ANNOTATIONS

HOW I USED TRUTH (Cady)

Lesson 1

"FINDING THE CHRIST IN OURSELVES"

UNITY

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY

LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

UNITY SCHOOL LIBRARY
UNITY VILLAGE, MISSOURI 64065
QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED
for
HOW I USED TRUTH (Cady)
Lesson 1
"FINDING THE CHRIST IN OURSELVES"

Note: It is suggested that before proceeding with the study of this first chapter the student read the letter (following the Foreword) written by H. Emilie Cady to Lowell Fillmore, in order to get the background of some of the lessons in the book How I Used Truth.

1. Is Christ lost? Why do we speak of "finding" the Christ in ourselves?

2. Explain how God "lives" and "works."

3. What does "anointing" signify? How are you the son of man? How the Son of God?

4. What causes us to lose the consciousness of our spiritual identity?

5. How is Jesus both the Elder Brother and the Saviour of mankind?

6. Explain how your body can be called a temple of God. What takes place in a temple?

7. What could be considered the distinction between a Christian life (as popularly accepted) and a Christ life?

8. What is the difference between a "reflection of God" and an "expression of God"?

9. Explain fully the "will of God."

10. Is "salvation" to be ours at some future time in a faraway place, or when is it acceptable? When is man really "saved"?
ANNOTATIONS

HOW I USED TRUTH (Cady)

Lesson 1

"FINDING THE CHRIST IN OURSELVES"

1. Is Christ lost? Why do we speak of "finding" the Christ in ourselves?

1. No, Christ (which is our God-Self or our own divine nature) is not lost. In the Annotations for the third lesson of Lessons in Truth, it is pointed out that "Christ" is one of the names for the first phase of our threefold nature (spirit-soul-body). As such, the Christ could not be "lost" any more than the life principle within the growing plant can be "lost"; without it there could be no plant. It is rather that we have "lost" the consciousness of our spiritual identity, the Christ in us, or we have not yet consciously attained a knowledge of it.

"Christ" is our divine nature; it is spiritual man, I AM. It is our spiritual identity. Identity means resemblance or absolute likeness; the condition of being the same as something described. God is life, love, intelligence, substance, power—anything and everything that is good. The "Christ" is the name of these same characteristics, or divine ideas in us, through which we are identified with God. Through our Christ Self we are the same as God in nature. As lessons in the previous course on Lessons in Truth emphasized, Paul refers to this indwelling pattern as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Too often we have thought of ourselves as a body with a mind and spirit. In reality we are a spiritual being, with a soul (or mind) and a body through which to function.

"Finding the Christ" in ourselves means discovering our God-Self; coming to see that we are spiritual beings. It is recognizing God within us as life, substance, light (intelligence), or as any of the divine ideas that make up His nature of Absolute Good. (See the Annotations for Lesson Two of Lessons in Truth). Jesus tried to explain that this Father-Mind or Spirit, lives in each one as the source of all-good. He sought to show each of us how to become conscious of this source as God's Presence and Power within us. The ways in which mankind goes about making this "discovery" are varied. Jesus emphasized prayer as a means of finding the Truth that "shall make you free" (John 8:32).

How far from here to Heaven? Not very far, my friend,
A single hearty step will all thy journey end.
Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
If He's not born in thee, thy soul is all forlorn.
Hold, there! Where runnest thou? Know, Heaven is in thee.
Seekest thou for God elsewhere, His face thou'lt never see.

--Angelus Silesius; "God and the Soul."

Sometimes we turn to other persons, those whom we consider are further advanced spiritually, in an effort to "find the Christ."
Sometimes the search leads us through intellectual studies, or through pursuit of the arts; sometimes it leads to a life of service to others. Yet, in the final analysis, each of us must turn within himself to become aware of the Presence. The text points out on page 23:

"No man can come to the Father except through the Christ part of himself. . . . Another may teach you how to come . . . but you must retire within your own soul, find the Christ there, and look to the Father through the Son, for whatever good thing you may need."

All true methods of spiritual study point to this one way of "finding the Christ in ourselves." In the book Talks on Truth (page 36), Charles Fillmore points out Jesus' mission in lifting the consciousness of mankind to realization (discovery) of man's innate divinity:

"The four Gospels reiterate again and again that the mission of Jesus of Nazareth was to find that which was lost; not that the real man is lost or in condemnation, but that the I, the man identity, has gone 'into another country' and is lost to his spiritual consciousness."

2. **Explain how God "lives" and "works."**

2. As the one Presence and one Power, God "lives" in His entire creation, including man, as the *life principle*. This life principle constitutes the life, substance, and intelligence that constantly and eternally sustain and maintain all that God has created.

In nature, in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, God "lives" as the idea or life principle of the species. As far as man is concerned, the life principle--God--is the I AM or Christ within to which belong all the ideas that are man's divine inheritance. On page 18 of the text God is referred to as the "ever abiding Intelligence" and on page 19 as "the central spark . . . that lives in each of us."

God "works" as the movement of His ideas into expression and manifestation through all creation. Thus we can say that the unfolding of the God-plan in creation is God "working." It is by means of the power of thinking (the power to conceive mental images) that we commune with God. This communion we call prayer. Through prayer we learn how to let God's will or plan unfold in our lives. Man is God's co-worker that God's will (plan) may be done, or come forth, on earth even as it is in heaven. Jesus said of this reciprocal activity, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" (John 5:17).

God "works" throughout the rest of creation as the unfolding of the idea (plan) back of the species, whether it be a mineral, a tree, or an animal.

"God is a mind force carrying forward creation under mental law. . . . God creates through the action of
His mind, and all things rest on ideas" (Mysteries of Genesis: page 14).

It is suggested that the Annotations for Lesson Twelve of Lessons in Truth be re-read for further study material on this point.

3. What does "anointing" signify? How are you the son of man? How the Son of God?

3. To anoint signifies "to set apart" or "consecrate to a sacred and special office." Perhaps the simplest definition to use for anoint is "to choose for a special purpose."

The anointing of kings and priests has always included the use of oil as a symbol of consecration. This anointing by oil indicates that they are chosen or set aside for a definite office. In machinery, oil prevents friction. Metaphysically, love is the "oil" that can prevent friction in human relationships. On page 141 of The Revealing Word, "anointing oil" is explained as follows:

"The thought of love, which is poured over anything, making it holy or a perfect whole."

The "Son of God, the Anointed" (mentioned in the text on page 17) is the divine nature, the I AM, the Christ, of every man chosen (or anointed to express the God-nature in every detail.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Many Christians in the past, and even today, have thought of this "only begotten Son" as being only Jesus Christ. A deeper study proves this Son to be spiritual man, the God-Self or the Christ in every man, which Paul refers to as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). It is the image-likeness anointed or chosen by God Himself to express all that God is. The inheritance from God to His "only begotten Son" is all of the ideas of Divine Mind.

When we awaken to the truth of our own indwelling Christ Self as God's Presence and Power in us, we will bring our thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting under the guidance of this Presence. We will know with deep conviction that we are "chosen" or anointed to be God's representative on earth.

The text refers on page 17 to man as "Son of God" and also as "son of man." It is well for us to consider just what these terms mean metaphysically. As mentioned previously in this Annotation, the Son of God is our spiritual nature, the Christ, the I AM. It is the first phase of our threefold being (spirit-soul-body) covered in the Annotations for Lesson Three of Lessons in Truth.

When we refer to "son of man" (small "s") we are usually referring to natural or physical man, and we often use the term "manifest man." Because all of us belong to the species of creation called "mankind," we are all "son of man" in our outer appearance; in our true nature within, we are always "Son of God" or the Christ of God.
From a metaphysical standpoint we could think of "son of man" as being the soul not yet fully awakened to divine sonship. This "son" sometimes feels separate from God the Creator; believes that he stands alone in a universe that continually has to be battled. On the other hand, we may consider "Son of man" (capital "S") as being the soul awakened to the truth of divine sonship. When our unfolding has reached this stage we are consciously unfolding the ideas that make up our spiritual inheritance by expressing and by manifesting them in daily living in body and affairs.

As we awaken to the truth of our divine origin, we no longer remain a "child." We have reached the status of sonship, ready consciously to claim our divine heritage. Usually when we speak of a son we mean a child who has matured, "come of age," has, as we often say, "reached his majority."

From the metaphysical angle the Son of man is the soul "come of age" spiritually. This "Son" is claiming his divine relationship as "Son of God." All men are children of God but sooner or later "come of age" through understanding and fulfilling the purpose or plan of God. When we recognize the Son of God as being the "anointed" we do "grow up" and are increasingly aware of our special mission to carry out God's plan (will) in every phase of our existence, i.e., in our mind, body, affairs and in our human relationships.

Our study has emphasized the vital part that faith plays in bringing forth results. In older editions of How I Used Truth (on page 29) are these words: "found himself possessing the very 'faith of the Son of God.'" In recent editions of the book this reads, "found himself possessing the very 'faith of Jesus.'" Jesus recognized the spiritual heritage that belonged to Him through the Son of God in Himself, the Christ, which enabled Him to do His mighty works. Faith is part of the divine heritage that belongs to each one of us, as it belonged to Jesus Christ. However, there is much work required to build a consciousness of this "faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20 A.V.). The text points out on pages 28 and 29 that much effort, much prayer, much application of faith in all phases of our life are necessary in order that we may build a consciousness of the "faith of the Son of God." Only then can we be said to possess "the very faith of Jesus."

Until we do establish a consciousness of the indwelling Christ, we have not really "found" Him within ourselves. Faithful use of both denials and affirmations, spoken silently or audibly as the need requires, plays a vital part in building the consciousness of our divinity. Then, through turning often in prayer to God, and living the Truth revealed, we come to be consciously acquainted with the Son as the Christ indwelling.

4. What causes us to lose the consciousness of our spiritual identity?

4. Giving our attention to the external, or to outer experiences of life, to the exclusion of the inner or spiritual realities, causes us to lose the consciousness of our spiritual identity.

Consciousness means the states of mind on any subject, which
have been built up through both thinking and feeling. Thus we build a negative state of consciousness about a person or a situation if our thinking and feeling activities are not based on that which is essentially true. We build a positive state of consciousness when we are centered in the Truth.

If we come to a place in life where we seem to "lose the consciousness of our spiritual identity" it is because somehow we have not based our thinking and feeling on the true pattern of our innate divinity. Sometimes we have forgotten our Divine Parent, our source of life, like the child, taken from his real parents, forgets all about them. By letting our consciousness go into the "far country" of the external, we have lost consciousness of our spiritual nature. The text reads on page 19:

"We get our eyes fixed on the circumference, or external of our being. We lose consciousness of the indwelling, ever active, unchanging God at the center."

As self-conscious beings we have the right of choice. When we seem to have lost awareness of our divinity, it is because we have not chosen to turn consciously to the source of our being--"the indwelling, ever active, unchanging God"--in prayer. The soul literally "starves" for the "living bread." This spiritual food is in the form of ideas, or inspiration, that the soul must have for its unfoldment. If legitimate "soul food" is not forthcoming, then there will be a search in the outer or external for fulfillment of the needs of the mind, of the body, of the family. When the attention (thinking and feeling) is thus diverted to externals at the expense of inner realities, we are apt to become absorbed in the outer. We give our whole thought, interest, attention to supplying food, clothing, housing for the body; educating and entertaining the mind, providing for the needs of loved ones. If our attention is turned exclusively to these pursuits, then there is little consciousness of ourselves as spiritual beings, or of God as the source from which all the needed good comes forth. Too often, in such cases, God seems afar off, only a theory or a religious tenet.

We lose sight of that which we do not keep continually in mind, that in which we seem to have no special interest. When we are looking exclusively to the effect side of life, we are not giving much attention--if any--to God and our relationship to Him as His son with an inheritance of all good.

There are times in the lives of all of us when we do feel separated from God--separated from health, harmony, abundance, peace. When such periods come we may reach out, hoping for a "mediator" to draw us back to God, to reconcile us with God. As we consider our threefold nature, we see why our true "mediator" is the indwelling Christ, the I AM, our own divine nature. Jesus taught that each of us must look to the Christ within us as "mediator" and savior. Jesus' teaching and His life bear this out in every detail. This was intimated in Jesus' words found in John 16:7:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."

The text puts it this way on page 23:
"No man can come to the Father except through the Christ part of himself. You cannot come around through some other person or by any outside way."

Rather than look outside ourselves for a "mediator," we should turn within through the process of prayer to the Christ Self that Jesus called "the Father." The words quoted from John's Gospel give evidence that Jesus sought to encourage us to look beyond His personality to the Comforter, the Christ Spirit, the Father within us.

5. How is Jesus both the Elder Brother and Saviour of mankind?

5. Jesus is the Elder Brother of man because He came into the full realization of Himself as a spiritual being, the Son of God. He lived in the consciousness of His sonship. He proved it by the example of His own life, and He also fulfilled His mission for all mankind, which was to be the Way-Shower.

Jesus is considered Saviour of mankind because He showed man by example how to recognize God as the Father of all. Jesus proved that God's will for man is all-good in mind, body, and affairs. Jesus taught man how to bring forth this good through the process of scientific thinking and how consciously to identify himself with the Father within.

A brother is someone considered in his relation to another person having the same parents. "Elder" implies having been born or having come into physical expression before another. Jesus at the age of twelve, recognized God as His Father. We find Him at that early age saying to Mary and Joseph on their return to the Temple in search of Him:

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49 A.V.).

Because of His consciousness of divinity, Jesus can lead the way to man's "finding the Christ," just as an elder brother will help his younger brothers and sisters to accomplish whatever they wish to do. As a human being Jesus was born of Mary; as a divine being He was born of God (the Holy Spirit).

Through His conviction of His true mission, Jesus consciously merged the human of Himself with the divine. Jesus walked the human pathway and met challenges as we do today. On page 20 of the later editions of the text is a statement in Hebrews 4:15 in which Jesus is described as, "one that hath been in all points like as we are." The King James Version covering this verse reads: "one tempted in all points like as we are." The word tempt originally meant "to test." Jesus was tempted at all points in His human nature, in all that belongs to manifest man. His divinity could not be fully manifested until He had proved every phase of spiritual law. In other words, Jesus had to fully understand God's plan for man, for all creation, so that He could manifest the nature of God. While it is true that Jesus was tested on all points, the Scripture is very clear in emphasizing that He was "yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He was "without sin" because His understanding was so clear.
and definite, His obedience so complete, that He did not fail the test on a single point.

Jesus worked out human problems that were presented to Him because He knew the law of God that was necessary to heal any situation. Jesus did not deviate from God principle in His consciousness, in His ministry, or in His personal life. Because of the depth of His understanding He was able to blend His human nature with the divine nature; He expressed and manifested God in all ways.

Jesus Christ is Saviour of mankind in a general way because He brought the "saving grace" of God to the attention of men. As Elder Brother He was the first to prove fully the laws of God. He proved these laws in His own life, as well as in the lives of others, through His miracles of healing and other demonstrations.

Annotation 4 of this lesson brings out that the "mediator" and savior of each one of us individually is our own Christ Self. When giving instructions for prayer Jesus said,

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret" (Matt. 6:6).

Jesus was pointing to the individual savior in ourselves, our own Father indwelling or as He put it, "Thy Father who is in secret." It is this God-Presence within us that "saves" us from mistakes that come through ignorance of ourselves as a spiritual being.

Jesus' mission was to present the truth about man and his relationship to God. When we follow Jesus' teachings (or "my words" as Jesus called them) we are made safe from danger, sickness, sorrow, or any limitation of mind, body, or affairs. In this sense, then, Jesus Christ is the Saviour of mankind, in that He showed mankind "how."

"Jesus showed us graphically how we can free, or 'save' ourselves from our sins and limitations; how we can meet the many temptations that would keep us from enjoying our good... He is our Saviour... because He lived for us, and through His life He gave to us the divine pattern for saving ourselves from sin" (Practical Christianity for You: page 37).

For instance, inventors have discovered ways of transportation, and labor-saving devices in home, shop, and office that actually "save" one from drudgery. Yet it still remains with each one to avail himself of the things that will "save" him, that is, make his life more orderly and productive. So with Jesus' relation to us as Saviour. He has done His part by walking the pathway of life. He showed us how we can be "saved" from pitfalls, from a sense of burden, from sickness, frustration, poverty. However, only as we actually live the truths Jesus presented are we "saved." Through turning in prayer to our own indwelling savior, we are truly "saved" from the limited thinking that has produced experiences of lack and frustration.
I would be patient, for Jesus Christ was patient. 
I would be kind, for Jesus Christ was kind.
One thing I seek: to follow in His footsteps;
To have in me the mind that was His mind.

--Dorothea Garrison: Best-Loved Unity Poems.

6. Explain how your body can be called a temple of God. What takes place in a temple?

6. The body of each one of us is a temple of God because God's Presence is within it as the life principle. A temple is an edifice dedicated to the worship of a deity--any place where the divine Presence resides. At the center of our being, the first phase of our threefold nature (i.e., spirit-soul-body), is a "Holy of Holies" (Heb. 9:3). This is where God lives as the life, substance, and intelligence that causes and sustains the body.

In a temple there is worship in which purification of the human and consecration to the divine take place. In our being, this purification and consecration must take place in order to allow worship of God. In our soul or consciousness all our thoughts and feelings (having come forth as aspirations and desires) should bow in worship and adoration of the divine Presence that abides within. Thus our mind (consciousness) and our body will be worthy of being the habitation "of the living God" (II Cor. 6:16).

As we become conscious of the Christ Presence and Power within us, our mind and body are purified and redeemed of all that is contrary to the God-nature. We consciously accept the Truth and understand how we are created in the image and after the likeness of God. It is only at this stage that we are truly able to present our body "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1). It is with this deep understanding that the Christ power within shall "fashion anew the body . . . that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21). Knowing the sacredness of our body as "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19), we will stand forth as the image-likeness of God. In each of us, as in Jesus, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

In his writings Paul says,

"We are a temple of the living God; even as God said,
I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Cor. 6:16).

We have also the words of Jesus attesting to the body of man as being God's temple, for we read,

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up . . .
But he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:19, 21).

Sometimes in our spiritual study we are so engrossed in Jesus' teaching concerning the state of the soul that we overlook His teaching concerning the body. The number of physical healings Jesus performed indicates His realization of the body as an instrument for
the expression and manifestation of God-perfection. Charles Fillmore caught this truth for himself for he spent many hours of prayer for his own healing. His conviction of the need to have the body worthy of the divine Presence within is brought out in the following words:

"When Jesus came teaching that the body is the temple He brought to man the revelation of the enduring temple. 

. . . Jesus Christ taught the beauty and continuity of the body temple. This was one object of His ministry. He first proclaimed that His mission was to preach and to heal, and all of His work was to demonstrate perfection of the temple, to establish the true worship of the living God throughout the body, which is God's temple" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary: pages 650, 651).

7. What could be considered the distinction between a Christian life (as popularly accepted) and a Christ life?

7. The distinction between a Christian life and a Christ life lies in the difference between "theory" alone and "practice." The text points out on page 24 that,

"To live a Christian life is to follow the teachings of Jesus, with the thought that God and Christ are wholly outside of man, to be called on but not always to answer. To live a Christ life is to follow Jesus' teachings in the knowledge that God's indwelling presence, which is always life, love, and power within us, is now ready and waiting to flow . . . into our consciousness."

When Jesus said "Follow me" we realize that He could not have meant that we are to follow Him just in every outer act. Our world today is not the same as the world of Jesus' day. We believe that He must have been referring to the laws back of His teachings that we are to follow. Jesus emphasized "the Father within." If we would truly live the Christ life we must, as Jesus did, turn often in prayer to "the Father within" for His guidance.

To attempt to follow Jesus' teachings yet not believe in the God Presence within us (or, as Paul puts it in Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you") is to make the teachings difficult to follow. Many sincere seekers have thought of Jesus as a more richly endowed "Son of God" than others. This is correct to a point, for Jesus was so supremely conscious of His relationship to God that He lived as the Son of God He knew Himself to be. In His salutation in what we term "the Lord's Prayer" (or "our Lord's Prayer") Jesus unified us with Himself in relation to the Fatherhood of God when He said "Our Father." Many a struggling soul has grasped at the person of Jesus, has tried valiantly to follow the letter of His teachings, yet has felt himself bereft because he has not "found" the Christ (I AM) in himself.

In the matter of living the Christ life, man as a free-will being must, as the text says on page 27, "choose to have Him." This means far more than just learning about Jesus Christ. In order to "choose" the Christ we have to feel whatever we are thinking. As
we feel the Christ presence within we begin to know our divinity. It is then that we are Son of man, conscious of the Son of God (Christ) within us and seeking to live the Christ life in all phases of our experience.

When we seek to live the Christ life—the life of mastery as brought out in the first lesson of Lessons in Truth—we are living the true Christian life. We are no longer trying to follow the letter of Jesus' teachings but we are living the spirit of them. It is theory understood and practiced in mind, body, and affairs. Definite results will show forth in our life with our mind stabilized in Truth, our thinking will be efficient, positive, keen, alert. The feeling or emotional nature balanced in understanding will be compassionate, yet clear and uninhibited. Our body will show forth the radiant health, strength, vitality, wholeness to which it is entitled as "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19). Our affairs will manifest harmony, efficiency, happy relationships, abundance to fit every need. True success in these endeavors will bring lasting satisfaction.

8. What is the difference between a "reflection of God" and an "expression of God"?

8. The difference between a "reflection of God" and an "expression of God" lies in the life or action. A reflection is only the picture of the subject, while an expression is the actual nature or character of the subject.

If one looks into a mirror his person is reflected. While this reflection resembles him, there is no substance, life, intelligence, power, or any other quality in the reflection itself. On the other hand, an expression is the actual "pressing out" (ex meaning out, and premer meaning to press). Thus man as an "expression of God" is God coming forth through man as life, substance, intelligence. All the qualities that make up the God-nature are "pressed out" into manifestation. Because God is life, then, an "expression of God" is constant action, not just a reflection that has no animation of itself.

One who seeks to know about God's laws as laid down in the scriptures will follow merely the letter of Jesus' teachings. With a sense of separation he puts himself in the category of being a "reflection of God," expecting something to be done to him. However, the individual who seeks to know God intimately, consciously, becomes aware of his oneness with God. He realizes that he is, therefore, the very nature of God coming into manifestation. He does not believe that any good just happens to him, but rather he knows that it comes from God through him.

When we come to the place of recognizing the inner divine Presence, we not only think that God's power is our power, but we actually feel it expressing through us. When we realize that we are actually the "expression of God" then we can say with conviction, "Wherever I am, God is." We have come to know that we have no existence apart from God.

When understanding comes to us that we are more than a
"reflection of God," that we are the actual expression of the One we
call Father, we build the faith which knows that any situation in
life can be met and overcome. We know beyond the shadow of a doubt
that our salvation is our spiritual nature "expressed," not merely
"reflected." We are struck with the full force of our responsibility
as co-worker with God. The bringing forth of His plan in the mani-
fest realm becomes an exciting challenge to us.

What Jesus claimed for Himself He claimed for every man, and
Charles Fillmore says on page 9 of Jesus Christ Heals:

"Jesus saw in Himself the perfect pattern of the God-Mind.
He lived so close to that pattern that He became its
perfect expression."

We can say for ourselves, "I am a reflection of the radiant
life of God." As we say this and think of the words we will find
that we look outside ourselves. If we say, "I am the radiant life
of God," there is a definite change. We achieve with this latter
statement a much richer conviction, not only of God as radiant life,
but of ourselves as the actual expression of that life. We are speak-
ing from the center of our being to the circumference, and this creates
a forcible impression of the majesty and power of ourselves as God's
son!

9. Explain fully the "will of God."

The "will of God" is God's plan of Absolute Good for man and
all creation. It is God's will for His good to be expressed and
manifested continuously through His creation. For every species
of creation there is a unique pattern. For example, the plan for
the rose is that it shall express and manifest as a perfect rose.
For the bird, the plan is that it shall express and manifest as a
perfect bird, according to the particular species. For man, God's
will or plan is that he shall express and manifest his true spiritual
nature, imaged for him at creation. "And God created man in his own
image" (Gen. 1:27). We call this true nature our divine Self, the
Christ, for it is the first phase of our threefold being (spirit-
soul-body). This was fully covered in the Annotations for Lesson
Three of Lessons in Truth.

God's will or plan for us is also His purpose: "I said, Ye
are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High" (Psalms 82:6). It
is His intention or promise for us: "Ye therefore shall be perfect
as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). The "will of God"
is also His pleasure for us: "It is the Father's good pleasure to
give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). It is God's loving inclination
for us: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt.
3:17). God's will is also God's law in each one of us: "I will put
my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it;
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33).

To these scriptural explanations of the "will of God" we can add
that it is also God's choice for us:

"For we are a temple of the living God; as God
said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them;
and I will be their God, and they shall be my
Lesson 1

people. . . . And will be to you a Father,
And ye shall be to me sons and daughters"
(II Cor. 6:16, 18).

I AM is another name for the first phase of our threefold nature. Thus we may say that I AM is the "will of God" in each one of us. It is the whole nature expressing in and manifesting through us.

Many have believed, and some still believe, that God's will must involve suffering or experiencing unpleasant conditions. This is far from the teaching of Jesus, who brought to mankind the message of a God of love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3) is the word of Scripture. The flower, the tree, all phases of nature, allow God's will or plan to come forth without hindrance because they have what we term "subjective consciousness" and must adapt themselves to conditions. On the other hand, man as a self-conscious being has the right of choice and he makes conditions.

If we are not aware that God's will or plan is within us we will live our life without any definite direction or meaningful purpose. If through ignorance we do not seek God's guidance, then results in our lives will not be according to God's will. We need to remember that we are spiritual beings with an inheritance of all-good. We need to turn often in prayer to God for revelation of His will. The results will be health of mind and body, harmony, success, and abundance in our affairs.

A new world opens up to us when we understand the true meaning of "God's will." We no longer feel we are subject to circumstances and conditions that are unpleasant, in the mistaken notion that this is "God's will."

"Poverty is not God's will but man lays it to the charge of God to excuse his own feeling of inadequacy and defeat. God's will is health, happiness, and prosperity for every man" (Prosperity: page 111).

10. Is "salvation" to be ours at some future time in a faraway place, or when is it acceptable? When is man really "saved"?

10. No, salvation is not something that comes to us in the future. Salvation is the free gift of God to each of us of our own divine nature, the Christ, or I AM. Salvation is ours now. The subject of salvation is extensively covered in the Annotations for Lesson Nine of Lessons in Truth.

"Salvation comes to man as a free gift from God. It embodies a knowledge of God that frees one from all limitations and points the way by which mind and body may be lifted up to the spiritual place of consciousness. . . . Salvation is based solely on an inner overcoming, a change in consciousness" (The Revealing Word: page 173).

Even though salvation is already ours in Truth, there is the sense in which we must "accept" it. Acceptance of salvation takes
Lesson 1

place the moment we become conscious that we have God's Presence within us as our own true nature. This indwelling Presence is the only means by which we can be "saved" from the beliefs and conditions that are less than the perfection that God has willed for us. We learn to accept salvation in our times of prayer and silence, when we have yielded ourselves completely to God. It is then that God reveals His Presence to us. This is more than an intellectual acceptance; it is a deep soul experience that comes when the heart (feeling) and conscious phase of mind (thinking) are unified in the realization that we are one with Him.

"It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of Jehovah" (Lam. 3:27).

In working out a mathematical problem we find that our only salvation in producing a right answer or correcting a wrong one is knowledge and right use of the principle of mathematics. We are assured that the principle is always available and that it is unfalling. We know that it is not something outside ourselves for which we must strive and strain. So in working out life's problems we see that our salvation lies in knowing the God principle within ourselves, knowing that it is constantly available.

"Salvation through Jesus Christ is not accomplished by looking forward to freedom but by realizing that we are now free through His freeing power, which we are using to cut the bonds with which our thoughts have bound us" (Jesus Christ Heals: page 165).

This can be likened to the understanding teacher of mathematics, who does not solve the problem for the student but points him to the principle. Just so does Jesus Christ point the way to the freeing power that lies in the recognition of the Principle of our life--"the Father abiding in me doeth his works" (John 14:10). Just to say that we have "salvation," or that Jesus has "saved" us, is not sufficient. There must be that deeper acceptance that carries with it the conviction that has come to us through divine revelation.

We are really "saved" first, as the soul accepts the truth of our own divinity; second, when we have recognized that we have within us "this mind . . . which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5), third, when we have seen the body as the divine instrument for soul and spirit to express through. With this knowledge, we are saved from making the mistakes that would follow if we were ignorant of the truth about God, about ourselves, about creation. To try to save ourselves through sheer will power alone is not the way for "Salvation belongeth unto Jehovah" (Psalms 3:8).

"Man's salvation from sin, sickness, pain, and death comes by his understanding and conforming to the orderly Mind back of all existence. 'Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free!' (Christian Healing: page 42).

When the subject of salvation is considered, usually we think of "remission of sins" and "remission of the penalty for sin." God's willingness to grant all men deliverance from sin is dealt with in the Annotations for Lesson Eleven, Lessons in Truth.
If sin is the result of not living up to God's standard of Absolute Good, then the "remission of sins" would be the change within our own consciousness. This change in consciousness would be followed by a change in our actions to conform to God's laws. The reversal of both consciousness and actions can only come about through our realization and acceptance of salvation. We find this statement on pages 26 and 27 of the text:

"Nowhere in the New Testament is the idea conveyed that Jesus Christ came that there might be . . . a remission of the penalty for sin . . . . Jesus came that there might be remission or cessation of sins, of wrongs, of mistakes, which were inevitably followed by suffering."

No one can escape the penalty or pain that results from the wrong use of any law. There is, however, a "remission" or diminution of the penalty when our attention is directed to the forgiving love of God as revealed by Jesus Christ. The word remit according to Webster's dictionary means "to send back; to forgive; to pardon . . . to restore." When we are convinced of our true relationship to God, we have no desire to disobey His laws. In the acceptance of God's forgiving love our past sins (shortcomings) are "remitted" by our turning to the indwelling Christ Spirit through prayer.

If a student makes a mistake while working out a mathematical problem he must bring his attention back to the principle (axiom). Then he must handle the proposition from this standpoint. The wrong figures would be erased and replaced with the right ones. So with us. We may have suffered through our mistakes, which have caused pain (and this would represent the "penalty" we pay). However, once we turn consciously to God as the Principle of our life and are obedient to His guidance, we no longer sin--we have found the right answer to life's problems!

I do not know Thy plan for me,
But this I know: I trust in Thee
To be my counsel and my guide;
So in Thy presence I abide.

--Ruth Freistedt De Chantal:
Best-Loved Unity Poems.