

THANKSGIVING

By Alden Truesdell

Thanksgiving is an intangible commodity. It must be experienced to be understood. This is the Season of the year when we hear many laudations of the practice of giving thanks. Some of these paeans of praise will sound poetic, others will be labored; but the latter may be more vital than the former, for vocabularies decrease with the expansion of spiritual insight. Emerson knew that a divine language would be required to do justice to spiritual verities. Having no such language, he was obliged to make his report by the common medium of thought exchange.

To understand thankful giving and the giving of thanks, we shall recall that yesterday we thought we had expressed our quota of gratitude, and today we discover our capacity increased because of yesterday's expression. Yesterday we were grateful for all that had gone before. Today, we admit that the certain benefits we enjoyed were evident because others, in preceding generations, had labored to lay the foundations for the blessings we now accept. Today, we participate in the fruits of yesterday's labors. Today, we are grateful for the understanding that yesterday's plantings, harvested today, quicken to action the planting of tomorrow's crop. Such understanding has caused a passage in the Lord's Prayer to be interpreted, "Give us this day our tomorrow's bread."

We are grateful for the understanding that everything that has gone before has already yielded its blessing, and we are released from past perusal to present-day appreciation. Today we are grateful for the presence of vital blessings poured out upon us by the Giver of gifts.

Today, we may choose with confident pleasure to accept the secret formula revealed to the children of Light of all generations, which dispenses the elixir of life, the nectar of the gods, the elan vital of the philosophers, the heavenly manna that has ever fed and sustained seekers for the more excellent values and higher pathways to promised lands. To those who choose rightly and value highly, miracles of Predicateless Being are casual. When we appreciate and praise our Origin, we compliment ourselves. When we are able to stand steadfast in an attitude of gratitude, enduring as beholding the Invisible, we are in a fair way to exercise the wise way of life. For a healthful, wholesome result may be anticipated with confidence from the practice of thanksgiving to God. The return on such investment is fabulous; for the treasures laid up in Heaven draw high interest rates and sure dividends.

An entirely different set of rules and ethics obtains when one submits to and is sustained by the spiritual realities, and yet all former commodities are provided. We do not dictate the course of spiritual progression, but we have discovered that certain practices identify us with a spiritual way of life. One of these practices is thanksgiving. Thanksgiving God-ward can be likened to the planting of seeds that results in an increase called harvest. Jesus Christ used the parable of the seed to explain the law of increase. The small mustard seed grows to such dimensions that the birds of the heavens come to roost in its branches. Surely seeds are splendid examples of spiritual transformation.

A young man in Oklahoma has developed a culture of grass that produced three million pounds of first class grass seed in 1947. This type of grass is

looked to by soil conservation experts as being the salvation of the dust bowl. While new imported seeds are constantly improving the agricultural picture, the young man in Oklahoma blended native Blue Stem and Indian grass and came up with the cure which some self-styled experts who had traveled as far as Asia had failed to find.

Pioneer farmers "proving up" on claims in the North Middle West knew the tremendous value of their few sacks of tiny seeds. They would treasure and pamper their supply, for they knew the success of their agricultural project depended upon their care and use of these harvest-bearing miracle workers. On long winter evenings the farmers would fondle and caress these potential promises of prosperity, as a miser might gloat over his secret hoard of treasure.

Little wonder that Jesus used seeds, fields, and farmers as symbols of God's prolific provision. Jesus himself was planter of words, a cultivator of consciousness. He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." He also said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." To give thankfully, gratefully, and generously is to insure receipt of blessings and bounty worthy of praise and thanksgiving.

Jesus Christ used thanksgiving more scientifically than any other man has ever used it. He thanked the Father for hearing His prayer, and Lazarus aroused to life. He gave thanks for a few loaves and fishes, and fed multitudes. Whoever has the presence of mind to emulate Jesus Christ in this practice will soon see how logical and practical it is to give gratitude and glory to God who dispenses the limitless, free-flowing bounty of the universe.

The urge to give is inherent in man; for man is the product of God and God is always on the giving hand. It is His pleasure to give, to the extent of His Kingdom. God's ideas, essences, and energies are as free as the air; and if anyone lacks, let him make known his desires, and forget not to express thanksgiving for having received. The tremendous potentials contained in this returning action sometimes almost overwhelm us. This upsurging from the inner depths must be directed God-ward or its action is prone to become involved in eddies, back-washes, and emotional whirlpools. It is still pure energy, but it is dammed up. Psychological investigators identify such collections of power as inhibitions and suppressions. Analysts attempt to release such accumulations through the practice of suggestion. Spiritual understanding reveals a more excellent way - that whole-hearted acknowledgment of the over brooding and underlying God-nature, and a thankfulness toward IT promotes release of this pent-up energy, and forbids accumulation of IT for any expression not identified with the Divine Intention and Purpose.

It is no secret that tithers and all who give God-ward seem to be recipients of secret flowings of hidden blessings. It is such a self-evident fact that the wise of all generations have built fortunes upon its practice. To give of one's goods God-ward is to set in motion some of the vital laws of the Universe. The free giver feels an affinity for the Most High God; he feels that he belongs to God and that God belongs to him. His practical experience proves that God is interested in his welfare.

All inspired teachers have declared that he who is able to give thanks to the Invisible before any supply appears exercises true faith. Thanksgiving to God, and giving thankfully, are potent practices that insure God's

administration of the giver's affairs. Thanksgiving is the sort of prayer God loves; and giving thankfully is like depositing the coin that hits the Divine jack-pot.

Life can never be the same when the secrets of thanksgiving and thankful giving are learned and practiced spontaneously. We are grateful for the privilege of having been permitted the practices through the years, as well as here and now in this Thanksgiving Season.

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To all of the friends of the CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE we extend our grateful thanks for generous cooperation with every phase of its ministry. Your devotion to and support of the ideals this ministry represents inspires us to further consecration and tireless service. Our prayer is that you receive the rich reward of the Spirit that blesses, heals, and prospers all who accept Its ministrations in confident expectation.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

A Joyous THANKSGIVING SEASON To You.

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SPIRITICITY November 1949

GOODNESS

By Robert Applegate

Socrates discovered that, while some persons are satisfied with appearances with respect to honesty, justice, and knowledge, with respect to goodness all men desire the genuine article. He discovered also that there is nothing in the world that can unqualifiedly be called good. Health, wealth, beauty, wisdom are not good at all times and under all circumstances. Since, however, men continue to have a concept of goodness and hunger after it, Socrates concluded that there must be a Universal Good, which is at once the origin and the object of that hunger. This Good, he realized, must be unchangeable and therefore independent of time and space. It is, he maintained, That from which all other things derive whatever measure of goodness they possess. It is That for which every soul is seeking, although some men think that their good is pleasure, while others think that it is knowledge.

Socrates realized that the Good is neither pleasure nor knowledge; but he could not say what It is, because It is above describing. He compared it to the sun. Just as the sun is both the source of life to the physical world and also the means whereby men perceive that world, so the Good is both the Source of Being to everything that exists, and also the source of all knowledge (or, as we should say, understanding) of Reality. The Good, Socrates explained, can be perceived only by the inner visional sense. The way to the vision of the Good is not easy, but it is the only satisfying achievement. He compared all those, who have never experienced the vision of the Good and who therefore consider the material world as a reality, to men sitting in a dark cave, looking at shadows on the wall, and considering them and their actions as the highest objects of knowledge.

In Socrates' "Good" the Christian recognizes his God. Jesus did not use the term "Good" for God, but employed instead the word "Father," in order to show man's intimate relation to the Source of his Being. He declared, "I and my Father are one." He knew that He and all men everywhere are eternally and inseparable one with that infinite Good, which is above thinking and above feeling; that the Good is at once the object of all desire and the only source of satisfaction. "There is none good but one," He said, "that is God."

What are you seeking? If you analyze your desires, you will find that you are seeking your good. You are seeking that which will satisfy, and the primary definition of goodness is that which gives satisfaction. Every action that you perform you do for your good, for it rules your life. You have an innate feeling that there is good for you and you ought to have it.

Since a man's concept of what constitutes his good determines the course that his life takes, it is important for him to know wherein his good truly lies. Otherwise, he is apt to spend his life, as most men do, chasing phantoms. He is liable to reach the end of a laborious earthly existence without having attained satisfaction.

The Christian Gospel is, first, a complete reversal of values. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth." "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," said Jesus. As long as a man seeks his good in the outer, he will fail to attain satisfaction. No matter how much of this world's goods he acquires, he will find that they do not satisfy. In seeking satisfaction in things and in persons, he is worshipping the creature instead of the Creator. He is thus committing idolatry, and he has the assurance of all the prophets that such a practice will effectually prevent him from receiving the blessings of the Spirit. Of such Haggai wrote: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, and ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes."

A complete change of values is the burden of Jesus' command, "Repent." To repent never means to feel sorry, or to do penance. It means to turn around, to stop seeking in the world for the good that is not there. It means to turn to God and to seek that His good pleasure may be done. Man need not strive for his good; he need only to "strive to enter in at the strait gate."

He who seeks his good in God, who realizes that his God (and not something that God has to offer) is his good, finds contentment in what he has. He discovers that he always has sufficient for the present moment, and what he has is good. It is, in fact, the best that he is able to receive, to enjoy, and to use at the moment. He thus learns the truth of the promise that he who seeks first the Kingdom of God will have all things added to him. More important, an inner realization of peace satisfies the hunger of his soul.

The second part of the Gospel is the announcement, "The Kingdom of heaven is within you." It is at hand now. The realm of infinite good is within every man, and every man is within it. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

"Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," Jesus declared. The general practice of truth students is to attempt to accept this part of the Gospel before accepting the first part of the Master's teaching. They ask for things, and then wail because they fail to

find satisfaction in them. Ask for what, then? - that God's will be done! Ask to understand His Love. Ask for strength to turn toward the Almighty.

God is the Good we ought to seek. This is the message of Socrates and of Jesus Christ.

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SPIRITICITY November 1949

MIND, MAN, AND THE MACHINE

By Nell Truesdell

The automatic washing machine belched, lurched within its depths, and then noisily expelled dirty water. I aroused. "Cinderella sitting among soiled clothes instead of ashes," I observed, and wryly glanced at the three additional piles of soiled clothing that lay at my feet. My thoughts had been drifting, shapeless forms without meaning, but the snap of the washer laboring under its load stirred me to attention. Remembrance of Cinderella made me realize that I had been feeling sorry for myself.

"Here I am," I thought, "sitting comfortably while a machine does hard work for me. Why, I should be accepting the full benefit of participating in this experience! What about Cinderella! what about me?" I began to give serious attention to the immediate state of my mind. Two fascinating lessons unfolded before me and are herewith set forth.

Cinderella, kneeling before a hearth heaped with dead ashes, is a pathetic figure. She gets our sympathy because we know she deserves better. She has been a good girl, patient under trying circumstances, kind to people who have been cruel, tolerant of their thoughtlessness and ingrained selfishness; and she has always done what she was told to do. But our negative picture persists: there she kneels before the dust of a day past, and she must clean it up. This seems unfair when there are other able-bodied girls in the house who might help.

However, what is Cinderella's attitude in this situation? Ours is one of ready sympathy for her and sharp criticism for her step-mother and sisters who have forced her to be the household drudge. But her attitude? what of it? The events that follow in breathless succession give us a clue. They prove what she has held in mind, or given attention to, while the affairs of her life have looked blackest. If we consider the events, step by step (for they are the outmotion of her hidden thoughts), we shall uncover a startling secret. While she is at her lowest ebb, she dreams her highest dreams. And those dreams prevail over her dreary daily lot. The unrecognized beauty, for the time being despised and oppressed by cruel relationships, gives constant attention to secret successes that move invisible powers to shower immeasurable gifts upon her, with the triumph of personal happiness thrown in to crown her life.

The other lesson is slightly more prosaic but none the less gripping in its undeniable truth. As to the automatic machine, man has put his "mind" into it. He constructed it in such a way that, under the right conditions, the machine would fulfill the duties for which it was designed. Its work is that of receiving soiled clothes, and giving them forth washed and free of all soil after swirling them about for a certain period of time in sudsy and then in clear water. Man made the machine according to a plan for a specific purpose. When the machine is connected to a source of power and water, it functions

automatically and fulfills the mission for which it was designed. The "mind" of the machine is the mind of man.

Man is much like the machine. He was made by a Mind, and he operates by means of that Mind, which has been built into him. If he is connected properly to the Source of Power, and willingly fulfills the purpose for which he was designed, he will reveal the working power of that Mind and he will turn out a clean job of whatever he has been given to do.

Suppose the automatic washing machine should decide to do what it pleases (be a dish-washing machine instead), without obedience to the purpose or to the principles that have been built into it. In a short time it would prove itself very inefficient, it would burn itself out, or would strip some gears that would cripple it for further action, to say nothing of the havoc wrought. It would get into such bad shape that it would have to be reconditioned before it could operate again.

Man, because of his ability to "think for himself" has undertaken to operate on his own. Though he cannot actually "unplug" himself from the Source of Power, he gets himself into trouble by not permitting that Power to stir into living activity the Principles of Being that have been built into him. If man would let the Power activate him, and be nonresistant to the Principles that know how to work through him to clean up and make flawless a consciousness full of soil and foreign accretions, those Principles would automatically carry out for man (the mechanism) the plan for which he was originally designed (to be the manifest Son of God); and all he would have to do is "let" the work be done.

Impatient self-expression, short-sighted observance of the Divine Plan, inability to judge and evaluate correctly, impetuous seizure of operations not understood -- such missing of the mark of the High Calling is the cause of all sorrow, pain, frustration, and lack that the man of the world experiences.

"But if I do not run my affairs, they will become so snarled that I shall fail," you insist.

Have you tried to let God work through you? You may be required to sit before a hearth of cold ashes for a time if you do. But the doctrine of Truth is not one of complacent resignation to whatever comes. It is a dynamic practice that directs you to turn and touch the Source of Good, and remain conscious of It regardless of the many distractions that will enforce themselves upon your attention. Is your will to rule turned toward the Ruling Power, or is it played out over activities that sap vitality and destroy peace. Discrimination between the two orders is something to learn, understand, and practice.

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

NOVEMBER 1949

1. We are AMBASSADORS for Christ.
2. This day will I BEGIN to magnify thee.
3. Here am I: for thou CALLEST me.
4. The Lord will DELIVER us.
5. The ETERNAL God is thy refuge.
* * *
7. Be FILLED with all the FULNESS of God.
8. GIVE and it shall be GIVEN unto thee.
9. The Lord on HIGH is mighty.
10. The righteous shall INHERIT the land.
11. Thou shouldest ... see that JUST ONE.
12. He KEEPETH the paths of judgment.
* * *
14. There is none LIKE Him.
15. God gracious and MERCIFUL.
16. NARROW is the way, which leadeth unto life.
17. His tender mercies are OVER all.
18. This day we PERCEIVE the Lord.
19. QUENCH the violence of fire (anger).
* * *
21. RIGHTEOUS art Thou, O Lord.
22. SEEK the glory of the Lord.
23. TAKE no THOUGHT for the morrow.
24. UNDERNEATH are the everlasting arms.
25. God giveth us the VICTORY through our Lord.
26. The WAY of life is above, to the wise.
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28. YE are bought with a price.
29. Have a ZEAL for God.
30. Trust thou in Him.

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"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."

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