

THANKSGIVING

By Alden Truesdell

One of the main lessons taught in Scripture is that desirable results are attained by dependence upon the Lord. Dependence upon the Invisible for manifest blessings is faith; and, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." But, if it is true that the Invisible becomes visible to those who have faith, how can a man know when he has a sufficient degree of faith to bring into actual usability the invisible spiritual Substance? It has been said that anyone who can give thanks for something as yet unseen has real faith; and, as we know, real faith will beget real things. It would then, seem necessary and profitable to learn the spiritual amenity of thanksgiving and to become proficient in its practice.

Faith itself will move mountains and heal the sick. Even blind faith will make for eventual manifestation. However, for rapid manifestation and instantaneous healing, there must be a spontaneous appreciation of blessings already given, although not yet visible to the outer eye. Thus we find Jesus giving thanks for provision in the face of the appearance of lack, and giving thanks for life when death seemed present.

Of the feeding of the five thousand, we read:

"Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would."

Similarly of the raising of Lazarus from the tomb, we are told:

"Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."

Few words are required to invoke invisible supply and intangible life, when gratitude is genuine. The attitude of gratitude is of itself such a heartfelt expression that it generates delight, which in turn increases the reason for gratitude. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart," sings the Psalmist.

Gratitude seems many times to be the agency by which the universal machinery is swung into action for the establishing of the one increasing Purpose. The element of cynicism in the mind of the race would question the reason for thanksgiving, for the race is reluctant to acknowledge good. "Give thanks for what?" the cynic would question. Yet if a man has, or ever has had, anything that he considers essential to his well-being, that thing was given by God. If a man likes to live, he can thank God for endowing him with the power to do so; for it is God that breathes into man the "breath of life." Some can think only in terms of self-indulgence and catering to the senses; and these may as well know that, except for God, there would be no self to indulge and no senses to satisfy. Everyone can find something to be thankful for, and every expression of gratitude increases the good that is added to the thanksgiver.

Even law-violators are thankful when they are able to outwit the law, and they say they are getting the breaks and luck is with them. The gambler is delighted with the winning hand that takes the pot. The player of races offers prayers of thanksgiving to Lady Luck when his horse comes in. Even thieves are

grateful when they have little trouble with their victims. If all those violators of the law can find something for which to be thankful, how much more should law-abiding citizens benefit by the increase-laden custom of offering up thanks to the Creator of all good?

Then consider the measure of gratitude the keepers of the Gospel should express if they are to be found among those favored for whom there is no law. For these, who have found the more excellent way, life is a matter of recognition, acknowledgment, appreciation, and hearty participation.

These are in the position of the favored child for whom everything is provided, and for whom every act is a spontaneous service. The position of favor held by these followers of Christ is contingent only upon their continued appreciation. Should they, however, cease to be aware of the Source of their good fortune and refuse to concede their heritage to be a spiritual windfall, it would cease to be of value to them. If their appreciation of their well-being ebbs, they will find themselves partaking of lesser degrees of good.

For those who recognize God only, acknowledge God only, appreciate God only, and know themselves to be partakers of God only - for these there is no law, no loss, no lack. The life, strength, protection, and provision of their everywhere-present God is so much a part of them that their attitude of gratitude is in itself a vital blessing. In these it is difficult to separate the son's delight in his Father from the Joy of the Father in the wholesome expression of the son. In this converging of Creator and creature, the gratitude of the son magnifies the Joy of the Lord which is strength.

While the son of God is appreciative of his fortune, he is not surprised at its magnitude; for he knows the capacity of the Father to pour out of His provision until the saturation point of perfection itself in every department of life is reached. Should such a one express his gratitude in prayer, this prayer would resemble the simple "I thank thee" of Jesus, who said: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

We ourselves might say:

"I thank You, my invisible Father, for all visible and manifest blessings.

"I thank You, Father God, for Your seeming aloofness, for that impersonal quality pouring out of its blessings upon the just and the unjust alike.

"I thank You, Father, that no man can claim superior lineage or proud priority in the title to Your gifts, which are neither earned nor deserved, but given freely lest any man should boast.

"I thank You, Father, for protection, correction, direction, and perfection.

"I thank You for the privilege of giving You my attention, for the exchange of affections between us, as they are poured out upon me, and upsurge in me in their longing for You.

"I thank You that, in Your foresight, You have so filled my cup that my greatest thanksgiving is for the ability to give thanks."

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HOPE AND REJOICE

By Robert Applegate

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Hope is the first response of the individual who is awakened to hear the Truth of God. Hope is exhilarating and gladdening, and we never get entirely beyond it. Yet there is much more even than hope in the Good News that Jesus Christ announced to the world.

To hope is to feel that what you desire will happen. It is to desire some good and to expect to receive it. The word hope suggests two things; it suggests futurity and it suggests uncertainty. We do not hope for what we already have, but we hope to receive something in the future that we do not have in the present. And we do not speak of hoping for something that we are certain that we will receive, but we hope for something that we may or may not get. We may say that we hope that it will rain tomorrow, but we are not likely to say that we hope that the sun will rise tomorrow morning, for we are quite sure that the sun will rise. Hope, then, is the expectation, but not the certainty, of receiving some good in the future that is not possessed in the present.

But there is no future in God. God knows nothing of past and future, for He is above time. This is difficult for the mentality to grasp, for our whole lives seem to be governed by time and we are painfully conscious of time. But there is no time in Reality. Even the scientists are telling us now that the basic processes of nature know nothing of time. The appearances, the phenomena that we see, are seen in the framework of time and space, but the Reality that underlies and causes the appearances is not in time or space. Time and space exist only in our perception. This is what Paul meant when he said, "The things which are seen are temporal (they are seen in a framework of time); but the things that are not seen are eternal (they know nothing of time)." As we reflect upon it, it is revealed to us. And, even if we cannot understand it fully, we can accept it, that there is no time in Reality, and therefore those who are looking for their good in the future are looking for an impossibility. Futurity is futility. All the good that there is, is now. The only future is in our consciousness, as we become progressively aware of that which is.

Furthermore, there is no uncertainty in God. God is, and there is no uncertainty about Him. Even the appearances, which we see in time, are governed by invariable law; and, when anyone knows the law, there is no uncertainty about them. Thus Emerson declared, "The man who knows the law is sure that his welfare is dear to the heart of Being; and he believes that he cannot escape from his good."

Strictly speaking, the word hope applies only to the human consciousness. We do not hope to receive our good, for we know that we will receive it if we look to God. We do not hope even that our prayers will be answered, because we know that they will be answered according to our faith. We hope, rather, that we may look to God; we hope that we may have faith; we hope that we may become conscious of God, that we may have that same consciousness of God that Jesus had. We know, however, that we will become conscious of God if we look toward Him. In every experience, we have the choice of giving our attention to the experience or to God; and, as we make the choice in favor of God, we grow spiritually toward that perfection at which we are aiming. Therefore, in so far as we can rightly use the word hope, we hope to make the right choice under all circumstances. This we do hope to do.

The ability of man to choose whom he will serve is the basis of all the duality that seems to run throughout Scripture: "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit," "the way, that leadeth to destruction," and "the way, which leadeth unto life." There are not two powers in the universe: good and evil, God and the Devil, Spirit and matter. But man has the choice of looking to God and praying, "Thy will be done"; or looking to the self, conceived of as apart from God, and expressing self-will. The self, conceived of as apart from God, is a figment of the imagination. Man, however, has the power of believing that imagination and living in it, if he chooses to do so. This is the way of the flesh, the way of darkness, the way of the world; and man must choose whether he will follow this way or the way of Spirit, the way of Truth, the way of Light. Jesus had to make this choice in the wilderness and again in Gethsemane; and so does every man have to make it innumerable times.

If we hope to make the choice in favor of God - to look to God when we could look away from Him - then we expect to do so. And yet why should we expect to make the right choice when there seems to be that within us all that would choose wrongly? Jesus gave us the answer when He said, "The time is fulfilled." The time is fulfilled that we should choose God. This is the Gospel, the Good News, and we are told to believe it. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Jesus said also, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Jesus has already overcome every testing that we can meet. He has shown us that it is possible to choose God under all circumstances and that God will take care of everything else. Because He has done this, it is easier for us to do it, just as it was easy for men to cross the Atlantic Ocean after Columbus had shown them that it could be done. But Jesus Christ is more than the Pioneer; He is the Way. Christ is That in us which helps us to make the right choice. Christ is That in us which makes the right choice, and that is Love. All that we need to do is to believe in Him.

"Only believe," He said.

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

"All things are possible to him that believeth."

And of Jesus Christ, John wrote: "As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

If we believe in Jesus Christ, we cannot help but rejoice. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is truly the "good tidings of great joy": that Jesus Christ has overcome the world, that Jesus Christ is here now, both within us and all around us - one with us now and eternally.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me, . . . I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

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THE SECRET OF PROSPERITY

By Nell Truesdell

Prosperity is a state of mind or consciousness rather than a state of pocketbook or bank account. To the materialist this is foolish; to the man of understanding this is sensible. We shall attempt to set forth the basis of our statement by turning to the Principle of bountiful and continuous supply and seeking out, so that we may practice, a few simple rules that stem from that Principle.

When most people pray for prosperity they are apt to say something like this: "O Father, please send me money - lots of money - so I can pay all my bills and get out of debt." Both in prayer and in the daily round of existence, people concentrate on their need for money; and the more they center their attention on need the greater the need becomes. The reason for this is that the pressure of their attention on a condition of lack stimulates their reaction to lack so that they are aware only of lack - or the absence of supply. Caught in the void of need, they demonstrate increased measures of need. Often it is not until a new low is reached that a person, hopeless and helpless in his own inadequacy, will stop struggling altogether, and, in mute agony, wait on God. Then something happens - some unsought and unsuspected opportunity right at hand presents itself and offers a way of escape.

We must understand that God does not force any person to his knees before he will bless him. God does not send lack, grief, or ill health into our lives so that we will turn and worship Him. We bring disaster on ourselves by forgetting that whatever we want starts toward us from God, not from some person or place in the world. Engrossed in having and enjoying the things that we think are good for us, we are apt to close the door of our heart on the only Source of Good in our lives from the most insignificant to the greatest blessing. When that door is closed we soon come to an impasse in our outer affairs. We alone, have the power to open that door. For our state of well-being is not a matter of God's treatment of us; it is a matter of our attitude toward God.

The first rule of Prosperity - all-inclusive Good - is that of waiting on God.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God."

"The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him."

The practice of waiting on God is simple. The attention of the mind must be so flexible that it bends easily toward God in the midst of consciousness regardless of the demands of the hour. Love of God is the necessary lubricant that insures flexibility; for, when we love Him, it is easy for us to give our attention to Him at play or at work, at rest or active. Every moment that we wait, we widen and deepen our capacity to receive the greater rewards God already has in store for us.

How does God give us His gifts? He gives them in the form of invisible Ideas. As His Ideas push against the door (heart) of our consciousness, we

translate them in terms of our own thoughts. When the touch of the Divine is upon us, we either wait on God until the Divine Intent is understood, or we depart from Him to follow our own purposes. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." To wait at the point of impact where God's thought strikes our capacity to think requires discipline. All too frequently we choose to wade through shadows of mistranslation (cast by our refusal to wait in God's Light) before we will practice obedience (waiting) and control (expectancy).

The second rule of Prosperity is that we maintain an attitude of expectancy toward God: "My expectation is from Him." We must confidently believe that God has, and is willing to give us, measureless blessings and that He will give them in the way that is best for us. We try, however, by sly tricks, to bend His Will to our own will and so lose hold on a proffered gift - not because God takes it away from us, but that we are unable to divert it to our own purposes. "Ye receive not," wrote James, "because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

To give thanks and praise to God for His goodness is the third rule to follow. Thanksgiving always bears fruit; for, in the act of giving thanks, we present ourselves for acceptance, and, by so doing, catch sight of God's favor. "I will praise Thee with my whole heart; . . . I will worship . . ., and praise Thy Name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy truth; . . . In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul."

The fourth rule in our list is that of making use of the blessings that are already ours. "Use or lose" is an old saying that has never been proved wrong. By using what we have, we improve our latent skills; and skill is substance.

As we observe our activities and our possessions we see that whatever we are skilled in using never actually diminishes but is always present in sufficient bounty to serve our needs. I will give an example from my own experience. I like to sew, and each season make the greater part of my wardrobe. Through more than forty years I have marveled that I am never out of pins. I do not buy pins; they come to me from unexpected sources and are always at hand. So it is with whatever we use. To use our faculties, capacities, and material possessions in a well ordered manner is to add to our treasury of Good.

When our vision waits before God, when expected blessings are acknowledged (even before they appear), and when we use what is already at hand, we place ourselves in right relation with our Source of Prosperity. We find that we are rich in all things: spiritual, mental, physical, and material.

Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

NOVEMBER 1953

2. Can two walk together, except they be AGREED?
 3. The God of love and peace shall BE with you.
 4. A merry heart maketh a CHEERFUL COUNTENANCE.
 5. DAILY shall He be praised.
 6. In EVERYTHING ye are ENRICHED by Him.
 7. How FORCIBLE are right words.
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9. The GIFT of GOD is eternal life.
 10. HE sent HIS word and HEALED them.
 11. Love one another, as I have loved you.
 12. Let JUDGMENT run down as waters.
 13. Then shall we KNOW, if we follow on to KNOW the Lord.
 14. LIVE in the Spirit.

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16. The Lord thy God in the MIDST of thee is MIGHTY.
 17. NOW will I arise.
 18. OBTAIN gladness and joy.
 19. PREPARE to meet thy God.
 20. The effect of righteousness (is) QUIETNESS.
 21. Let us RETURN unto the Lord.

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23. SEEK the Lord and ye SHALL live.
 24. TEACH me Thy paths.
 25. The Lord lift UP His countenance UPON thee.
 26. O VISIT me with Thy salvation.
 27. The WAYS of the Lord are right, and the just shall WALK in them.
 28. YEA, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.

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30. Where is thy ZEAL?

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