving, tender grace;
To glance above, and see Thy face
Through vision upward -- on I plod
and know my life is hid with God!
I thank Thee, Lord, I thank Thee.

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JOY

By Nell Truesdell

We ought to be as forceful and direct in going to God, to learn of him, as we are when we tackle any job to get it done. I learned this more fully than ever when I decided to move a small pile of cast off pieces of wood that had accumulated in an obscure corner after the builders had left our place. I started to work with vigor so that I might get the job done easily and quickly. It was then I realized we ought to go to God in much the same manner.

Instead, we wait until we are exhausted with the occupations of the world before we turn to him in weakness and with so little inclination to behold him steadfastly that we drift about awhile in aimless prayer, then soon fall fast asleep.

All Jesus' instruction accented the fact that we should be alert, awake, and receptive to the Father's Presence. He himself was an example of intense interest in finding God and learning what God had to teach him.

Joy is the attribute that will give us this inner strength and vigor to sustain us as we stand before the Lord to wait on him. Whenever joy floods the consciousness, no task is too difficult or discouraging. Joy gives a strength that surpasses physical strength; an ability to continue onward in whatever we undertake no matter how the tide turns.

Joy lightens burdens because it causes a feeling which arises from the expectation of some accomplished good coming out of willingness to carry through to a successful termination whatever is taxing the strength. When we never give

up because we know we can carry our load, even though it weighs heavily upon us, we are filled with a lightsomeness so intense that IT takes over and does the work. Thus, we are free. We simply go through the motions while the work is being done. It seems that we are there just to bear witness to a work well done.

Frequently, when we are coming to know or understand some phase of truth, our feelings reach a low ebb and we are saddened. In this state, we are sorry for ourselves and regrets, remorse, and other negative reactions set in to make us feel worse than ever. If we but knew it, however, such times offer richest opportunities to be still and get in touch with God. Instead, the tendency is to fix the attention on the melancholic spirits to the exclusion of all else. Here is where joy in the Lord becomes functional. Through it, we detach ourselves from the morbidly gloomy and dejected sensations, and a new understanding of truth floods into the mind. Actually, we are delivered by the spirit of joy.

Such an experience was had by the Israelites when, for the first time after their return from captivity in Babylon Ezra, the scribe, read out of the Law plainly so that all the people could understand. While in Babylon, the Jews had adopted the Aramaic language. The Law was written in the old Hebrew tongue, but Ezra read it to the multitude in such a way that they understood what he was reading.

Nehemiah had rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and had suffered much abuse at the hands of enemies who tried to belittle him and his efforts in the sight of the people, but he refused to let himself be diverted by their deceits. After the work was done, he assembled the crowd to listen to the reading of the Law. As the people, for the first time, heard their traditional religion read in the original tongue, they became sorrowful, but Nehemiah said, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Whatever the outer seeming, it matters little. What counts in spiritual development is where the inner sight is directed most often and most steadily. It is essential that we continue to look upward toward God if we would find out the things of God. The reason: because we are doomed to move toward that at which we look in an intense, unrelenting way.

We are prone to consider joy as state of exultation wherein we rejoice, as in triumph or victory in having gained an advantage in some way over some body or some thing. True joy, however, is not wholly an elevation of spirits or taking a lively delight in some great success or high achievement.

True joy is more a state of exaltation, an act of paying high honor to great or lofty virtues that lifts the sense of being to new heights; an ascribing of excellence or sublimity to an unknown, but felt Presence within, that quickens the whole man with new faith and hope and love and adds the power to be and to do.

Joy is a life-carrier. It serves to spread the vital energies throughout the whole consciousness so that it is suffused with new strength and power of continued endurance. The song of joy is a moving agency acting from within, to transport the mentals, the emotions, the physical body (including its outer possessions) to heights never yet attained.

Joy acts something like a tornado. Everything within a radius of its action is moved in some way or other. But unlike a tornado, real joy does not destroy. It resurrects the inner essences of being and a hitherto unsuspected briskness enlivens the whole man. True joy is not a racy stimulation or false exuberance that causes an appearance of lively happiness.

That brand of joy which seems to be destructive, as when a man on a binge seems to be having a joyous time, is not the true joy of which we are speaking. The fruits of such falsely stirred activity are not wholesome: they tend to break down the mentality, the emotions, the physical make-up, and disturb the affairs, sometimes going so far as to throw them into chaos.

There is no doubt about a merry heart making a cheerful countenance. Surely there is no other way to achieve an appearance of happiness than to have the heart filled with real joy. The grim smiles that some truth students assume in order to appear happy is not that radiant expression that turns up the corners of the mouth, crinkles the skin around the eyes, and presents a pleasant aspect to public view.

Inward cheer, too, outpictures as prosperity. It manifests as provision, supply. It makes itself felt as substantial, dependable, without fear, or lack, or want. It is a sort of unspoken guarantee that successful business men feel when they are dealing with one another -- an assurance that eradicates fear of risk or loss.

Food is always plentiful in a cheerful household. It seems to multiply and is available to meet every demand. The woman who, with willingness, lays a meal before her household, always has enough to feed her brood.

Joy is such an enlivening, animating quality that it is difficult to answer why mankind does not make better use of it. Instead, man devotes himself to a detailed study of sorrow and the hundred negative offshoots from the gloomy outlook. When we think about it, we wonder how man can live so well and so long as he does in this world, for at every turn he works against himself.

The very fact that we are alive should cause us to rejoice. That we are of sound mind should give us much to be thankful for. That we have sufficient to meet all our needs should fill us with gratitude. Yet we complain and are cross and dissatisfied. There is little real joy in living because we usually look outward and see only what we do not have.

The secret would be to look inward and upward. If the sight is allowed to move in this direction it is concerned with that which is above the reach of appearances and is not touched by them. To give the attention of the mind to God above thoughts and things is guarantee against lack of any description.

God is my exceeding joy; God's word is joy to my heart; God gives the oil of joy for mourning. Jesus instructed us in joy. He said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

He was fortified with an intense inner joy. Life in the world was no picnic for Jesus. But the joy that was in his life through his love for God carried him through discouraging experiences, and even death itself.

A simple practice to build a consciousness of joy is this: repeat the sentence, I am joy, in three different ways, accenting first one word, then

another, and another. I am joy! I AM joy! I am JOY! until the whole being takes up the refrain. No matter what your experience is at the time, it will change for the better. An uplift in spirits will charge the whole being with a new dynamics, and people around you will feel and respond to your real spiritual joy. They will feel good when they are around you, and will be willing to aid you if that is necessary. But more, you will be a gladdening influence, and will spread the oil of joy that will heal, bless, prosper, and happify others.

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SPIRITICITY November 1947

THANKSGIVING

By A. J. Truesdell

Before multiplication can be achieved, division must be practiced. This was a favorite axiom with a wise woman we knew in our early years in truth. The statement applies to the making of demonstrations, or with the increasing of goods. It in no way conflicts with a correct division of the word of truth: that a total must be established before a correct division can be made.

Our status, our goods and chattles, our environment are an out-picturing of our consciousness which includes our most casual and habitual word and practice. By our word we are justified or condemned. This established law operates, whether we are aware or not of its working.

At times we may, in consciousness, transcend the law. We may touch the gospel and become indifferent to the operation of the law. But wherever we are, some degree of law operates to carry out every impression registered in the realm of Mind. While the law makes nothing perfect, it does give back to the law-keeper, or to the law-breaker, a perfect replica of what has been impressed upon it.

It is interesting to observe that several people might speak the same words and do the same deeds, yet each one will receive a different compensation from the law. This is because the law takes motives into consideration and returns what the heart intends. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Several people might be seated at a Thanksgiving feast. Some member of the group is asked to offer thanks. Assuming this to be a normal group, the next steps are to serve, eat, and enjoy the ample food set upon each plate.

A gathering of a group of people so abnormal as to sit before such a feast, offer thanks and then refuse to take the next few steps is hard to imagine, and, we might add, impossible to assemble. Yet we find the equivalent of such actions in the religious and metaphysical fields today.

In one metaphysical group, some years ago, the students were taught to sit in the silence with palms up upturned. They were instructed to wait expectantly for somebody or something to come and fill their hands. We regret to report that some of the disciples really had their hands full. Such petitioners would

be the type who might wait at the aforementioned table for someone to come and feed them.

However, let us in imagination turn to a more normal group. Each one of the diners will react in a different manner to the food being served. According to his attitude, one will eat with gusto and digest easily the bountiful repast, while another might pick at the food and complain of flaws in its preparation and cooking, and soon have an attack of indigestion. The first individual is truly grateful; the latter, habitually critical. Both, we remember, subscribe to the same Thanksgiving formula.

Attitude is so important. It makes the difference between zealous enjoyment and bored indifference and toleration. A young lady from a fashionable boarding school was in our party one evening at dinner. She made herself quite ill by rehearsing the monotony of the regular Sunday dinner at her home. It is hard to believe the things some of the young well-to-do generation have to endure; but, a Sunday dinner of chicken or turkey, dressing, fresh vegetables, and salad, seemed to have been an obsession with their cook. And to add another touch of excruciating boredom, the desert was always ice cream and cake.

No originality and little variation. Just to think about it caused our young friend to lose her appetite and she became so distressed that she had to leave the table to regain her composure. With such a menu as her home offered fifty-two Sundays a year, who would not become bored? What gustatory excitement would be left for special occasions like Thanksgiving or Christmas?

We might smile at the trails of such youngsters and secretly compare their lot with our own early exciting menus of hash and boiled potatoes, or beans with pork, and realize the seriousness of the situation though it might be a little difficult to understand.

In our family which consisted of two girls and two boys, no mother, and the usual one father, all of us pitched in (sometimes reluctantly) with enough zest to get the routine housekeeping and chores attended to. We had no opportunity to become bored with dinners of chicken or turkey, ice cream and cake. In the rare intervals when such provender was presented, we had a deep appreciation and a sincere and prodigious appetite, for we were fortunate enough to have developed early a respect and gratitude for even the staples of life, and an awe of the luxuries.

We learned to value both the giving and the receiving of service. Certain of our present day children have no such advantages and, as a result, require extraordinary things to provide the thrill to living. The best things come so easy that they become burdens, which might explain some of the outbreaks of today's youngsters, and their lack of understanding about giving, receiving, sharing, and gratitude. A young darling of society was overheard longing for a normal life with husbands and children.

This Thanksgiving article is no post-mortem for the good old days. Even with the rationing and shortages we experience such a short time ago in our national food economy, there were many more conveniences and comforts for all to enjoy. The seating brow of today is not caused by physical, but mental exertion.

War time, peace time, pre-war, post-war, new deal, old deal, Democratic or Republican, God and truth go on forever, and God's time is always now. Other

days and other administrations come and go: the indispensable men come and go; administrations point with pride while their critics view with alarm; but, like the little brook, God goes on forever. The poet sings, "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" But God goes on forever; always the same, never changing, without variableness or shadow caused by turning.

Who but a fool would sell his permanent spiritual heritage for a mess of disappearing pottage when even the changes taking place will work for the good of those who are true to truth?

In these days, because of education, etiquette, and association, there is a general tendency to be extremely polite always. Our expression of gratitude is always correct; it is a social nicety. The young lady is taught to say, "Thank you!" for any attention of service; but, by association she learns to ridicule and discount homely efforts of the household management to make a family comfortable.

The rich are long and loud in their complaints of Government restrictions or any interruption in the flow of their profits. Poorer worshippers of the system of profit are belligerent in their demands for more and more of those same profits. But who is actually grateful? What percentage of the population of any city or state in our nation will sit down to Thanksgiving dinner this month with an attitude of sincere gratitude? Political losers will be disgruntled; the winners will be jubilant for a season, only to experience in the not far distant future their opponents' present discontent.

How grateful we are for the pioneers of truth who withstood the siren calls of the world with its distractions, the flesh with its pleasurable practices, and the devil with his personal power that we might hear the truth and be released from bondage to the three-ringed circus commonly called life.

How grateful we are for the demonstration of the efficacy of the true practices we have learned! How grateful we are for failure to demonstrate some fancied vanity which might have distracted us from greater glories! How grateful we are for the operation the great Physician and Surgeon performed on our consciousness and our soul!

Have we remembered to say, "Thank You, Father!" Have we been so filled with unspeakable riches and blessings that we are becoming bored, ill, agitated with nothing but demonstrations, demonstrations, demonstrations! Do we ask why God does not learn some new tricks for our amusement? How about a major miracle to amaze us!

Everyone can bear witness to the efficacy of the Christ Truth. God has not yet lost his ancient magic touch; his arm is not shortened that he cannot continue to heal, bless, and prosper the sons of man.

Effort has been made to make this lesson for Thanksgiving a little different from the routine script for the purpose of generating a practice of sincere thanksgiving that differs from the complacent variety. The attitude of gratitude is man's chief method of performing his own miracles. Miracles are simply an effect of the invocation of a higher form of Intelligence and Energy than had hitherto been utilized. Man's sincere thanksgiving is his highest practice. Gratitude and giving (dividing) constitute and motivate multiplication and addition. Our friend and wise counsellor of our youthful days in truth gave us her axiom, and it still stands.

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATION
For Every Week Day of the Month

November 1947

1. The Lord's ANOINTED is before Him.

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3. The righteous are BOLD.

4. God loveth a CHEERFUL giver.

5. It is DONE.

6. There is an EXCELLENCY in wisdom.

7. I have FOUND grace.

8. Show me Thy GLORY.

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10. The tithe of the land is HOLY.

11. IMMEDIATELY I was IN the Spirit.

12. Let us JOIN ourselves to the Lord.

13. Ye shall KNOW the truth.

14. I LOOKED up upon Him.

15. Great are Thy tender MERCIES.

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17. I will NEVER leave thee.

18. OFFER spiritual sacrifices.

19. Thou wilt show me the PATH of life.

20. QUIT yourselves like men.

21. We REST in Thee.

22. His word runneth very SWIFTLY.

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24. I will come down and TALK with thee.

25. I will UPHOLD thee.

26. I am the true VINE.

27. Thou art made WHOLE.

28. YE are all children of light.

29. It is good to be ZEALOUSLY affected.

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The word of truth runs swiftly through mind and heart.
Please keep the DAILY MEDITATIONS with us.