

VOLUME 30

THE BIBLE SERIES

**A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF**

The Bible

by

Mildred Mann

Author of

HOW TO FIND YOUR REAL SELF (textbook)

THIS I BELIEVE

LEARN TO LIVE

THE FAMILY OF ADAM and EVE

THE BIBLE – The Seven Days of Creation

BECOME WHAT YOU BELIEVE

WHAT IS PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM?

C O N T E N T S

	PAGE
I Corinthians	3
II Corinthians — Chapters 1-8	33
(Part One)	

Published By
The Society of Pragmatic Mysticism
116 Central Park South
New York, N.Y. 10019

I CORINTHIANS

We might briefly refresh our memories of the times and mention a few salient details concerning Corinth and Paul before we begin this letter. At this time Corinth was a very new city. It had been razed by a war which ended about 150 B.C., and the new Corinth was rebuilt under the sponsorship of Julius Caesar around the first century A.D. However, its population increased quite rapidly and it was a fairly good-sized metropolis and a center of commerce by the time Paul arrived. Its people were composed of itinerant seafarers, many Romans, a number of Jews from Jerusalem and those who had been exiled from Rome, many Greeks and other nationalities. It was almost as much of a polyglot population as we find in New York today. Of course, it also had many religions. Actually, its main center of worship was the temple of Aphrodite, and it was considered to be the most licentious city of that day. There were also altars to practically all of the Roman pantheon, as well as those who followed the Egyptian teaching, in addition to the orthodox Jews and those few Jews who had come from Rome and had already been converted to the new Christianity. So there was a great mixture of religious worship, yet they all seemed to dwell together quite harmoniously.

There is an interesting sidelight in connection with the Egyptian worship in Corinth and Paul. It was unique in one way: they accorded women an equality in religious service which none of the other faiths allowed. Consequently Paul, who was firmly imbued with the orthodox Jewish concept that women's place is in the background in religious participation, was suddenly faced with a totally different situation upon his arrival in Corinth. Whatever modification Paul made in his ideas about women—and I must admit that it was not a very great change—could well have occurred as a result of his experiences in Corinth.

Paul came to Corinth because he had not been too happy in Antioch. What happened in Antioch is especially important for us in our study. There is little elucidation of it in his letters, but we do find that in this letter, particularly in the first few chapters, he is telling the Corinthians to overcome the dissensions among themselves.

The dissension between Paul and Peter began in Jerusalem. Paul was strongly against the idea held by the disciples that a male convert must be circumcised, and finally Paul won out. But in Antioch another argument arose. Peter felt that the Gentile converts should not share bread at the same table with the born Jews because of the difference in "clean and unclean" food, and in this discussion Paul lost. He also lost the support of his most trusted helper, Barnabas, who agreed with the other disciples on this point. And so we begin to see in this very new church the conflict resulting in the ideological separation which finally climaxed at the time of the Reformation in the split of the church itself. Despite the fact that the basic and commonly held belief was in the Presence and Power of God, violent enmities arose over small intricacies of interpretation.

In this letter we will find the names of people whom we encountered in the book of Acts. There is a Greek by the name of Apollos who was very well versed in the Old Testament, and who taught baptism in the name of John the Baptist, as well as the teaching of Jesus. He had previously been instructed in the new teaching by Priscilla and Aquila, as we also saw in Acts. They had been converted by Paul and then made their way to Corinth to join him once more. Apollos had his own group of followers, and there was another faction which belonged to Cephas, which is the Greek name for Peter. This group may have been under the direct leadership of Peter himself or may have been led by followers who taught in his name. Then there was Paul who was battling for his life to make a foothold.

This, then, was the general situation. Paul left Antioch because he suffered his first defeat there and he had very few followers. He chooses Corinth as his next step, perhaps because he felt that Corinth had to be saved and it was new territory. He probably did not expect to encounter the followers of Apollos or Cephas, but there they are. He was, however, sufficiently successful to stay for eighteen months, and it became one of his great centers. And so as we read I Corinthians we should realize that the divisions he is referring to are between his converts and those of Cephas and Apollos which have arisen because of a variance in conception. Corinth marks the end of Paul's efforts in Asia Minor and from there he goes on through Europe to end in Rome.

CHAPTER 1. In the first verse Paul mentions Sosthenes who is believed to have been a rabbi who sided with Paul in the trial

which was described in Acts. We do not know whether Paul mentions him as a gesture to the Corinthian Jews, or whether Sosthenes had become a secret follower and had recently declared this openly, or if it was simply that he was transcribing the letter. But it is nonetheless interesting, in the light of Paul's trouble with the Jews throughout his life, that he had this unexpected ally in Sosthenes. Basically in this section Paul is asking them, "Who do you believe in? Where is your allegiance?" and he discusses some of the reasons apparent to him for their dissensions.

This section has a particular fascination for me because many people consider Paul to be a tyrant, and in many ways he was. He was fanatic in his zeal and his belief and worship of Jesus. But when he discusses these points here it is with a very kind and tolerant attitude. On the other hand we encounter many instances where he had no hesitation in making things as uncomfortable as he possibly could for those who crossed him. So we are presented with a very complex figure. He is a man very much like all of us, even though he is one of the great figures of the New Testament. He wants to do the things that he believes in to the best of his ability, but he sometimes finds that his desire is greater than his ability.

The idea expressed in verse 19 is found in the Old Testament and gives many people the impression that God is playing with people. Certainly that is not so, but we have lost our simplicity to such a degree that we do not appreciate the fact that those things which are the most simple and gentle are always the most effective. For instance, God is Love, and Love in its pure essence is the most simple and gentle aspect of Being, yet how many people understand it? He speaks of confounding the wise. But who is wise? It is an interesting question. I wonder how many people think they are really so wise that they know more than anyone else. I am sure that at some time or other each of us has thought that we knew it all. That is why the prayer of Solomon is one of the greatest prayers ever made: "Lord, give me an understanding heart." And he was considered to be a very wise man. Everyone has to some degree the one thing which can be called a sin—spiritual pride. The feeling of being unusually wise is one of the strongest symptoms of this.

Then again, in verse 25 he uses the word foolishness to mean that to us God sometimes seems illogical. He is using a rhetorical device in discussing the quotation from Proverbs which he mentions

in verse 20. It is true that the wisdom of God, in this sense, is to most men the most illogically foolish thing in the world. This is one reason why the teachings of Jesus are not attempted in the twentieth century, because this century considers itself to be much wiser than God.

CHAPTER 2. Paul continues his discussion of the wisdom of God versus the "wisdom" of man, and relates it to himself personally. It is interesting to see the fight within himself, which comes out quite clearly in his epistles. He says here he is only preaching the crucifixion, which is not quite true because he lays down a lengthy series of "thou shalt nots." Many of the things he mentions are of course right, but he is not quite sure of some rules such as celibacy and the woman's role in the community, and he is honest enough to admit it at times. But, on the other hand, he becomes extremely didactic when he feels that he is speaking with the authority of the Lord. Then, this is the way it must be and there is to be no deviation from it in the slightest. But Paul sincerely felt that what he was saying was correct, and he is discussing, consciously or unconsciously, the basis of his own inner conflicts. Paul had a great degree of knowledge, but he did not have the benefit of personal contact with Jesus. And I do think that, since he was so brilliant, had he had a real spiritual experience he would have understood much more on his own. We should always bear in mind that there are degrees of spiritual experience.

A spiritual experience for a man like Paul who from the beginning was destined to be a man of God in one capacity or another, caused a complete change as it would for anyone. Because of his very fine mentality, he was able to assess what it meant in terms of his own being, which is why he talks so much about what he calls the "foolishness of God and the wisdom of man." No one knows the reality of this until he has an experience of this nature. Suddenly you are to some degree stripped of—call it knowledge or intellect. All of the concepts which you felt of such importance are suddenly made as nothing because of this overwhelming simplicity of life. You suddenly realize we live in a network of madness, and the only sanity is to be found in these moments of what we call the "foolishness of God." But we have also seen in Paul's case that this did not mean a complete illumination in regard to the teaching of Jesus or of Paul's interpretation.

CHAPTER 3. I think this is one of the most beautiful chapters of Paul. He takes as his theme Jesus' parable of the Sower and

the Seed; where some fell on fertile ground and grew and some fell on rock and wasted away. He is saying that he or any other teacher can only teach, but what you do with it is up to you. He repeats this basic idea in many beautiful variations. We gather from this that there was quite a feud between the three factions, as we mentioned before. We all know how vehement followers can be at times, and Paul is trying to make them realize that it is not important what they get or from whom they get it as long as it means something to them and they do something about it.

This reminds me of one of the wisest statements I have ever heard, which was: *"Get the message; forget the messenger."* Nothing could be more true. And this is what Paul is saying here. Again his humanness is shown in the fact that there are moments when he does not actually believe this himself, as his actions show. But at least he has those periods when he is trying to make them realize that all he, or anyone else, can do is to teach, and that the only thing that is important is that they accept the teaching, understand it and to the best of their ability, utilize it.

At the end of the chapter he very definitely makes the point that the Presence of God is in each of us. Or, take the 11th verse for example, he is not saying that Jesus is God, but that he is a man. He is saying that Jesus is the demonstrator: the example which we can follow. Then at the end he says "Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Christ is another name for the Indwelling Christ, I Am, or whatever you want to call the Presence of God, or the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this respect, probably one of his most famous texts, and one which we use frequently, is "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." On the other hand, I look at Paul sometimes and say, "If you knew this, and you were familiar with the ornate magnificence of the Jewish temples, why is it that you do not think the body should be dressed up a bit? Why must it be subjected to every discomfort?" So we find not only a disparity between what he says and what he does, but the inner conflict of the dawning understanding of the Presence of God in the individual. We find that Paul is extremely human in this growth in understanding, and we get a clear picture of it through his epistles. Every writer gives far more away about himself than he has any intention of doing: it is inevitable for anyone who is in the public eye to any degree. No human being can conceal his personal attributes, and with Paul they are sometimes amazingly distinct.

CHAPTER 4. Paul is fighting for his place in the sun against the followers of Apollos and Cephas. He did not like the way he had been received and he had not come into his own as he had expected. He evidently resents his lack of success. Of course this brings up a very interesting question which is pertinent to Paul and certainly to our noble selves: where is the fine line between spiritual pride and altruism? It is a very, very fine line. For instance, let us delve into this episode for the moment, because one of the most fascinating questions in the epistles is what is Paul fighting for?

There is no metaphysical teacher or student who does not think that his understanding of metaphysics is the correct interpretation. There are many metaphysical teachers who would not agree with what I present, but that is quite all right with me. But Paul is not content with this, he wants the groups which are following the other teachers. It would be as if I felt that certain other groups were too big and their leaders were not teaching what I taught, so I decided to "raid" Unity because, after all, they should all be under my banner. Paul has yet to learn the first step of metaphysics, one which remains with us all the way: "when the student is ready, the teacher appears." In other words, the people who followed Peter were right for Peter; the people who followed Apollos were right for Apollos; and the people who followed Paul were right for Paul.

Let us translate this into our own terms. Metaphysics is a widespread teaching, and there are hundreds, if not thousands, of metaphysical groups throughout the country. We all believe that God is the only Presence and the only Power, but from there on we may differ. Some of the groups rarely use the Bible: we use the Bible as a textbook. To them it is much more a teaching of mental power than what we call metaphysics, but they also call it metaphysics. They do not believe in reincarnation and cannot understand why we do. These are a few of the differences in approach, and the people who are right for those groups would not be right for us, and vice versa. It is not a question, naturally, of whether we or they are better, it is simply that each student is where he belongs. But Paul has not learned this. This is fascinating as it once more shows what Paul unconsciously reveals about himself, for here he is being very human under the guise of being spiritual and helpfully instructive.

It also reveals Paul's attitude towards Peter. Despite the fact

that Paul's experience was not a physical contact with Jesus, as Peter's had been, Paul barely tolerates Peter: he never really accepts him on his own terms. Peter, who was a very simple, lovable person with tremendous faith was certainly no match for Paul intellectually, but that is no reason to have less regard for his understanding. Paul had, as they say in the Scotchman's prayer, "a good conceit" of himself.

Verse 10 is a vivid example of Paul's sarcasm, and he certainly knew how to use it. He is saying that by the Corinthian's standards he and his followers were fools because they were living on crumbs and they, on the other hand, were wise in their wealth. His sarcasm, of course, is based upon his own concept of poverty being the way of following Jesus. At the same time it once more brings up the question of what it is that he wants. He does not want money from them, he wants the following and adoration of the crowd.

One of the greatest lessons I ever learned from Emmet Fox came in my first appointment with him. I was terribly thrilled and grateful for what I had learned; I wanted to do something to show my gratitude, and I believed in tithing. I was still in business at the time and I had worked out an idea which I was very excited about. I had a very strong "in" with Life Magazine, and they were interested in my idea of doing a series of pictures and an article on Emmet Fox. And so, I said to him, "They are fascinated and would give you at least four pages." He replied, "That is most kind, but I cannot accept it. You can do anything you want on the movement, and I will help you, but you cannot do anything on Emmet Fox personally." I said, "But you are the movement." And he said, "No, that is not quite so. I'll tell you why I am going to turn you down and you may not understand it yet, but in time you will. You know, anyone who is in the public eye to any degree, or who has any sort of a following, is always in danger of being swayed by the adulation of the crowd. And the moment I allow myself to be influenced by that, that moment the source of my inspiration is cut off." Well, I could not understand it at that time; all I could think of was "four pages in Life!" Then a little while later I understood. But Paul never learned that, and here he is being sarcastic and slightly bitter because he has not acquired the following he wants.

CHAPTER 5. This certainly does not agree with the feelings Jesus had towards people of this type. It is a totally different

approach from what Jesus taught. If you remember, when Jesus was censured for eating with the publicans and so-called sinners, he said that he came to heal the sick, for those who were well had no need of it. We will see that Paul speaks of forgiveness more often as we go through the letters, but Paul never really understood forgiveness.

He was motivated in this, first of all, by his desire to be the foremost disciple. And secondly, in his need for popular acclaim, he formulates his own ideas of what he thinks Jesus taught. Actually, if any of the Christian creeds really referred directly to the sayings of Jesus—even though we have them in an altered form—they would find that it completely differs from what is taught in the churches today. Each man who has followed has given his own account of what he thought Jesus meant, and the further away in time they were from Jesus the more corrupt the teaching became. I use the word corrupt, not in the sense of evil, but in the sense of distorted meaning. Therein lies the difficulty. This is the reason why the only gospel which has a truly authentic foundation of truth is the Gospel of John. This was the teaching which was so far above the heads of the editors that they could not understand it and so they left many parts of it intact. Here, however, it is not a question of editing. Paul is formulating his own theology, rather than what Jesus taught. Paul's theology is very close to the pattern of Aristotle, which became the foundation of the Catholic church. Paul reverts completely to the orthodox concepts of cleanliness; and what is unclean, according to Paul's own ideas, is to be shunned or removed.

CHAPTER 6. Here again Paul unconsciously reveals himself. He verbally scourges the others because they have not accepted his teaching—because anyone who accepts his teaching is saved—and he tells them not to “judge,” but what is he doing? He is taking it upon himself to judge because he is the disciple of Jesus. When we get to the letters of Peter and John we will find no judgment in any sense. But Paul takes it upon himself to make the difference: you are good if you accept his teaching or you are evil if you do not. Now certainly nobody approves of breaking laws, but on the other hand, there is not one of us who at some time or other has not broken a spiritual law, consciously or unconsciously. By the same token, if we measure ourselves against Paul's moral standards, probably none of us have a right to be in metaphysics. Again, in the case of Mary Magdalene, Jesus did not

judge, but Paul is rather vehement in his condemnation.

Once again we find those personal peculiarities and contradictory texts which we have come to associate with Paul. One of the greatest texts for healing in the Bible is verse 19: "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost within you." "Your body is the temple of the living God." I can testify to innumerable healings of students who have used this text and of myself when I have used it. But this text is found in a section dealing with the evils of mankind. Certainly it is true that your body is the temple of the living God. This is true of everybody and is not reserved for those of us who have found metaphysics.

Now Paul speaks of fornication in the sense of sexual indulgence, but in the broadest possible meaning of adultery, we all adulterate our beliefs and the form this takes is dependent upon your particular religion. If you are a Jew you are not supposed to eat anything but kosher food. If you are a Catholic you are supposed to eat fish on Friday. The Jews eat fish whenever they wish, but they will not eat milk and butter with meat; whereas the Catholics do. Before you know it, everyone, in some way or another is committing a misdemeanor according to the particular religion which is judging the action. Again, Jesus ate meat, drank wine and he said repeatedly that it did not matter what you put into your mouth, just what came out of it. Paul touches on this in verses 12-14 but he is unable to follow it through.

It is true that Corinth was a wide-open town in terms of sex. But it is still interesting to see how very quickly Paul moves from the point of aggravation at those who have not accepted him to his really favorite theme of sex. I think that he is one of the most tragic figures in the entire Bible. He was a great man in many ways, and his love for what he thought Jesus had taught and what the faith meant to him was very real, but I have always felt that, because of his affliction and his physical unattractiveness he was sexually frustrated.

Paul also says that the body itself has no part in the planning of the idea of sin, which is of course true. But again, this is one of the subtle points he can be picked up on for, if that is true, then the thing to do is to clean the mind, not the body, and Paul places the greatest emphasis on the body. This again relates to the idea that his thought and concern, consciously and unconsciously was largely with sex and the physical side of life. It happens very

often with people who are of this temperament and who have no means of expressing themselves, and are not living what we would call a fairly normal life. This pent up frustration comes out in many strange ways, and they become almost tyrannical in their condemnation of anything pertaining to sex.

I do not think Paul would have attracted me to metaphysics or made a convert of me if I had met him at that time. I think I would have found him very unsympathetic and would have turned to one of the others, probably Peter or John, or even Thomas. I remember when I first read the epistles I had very little sympathy for Paul: I did not like him. However, as I studied the letters another picture of a very human person emerged. Paul believed in the immortality of the spirit and that there was no death; and this undoubtedly gave him some satisfaction when he passed from the scene, since he did not get much in this life. Although he is constantly saying "I want nothing for me" he wanted appreciation desperately. His chapter on love is one of the greatest pleas for it, as we will see. "If I have not love, I am nothing." He knew this. While he was certainly teaching that love was a love of brotherhood, he was also pleading for Paul. And the final section of the chapter, beginning with "When I was a child . ." shows us a man searching his own soul. I do not always agree with Paul, but I am very fond of him—at times.

CHAPTER 7. As we have seen, there were many followers of the Egyptian religion in Corinth, and they gave women a place of honor in their worship. In contrast to this, Paul is saying that the woman is nothing; she is completely under her husband's rule and has no mind of her own. This did not have too great an appeal, not only to the possible Egyptian converts, but to those of other faiths as well. This is one point which the church overlooks in Paul's teaching. The Catholic church says "marry and be fruitful," but Paul says "very, very infrequently." Paul very definitely believed in celibacy.

In his fanaticism and zeal and his insistence that he and he alone knew, Paul has originated many misconceptions which have caused great guilt and unhappiness in the world. In verse 13 we find the beginning of the doctrine that if you are not of the same faith, or share the same belief, your marriage is religiously invalid to begin with and so separation is allowed. Paul phrases it that a marriage between a believer and non-believer may end in separation whereas one between believers cannot be dissolved. It is a pity, because

religion in the twentieth century and the western world would have had a completely different concept if Paul had met a woman who loved him, married her and had a child. Do you realize that we would have had a completely different theology?

God has never been extravagant in anything He has given man. Everything He has given us is supposed to be used, not abused. I certainly go along with Paul when he lambasts perversions as he does here and in Romans, but he carries it to the extreme that sex itself is wrong. He must have given many of his converts guilt complexes, for with his oratory and power of persuasion he did have the ability to direct their thinking to a great degree. In addition to that, people at that time were just beginning to learn of Jesus and his seeming miracles, and their enthusiasm also enabled Paul to sway them to his line of thinking to a certain extent.

Paul is caught on this one point and he returns to it again and again. Now, if you recall, in the beginning of the chapter, after speaking about continence in the first five verses, in verse 6 he says "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself . . .". He does not say that this is the Law of God: he says he believes this is so, and, in all fairness to him, he repeats this several times.

Despite the fact that he wrote what is probably the most beautiful treatise on love that is known, he knew very little of human love, which is amazing. I have no doubt that he loved Jesus after his encounter with him, but I have always had the feeling that he did what he did—placing himself in constant jeopardy—not so much for the love of people as for the great pleasure he derived from the plaudits of the crowd. He enjoyed being Paul. He has a tremendous ego which comes to the fore time and time again. And the esoteric meaning of his change of name also indicates this.

We discussed the Cabalistic meaning before, but there is an additional analysis which makes it even more clear in the present context. In Hebrew Saul is spelled Shin, Aleph, Lamed: Paul is, Peh, Aleph, Lamed. *Shin* is a Hebrew letter shaped like a three branched candlestick with flames shooting upwards, and it represents creative energy, fire. *Aleph* is the symbol of the physical body and *Lamed* is represented by the phrase "Thy will not my will be done." So the name Saul refers to a drive towards the goal of God. In Paul we have *Aleph*, the body; *Lamed*, "Thy will," and we

also have *Peh*. Remember that *Peh* in the Tarot cards is the Tower: the destruction and discarding of everything which is unworthy and unusable. Here Paul is throwing out what *in his mind* is unworthy and unusable. But he is not doing it for himself alone: he is making himself a model whom everyone else should follow. And, for this reason, a psychologist who did a good study on Paul would say that he was an extremely destructive teacher. What he did to himself is one thing, but what he did to others is another thing.

CHAPTER 8. In those days food was a most vital issue which aroused many discussions. The Jews had a concept, which Catholics also accept, that the food offering to God is reserved for God. In the Old Testament, you will recall, they sacrificed cattle and sheep or birds and doves to God. It was considered a sin to eat any food which had been consecrated to God. Now in the various religions in Corinth there were many forms of sacrifices to idols. The question had arisen as to whether the food offered to idols was consecrated to the same degree, for it seems that some of the new converts ate these offerings rather than see them go to waste. Paul, of course, being very much imbued with the Jewish concept, was horrified that anyone would eat a temple sacrifice. But, intellectually at least, he had by now realized one thing which Jesus taught, and that was that food does not defile the man. We should not forget that he was addressing a group of people with very mixed ideas of the use of sacrifice and the kind of food they were permitted to eat, so he tries to clarify the situation for them. Paul tells them the most important thing to realize is that it does not matter what goes into your mouth, but what comes out of it.

On the other hand, the Catholics, based on the date of the Crucifixion, do not believe in eating meat on Friday. This did not originate with Paul, but was added later. The Jews, in a fast diminishing number, have adherents to dietary laws which are based on the sanitary code instituted by Moses. But there is another idea behind these differing concepts of food which has been known for many centuries. That is that the physical body can impede the growth or the progress of the Spirit if it overindulges in food and drink. I am sure all of us have had the experience of eating too much of some especially marvelous food, at one time or another, and we all realize that that is not the time to sit down and meditate for we are more than liable to fall asleep if we do. Many religions teach that one should eat little at all times and fast in times of deep meditation. Fasting can clarify the thought process, it is true. I

am not in favor of fasting, but I am in favor of eating moderately. Eat what you feel you need, not what you feel you want. In that way you condition your body to stay out of the way, and you are free to meditate at any time. If you are going to indulge in over-eating all the time you are not going to get your spiritual wings very far off the ground. It is impossible.

The idea of fasting is a very old one. The church advocates it although not strictly, at the time of Lent, for example. The Jewish Day of Atonement is a day of fasting, not for the purpose of prayer, but for the purpose of atonement. The Jews deem this fast a self-inflicted punishment to show their love for God. They are atoning for the sins of the past year by doing without the food that He has given them. It is a symbol of repentance and atonement. However, in both these cases food is given a power it does not possess.

CHAPTER 9. First of all, in all fairness, I think the editors or translators did a rather bad job here because some of the sentences are very unclear. But there is one thing which does strike you about this chapter which is not the result of translation. One of the faults which Paul had not yet overcome is criticism. As we know, he has quite a healthy ego, and he is just slightly critical of everyone else, and he does not approve of the way the others do anything. The way he does things he feels is right and, therefore, his way is law.

In verse 18 he says that he preaches "the gospel of Christ without charge," but so did the other disciples. The only difference between them was that Paul was not attached to the eleven and the support they received from the tithing of their followers. Paul is criticizing this. Remember when Jesus sent the apostles out to teach and heal he told them to take what was given them. Now obviously Paul knows more than Jesus because he is saying that they are wrong and that he does it free of charge. Paul repeatedly makes the point in almost all of his letters that he would not take any money and he worked for his living as a tentmaker. He carried this like a badge of honor: "I refuse to take any money." In contrasting the strong and the weak here, Paul makes it clear that he thinks he is better than they are. For instance, he starts out "Am I not an apostle, am I not free: have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are ye not my work in the Lord?" He is putting forth his credentials. And then he says "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye

in the Lord." In other words, if it had not been for Paul, they would not have found God. The section beginning with verse 20 is slightly redundant, but he is attributing to himself the fact that without him they would not be saved. This is completely in contradiction with the statement "When the student is ready, the teacher appears."

These are some other reasons why this man is such a fascinating psychological figure. He did have a tremendous power over people and he had a magnificent use of rhetoric. Here we see only certain remnants of it, because it has been badly edited in many ways. They have kept that part of his teaching which is particularly important to the theological development which followed Paul, and they have also retained enough of the original to reveal his personal characteristics to anyone who reads the text objectively. They have not put words in Paul's mouth: these are Paul's words. How much they took out is another thing.

Paul apparently feels as though he is on trial, and he has a sense of rivalry with the other disciples which they do not have for him. He is going to show that he is the greatest of the apostles: this is his goal. Jesus taught that we are to find and enter the kingdom of God within each of us, and I do not think that Paul had the experience or the background of mysticism to understand this. To him it was still a very personal issue: he uses I, I, I repeatedly. He is quite definite in his statements and he believed in his own superiority. He felt that he had an advantage over the disciples because he was well-educated, but they had something which was much more important, they had love and faith.

You know, anyone who teaches or is (as Evelyn Underhill describes it) a counselor of human souls, has a certain satisfaction when they see the results of a teaching, but it is not the personal issue that Paul makes it. He feels that he is personally, physically responsible for everyone who hears his voice, which partly accounts for his tremendous drive to make converts. He was trying to get a spiritual crown by gathering the largest number of people. This became almost a physical contest in the realm of the Spirit. I am perfectly sure it meant just as much to the other disciples to spread the teaching, but they did not feel that they were the only means by which you could find God. In my own case, I am very concerned with everyone who comes to the lectures and with every student who takes the Lecture and Bible Series, but I am not personally responsible if you continue or you do not. It

is not going to bring me a crown in heaven if you stay in metaphysics with me.

We are each individuals and we are here to use what we learn and use it as well as we can. But the person who instructs you is not personally responsible for what you decide to do about it. That is why I say so often, I cannot live your life; I can only give you help. If you come to me for help I will certainly give what I am able to, but I cannot be in your mind twenty-four hours a day, therefore, I cannot be responsible for what you decide to do.

CHAPTER 10. I think on the basis of what we now understand about Paul this section is fairly clear, so we need touch on only a few points. In verse 16 we see the format for the theological doctrine of communion which is completely different than the actual meaning of the Last Supper as we saw in the gospels. In verse 33 Paul says all things are lawful for me, or, in other words, I am above the Law, and in one sense, he is right. When you get to the stage, which Paul evidently knew about, where you are united with the Presence you are also in control of the Law. You use the Law properly and it brings forth accordingly, and you can never use it improperly.

To put this in another way, what is the difference between metaphysics and mysticism, or gnosticism? In metaphysics you work for something. In gnosticism, you know. You do not have to work for it because you live on that level of consciousness where you know it is already there. That is the main thing. If Paul is using this in this sense, he is talking about something which he believes but I do not think he had achieved, because he had too much to undo personally.

In verse 20 he is speaking of those Gentiles who were not yet converted. In Corinth there were many cults which indulged in a variety of occult practices. Paul was very much against this, and quite rightly. But it is probable that many of them became converted in the same way that people will sometimes come into metaphysics. They continue to attend the church of the faith in which they were born while being a metaphysics, and certainly we do not think this is wrong. But to Paul this is blasphemy for there should be an undivided allegiance to God, which implied to his teaching about God. The people who made the sacrifices to which he refers had as much faith in their religion, strange though its form may have been, as any Jew, Catholic, Methodist, etc., has in his religion today. The person suddenly begins to see a new con-

cept and, at the same time, while he is accepting this new idea he still maintains his contact with the old.

Let us put this into a personal frame of reference. We believe that there is only one healer and that is God. But if a person goes to the doctor, there is no reason why he should not treat as well: he goes, very simply, because his faith is not sufficient to heal himself without aid. The same thing is true when a person is in a particular creed and still has not developed enough faith in metaphysics to feel that he has outgrown the other. It is exactly the same idea. And, as we know, as yet we have very few metaphysicians who can do without doctors.

We are geared to the point where we differentiate between the levels of our being. If we want to achieve something physically: it has to take this much time. If we want to achieve an emotional or mental goal, it has to take this much time; and spiritually it does not take time. Very few of us have reached the point where we realize that Spirit is outside of time and that it is not necessary to have the time. It is only necessary to get high enough in consciousness, and the lower planes of our being must then conform to that.

CHAPTER 11. Interestingly enough, apropos of this chapter, the Jewish male did not cover his head during worship until the fourth century A.D. We know that hair is the symbol of strength, which is why orthodox Jews do not cut their hair. As you remember in the story of Samson, when his hair was cut his strength was gone. Jesus did not believe in the importance of the head being covered or uncovered, but once again Paul took the authority upon himself to say that this was the way it had to be: men must worship God with bare heads in order to be open to the inspiration of God. He believed a covering would interfere with that inspiration. Jesus also never taught that women were less able to receive the inspiration of God than men, or that they should wear head coverings, Paul decided they should.

Now, if the Presence of God is in each and every one of us, as He is, then that Presence is with us no matter what we do or where we are; whether we are in meditation or taking a bath. Paul is putting the idea of God, or the Presence of God, somewhere "up there" and we have to watch everything we do in order to be in perfect form at all times. But from the point of symbolism, hair is called the "crown of glory" not really for its beauty, but because it means strength, and glory always includes strength. Whether a

man has short or long hair, and it is covered or uncovered has nothing to do with his contact with the Presence of God.

Aside from the fact that Paul's attitude towards women was extremely narrow and bitter, these chapters in particular have been very badly edited, for in some instances they make little or no sense. The Bible did pass through many hands and religion of course has its vogues in the same way that styles had their vogues. So in many instances we find a complete distortion of what was really meant. However, since we have no original transcript with which to compare these texts, we can only assume that the ideas stated here were originally Paul's, and they do relate to what we know of him.

Coupled with Paul considering himself to be the final authority, is his apparent newness as a follower of Jesus, which is evidenced by the degree of his vanity and ego. These personal characteristics would be the first stumbling block to be changed in applying the teaching. When we come into metaphysics there is one thing we must all learn before we really learn anything else. It is said very gently in the beginning, and that is that there is a greater intelligence within you than you are conscious of. If you think this through you suddenly begin to realize that what this really means is that you are not as smart consciously as you thought you were. There is a greater intelligence. As you go on, you begin to realize as you allow it to work through you, that there is this great power centered within you; this great love within you. And you cannot help but be humble. You do not become the final word or become critical of everyone else as Paul is. So you realize that there is a strange mixture in this man, even though there was a great deal of love and longing for truth, it was a great part of Paul's conflict.

What do we work on when we get into metaphysics? Changing our personalities. You can describe this by many other words, but you are told to rout out all of the negative qualities from your subconscious. These negative qualities are some of the attributes which strongly contribute to your personality. What is a personality? It is the outpicturing of what is in your conscious mind and your subconscious as well. Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "What you are shouts so loudly I cannot hear a word you say." What we try to do is to make our words conform to our actions, and changing the personality—getting rid of the negation—is the first step in this process. Then we see many amazing changes take place in our lives. But Paul had not gotten to the point where he did much changing.

There is another very interesting point which we should realize in view of what we have learned of Paul and his teaching. All of the other disciples were teaching during this period, but the only teaching which has been preserved to any extensive degree is Paul's. The reason for this is obvious. The teachings of Peter—who was as close to Jesus as John—John and Thomas were not acceptable to the church because they taught what Jesus had told them and the church did not understand it. Paul taught what Paul thought, and that conformed to what the early church wanted, or was able to hear. The others had some degree of spiritual experience with and after Jesus, and so they knew. Paul had only the one experience of being told that he was to be a disciple. This changed him from an orthodox Jew into a follower, but he became a follower on his own terms, not on the terms of Jesus. Someone, commenting on why Jesus had chosen Paul, once said that Jesus knew that the karma of the world was such that it was not ready for a higher teaching, and Paul could at least start it going, and I quite agree.

CHAPTER 12. This is a very brilliant chapter and I think it is sufficiently clear to need little discussion. He is speaking specifically of the fact that in Corinth, as it was throughout that area at that time, there was a great interest and participation in all forms of psychic phenomena. This is also one of the intriguing points of theological choice. Paul is quite right in warning them about these things, and telling them to use discrimination in appraising them. But, since the church bases the greater part of its doctrine on Paul, what did the church do with the gifts listed in verses 8-10? This is an area which the churches never touch. The only remnant of it is found in the ritual of bells and incense used in the Mass to ward off evil spirits. What happened to healing in the churches? What happened to miracles or, as we would call them, demonstrations? It is considered to be the field of witchcraft by the orthodox churches, with the exception of the healings which takes place at shrines such as Lourdes. On the other hand, a trend of healing, which was begun by a woman named Agnes Sanford, has grown in the Episcopal church to the extent that several ministers have healing services and even practice laying on of hands, and we may find this once again becoming a part of religion. However, the chapter is particularly fascinating in this respect since it is one of the few areas of Paul's teaching which the churches have heretofore ignored.

CHAPTER 13. This is, I believe, the most beautiful chapter Paul ever wrote. If you made this chapter the guidepost throughout your life, you would need nothing else. That is absolutely true. If any of us, including Paul of course, were able to really incorporate these ideas and the idea of what Love really is into ourselves we would never need anything more. Augustine said so beautifully, "Love God, and do as you please," and if you really have enough love in your heart it is impossible to do wrong. That is a very tremendous concept in a few insignificant words. I think we should all think about this from time to time. We should realize that, no matter what problems we have in our lives, when we get to the point where we see our fellowman—whether or not we care for him personally—as a spiritual being who is entitled to the same good that we are, and we go out of our way to help him wherever it is possible, we begin to know what Love is.

Apropos of this, I had a healing myself when I first came into metaphysics which taught me a great deal. It was not an especially wonderful healing from the physical point of view, although it was a painful condition, but its value lay in another area. I sprained my foot quite badly and could not seem to take care of it metaphysically, so I finally went to bed. I did not treat it. I decided to meditate on Love. For the first time in my life, as I really began to pursue this idea, I realized that there were three component parts to love, kindness, understanding and forbearance. I became so completely engrossed in the subject that I had no idea of time: it could have taken ten minutes or an hour. But I fell asleep on that meditation and when I awakened in the morning the sprain, which usually takes a couple of weeks to heal, was completely gone. I was fascinated. I was not only completely thrilled by my own greater understanding of what Love really meant, but also because I realized what I had done without any particular conscious thought of doing it. I had so tuned up the vibrations of my being that I had raised my consciousness to the plane where this physical organism had to respond. This is one reason why I always say that you should never bring the negative aspect of a situation into your meditation or treatment; do not even mention it. If you can, whenever you have a problem, whether it is physical, mental or emotional, take your mind completely off of the problem and meditate on an aspect of God, preferably Love.

I would suggest that once a week you sit down and meditate on this chapter. It would not be a bad idea to memorize it. It is

true of this chapter as it is of anything that contains Truth; you can never exhaust it. You can never come to the end of what it means. Each time you think you have understood all it has to say, and you return to it later, you will find that there is much more. Consequently you learn, and you learn in a very strange way. Metaphysical development, or metaphysical teaching is a strange experience for most of us. Teachers can guide you, books can give you instruction, but you can never know any of these things until you have experienced them for yourself. I can tell you things and you can tell me things, and we can believe each other because we know that we are telling the truth, but it does not have an affect until you yourself have done it.

A student of mine was very excited recently because she had a healing. She had a fear of health for a long time which she had acquired through another form of metaphysical teaching which forbids medical aid, and that is now gone. She knows that she made a healing through speaking the Word and meditation over a condition which could have been serious, and so the fear is gone. This will do something for her that all of the years of coming to see me, all of the meditations, all of the lectures and books could never do, because now she has had the experience. This is why I am continually stressing the need for your own experience. We all need to develop the fullness of the planes of consciousness in ourselves. We cannot know this until we do and, returning to this chapter, until you have the experience, or realization of Love within yourself, you never know. It is the same point which I make so often: until we get to the state where we have a contact with the Presence, we do not *know*.

Now, in this chapter we see the real Paul speaking, and we see too that he is so caught up in the realization of the subject that he too is changed. It is without doubt one of the most magnificent and greatest truths we have. Dr. Fox used to have a saying which is very beautiful: "Love is the lord of karma:" if you love enough, everything negative is wiped away. And of course love is something we certainly could have more of in this world. But this is one of the high moments which Paul reaches and it shows that this man had a tremendous potential. The man who wrote this, while he was writing or thinking it, certainly also felt it, even though he could not sustain the feeling. We come across some very strongly negative characteristics in the epistles, but at least this was his goal, even though he could not always realize it within himself.

It is also a fascinating chapter because he touches so many points of which we should all be aware. One of the dangers in our understanding of love is that many people feel that if you love a person you must become a doormat for them. God is Love, but love without intelligence is sloppy sentimentality, and intelligence without love is often hard and snobbish, so there must be a union between love and intelligence. For instance, no person in the whole world showed more love than Jesus, yet he did not let people get away with anything. For example, what he did with the money changers: or what he said to the scribes and Pharisees: "ye generation of vipers." Did he love? He did them more good than if he had let them get away with it, because he just may have opened their minds a bit and made them look for themselves. If one of them had come to him and said, "What must I do to change" he would be the first to open his arms and show him. That is love.

As we have seen, Jesus also had a very healthy temper. The belief that anyone who follows the mystic path, because this is mysticism, is supposed to be weak and pathetic and at the mercy of the world is totally incorrect. They are not. They are the strongest people in the world. And, if you are strong, you usually have a pretty good temper as well, but you do not explode unnecessarily and without reason. This has never been a namby-pamby teaching, although religious teachers from the first century on have tried to make it so. They have pictured God as the universal power and those who are supposed to be His chosen (if such a thing were possible) as people who are always punished by humanity and have to submit to that punishment. I have never been able to understand this conception, and quite the contrary is true.

Before we leave this chapter, I might mention that when Paul speaks of prophecy he means it in the full sense of the word as we found in the great prophets of the Old Testament. One of the gifts of the Spirit is prophecy. This is not fortune telling; it is not prediction from the point of view of "Don't go outdoors on the 20th, it is a bad day for you." But we do know that when you begin to have these experiences you are given the power to comprehend certain cosmic knowledge which accompanies them. You find that all of these particular gifts of the Spirit, and there are many, begin to develop as you grow yourself and reach their fullness as you become a fully integrated person.

CHAPTER 14. This chapter should not be too mystifying

since we have spoken of these manifestations in other contexts. First of all, prophecy was quite prevalent in those days, especially with the Jews who came from a race of famous prophets. Also, speaking with tongues was part of many of the religious rites and after the day of Pentecost this spread in the new centers as well. It was also true that even if people did not actually have the ability (and I question the word ability) they often forced themselves or put on an act to make themselves important. Of course when people whip themselves into a religious frenzy the result is often jibberish, and in some instances this happened here as well. Consequently, Paul who does not quite know if they are genuine or not, is wise enough to say "If you cannot interpret it yourself, then go home and meditate, and tell what your meditation brought forth as explanation." Most of these people who were speaking with tongues, as well as their hearers, did not know what was said, and the new church was in danger of being taken over by confusion and emotionalism. It was quite a danger point. This also brings up the question of how much Truth was held in esteem by the people who followed Paul. Were they really sincere? As in this case, did these experiences actually occur or were they simulated in order to make the person appear important? I might also add that in those days the prophets were very well paid, so this was also a means of livelihood, of which Paul was quite aware.

CHAPTER 15:1-29. In this chapter we find another quite different tone. We also see that Paul has still not learned humility. In verse 10 there is a line which I think is a rather poignant indication of Paul's personality: "but I labored more abundantly than they all:" he tries to make sure that his work is appreciated. But it is interesting to see that here Paul is very close to the truth of why Jesus came in that great statement in verse 26: "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The idea of Jesus dying for our sins, on the other hand, is Paul's own concept and that of the early fathers. Jesus never said that his death would wipe away our sins. First of all, he did not believe in sin. And secondly, no one knew better than he that he could do nothing more than show the way. But the real reason for his coming was not only to teach us the next step and show us how to live, but to show what the 23rd Psalm expresses, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the *shadow* of death;" that there is no reality to death. And here we are, some two thousand years later and, even among those who consciously believe this, there are very few who believe it subconsciously.

One of the pathetic deprivations which the churches have imposed upon their followers is in refusing to allow the idea of life on other planes and the possibility of communication between a person here and a person there to be accepted by their members. Actually, the only valid use for spiritualism is that it proves to you, if you ever have the experience (again the word experience) that there is no death. If you have ever really seen someone you knew who has gone on and *you* know it is real, you know there is no death. This was a widespread belief in Paul's time. It was only after his time that it began to be deleted from the Bible, as we see in the Apocrypha. However, most of the later leaders had not had the experience, and if they did not have it, it could not be so. Our admonition of keeping an open mind did not apply to the church fathers. If the church had allowed that concept of continual life and allowed people to contact those who were close to them, think of the millions and millions of heartbreaks resulting from our concept of death which would have been avoided.

In describing the change called death, I very often use the example of a person who was very dear to you being suddenly offered a wonderful position on the other side of the world. They went to South America or Australia to live and you were not going to see them for a while. You both were much too busy to write, but you were close to each other in thought. This is what it is like, but we have not been allowed to think that. If this idea had been permitted to grow naturally in people it would not have been abused as it is today through fear. Paul was quite right when he said Jesus came to abolish death. The most important part of his mission was to prove to us that death did not exist and few there be who as yet really believe it. Paul had come a long way, but he had been raised a Jew. The only thing which could have made him personally believe that there was no death was his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus. He knew. He not only saw, but he also knew the result of his experience. No one in the world could tell Paul that it had not been Jesus, and so he knew that there was no death.

Regardless of the fact that Paul is referring to his belief that Jesus is God, we should look into the meaning of the words of the 17th verse: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain, ye are yet in your sins." The corollary to this is "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." We can say that Paul is talking about the need of bodily resurrection, which

is the orthodox interpretation. It may also be that the words have been altered to refer to a physical resurrection, but the original quotation of Jesus from the gospel did not refer to this. Whether Paul meant it as such or whether he unconsciously voiced words which could be read on a much deeper level, we do not know. However, the deeper level is what we must watch for in the Bible. Too, Paul used the word sin which Jesus did not use. We are still very ignorant, which is the cause of much of our trouble. But, actually, not only from the Christian point of view, but from that of the Eastern religions as well, if we are unaware of the Presence within we are not in sin, we are dead. We are functioning on what we might call a "one horse power motor," because we only live on one level of existence, which is the meaning of Paul's statement.

We have spoken of the belief of the orthodox and fundamentalist creeds that when you say you believe and accept Jesus as your saviour your salvation is assured, and their literal interpretation of this statement is the origin for their belief. We have discussed Paul's understanding of the resurrection, but we should remind ourselves of it when reading this chapter. Paul, with the other disciples with the exception of John, suffered from the delusion that martyrdom was the way of following Jesus, although it was completely opposed to the reason Jesus chose to die. If Jesus had chosen to prove that there was no death by going into the sea of Galilee and drowning, everyone would have drowned. Whatever Jesus did, they followed, but they "knew the words, but not the music."

Then in verse 21 Paul is attributing to man the choice of following Christ, as he puts it. The power of resurrection does not come from man, but the choice does. It is true we always have the choice. But if we think of the thousands of people who heard Jesus and the other disciples — how many chose to follow? How many to this day choose to follow? That is the big question.

On a much smaller scale, we all have the choice of whether we are going to continue living with our little discomforts, or whether we are going to choose to change ourselves and make ourselves conform to what we now believe. This is always difficult for us in the beginning because we are not trained that way, unfortunately. Until we do make that choice we have our problems. But the gift of healing, or the gift of resurrection, or of any other spiritual gift has already been bestowed upon us.

Whether or not you or I are going to accept it is our choice alone, one which no one else can make for us.

Verses 30-58. Paul seems to alternate between understanding and a literal interpretation with no deeper meaning, and we should become increasingly aware of this distinction. I have known people, and I am sure you have too, who are imbued with the desire to teach and give what they know, but their knowledge is limited. And then, at times, they will suddenly seem to be lifted out of themselves and express a wisdom which is amazing in comparison to the individual's knowledge. I personally believe that from time to time Paul was so filled with a fervor of belief, faith and desire to bring people to this that the Presence in him took over with the result, for example, of chapter 13 on Love. This was no more Paul, the man, speaking than it could have been Herod. Paul was never that gentle a human being. A man who can, no matter how devout he may be, be instrumental in taking a life as he did with Stephen — unless he completely transcends the little self under the impact of his own drive, emotion and desire — cannot sustain this contact and awareness.

This is why I referred to verse 17 before. It is one of the important texts from Paul and yet when it is read in the light of the entire chapter it signifies a belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus, and the belief that Jesus was the Christ. Yet, out of context that text can be read on its highest level. Now in this last section Paul vacillates between right and left. We see here that he does know something of occultism. It is amazing that the later editors retained this section, although they did believe that there was some sort of spiritual body to inhabit after death, and the accounts of Jesus' ascension led them to believe that a new body had suddenly been created. But Paul is referring to the etheric body which houses the mentality and the spirit, and is another term for the subconscious.

There is another point related to this in verse 46 which we should touch on, for it should make the difference in understanding quite clear. Paul says that the "natural" body came before the spiritual, but it is impossible to have the physical unless you first have the spiritual or the etheric form. For instance, in Genesis we are told that God made man in His image and likeness. How did He make man in His image — as a physical body? Do you think God has a physical body? You and I know that you cannot have the physical body unless you first have the etheric. This

is true of everything, human or material. Nothing can exist unless there is first an etheric form which provides the substance from which the physical manifests. This is a physical impossibility, and it is also a spiritual impossibility. The reason I am stressing this is to show that even a man as brilliant as Paul can get a bit confused. From his previous Judaic training he firmly believed that God took a piece of clay, shaped it, made it into a human being and then literally put His breath into him and brought him to life. The main thing to realize is that Paul had gone through so much so fast that he had a bit of "mental indigestion" at times. This is why he vacillates back and forth from the Judaic concept to the one he is just beginning to absorb, resulting in the confusion of ideas which is so noticeable in this section.

Verse 49 is extremely beautiful, but Paul is a bit wrong in his interpretation. It is not that "we shall also bear," but we *do* "bear the image of the heavenly." Let us make this very pragmatic by applying it to the field of demonstration. Let us say, for the sake of argument, a person has a problem in health. Now, when you make a healing, what do you think happens? Do you pull out the negative aspect in the subconscious and put something in its place that is true, or do you believe that the true picture of life is that perfect health is already there and that you are removing that which prevents its manifestation? Which do you believe? We do not put in anything: we are created perfect.

A healing is made by evaporating the negative so that the positive, which has always been there, comes through. When you begin to realize that you also begin to realize what is meant when I say that God is not doing anything for us now. We already have it: we have already been given it. If we have our good clouded over with fear, or if we have accumulated a lot of ideas which we no longer need and cannot seem to get at the reality within ourselves, it does not mean that God is suddenly going to reach down from heaven and give us another dose of reality and say "Here child, use this until you can dig your tunnel to the other." The way to remove the debris is to first become objective about what you want to remove and secondly, to realize the fact that you are using your will, your mind and your meditation to remove it. You are approaching it from two points of view. The same principle applies to any kind of problem, I do not care what that problem may be. We are always the ones who have brought it to pass and we are the only ones who can get rid of it. If we get rid of the

negative concepts within ourselves, the outside must respond.

The same thing applies in treating other people who come to you for help. You can speak the Word for them and make them aware, but you cannot do anything for them unless they want you to. But it is still true that, no matter what the outer pattern may be, the pattern of perfect good is already within us. It is not that we are bringing it in now; it has always been there. All we have to do is to clear off the dust and debris which has collected around it and let that good come through. That is why I repeat again and again: God is not doing anything for you now. When you meditate, it is not to please God; it is to clarify your understanding and bring you into a higher plane of consciousness where you are one with that good. Then the lower planes immediately react.

Again, the same thing is true of absent treatment. The person, or someone who is very close to them, makes the request for help. Point one. Point two, the healing takes place on a telepathic principle: there is no need of physical contact with that person. With the power of thought you are able to contact the Presence of God in them and bring the action of God into manifestation. Remember when Jesus called Lazarus from the grave? What do you think happened? We do not know very much about the life of Lazarus, but we do know that he lived with his two sisters, We know a bit about Martha and Mary and, even though they were followers of Jesus, it does not mean that they were perfect. It could be that poor Lazarus was very henpecked and may have subconsciously sought a way out. This is supposition, but no matter what happened, the point is that the cause of death was removed by the healing in bringing him back to face life. This is the Law.

Our difficulty in studying the Bible is that we approach it from a religious point of view and we do not realize that these are laws at work. As a very simple example, suppose you get a stain on a dress. You put the dress into stain remover to clean it. Perhaps you remove some of it and then you must put it back in again, and you keep doing this until it is finally clean. Once in a while you are more fortunate and when you put it in the stain is immediately removed. It is the same principle. That cleanliness and perfect good of the "heavenly image" is always within us.

CHAPTER 16. Here we see that Paul had another problem in dealing with his centers as well as with himself. It is a problem which we rarely discuss in our branch of metaphysics. As we know,

Paul felt that he should have the power to subsist without any financing whatsoever, and it is well known that this was extremely difficult for him. He fed, clothed and housed himself by means of his trade, and the rest of his time was devoted to meditation, study and teaching. He evidently felt that he should have enough faith in God, which is true, to know that the financial returns he needed would be his. But he personally believed in laboring. However, he did not account for the fact that as his groups grew there was the need of housing them and of paying people who devoted their time to this work. At this point he was making a collection for the center at Jerusalem, and he suddenly found himself faced with a financial problem. Consequently, while he had a complete disdain for money himself, he was forced to speak of tithing.

We remember from the gospels that when Jesus sent the disciples out he told them to depend on the financial offerings of those people who accepted them. Let us apply this to our time, because the main work of the Bible is not only its spiritual teaching, but that this teaching must present itself at the same level and have the same impact in our lives as it did for these people two thousand years ago. But we live in a completely different world. We live in a world where for the past five hundred years we have made a god of money, and so that money has become a most powerful force in our lives. The churches have also helped to strengthen this idea by the wealth they acquire to glorify a symbol. When we see the gold, diamonds and jewels of many churches we cannot help but wonder, "What would Jesus say? What has this to do with the worship of God?"

All of the metaphysical movements that I know function on the concept which Moses instituted and Jesus believed in, which is tithing. But in metaphysics, again depending on what branch you are affiliated with, tithing is a somewhat lackadaisical affair. Now I do not believe that the only way we can tithe is monetarily. I believe we can tithe our time, in healing — there are many ways to do this. But primarily, any group which is designed to spread a teaching is dependent upon the support of its members. For example, many people who take the Lecture Series have contacted us saying that they wish to join the Society and asking how much they should donate. We send them a membership card which says that they may donate whatever they feel they can. We receive tithes from people we have never met, and if it is only a monthly dollar it is a great help.

On the other hand, I have spoken to other metaphysical teachers who feel about their own immediate groups as one teacher in the west expressed it: "Unless you constantly remind them, they do not do anything." I think that is a horrible thing to do. Many of these same people feel that you must charge for counseling and healing because you cannot depend upon people to do their part. I do not feel that way. I believe very firmly that God is the source of my supply. On the other hand, I am aware when people "cut corners," but that is their problem, not mine.

But Paul now begins to see that when it comes to the maintenance of an organization, he cannot do it all. If you want something you must pay for it. We never get anything for nothing, and we only get from it what we give to it: not only in devotion and meditation and living the life, but by the symbol of our physical actions. The only proper use of this symbolism is that it represents to the individual a token of gratitude. Words are very beautiful to say and hear, but we have to do more. We have to implement our words and if we do not we are the loser. And Paul is wrestling with this concept here. It is particularly interesting to see because as a rule he is so sure of everything he does. He is completely certain that he is right in what he tells you to do. Here, after writing at length about the fact that he does not require financial assistance, he is saying in effect, "I do not need your help, but help the group to grow and pay expenses, and please tithe regularly."

There is no doubt that Paul is the most complex figure in the Bible. He is a mixture of fanatic and mystic, frustration and accomplishment, hard task-master and gentleness, egotistic throughout, but driven to give his understanding of what Jesus taught.

That he worshipped God - there is no doubt. That he adored Jesus, - there is no doubt. But both God and Jesus were heads to fit Paul's concepts. Paul was sure that he, and he alone, knew what Jesus meant. He alone was correct in his interpretation.

I think I Corinthians 13 is the most beautiful of all of Paul's writings, and I am sure that the line

"Now, we see as through a glass darkly"
applies as much to Paul as it does to us.

M. M.

II CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER 1. In this section another contradiction in Paul's character and approach is emphasized. Paul as an orthodox Jew in training for the rabbinite never encountered the idea that suffering was good in any way. This is not the teaching of Judaism. We suffer because we break the Law, and there is nothing to be gained by suffering. According to Judaism, the moment you turn back to God and repent, the suffering ends and you are restored to your full measure of good. Here Paul is advocating suffering and, as we have seen, he also misunderstood the purpose of Jesus. For him suffering is now a spiritual action; it now becomes a badge of spiritual prestige to be tortured. I have often wondered how he was able to continue in this conviction, as it conflicted so drastically with the Judaic concept in which he was trained. Or, how could he accept either Judaism or the teaching of Jesus since they both contradicted his personal predilection for suffering? It is as true for any other religion as it is for the Catholics that if they are given a child until it is seven the concepts that they implant are extremely difficult to alter or remove. A child brought up in an orthodox Jewish home will always be affected by that teaching. Paul had been raised with the concept that suffering is a sin to God, which is what it amounts to since you suffer, according to the Jews, because you sinned against God. Then suddenly a view which totally contradicts this, as well as the teaching of Jesus, emerges in Paul's teaching: one which he completely accepts, that suffering is a badge of God's love.

We could easily say — and it may well be true — that one of the foundations of Paul's guilt and ensuing martyrdom was his departure from Judaism. It could be, because he was equally devout as a Jew as he was when he became a Christian. He was a firebrand under either banner, which is a very indicative trait in a person. When I first came into metaphysics I was a very firm atheist, and so I had no prior religious concepts to overcome. It was not until I had been counseling for a few years that I realized what a tremendous blessing this was. I have seen the

struggles that many people, Jews and Christians alike, have in changing their earlier religious concepts to meet the life that metaphysics offers. For example, many Jews will understand and accept metaphysics until they are faced with the word Christ. If you ask them what Christ means, they tell you it means Jesus. On the other hand, a Catholic friend answered that question by saying that Christ was Jesus' last name! It is very difficult for a Jewish person to accept that Christ means exactly the same as Messiah, the Anointed, and it is equally difficult for a Catholic to accept the fact that the Christ is the Presence of God in each human being, not just in Jesus.

Some of the verses in this section are a bit confused and quite repetitious. There is not much doubt that Paul wrote this letter and it is very much along his lines linguistically, so the confusion could be the result of editorial alterations.

CHAPTER 2. The concept of a human being able to forgive another human being was a very startling concept when Jesus first taught it. Therefore most people were not aware of it and many had the feeling that it was blasphemous to assume such a thing since this was supposed to be a divine prerogative. So the concept of human forgiveness was a very new and startling idea. Paul makes a connection between Satan taking advantage of us, in verse 11, and forgiveness in verse 10, for the simple reason that if you harbor resentment you make yourself open to other evil. This is basically what it means, and it is one of the main points of metaphysics. In another sense, the moment you indulge in negative thinking and reactions, that moment you are making it easier for others to do the same thing, and in that way you are strengthening the power of evil and enabling it to stay in the world. And, of course, the moment you root it out, that moment you deal it a blow. That is the point.

There is one little point here which is rather amusing. But before I comment on it, can you picture what Paul would be like as a teacher? If we were his students, I do not think we would find him an enjoyable teacher, for he was extremely didactic. Apparently there had been some complaints, for verse 17 seems to be a response to those who disagreed with him, and we find instances such as this every so often. Basically Paul is saying "if you were influenced by divergent teachings it is your own fault, but if I was rough in reprimanding you I am sorry." It is as close to an apology as Paul comes. It is amusing because

one of the things he did the least gracefully, I am sure, was to apologize. While he wrote some of the most beautiful words we have on love, I am not so sure Paul was that loving, and he did have a great deal of pride.

CHAPTER 3. In verse 6 Paul refers to the letter of the law. Outer ritual is of great importance to most orthodox sects of any day or age. Today, for example, it is a sin for a Catholic to eat meat on Friday, or for a Jew to use the same dishes for both meat and dairy foods. None of these things are important in themselves except to the people who believe they are important. Some metaphysicians believe that if you smoke or take a drink you are not spiritual — but why not? The things we are to do in obeying the spirit within ourselves are far more difficult to do and far more necessary than any physical ordeal we might put ourselves through. For instance, as I think you all know by now, the seven day mental diet has nothing to do with the letter of the Law: it is the spirit of the Law, and you just try to stay on it for seven days. But if you make the attempt and even if you only stay on it for a few hours, you are doing something that is of tremendous spiritual value.

Too, most ritual subconsciously stems, to a great degree, from the need to advertise piety. People are supposed to be very impressed by pomp and circumstance in the name of God. Jesus never taught this. Jesus said that it did not matter what you put into your mouth; what mattered was what came out of it. He said that man was not made for the sabbath, but the sabbath was made for man. Jesus completely eliminated the ritualistic concept, but it still has not completely disappeared as yet. Here Paul is concerned with the necessity of following the spirit of the law. He did not advocate ritual, that was added after his time. It is true that Paul felt that it was far more important for you to cleanse yourself inwardly, but it is equally true that he had a long way to go in perceiving the spirit of this form of cleansing because his concept of sin was so very orthodox.

Paul refers to Moses as well as Jesus. Moses did not believe in ritual himself, but he taught it to a certain degree because the people he led were a much earlier and younger people than they were at the time of Jesus. Moses lived around 1400 B.C. and we are dealing with the first century of a new age. During the period in between mankind did grow very slowly in understanding. Moses knew that the people he was leading had to have a certain

amount of fear to hold them in line because they were still influenced by their former pagan worship which taught them to fear the gods. Paul was slowly but surely emerging from this concept himself, and he is teaching his followers that the spirit of the law is most important.

The "ministration of death" in verse 7 refers to the statement that the "letter of the Law killeth." He is saying that the Commandments are enlarged and superceded by the new teaching. The ministrations of the spirit in our terminology would refer to those who teach, and Paul's discussion of this is quite interesting. In those days everyone was expected to become a special ambassador and go out and make as many converts as they could. There is where the idea of missionaries arose, unfortunately, but the basic idea is right. There is no greater thing in the world that a human being can do than to be able to some degree to reach the understanding of himself and in turn, to be able to pass it on to his fellowman. This has always been, and remains, the concept of all basic religions, but we do not have too many who have done this today.

I feel, particularly in the field of religion, through the last few centuries that the necessity of imposing academic demands on the teaching of the Spirit has completely hemmed it in. I feel very definitely that if it had not been for the renaissance of the metaphysical movement we could have had a long period of religious darkness. It is quite interesting to realize that all of the orthodox religions insist that a man who wishes to become a minister must go through a prescribed collegiate course. If he passes, he gets a degree which supposedly authorizes him to teach. We are all aware that the one thing the higher education of today does not allow is individual thought and expression. A student is called upon to do one thing: memorize, and heaven help him if he starts to dispute what he has memorized. In both graduate and post-graduate work the stress is laid upon what has already been said on a subject and if you cannot quote that, you do not pass. As far as I am concerned, this is a crime. It stifles original thinking. Consequently, we find that for the most part — and we can truly thank God that there are always a few exceptions — people are academically throttled, but they do have a degree and therefore they are entitled to be a religious minister.

I am very much in favor of education and the training of the mind, but I do not think it is the most important asset when it

comes to knowledge of God. There is nothing in any teaching of any university that will give you the true knowledge of God. That only comes from intuition, and intuition cannot be taught. You and you alone can develop it.

This situation did not exist in the time of Moses and Abraham and it certainly was not true in Jesus' case. You realize, of course, that if Jesus came back to teach today he would probably be required to take an academic examination before he spoke, or if he tried to heal he would have to go before the medical board and get a license. It sounds ridiculous to say this, but it is true. This is one of the reasons why I am against metaphysical schools which give courses and degrees which enable you to teach that brand of metaphysics. This has nothing to do with what is within the human being. But more importantly, no one has the right or the ability to confer teaching and healing on another human being. This does not come from any university or school: it comes from the individual himself and cannot be outwardly controlled.

It is also unfortunately true that many people have gone into various phases of the ministry, be they Jews or Christians, not for the love of God but because it is a profession and one in which certain posts are quite lucrative. There is no way of insuring the sincerity of an individual, but there is a crying need for more sincere ministers of all faiths. Teaching religion is not something to do just to make a living. There is a subtle line between doing work to satisfy your needs and doing it in answer to the needs of others, but if you do your part God always does His. There is no doubt of that. God chooses the channels through which He will bring you that which you need, but very few people believe this. On the other hand, if you do command a big salary, and there are many religious posts which offer this, it is very nice and, certainly, in the final analysis the person has the karma which entitles them to this. But how much of it is due to the sincerity of the heart and how much of it is a dividend from past karma? These are questions we cannot answer. Until you know the heart of a person you do not know what is behind a particular choice or situation. But the concept of religion being a good profession is a growing one and, as a result, there is very little illumination and a great deal of memorizing and quoting.

It is rather ironic as far as I am personally concerned, because I have a great love and respect for the intellect. I do not think that you ever go as far metaphysically without a good intellect. Yet,

on the other hand, I am not ruled by my intellect: it must be my servant and not the other way around. I have learned through metaphysics time and time again, that when the Presence within me says something which is apparently contrary to everything my intellect tells me — it does not seem logical — to always follow the Presence. I have always found that it is the most superb logic imaginable and far greater than I could have ever intellectually perceived. Each part of our being has a certain role to play in our lives. It is the intellectual and emotional seeking of the individual that brings us into metaphysics. But you find, and Paul uses a very beautiful phrase to describe this, that there are warring members in the body. In the beginning they are warring because at first the mind says "do this:" the spirit says "do that" the emotions say "I want;" and the physical says "Where am I?" But the time does come when you finally get these various parts in line with spirit and then they begin to function as a unit.

Before we leave the chapter I would like to refer to verse 14, for there is a certain blindness, not only inwardly but outwardly in most individuals and in religions as a whole. It is an inability to see past the outer ritual to the inner truth. For example, in this century we are seeing the beginning of an attempt at cooperation between Judaism and Christianity, but we still have a long way to go before we realize the oneness of God in all religions. There is a wealth of truth in a little verse someone once told me. It carries a powerful philosophic lesson:

"Roses are reddish,
Violets are bluish;
If it wasn't for Christmas,
We'd all be Jewish."

CHAPTER 4. In verses 4 and 5 the fact that Paul's understanding of what Jesus did is not very clear comes out quite definitely. He still has the belief that Jesus had to die and that he died for our sins. This is one of the obvious points where you realize that Paul did not understand as well as he thought he did. Paul, not knowing or understanding why Jesus died, practically advocates being physically persecuted as a thing of joy. This was far from the teaching or life of Jesus. As far as Jesus was concerned, when things went wrong, as they did on a few occasions, he became perfectly furious and did something about it. Submission to unhappy situations or to persecution of any kind was certainly not his way of life, nor did he advocate it for others.

It would be fascinating to know what Jesus would have said to Paul in person about verses 8 and 9. This is completely contrary to everything he taught. The only moment of what you could call negative emotion he had was on the cross. That one moment, and that was all. And that probably came when he looked down into the faces of the mob and realized how little they had understood and asked himself "What for?" But to Paul, the more he was persecuted, the more perfectly he felt he was following in Jesus footsteps, and so he continues to allow it to happen.

CHAPTER 5. Paul has the idea, as we see here, that our physical body is a burden which keeps us from God. Let us look at verse 6. We are all at home in the body: in other words, we are alive on the earth plane. You know very well that God is in you and that you are in God. It has nothing to do with what body you are living in, whether it be your physical or your etheric; wherever you are, God is. Paul places the stress on the importance of being out of the body in order to be with God. According to him, we should give up the mortal coil which has no value — particularly for Paul, as we realize when we remember the life of the man Paul as well as the teaching of the apostle Paul. To be out of the body or to be dead brings you back to God. Does it? Do you really think that as soon as Mr. Hitler moved to the next plane he was reunited with God? Or Mr. Stalin? Do you really think that death changes the character of a person? You are the same person that you were here. You may not like being there at all, for you may try to pursue habits you had here and you find that you cannot. For instance, a person who is an alcoholic is in a literal hell because he is unable to get a drink. You are just as aware of life there as you were here, and, if anything, your awareness is sharper. Life continues and life does not change.

Death does not change a person's character. This is one of the great tragic ironies of many people's lives. When people who have been the worst characters suddenly die, their families, friends and ministers believe that the act of death transforms them into a saint, since this is taught by many religions. In the act of death we do nothing more than discard a physical body in the same way as when we retire at night we take off our clothes. The same person who wore those clothes a few hours before is now in bed. It is the same person with the same characteristics, the same desires, the same good and evil that were there before they retired. The change of death is the same as if you were to wake up in the

morning and find you had moved your locale during the night.

There is never a time when you do not have your etheric, mental and spiritual bodies. If you did not have them you would not be here, because these are the bodies which give you life. The physical body does not give you life. The physical has absolutely no power over you except the power you give it. If we all believed this, we would never have any sickness at all. But at any rate, Paul is firmly of the belief that it is best to get out of this mortal body and earthly strife, as this would bring us much closer to God, and he is very wrong.

However, in this context verse 17 is very interesting, for it shows how the same words will have as many different levels of understanding as the different people who read it. This verse is one of the bulwarks of metaphysical teaching: "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Now Paul is specifically speaking of Christ as Jesus, and of a new life in a new age, with which we do not agree. "If any man be in Christ?" What does that mean to you? Whether or not we have had a conscious contact with the Presence, we certainly all know that the Presence of God is within us. You know the line we use in meditation: "In God I live and move and have my being, and never let me forget that in me God lives and moves and has His being too." If I only intellectually believe this I am then "in Christ," even if I have not yet been able to make my subconscious accept it. I am aware of the fact that Christ, which is the Presence — not Jesus — lives within me, because if He did not live within me I would not be here, and neither would any of us. But what my conscious realization — not necessarily a conscious experience — of this is is also the degree to which my life is changed. In other words, in my realization of what this implies I begin to change my life through my thought and "old things are passed away, behold, all things are made new." I do not have to wait for death for this, nor will death make this change for me.

You see, Paul's teaching is primarily based upon a constant giving up and stripping of yourself. This is where the Catholic church gets the idea that our reward shall be in heaven. Jesus' teaching had not even the slightest relation to this. Jesus said, first of all, "it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" and "the kingdom of God is within you" and "I have come that ye might have life more abundantly." This has nothing to do

with the next plane. And if you need anything or have any problem he said "Go into your closet and pray to your Father in secret . . . and your Father shall reward you openly:" not when you die, now. I want to make this distinction very clear between Jesus' teaching and Paul's. The great paradox is that Paul's teaching was accepted rather than that of Jesus.

Nevertheless, verse 17 is one of the real guideposts of metaphysics: every time you or I make a demonstration this is the concept which is behind the change. And certainly it would be a terrible thing if we were to wait to die or become perfect before we made a demonstration. Paul is continuously making the point of the need for atonement, for a giving up and stripping of body and soul for the rewards of heaven. I do not recall one line in the letters of Paul where he says anything about a healing or a demonstration. He gives only the philosophic discussion of what he thought Jesus taught. Whereas we find accounts of healings and demonstrations in the book of Acts and the writings of the other disciples because this was part of their training. I think too that Paul is partly to blame for the practice of healing and demonstration to improve life having left the church. Paul mentions none of these things, not so much because he felt that they were wrong, as because he did not believe or understand it. Miracles are merely the result of the working of spiritual law. The only miracle, as I always say, is that we have enough intelligence to discover the Law. I have often wondered what Paul's reactions to Jesus walking on the water and feeding the multitudes must have been.

CHAPTER 6. In verse 2 we find another of the great statements of metaphysical belief from Isaiah 49:8. "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation." Again what Paul meant by it is not what the metaphysical world means by it, because this is probably the most negative chapter that Paul has written. Furthermore, he is saying that if you accept "salvation" now, you will be rewarded in the hereafter. I have always been curious about a question to which I am sure I will never have an answer. I do not think that this kind of teaching could attract too large an audience: and I have often wondered how large a group of followers he actually had. He came to a position of prominence through his disciples who afterwards became ministers of the newly founded Christian church and who preserved his teachings. But this does not tell us how many people he personally was able to interest in what — at least to my mind — is a singu-

larly unattractive invitation to become sojourners in Christ. I do not think that people change radically in a few centuries, and I am sure the Corinthians were very similar to the super-sophisticates of our modern world, although they may have been a little more unrestrained and not as well-mannered or well groomed. You can imagine the reception this teaching would have in our own time.

But to return to Isaiah's very beautiful statement; we use it in a completely different frame of reference. When you are stymied in making a demonstration it is because something in you — lack of faith, or negation, or something which you are not doing of which you are unaware — is blocking you and you overcome it by realizing that it is here NOW. We live in an eternal NOW, and the only moment we can know is now. If this moment is right every moment has to be right, and if this moment is wrong, unless we change it, the next is going to be wrong. It is in the realization of this that we are able to accept our good. But Paul is putting salvation's rewards in a life after death.

Paul is so completely negative in this chapter that it is unbelievable. He literally lists the sufferings he thinks a man must endure in order to gain heavenly rewards. Verse 16 includes two very famous texts. Paul reiterates his own statement from I Corinthians "ye are the temple of the living God" but in a different context. He refers to his Judaic training, and repeats a statement from the Old Testament which refers to the Hebrews. He has expanded it to refer to the new followers and he is quite right. But his original statement meant that the Spirit of God lived in the individual and here he speaks of the temple of the living God as being a special group of humanity. It is the picture of a far removed deity which is reaching down to bless a particular group of people, as in the Judaic tradition of the chosen people. It does not seem to occur to Paul that this is a living experience for the individual, in spite of the fact that he seems to understand the meaning of the Trinity. When he refers to God, whom he believes is Infinite, he is not referring to Jesus, and when he refers to Jesus he usually uses the term Christ, the second person of the Trinity, which shows that he knew that much. But here the temple of God becomes a general term for a group of people.

As I have said, Paul had little esoteric knowledge, but he knew just enough to make it confusing for himself, and so he quite frequently mixes up ideas and transfers them indiscriminately

from one plane to another. It is true that everything is colored by the personal experience of the person and Paul had a very bitter life which seems to have affected his entire attitude. He made no attempt to change it. But, because he did nothing about it, because his was an unhappy, frustrated life, everything on this earth was seen from a very bilious point of view. Physical life was to be escaped and only then did you find yourself, with the result that he stressed martyrdom. On the other hand, he will suddenly come out with half of an esoteric truth without knowing it.

Apropos of our discussions of Paul being the father of Christian theology rather than Jesus, in a recent New York Times book review, a Mr. Blanchard said something which is quite true: "Orthodoxy is not loyalty to the truth, but loyalty to an organization. Suppose for example you believe in the creation story, or miracles, or in the Trinity, why do you do so? Is it because you have looked at the evidence and found it compelling? Almost certainly not. It is because you belong to a church whose power and prestige behind these beliefs impress them upon you with a force that is hardly resistable, even when unperceived." This is the difficulty in all modern religion. It is also why I say time and time again that until you have had an experience, until you have proved in your own life that the things you believe in are true, you really do not know them. You can believe them, but you will not *know* until you yourself have made your first demonstration. And until we get to that point we are all under the pressure of the particular creed in which we were born and we accept these dogmas because our parents and their parents and so on, accepted them.

For example, let us take the subject of Judaism. Do you really believe the Red Sea parted? Moses did not part the Red Sea, but he was not only a great occultist, but he was so well educated that he knew when this phenomena would occur. Actually there is only one "miracle" in Exodus which was not an actual physical event, and that was the death of the first born, which is completely symbolic. Do you really believe the walls of Jericho fell down when they marched around them seven times and blew the trumpets? Do you believe that Jonah lived in the belly of the whale? Why do you believe in one and not in another? Do you believe that Jesus rose from the dead?

How many people do you think really think about what they believe? Let us take it out of the field of so-called miracles. Do you believe that Jesus healed? Why? How many people in any

of the religions do you think believe it? We believe it because we have all experienced it. But you see, getting back to Paul, we have come through Romans, I Corinthians, and we are now up to chapter 7 of II Corinthians and how much in Paul's letters have you found to be in accordance with what Jesus taught and said? How much of the teaching itself does he give directly? Actually the only references he makes to the teaching is "the mind that was in Christ Jesus," a few references to the Sermon on the Mount and the Resurrection. Mr. Blanchard is quite correct when he says that most people accept things without thinking. On the other hand, you could not possibly have any progress in the world if we all abided by old ideas. Whatever progress the world has made, not only religiously, which has been least of all, but in any field, has been the result of rebels who broke away from old time beliefs. But Paul, ironically enough, broke away from the original teaching and then gave his own version of what he thought should be and millions and millions of people have followed this.

We take the figure of Jesus as the perfect example of what we strive to develop within ourselves. The concept of metaphysics, as far as the western world is concerned, comes from Plato. Now his student, who could have been an earlier incarnation of Paul, was Aristotle. When you mention metaphysics to most people they will think of Aristotle, and his method is also the basis of Paul's teaching. Aristotle's teaching is, so to speak, the metaphysics of logic and Plato is the metaphysics of ideas. Metaphysics as we know it is the religion of ideas. Paul was torn between being a zealot, a mystic and a logician, and he combined all three and gave what he understood.

CHAPTER 7. Again, Jesus never taught that people should tear themselves apart for the wrongs they had committed. I am pointing this out once more because this chapter shows the marked difference between these two men so clearly. Can you picture Jesus putting anyone through a public interrogation like this and saying, now that you have really repented, it was good for you to suffer? There is nothing, even in the editorially altered gospels which says you should do anything but forget about it and not repeat it.

You know, even in our highly intellectualized world of today, when we are confronted with a person with Paul's gift of rhetoric and oratory, we accept what is said and follow blindly. We

just do not know how to think. There is a beautiful phrase which I believe is from Emerson that says "the planet trembles when God lets loose a thinker on it," to which I add, "and it has been very steady." But people accept and do not think, for example, of the differences between the two men, Jesus and Paul, or of the reasons for their differing teachings. They simply accept on the basis of an historical authority which is without foundation.

CHAPTER 8. Once again Paul is talking about tithing which, of course, is a most important part of religious life, and one which is very misunderstood. As we have seen, the concept of tithing originated with Moses in our Bible, but it has also been a part of many earlier religions. It is the acknowledgement that everything on the earth was given us by God. We are given the privilege of using it. We live graciously, and in recognition of that we are to tithe one-tenth, according to Moses, of our income to the work of God, to whatever is our particular sect. This is the purpose of tithing. In our day and age of income taxes and state taxes, tithing ten percent of our income is a bit difficult. On the other hand, a person who does not tithe will not find it too easy to speak the Word for finance. You cannot expect to receive unless you give. This is the Law. There are many ways of tithing other than financially, although money is definitely the foundation. You can tithe your time; you can tithe by buying books and spreading the work; you can tithe in giving of yourself to people who may not particularly interest you but who need your help. But it basically starts with finance, because this is the form of substance which enables us to do everything else.

It is fascinating to see this Law at work. I have watched it in my own case when I first became a metaphysical student, and now with my students. I have seen people who have nothing left and are down to their last five dollars, who will insist upon making a donation and within three or four days "out of the blue" they received some form of finance which was anywhere from ten to thirty times the amount they tithed. This is the Law.

I have found too, that the more you tithe — not by stripping yourself as Paul does, because this is absurd — the more you receive. Furthermore, most people also do not realize that it should be an orderly giving. You know, we have a saying in metaphysics "order is heaven's first law," and in religious work tithing is the basis from which we grow not only financially, but in other ways. If you join a group you are supposed to pledge yourself to a

certain amount weekly, monthly, etc., and whatever you pledge you fulfill. This is the Law, but if you do this with the idea that you are going to get money as a result, I can guarantee you will not. This is what you want to do in recognition that God is the source of all substance, and that everything we have comes from God who is the Giver of all things. This is the Law of supply. This is one of the great meanings of the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want . . .".

If you find yourself thinking, "Well, my heavens, I must take care of myself," then you must ask yourself, what do you think about God? Are you taking care of yourself or is God taking care of you? We must get our thinking straight. Did you ever notice the symbols we have all around us? The profuseness of beauty which God gives us in every season, even to the snow in winter. Everything in nature grows profusely, and as profuse as it seems to be this year, it is even more so the next. It just keeps growing and giving. What does it grow for? It gives us beauty, sustenance and health, but we do not see it this way. "There are none so blind as those who will not see."

Actually, tithing is a subject I do not care to talk about. I think that anyone who knows what metaphysics is and what it means and has any feeling for it, must tithe from sheer gratitude and need not be told. Tithing is an individual action which comes under the law of growth. We all want to grow, and in order to do so we must look at ourselves objectively and ask ourselves what part of our growth are we limiting. We have a habit of believing that the only thing we have to do to be good metaphysicians and grow, is to meditate and keep our thought positive. This is true, this is the basis for growth. But we still have to live an everyday life in an everyday world and participate in its activities, for this too is part of our growth.

You know the old saying which is so very true: "you can never get something for nothing," and the place where we get the least for nothing is in the growth of the soul. There is an interesting distinction in our everyday lives. Say, for example, that I am shopping for furniture. I would have no desire to pay more than I feel I should. But, on the other hand, where it comes to the things I want to give, I will give today and tomorrow I will see what is left. If there is nothing left then, there will be something the next day. I have never yet known the Law to fail. And we should remember that we are basically dealing with Law. Whether

we put it in Bible phraseology or modern vernacular, it is still the same Law. Whatever you think upon grows; but the way you think upon it determines the way in which it is going to grow.

Thank you, and God bless
you.

Mildred Mann

*FORMULA FOR DEMONSTRATION

(A demonstration is answered prayer..
the manifestation of the Presence,
Power and Love of God.)

" **A**sk And Ye Shall Receive,

Seek And Ye Shall Find,

Knock And It Shall Be

Opened unto you"

- *JESUS*

(*The formula is ASK Mildred Mann)

Seven Steps in Demonstration

Desire: Get a strong enthusiasm for that which you want in your life, a real longing for something which is not there now.

Decision: Know definitely what it is that you want, what it is that you want to do, or have, and be willing to pay in spiritual values.

Ask: [When sure and enthusiastic] ask for it in simple, concise language...

Believe: in the accomplishment with strong faith, consciously and subconsciously].

Work at it ... a few minutes daily in seeing yourself in the finished picture. Never outline details, but rather see yourself enjoying the particular thing ...

Feel gratitude. Always remember to say, "Thank you God," and begin to feel the gratitude in your heart. The most powerful prayer we can ever make are those three words, provided we really feel it.

Feel expectancy. Train yourself to live in a state of happy expectancy ... Act it until it becomes part of you, as it must and will.

These are the seven steps. Follow them and they will bring you whatever it is that you need.

VOLUME 30

THE BIBLE SERIES

A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF

The Bible

by

Mildred Mann

