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PAPERS (3014)**

**BOX 13
FOLDER 9**

**YOUR POWER TO BE
GREAT(FUL)**

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We are dealing with a continuing series devoted to "Adventures of Self-Discovery." And on this day which is Thanksgiving Sunday, we are going to deal with the discovery of the power to be great through the underlying idea of Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving 1977! We have come a long way since the Pilgrims gathered in 1621 on that first Thanksgiving Day to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord."

As we view their condition from where we are, they really didn't have very much to make a noise about, did they? What about you? Can you make a joyful noise unto the Lord?

Cartoon showing the President and his wife sitting at home in the White House. Mrs. President is saying, "Do you think we can enforce the Thanksgiving Proclamation this year?" Certainly there are many reasons around for worrying, commiserating, if that is what we want to do. Recall the woman who was always in a state of complaint about the continuing misfortunes that seemed to occur to her. A friend said, "Oh come on, things are not that bad. Why not look for the good?" And the woman replied, "That's all well and good for some persons; but it seems to me when the Lord sends me tribulations, it's my duty to tribulate."

Of course, God doesn't send problems; and it is our duty, not to tribulate, but to keep a high enough perspective, and thus to give thanks in all things. Life is consciousness, and problems unfold from states of consciousness. How do you give thanks for them? You don't! The problems have come because of a frustration of the flow of God's good action. We don't need to give thanks for them. Paul says, "In all things give thanks" -- Not "for all things." In other words, it is not saying that you should be grateful even for the crises of life, but that in spite of the crises, your healthy flow of divine activity calls for an attitude of gratitude. The reason: THANKSGIVING IS NOT A REACTIONARY EMOTION, BUT A CAUSATIVE FORCE.

Flying back from Europe a few syears ago I was reflecting on how the Pilgrims had crossed the Atlantic in 1621 in their awkward wooden ship, a journey that required 1580 hours. Today the controversial SST crosses in about 2½ hours. And I wondered at how incredulous the Pilgrims might have been to hear that within 356 years Jets would be flying overhead. And I pondered over the kind of space flights that would be routine looking ahead another 350 years to the year 2327.

It is important for our own spiritual stability to keep our thoughts open in appreciation for the world we live in. I heard someone remark recently what a terrible world this is. And I wondered, "Compared to what?" It is a changing world...but so it has always been. Growth can only come through change. Things can't remain the same. So give thanks for the change. Give thanks for hills and the strength to climb up.

Why THANKSGIVING DAY? What is accomplished if we give thanks for one day and then go back to a normal life of ingratitude? Do we win a few "brownie points"? Is God moved by our show of flattery? Actually it really doesn't make any difference to God whether or not we ever express thanks. He doesn't need our gratitude... but we do. It is an attitude that is imperative to healthy-mindedness.

Thanksgiving is an attitude that deals with life all through the year, not just on a "holy day". As Carlyle says, "Every day born into the world comes like a burst of music and rings itself all the day through, and thou shalt make of it a dance, a dirge, or a life-march, as thou wilt."

We always have that choice! We can engage in thank-thinking or in lamentation. And the choice we make will dtermine how things will unfold for us. If we are great or small. Without thank-thinking we become little people, with little minds, leading little inconsequential lives.

Return Thank
us. Give

Gratitude is not simply a virtue, something you should express because it is the religious thing to do. But in order to realize our potential as spiritual beings, we are dependent on this transcendent -consciousness we call gratitude. A grateful person is a great person. And he is great because he has turned on the lights in himself. Everyone is great at the depth of his being, but most of us keep the light turned down low.

Plato: "A GRATEFUL MIND IS A GREAT MIND WHICH EVENTUALLY ATTRACTS TO ITSELF GREAT THINGS."

In the Master Class we used the term "Hemianopic", a medical term relating to a visual condition where because of brain damage you see only half the visual world. We also used the term Concentrical - dealing with the inner center as the point through which all good flows. Casting about wondering what you have to give thanks for may well be hemianopic...seeing only part of the good that is yours. You can give thanks "from" the divine flow within. You can deal with it concentrically. Thus, your Thanksgiving becomes a kind of giving way to the flow from within. It is the great mind that will surely become a channel for the flow of great things.

The mystic key to Thanksgiving is the GREATNESS that is within us. And the message of Thanksgiving is that when we are grateful, we are full of greatness... and we begin to relate to life and to people at the highest level of our being.

Jesus did not achieve His power of greatness by occasional attempts to work miracles. When he "lifted up his eyes and gave thanks," it was like the great performing artist on this concert stage...bearing fruits of years of practice.

When Jesus was faced with 5000 hungry people, "He lifted up his eyes and gave thanks." Then He proceeded to feed the hungry multitude with what was available. It was not a thanks for the food on the table, for there was only ~~five~~ loaves and ~~seven~~ fishes. It was a technique by which Jesus attuned himself to the Kingdom possibilities in the greatness of God within Him. And in that attitude He became great, and of course He did great things.

→ GREAT ACTS FOLLOW GREAT THOUGHTS THAT COME FROM A GRATEFUL HEART.

Thanksgiving is a kind of cosmic perspective. If you can get a view from high enough up, and see from the perspective of wholeness, you will be able to deal easily and efficiently with life. "Contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view."

A few years ago we had some guests from England, visiting New York for the first time. They had been forewarned with all the lurid tales of this "terrible place." I took them first up on the RCA Building. It was one of those beautifully clear days when you can see forever. The woman said, "Well, it certainly is an awe-inspiring sight from up here!" We toured around a little, but they said, "We just can't forget that sight from the top of the building." And they went away singing the praises of New York City.

This is what Thanksgiving is: "A view from the top" - contemplating all the changing, challenging things, experiences, and persons of life from the highest possible point of view. Whenever there is conflict or chaos, the need is to get the view from the top, to see the inherent good, to see the activity of God, to get our consciousness in the flow.

Jesus came hurriedly to Bethany to meet with the sorrowing family of his friend, Lazarus, who had died. The sisters reproached Jesus, "If you had been here our brother would not have died." Jesus went to the tomb where the friend had been interred for four days. He had them roll away the stone. Then he lifted up his eyes, (got a view from the top) and said, "Father I thank you that you hear me." Imagine people thinking, "Thanksgiving! what is there to be thankful for? Lazarus is dead! The man had better wait and see if He can really do anything before he gives thanks!" But you see, his thanks was not a reactionary emotion, but a causative force.

Jesus knew that the key to power was acknowledging the availability of the power. He was not giving thanks for anything...but giving thanks from a high perspective that saw life as transcendent to death. And he affirmed, "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE" - not to make it true, but to get into the flow of that which is true. Then, "LAZARUS, COME FORTH!" And the man walked out free and whole.

We may not understand the implications of this great event...the actual resurrection from the dead. But we should not get so involved in analysis that we lose sight of a simple fundamental. If Jesus would lift up his eyes to get a view from the top in this attempt to deal with the final enemy of death, how much more important it is that we look up and give thanks in every experience in our lives. Thanksgiving can be a dynamic golden key to resurrect waning possibilities in any experience.

If you always seek first to get a view from the top, and give thanks in all things for the activity of God that neither slumbers nor sleeps, you actually set off a chain reaction of positive power.

Most of us are quite familiar with negative chain reactions...though we normally do little to prevent them. For instance a man is awakened early one morning by phone...the foreman of his plant tells him a machine is out of order. John snarls something unpleasant back, something critical of the lack of care of the machine. John now is in vile humor...so is the foreman. At breakfast John snarls at his wife, at the plant the foreman snarls at the men. Mrs. Jones snarls at her son before he goes to school. Little Johnny snarls at the teacher. The teacher snarls at the whole class. The workers at the plant go home and snarl at their families. It is a thoroughly bad day in an unbelievably large number of homes. A good day became a day of snarls.

Now what might have happened if the call had been met with an effort ~~to view the experience from the highest point of view~~ to view the experience from the highest point of view? The Boss would start an inspiration cycle instead of an irritation cycle. There would be a great difference in many lives...and in the world as a whole.

In any challenging situation...take a moment to get altitude in your thought. You may have a quiet meditation, or practice some kind of ceterning process to get yourself back into the flow. Take a quick breath to symbolize the centering at the heart of you, and then whisper "I am grateful for abundance...or order...or protection, etc" You will see with a new appreciation, you will see beyond appearances...you will see divinity in people, and the potentialities in every experience.

A woman faced a physical challenge that was threatening her business career...and at the same time she was facing some financial difficulties that seemed insurmountable. She was terribly depressed...it all seemed hopeless.

She went to the beach and stretched out on the sand, staring up into the blue of the night sky. She remained there all night. Gradually she seemed to get away from her earth-bound thoughts. She seemed to get a new cosmic perspective. Finally she dropped off to sleep in a peaceful realization that she was one with limitlessness. She awakened with new confidence. The physical challenge disappeared. She was guided to make certain contacts. In a matter of days, the whole difficult experience was dissolved. She was resurrected from her tomb of despair, by getting a view from the top.

The beautiful part of this high perspective is that it enables you to begin to appreciate your ability to appreciate. So many persons, when looking for things to give thanks for...become aware of their inadequacies. They count their envies one by one. "He is so talented!" "She has so many lovely things" "Wouldn't it be wonderful to have his creative ability!"

I love Rostand's story of the "CHANTICLEER". He thought it was because of his crowing in the morning that the sun rose - but every day he would awaken in the dark, and then after his crowing, the sun would rise. One day, he overslept... and he arose late to find the sun had already risen. He had not crowed. It was a great disillusionment. How ineffective his life was! Then, in a moment of inspiration he thought, "It may be that it is not my poor voice that brings on the day, but even if I may not cause the sun to rise, I may lift up my voice and celebrate its rising!"

This is a marvelous insight into Thanksgiving as the power to be great. Some persons may do great things, others may have good health or rich possessions. And they may seem to have good reason for thanksgiving. But when you get a view from the top, you can appreciate great things and become great through gratefulness. You can celebrate the abundance that is everywhere no matter whose life it may appear in.

Perhaps you can't paint or carve or sew or compose or play an instrument... but you can celebrate this order and beauty and richness. You can become great, by being great(ful). And maybe your view from the top, your attitude of gratitude, is the very key that will open the way to the flow of your own affluence.

So...this is the season to practice thank-thinking. But it is not just making a great show of your piety and thankfulness on this one day. Truly you could spend a full day of constant thanksgiving to God out of a sense of obligation and never even approach a thank-filled consciousness. It is not trying to be grateful. For to try to be is not to be. It is re-centering yourself at the root of your being, where you are filled with the essence of greatness...the very essence of God in you...and...as Plato says, this greatness eventually attracts to you great things.

YOUR POWER TO BE GREAT(ful)

An excerpt from "A Short Outline of Thanksgiving" by Ogden Nash...

"Thanksgiving, like Christmas, comes but once a year,
And when it comes, it occasionally brings good cheer.
Christmas arrivds without any but or if
Every year on December twenty-fif
But Thanksgiving, like ambassadors, cabinet-officers,
And others smeared with plitical ointment
Depends for its existence on Presidential appointment."

(Cartoon showing President and wife sitting at home. And Mrs. President is saying,
"Do you think we can enforce the Thanksgiving Proclamation this year?"

Many reasons for worrying, commiserating, = if -that is what we want to do.
Old woman who always made a big fuss about the slightest misfortune. "Things
aren't all that bad." "Maybe so..but it seems to me when the Lord sends
me tribulations it's my duty to tribulate."

(God never sends problems...and it is our duty, not to tribulate, but to get
a high perspective, and give thanks in all things."

Gratitude is not simply a virtue. Something you should express because it is the
religious thing to do...something for which you earn "brownie points". But, in order
to realize our potential as spiritual beings, we are dependent on this transcendent
consciousness we call gratitude. A GRATEFUL PERSON IS A GREAT PERSON. AND HE IS
GREAT BECAUSE HE HAS TURNED ON THE LIGHTS IN HIMSELF. Everyone is great in the
depths of his being, but most of us keep the light turned down low.

How can you be grateful with all your trials? You don't have to have things for
which to be grateful. But when you are grateful, you radiate a light that enables
you to see things for which to be grateful.

Plato: "A GRATEFUL MIND IS A GREAT MIND WHICH EVENTUALLY ATTRACTS TO ITSELF
GREAT THINGS."

The mystic key to Thanksgiving is the GREATNESS that is within us. And the message
of Thanksgiving is that when we are grateful, we are full of greatness...and we
begin to relate to life and to people at the highest level of our being.

Thanksgiving is not dependent on outer things. IT is dependent only on an awareness
of the Greatness of God lwithin us. The attitude of gratitudd is the key to the
inner Kingdom.

When Jesus was faced with 5000 hungry people, "He lifted up lhis eyes and gve
thanks." Then He proceeded to feed the hunger multitude with what was available
Not a thanks for food on the table...for there was only five loaves and seven fishes.
It was a technique by which Jesus attuned himself to the Kingdom possibilities in the
greatness of God within him. And in that attitude He became grea, and of course,
he did great things. GREAT ACTS FOLLOW GREAT THOUGHTS THAT COME FROM A GRATEFUL HEART.

Looking about at the challenges of your life...how do -you give thanks for them?
You don't. In a sense these things hav come because we have frustrated the flow
of our potential greatness. We don't need to give thanks for them. We are told,
"In all things give thanks" -- not "for all things..."

"He lifted up His eyes...and gave fhanks." Perhaps if we could lift up our
eyes high enough, and give fhanks deeply enough, and open the greatness of our
God-self completely enough, we would set off a chain reaction of harmony and
love and life and substance that would open a flow of healing and renewal.

LADY ASKED HER PHYSICIAN: "DOCTOR, WHY AM I SEIZED WITH THESE RESTLESS LONGINGS FOR
THE GLAMOROUS AND THE FARAWAY?" DOCTOR: "MY DEAR LADY THEY ARE THE USUAL SYMPTOMS
OF TOO MUCH COMFORT IN THE HOME AND TOO MUCH INGRATITUDE IN THE HEART."

intro
Thanksgiving 1977 We have come a long way since the Pilgrims gathered in 1621 on that first Thanksgiving day to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." They didn't have very much to make a noise about. What about you?

Flying back from Europe a few years ago I was reflecting on how the Pilgrims had crossed the Atlantic in 1621 in their awkward wooden ship, on a journey that took them 1580 hours. Today the SST crosses in about 2½ hours. And I wondered at how incredulous the Pilgrims would have been to hear that within 356 years jets would be flying overhead. And then I wondered...looking ahead 350 years...what kind of space flights would become commonplace?

We need to open our thoughts in appreciation for the world we live in. I heard someone remark recently what a terrible world this is. And I wondered, "compared to what?" It is a changing world...but so it has always been. Growth can only come through change. Things can't remain the same. So give thanks for the change. Give thanks for hills ~~xxxxxxx~~ and for the strength to climb up.

Thanksgiving is an attitude that deals with life through the year, not just on a "holy day". Carlyle: "EVERY DAY BORN INTO THE WORLD COMES LIKE A BURST OF MUSIC AND RINGS ITSELF ALL THE DAY THROUGH, AND THOU SHALT MAKE OF IT A DANCE, A DIRGE, OR A LIFE MARCH, AS THOU WILT."

We always have that choice! We can engage in thank-thinking or in lamentation. And the choice we make will determine how things will unfold for us. If we are great or small. Without thank-thinking we become little people, with little minds, leading little inconsequential lives.

It is not a matter of taking one day apart to sing praises to God. "Mothers day" "Brotherhood day" "Law Day" -- Makes no difference to God whether you give thanks to him or not! Actually, why give thanks to God? He doesn't need it! Keep them for yourself. Eckhart, "Never thank God for loving me, He can't help himself."

You could spend a day of constant thanksgiving to God out of a sense of obligation and never get a thank-filled consciousness. God is not a person to thank and praise but a present in which to live and on which to build a positive life.

THANKSGIVING IS NOT A REACTIONARY EMOTION, BUT A CAUSATIVE FORCE.

Jesus did not achieve his power of greatness by occasional attempts to work miracles. When he "lifted up his eyes and gave thanks", it was like the artist on this stage... bearing fruits of years of practice.

We need to practice "thank=thinkig", getting higher perspective, every day.

In the play "Twigs", few years ago, the female lead is preparing a thanksgiving dinner for a load of visiting relatives. She signs: "This holiday -is an awful lot of work...no wonder no other country celebrates it!" (Line gets hearty laugh)

In Master class we used the term "Hemianopic" (medical term a visual condition where because of brain damage you see half the visual world). We also used the term Concentrical - dealing with inner center as point through which all good flows. Casting about wondering what to give thanks for may well be hemianopic...seeing only part of the good that is yours. You can give thanks "from" the divine flow within. You can deal with it concentrically. Thus your thanksgiving becomes a kind of giving way to the flow from within. It is the great mind that will surely become a channel for the flow of great things.

If you have no basic faith from which to give thanks, then your life is emptier than you know...and all the affluence of heaven and earth could not give you fulfillment.

If you have a basic faith than Thanksgiving comes easy...but it is not just a RESPONSE to the things of your life...it is a celebration of the Truth which becomes a CAUSE of greater good.

Great lesson in living: IF YOU CAN GET A VIEW FROM HIGH ENOUGH UP, AND SEE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WHOLENESS, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DEAL EASILY AND EFFICIENTLY WITH LIFE. "Contemplation of facts of life from highest point of view."

Guests from England...visiting New York for first time. Prepared with all the lurid tales of this "terrible place". Took them first up on RCA building. It was one of those beautifully clear days when you can see forever. Woman: "Well it certainly is awe-inspiring sight from up here." We toured around a little, but they said, "We just can't forget that sight from the top of the bldg." And they went away singing the praises of New York City.

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Whenever there is conflict or chaos, the need is to get the view from the top...to see the inherent good, to see the activity of God...to let our consciousness in the flow.

Jesus called to Bethany to meet with the sorrowing family of Lazarus. Sisters reproached Jesus, "If you had been here our brother would not have died." Jesus went to tomb where friend had been interred for four days...had them roll away stone. Then, lifted up his eyes, got view from top, and said, "Father, I thank you that you hear me." Imagine people thinking "Thanksgiving! What is there to be thankful for? Lazarus is dead! The man had better wait and see if he can really do anything here before he gives thanks!" But you see his thanks was not a reactionary emotion but a causative force.

Jesus knew that the key to power was acknowledging the availability of the power. He was not giving thanks for anything...but giving thanks from a high perspective that saw life as transcendent to death. And he affirmed, "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE." -- not to make it true, but to get into the flow of that which was true. Then, "LAZARUS, COME FORTH..." And the man walked out free and whole.

We may not understand the implications of this event... The actual resurrection of the dead. But we should not get so involved in analysis that we lose sight of a simple fundamental.

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The beautiful thing is...if you always seek first to get a view from the top...and give thanks in all things for the activity of God that neither slumbers nor sleeps...you actually set off a chain reaction of positive power.

Note how a negative chain reaction raises such havoc. Man awakened early by phone... foreman tells him machine out of order. John snarls something unpleasant back, something critical of the care of the machine. John now in vile humor...so is foreman. A breakfast table John snarls at wife, at plant foreman snarls at men. Mrs. Jones snarls at son before he goes to school. Johnny snarls at teacher. Teacher snarls at whole class. Workers at plant go home and snarl at their families. Thoroughly bad day in an unbelievably large number of homes. A good day has become a day of snarls.

Note what might happen if the call had been met with effort to view the experience from highest point of view...Boss would start an inspiration cycle instead of an irritation cycle. Difference in many lives...and in the world as a whole.

In any challenging situation...take moment to get altitude in thought...time of quiet meditation...get back to the center. Start chain reaction of good. You will see things and people and experiences in completely different way. New sense of appreciation, seeing beyond appearances...see divinity in people, and the potentialities in every experience.

chain reaction

Old saying: A donkey may carry a heavy load of precious sandalwood on its back and never know its preciousness...only its weight. Many of us go through life feeling only the weight of circumstances, never able to know the precious nature of life...because of a chronic negative attitude...head bowed down...eyes fixed on the ground. Need to look up...get view from top...cultivate attitude of gratitude.

Story of woman facing a physical challenge that threatened her business career... and at the same time was facing some financial obstacles that seemed insurmountable...and thus she was terribly depressed. It all seemed hopeless.

She went to the beach and stretched out on sand and stared up into the blue of the night sky...remaining there all night. Gradually she seemed to get away from the earth-bound thoughts. Seemed to get a new universal perspective. Finally dropped off to sleep in peaceful realization that she was one with limitlessness.

Awakened with new confidence. The physical challenge disappeared. She was guided to make certain contacts. In the matter of days, the whole difficult experience was dissolved. She had been resurrected from her tomb of despair, but getting a view from the top.

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"He is so talented" "She has so many lovely things!" "I wish I had a happy home like they do" "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be so creative!"

Rostand's story of the rooster, "THE CHANTICLEER" -- He thought it was because of his crowing in the morning that the sun rose - but every day he would awaken in the dark, and then after his crowing, the sun would rise. One day he overslept... and he arose to find the sun had already risen...he had now crowed. It was a great disillusionment...how ineffective his life was!

Then in moment of inspiration he thought, "It may be that it is not my poor voice that brings on the day, but even if I may not cause the sun to rise, I may lift up my voice and celebrate its rising!"

Marvelous insight into Thanksgiving as power to be great. Some persons may do great things, others may have good health or rich possessions...and they may seem to have good reason for thanksgiving. But when you get view from time, you can appreciate great things and become great through gratefulness. You can celebrate the abundance that is everywhere no matter whose life it may appear in.

Perhaps you can't paint or carve or sew or compose or play an instrument... but you can celebrate this order and beauty and richness. You can become great by being great(ful). And maybe your view from the top, your attitude of gratitude, is the very key that will open the way to the flow of your own affluence.