ANNOTATIONS

HOW I USED TRUTH (Cady)

Lesson 7

"IF THOU KNEWEST"

UNITY

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY

LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

3-2-64
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10. Explain the meaning of the Scripture (text, page 79): "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil [evil]" (John 3:8).
1. What is "negation" as used in this lesson?

1. "Negation" as the term is used here means a condition or state of mind, body, or affairs that is undesirable, such as fear, anxiety, sickness, poverty, inharmony. Webster's dictionary states that negation means the "act . . . of denying; a refusal"; while the word deny means "to declare not to be true . . . to refuse." Thus a condition that is undesirable is termed a negation because it denies or limits the expression of some good.

On pages 72-73 of the text we find a very simple definition of the word negation: "all that is not good, not light, not love, not health, not wholeness." When we accept such conditions in our life as being real, we are actually denying God's presence for we are intimating that there is an absence of God. As long as we believe in the reality of negative conditions, they will manifest in our life.

"Thoughts, when accompanied by deep feeling, are like seeds of the things they call for" (Soul Power: pages 34-35).

Through the process of denial, we are able to erase the negative beliefs that cause the undesirable conditions. Through the process of affirmation we decree light, love, health, plenty, incorporating these truths in our mind. Having planted the "seed" in consciousness, these good conditions come forth in our human experience.

This lesson is titled "If Thou Knewest," and is taken from the incident in the life of Jesus when He spoke with the woman at the well. After Jesus had asked her for a drink, the woman wanted to know why He would request a drink of her, a Samaritan.

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John 4:10).

"If thou knewest the gift of God"—herein lies our answer to any negation. It is through "knowing" ourselves as sons of God, and heirs to His good, that we are able to bring the desired good into mind, body, and affairs.

A negative condition makes its appearance in the manifest world because, unaware of the Truth, we have conceived in our imagination something contrary to God's will for us. Lack of knowledge of our inheritance, and of the omnipresence of God, has caused us to believe in lack in mind, body, affairs—in the world about us. It has been emphasized over and over again in these lessons that our inheritance is all of the ideas of Divine Mind. When we forget this, or have not
yet reached the full consciousness of this truth, we are likely to believe that some quality of Being (God) is missing. We may feel separated from the life that produces health, wholeness, vitality in the body. We may complain about lack of comfort, of the necessities of life. So long as belief in lack remains in our consciousness we will experience some form of negation in our life. We need to erase error beliefs and turn in prayer to God, the Principle of all creation, to be reminded of the Truth.

"I turn away from the belief in negation, and my thinking changes. I rid my consciousness of limited thoughts that have encumbered and darkened my understanding . . . and ascend into a spiritual realm, the kingdom of the heavens" (Keep a True Lent: pages 141-142).

2. Where does the belief in the "absence of good" exist?

2. The belief in the "absence of good" exists only in the human consciousness, in the mind of man. One of the denial statements given in the fourth lesson of Lessons in Truth is, "There is no absence of life, substance, or intelligence anywhere," and this is stated in the affirmative in Unity's fundamental statement, "There is but one Presence and one Power in the universe, God, the good omnipotent." If we accept these statements as true, we realize that there is no "absence of good" anywhere. Thus any belief that we hold in the "absence of good" is false, has no reality, because it is not based on the principle of Truth.

Inherent in God as Divine Mind are all the ideas of good that permeate and penetrate all so-called space. These ideas are the spiritual patterns for the visible universe. We are the only part of creation that has the power to conceive images by thought. If we are not acquainted with God and His ideas of good, then we do not use our formative power of thought in the right way. In such a case, our imagination conceives of our world as having an "absence of good" in some form. It is, however, our joy and privilege to make conscious contact with God through prayer in order to lay hold of the ideas of Divine Mind. Through prayer we gain the understanding that enables us to use these ideas wisely in order to produce the desired visible good.

"He that keepeth understanding shall find good" (Prov. 19:8).

Webster's dictionary defines the word absence as "an empty or unfilled place." Having established the proposition that God is the one Presence, we cannot conceive of any place in His universe where He is not present. We speak of God as not only omniscient and omnipotent but also as omnipresent. We may look at an outer condition, an outer appearance, and feel that it lacks some manifestation of good. Nevertheless, when we are aware of the omnipresence of God, who is All-Good, we see the condition, not as something of itself but as a reminder of the Truth that there is but one Presence and one Power waiting to manifest in that condition or situation.

If there is no understanding of the truth of the omnipresence of God, then the mind viewing a condition that appears to be lacking some desirable good accepts a belief in the "absence of good." Where there is an appearance of sickness, such a mind feels that there is an
"absence of health." Because God is life, then life too must be omnipresent (even in an appearance of illness). This is why we can pray for healing. Even the condition of illness cannot be termed an "absence of life or health." Very often the evidences of life in one who is ill are very noticeable. It is because the law of expression of life has been disobeyed, either consciously or unconsciously, that the body rebels against some thought of the mind that has acted to produce inharmony, or dis-ease, in the body. Through what we term "sickness" the body endeavors to compensate for the introduction of something foreign, in mind or in the body itself. Illness is the body seeking to eradicate the unpleasant condition.

Having accepted the Truth that God is the Creator and Source of all, there can be in reality "no absence of abundance." It is a fact that there are manifestations of lack throughout the world. Such manifestations of lack have been brought about by beliefs in the "absence of good," which in turn keep us from doing those things that would reverse the picture. Many factors go to make up the error believes that men have carried down through the ages and only spiritual education can change the belief in the "absence of good."

Though there may be a misunderstanding between two or more persons, producing a belief in the "absence of harmony," there is in reality no lack of God's love, peace, harmony, consideration, or understanding. To transform the situation, those involved need to hold to Truth and call upon its action in their own lives.

War is not an absence of peace, for God, as peace, is not absent from any country, any nation, any individual. The ingredients required to produce outer peace have to be recognized and accepted in the consciousness of man. No matter how much we may long for it, there can be no outer peace until there is individual peace within. This is only possible as we acknowledge God to be the Source from which not only peace, but all good proceeds. When we seek God in prayer we are guided by wisdom, love, understanding to think, feel, speak, act according to the laws of God. The process is much like that of the homemaker who bakes a cake. She must first gather the ingredients, and through understanding of the recipe combine them correctly before the finished product can come from the oven.

God's good will flow into and through any channel that is prepared for it.

"Yes, God will accept any channel that is open to Him. Make yourself an open channel... Say to yourself: 'I am an open channel through which the healing, prospering, life-giving forces of God are now freely flowing. God is my life, God is my health, God is my supply. In God is my trust!'" (Soul Power: pages 104-105).

The wrong application of a principle of mathematics may produce an "absence" of the right answer. The mathematician, however, knows that there is in reality no absence, and that through his correct application of the principle he may bring forth the right answer.

"For if God is Spirit, the principle of intelligence and life, everywhere present at all times, He must be
just as accessible as a principle of mathematics"  
(Talks on Truth: page 11).

No matter what faces us as we walk the journey of life, we need to build into consciousness the truth that there is no "absence of good" anywhere, for God is omnipresent good. We need to know that whenever there appears to human sense to be an "absence of good," such an appearance exists only because of a belief in lack in the human mind. This wrong concept can be changed by turning to God in prayer, so that He may reveal Himself to us as the Presence and Power that fills all the universe.

"God is everywhere evenly present.

"There is no place, no situation, no problem, no condition where God is not. He is within you and around you. You are filled with and encircled with God, the good. God is omnipresent... .

"Is a condition of ill-health facing you? God is everywhere, and you can know that He is in the midst of this condition as health, life, and wholeness. Is a condition of lack or want facing you? You can know that regardless of appearances the truth is that God is always actively present as abundance, prosperity, and supply, for He is everywhere at all times" (Practical Christianity for You: pages 23-24).

3. Explain the meaning of the words temporal and eternal.

3. The word temporal is related to time and space. Webster's dictionary indicates that it means "limited by time, esp. some designated time or period." On the other hand, the word eternal means unlimited. The dictionary defines it in this way: "everlasting; without beginning or end... having no element of time; timeless."

That which is eternal is of God--unchanging, unlimited, and without form. That which is temporal is of the world of phenomena, that is, of form. By this we do not mean that all that is temporal is error; but rather that the temporal is subject to change, while that which is eternal is changeless. The eternal comprises all of the divine qualities or ideas of God, Divine Mind. In order for these ideas to manifest in the visible world they must take on forms. However, an idea can never be confined to any form, for the form is always the temporal. The rose we see is temporal. The petals will fall, and the visible rose will cease to be. But the rose idea is eternal. The idea of the rose will remain the same, and will produce other roses again and again. The forms the rose idea takes may change as horticulturists experiment with hybridization, bringing forth different varieties. But no matter how much the outer form may change, the basic idea back of this particular flower is the rose idea.

Holding to the truth that God's ideas are the changeless, limitless, eternal inheritance that God gave to each of us, we are able to view temporal things and conditions from the standpoint of Truth. We may not like the outer appearance of some condition and may desire
to be rid of it. When we go deeper, we find the eternal idea that can produce what we really want. There is much reason for rejoicing in the fact that appearances in our outer world can be changed. If they are negative, we are glad they can be changed to that which is desirable.

Growth always brings some change in form, so even the temporal conditions and things that may bring us happiness at the moment will expand into greater expressions of good. The bud becomes the rose. The flowering time gives way to harvest. The bare trees of winter are lying dormant only that they may come forth new in the spring. The baby becomes the adult. All of these are changes in form but not in the eternal idea lying back of the visible forms.

With the right understanding, we see negative appearances as the outpicturing of our misuse (through wrong thinking) of the eternal ideas of God. When we do come to this realization, we are prompted to return in consciousness to the principle of right or scientific thinking, in order to bring forth forms and conditions that are desirable. The form (temporal) of sickness can change to health through the right understanding of the life idea (eternal) as it is handled by our mind in thinking and feeling. There can be a reversal of the condition of poverty to that of affluence, with a return in consciousness to the idea of abundance. When we recognize the Truth, we need to follow through in the expression of the laws of mind that govern the true expression of any divine idea.

We often read in our Truth study that the eternal is the real. Sometimes we refer to the "unreal," meaning the outer manifestation. No manifestation could be sustained were it not based upon a real or eternal idea. In this lesson, we go a step further in considering the temporal, or what may be called the "unreal." On page 73 of the text Doctor Cady refers to certain emotions of the human mind that are not realities, such as envy, unhappiness, selfishness, jealousy, fear, and the like. She refers to these as being "a lack" but we have already established that in reality there is no lack, no absence of any good. On page 74, however, Doctor Cady does qualify her previous statement by adding, "In the deepest reality there is never an absence of the good anywhere, for that would mean absence of God there."

In considering that which is real (eternal) and that which can pass away or change (temporal), we find these words on page 158 of the Metaphysical Bible Dictionary:

"Only that which is created by God is real, enduring, abiding. If the untrue were real, it could not be changed. Only spiritual things are eternal and real."

It is this realization that enables us to affirm the Truth in spite of conditions that seem to belie the omnipresence of good. We are strengthened in our faith by understanding that conditions of the outer world—especially undesirable conditions—are only temporal. Through appropriation of the eternal ideas of God, outer conditions and things either change completely or expand into greater manifestations of God's good.
"Remember that man makes all appearance, and names it good or evil according to the pleasure it gives him. God furnishes the raw material as it were, out of which this appearance is formed, and this is always good, because its pure essence cannot be polluted."

--Charles Fillmore

4. How would you help a dear one who appears to be "going wrong" (text, page 75) and expresses unkindness?

4. We help one who appears to be "going wrong" by following the instruction of Jesus Christ to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39). The first commandment of love that Jesus gave is to "love the Lord thy God." When we follow this command we are truly in a position to "love [our] neighbor." Recognition of our relationship to God reveals the relationship of our dear one to the same loving God. Our first reaction, then, must be to place him lovingly in the hands of the Father. After doing this we are open to the guidance God gives us as to what we are to do in the outer to help him.

On page 75 of the text Doctor Cady, in referring to a situation such as is under consideration here, says, "It is the absence of love, that is all." This does not mean necessarily that we have ourselves been unloving with the dear one. It does mean, however, that the one who seems to be "going wrong" feels unloved and frustrated; he actually believes in an "absence of love" in spite of the fact that those near him may love him very much. He will continue to feel unloved until he can respond to love from within himself. When one seeking to offer help to another can reach the point of placing that one lovingly in the hands of the Father, this attitude will allow him to be at peace within himself. He will be better able to pray for illumination or spiritual awakening, healing, guidance, harmony, prosperity, or whatever the need may be, for the one he desires to help. When the person praying feels peaceful himself, with no condemnation, the person needing help may feel this peace and begin to open his own soul to God.

Any expression of unkindness is evidence of unrest in a person's own consciousness. There is a lashing-out at what might appear to him to be restraint, or even condemnation. Not having "found" the Christ or God Presence within himself, he may seek for fulfillment in ways that are not in accord with his true nature. His own inner guilt feelings produce the frustration that causes his words and actions to be hurtful to himself and to others. Because the Christ self is always seeking expression through each of us, we can never know fulfillment or inner peace until we are living in accord with the laws of God. One in bondage to a false habit is dissipating his energies in wrong ways. Because this is contrary to his true nature, his attitude toward life and other persons is warped and may result in expressions of unkindness to those closest to him.

A parent, friend, or counselor must first understand the soul need of the one he would help. That one's real need is for spiritual help, which in turn will indicate what outer help is required. The soul needs of people are varied. People need love. They need faith in God, in others, and especially in themselves. A person who is dominating and seeking for the attention of others needs to feel accepted
and approved. A person who cannot make decisions has a great need for wisdom and good judgment. Many people need a feeling of security. It is only through making conscious contact with God through prayer that we acquire the insight and understanding to do our part in meeting the needs of another. We need to pour out love to him. We need to show faith in his inner spiritual resources. We need to quicken good judgment in ourselves to be able to do the right thing at the right time.

Prayer gives us the insight to look beyond actions that fall short of God's laws. Prayer awakens the love that is

"Not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Cor. 13:5-7).

5. How would you "heal" the suffering of poverty?

5. One who would "heal" the suffering of poverty for himself or others needs to pray for enlightenment concerning not only supply, but also concerning God as the omnipresent source of abundance, and every man as heir to this good.

Webster's dictionary takes the word heal back to the Anglo-Saxon meaning of "hale, sound, whole." At first reading this might seem to apply only to physical healing, but the word can be used in an expanded meaning including the restoration of any state of consciousness as well as any condition of affairs. Besides restoration of the body to health, the word heal also means, "to restore to original purity or integrity . . . to return to a sound state." One has to know what the "original purity" and the "sound state" refer to before there can be any action toward return or restoration. It is thus that prayer becomes the open doorway to understanding of the truth that God's abundance, the "original purity" or "sound state" of our affairs, is everywhere present; and that this supply is available for all.

There are certain conditions, within and without, that must be met before prosperity can manifest in our life. Prayer reveals the Truth to us consciously, and through it we are guided in fulfilling the conditions. Knowing ourselves as heirs to the good of God, we see why we must deny, and thus eliminate from our consciousness, all beliefs in poverty and lack as being realities, or as being our lot in life. Knowing that our inheritance is primarily in the form of ideas, we perceive the need to affirm (silently or audibly) the particular ideas that represent prosperity at any given time.

The "healing" of the suffering of poverty is not always an overnight activity. It requires persistent and constant prayer to change a consciousness of poverty to a consciousness of plenty. Many times one who feels a lack in possessions or finances has also felt an inner lack, indefinable but seemingly very real to him. On the other hand, one who has plenty of this world's goods may also fear poverty. He, too, needs healing to find the spiritual foundation upon which his outer good rests. There are those who have never felt poor, even though for some reason or other they may have lost outer forms of good. They have not lost the inner consciousness of God's abundance. They hold in their own consciousness the "seeds" that can produce
more manifest good as possessions, homes, money. This is what Dr. Ernest C. Wilson refers to as "invisible means of support." In his book Soul Power (page 57), Doctor Wilson writes:

"Do you have a financial problem? What is the truth about it? Let's say you are considering a problem of lack. The answer to the problem of lack is its opposite, abundance. Identify yourself with abundance."

Forgiveness plays an important part in the healing of the body. We find that forgiveness, of ourselves and others, is just as vital to the "healing" of poverty. We need to forgive ourselves for thinking that other persons are responsible for the limited circumstances in which we find ourselves. We need to forgive others for any acts that have reacted in our life as lack. We have reached a high point in consciousness when we can say in the words of Jesus,

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

A fine affirmative prayer is suggested on the same page as the aforementioned quotation from Soul Power:

"God is my instant, constant, and abundant supply of all good... I make of myself an open channel for the swift, harmonious fulfillment of my needs, through the thoughts I think, the emotions I feel, the words I speak, the services I render."

6. Explain how the condition of evil is a "delusion of the senses" (text, pages 76-77).

6. Any condition that is termed "evil" can be said to be a "delusion of the senses," because if God is the one Presence and one Power in the universe, there can be no reality to evil. Evil is not real or enduring because God did not create it; therefore evil appearances can be changed. Man terms "evil" anything that causes him pain or unhappiness. Many think of evil as being that which is contrary to moral laws, or to religious teachings. Charles Fillmore made this statement:

"If man combines life, love, substance, and intelligence of Principle in such a way that discord results, let him not lay it to God. Man is a free agent, and in the exercise of his freedom he has left out some factor in forming his world."

We need to clarify what we mean when we refer to "the senses"; we need to ask ourselves what would cause the senses to delude us into thinking that there could be a condition opposed to God. The senses here referred to are seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling (touching). The senses are actually avenues of expression for ideas. We can say that any condition when evaluated by the senses as evil is really a "delusion of the senses" because the senses, of themselves, are not capable of right or righteous judgment. That is why Jesus warned, "Judge not by the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Judging by the appearance is done through one or more
of the five senses. The results will depend upon the amount of understanding expressed by the person judging. (See the Annotations for Lesson Four on "Denials" in Lessons in Truth, covering the subject of judging by the appearance.)

The senses are not the source of wisdom; rather, they are avenues for its expression. Therefore judgment from any of the five senses alone is not safe. The senses should be allowed to fulfill their own purpose as avenues of expression for the mind. When they are guided by the right understanding of the person using them, they prove their value.

"Our nearest approach to life is through its sensations in our body. God made them and they are among the creations that He pronounced 'very good.' It is not in the thing but in its use that we have fallen short."

--Charles Fillmore

If the driver of a car is alert to changes in the performance of his car, his sense of hearing can save his life. Keen hearing can reveal a sound that would indicate escape of air from a tire, or some other weakness in operation or in the mechanism. To obey such a warning is to avoid trouble. This is not a "delusion of the senses." The positive benefits derived from the sense of hearing are apparent all around us, in the soul-stirring music we hear, in the song of birds, in the sound of rustling leaves, in the falling of raindrops. These are not a "delusion of the senses."

One with a keen sense of smell is warned of escaping gas, or of burning materials. Quick response to such a warning may save a life. The right use of the sense of smell adds zest to our life through the odors that bring delight to everyday living. We find delight in the lovely perfume of flowers, or the perfumes that men have combined through knowledge of this art, the smell of healthful food, the smell of new-mown grass, the freshness of the morning and the mellowness of the evening. Such responses are not a "delusion of the senses."

We may consider the joys which the sense of seeing, the sense of hearing, the sense of taste, the sense of touch have each brought into our life. These good responses are no "delusion of the senses." It is only when the senses do not have a true premise upon which to base their functioning that a "delusion of the senses" results.

7. What is a gift? What is the "gift of God" to man?

7. A gift according to Webster's dictionary is: "anything given; anything voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation . . . some quality or endowment given to man by God." Even an outer gift cannot be purchased or earned. By the same token, a gift given by God to man cannot be purchased or earned. (See the Annotations for Lesson Eleven of Lessons in Truth, which deal with the term gift as well as "spiritual gifts.")

While a gift from a loved one or a friend can neither be purchased nor worked for, we have to accept the gift or it is not ours. Likewise, the gifts of God require a certain work in our own soul
consciousness before we are able to accept and use them, or benefit from them. First must come the awakening of our consciousness to the gift, then the mental work involved in denying any limited beliefs that would seem to keep the gift from us, and finally the affirmiting or claiming of it as ours by divine right of inheritance.

The text (page 77) repeats the scriptural verse from which the title of this lesson comes, "If thou knewest the gift of God" (John 4:10). Reference to the incident in the ministry of Jesus is given in the first Annotation of this lesson. The text then continues with an explanation of this "gift of God":

"What is this inestimable gift? What, indeed, but that He has given the veritable Son of God to be forever within us."

As explained in the Annotations for Lesson Eleven, Lessons in Truth, the "gift of God" is really the greatest gift to us, for it is God Himself as our own true nature. It is God's own image-likeness in us as the Christ, or I AM. This "gift of God" is the all-inclusive gift because as the whole nature of God it includes all of the divine qualities or ideas. At any given moment in a person's experience he might feel that life (health) is the most important gift to him. At another time he might need harmony. In another instance, he might feel that abundance is the greatest gift that could be bestowed upon him. However, in the over-all picture we see that it is only the completeness of the God-nature that can fulfill all the needs of everyday living.

There is nothing wrong in desiring the fulfillment of some outer need. It may be that the particular quality needed to supply that need is being unfolded in an orderly way. However, to put our attention on any one of the God-qualities to the exclusion of others leads to imbalance. There is a sense of security when one is aware of the truth that there is an all-sufficiency for every need. We can feel assured that God will guide us in bringing forth the supply in divine order.

The text says of this "inestimable gift" (page 78) that it provides "redemption from all human lack and suffering." It does just that. If God in us is the Fountainhead of all that we can ever need for fulfillment in our lives, then awareness of His presence in us as our all-sufficiency can redeem us from lack and suffering. The secret lies in being aware of this Presence and then availing ourselves of Its redeeming power.

How do we contact this power? Through prayer. It is not the formal prayer attesting God's greatness and our unworthiness that makes contact with spiritual power. It is the eager, simple prayer that acknowledges God as our loving Father and turns to Him in complete trust. To know the "gift of God" is to take of the living water which is the power of God's Spirit moving in all phases of our life. It is far more than intellectual knowledge of this gift. It is conscious acceptance of the gift itself that is our salvation, for the "gift" contains, as the text states on page 78, "the very substance of everything this human man can need or desire."
8. What is grace, and how is God's grace manifested?

8. Grace is the unmerited favor of God to man. It is God's love in action in us, to which we are consciously or unconsciously responding. (See the Annotations for Lesson Eleven, Lessons in Truth.)

It is interesting to note that the Latin root of the word grace means "beloved, dear." Truth reveals that every person is beloved and dear to God, stands in favor with God, for each one has been created in the very substance and image of God-perfection. A simple definition of grace is given on page 103 of Prosperity's Ten Commandments:

"Always remember that the law of grace is the action of Spirit or the 'free gift' of God's saving power responding to the call of faith."

Among the many definitions of the word grace found in Webster's dictionary, the following gives further light for our study of this word:

"Divine favor unmerited by man... a free gift of God to man for his regeneration or sanctification; an impetus and influence emanating from God and operative for the spiritual well-being of the recipient."

Another definition cited by Webster's dictionary for the word grace (one attributed to Protestant religions) is:

"The operation of divine love, especially as manifested in God's taking the initiative toward reconciliation with man."

When an individual finds himself in a situation from which there seems no way out, the very urge or movement within him to desire freedom is God's love seeking to express itself. This love stands always ready to help, no matter what the individual may have done to get himself into a limiting situation. One of the above definitions says that grace is "a free gift of God to man." Being free it can be neither earned nor purchased; it cannot be forced upon us but only accepted. God's love is always available, always ours. However, this love can only become grace to us, or the "fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:10) as Paul has said, when we avail ourselves of it. To ask and accept God's help causes us to respond to His grace (love).

There seems to be an intuitive knowing in us that when we avail ourselves of God's grace, it will, by its very nature, move all the qualities of God into expression to meet any specific need we may have. No matter in what situation we may find ourselves, deserved or not, we find God's love as His grace giving the mercy, forgiveness, protection, understanding, healing, wisdom, guidance, and strength needed to meet any circumstance if we call upon it, consciously or unconsciously.

One may think there is discrimination when two persons in a similar situation seem to have different outcomes. This, however, is not the case. Every person has equal right to the grace of God, for no one is excluded from God's love. We may have set in motion the mental law of cause and effect that will bring in its wake
results that are undesirable. Once we turn to God's grace (His love) we are given a "lifeline," as it were, to bring us out of the dark-
ness of ignorance into the light of Truth. Once we grasp the "life-
line," however, we still have much work to do if we would continue to
live under grace. Our consciousness has to be cleansed by the process
of denial. Then comes the building of the Truth into our consciousness
by affirmation. These activities must be followed by actions in our
everyday living that are commensurate with our changed consciousness.

While we say that "grace is the unmerited favor of God to man,"
there is a sense in which we need to "merit" the right to accept
this "free gift" by aligning our consciousness and our conduct with
God's laws of good.

There is really nothing mysterious about God's grace at work
in our life. As an analogy we might consider a principle of mathe-
matics. If we have, through ignorance or deliberate willfulness,
or even carelessness, brought about a wrong answer in the mathe-
matical problem before us, we are faced with two alternatives. We
may let the wrong answer stand, in which case it will adversely af-
fact not only the mathematical proposition at hand but any that may
follow. If we do this, we will be frustrated, probably complaining,
and unable to advance any further. Our other alternative is to take
a firm mental stand, realizing that if the answer is incorrect then
there has been a wrong application of the rules of mathematics. Com-
mon sense indicates that in such a case we must return in our thinking
to the principle involved, review its workings, and through this
process determine wherein the error lies. Did the principle of mathe-
matics punish us by giving us an incorrect answer? No, it remained
just as unmoved and true. Did the principle have to be cajoled,
beseached, begged to give us the right answer? No, the answer was
there awaiting our acceptance. Our part was to respond to the prin-
ciple and follow its rules in our application of it. In order to
solve future mathematical problems, obedience to the rules of the
principle is necessary if we would continue to produce right answers.

This analogy gives us some idea of God's grace or love in re-
lation to our own life. Like a principle of mathematics, God's
grace is always available, waiting to be accepted. We do not need
to cajole, beseech, or beg God, for His grace is a free gift to us.
Our desire to find the right answer to some pressing problem is God
seeking a channel through which He may pour His love into our life.
It is important for us to realize that while His love stands always
ready to help us, we have to acknowledge it and respond to it. It
is when we throw ourselves on the mercy of this love that it becomes
to us the "grace of God." Grace does not scold or remind us of our
mistakes, but like a principle of mathematics it reveals all that
is necessary to correct the wrong situation. When the prodigal son
made his return journey, his father came to meet him "while he was
yet afar off" (Luke 15:20). We are told that instead of being met
with recrimination, the prodigal was feted and given gifts. The love
of his father went beyond emotion; it went into action to produce all
that was necessary to fill the son's emptiness, even though he had
brought the former unhappy conditions upon himself.

God's grace manifests as all that is needed to fulfill our life
at any given time, and under any set of circumstances. When we avail
ourselves of this grace, we will be guided to take whatever mental or physical action is necessary on our part to bring an undesirable situation into divine order.

"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3).

9. What is meant by "the Godhead"?

9. The Godhead is another term for the Holy Trinity. It is the threefold nature of God, spoken of in religious terms as: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost). Metaphysically explained, the terms used are: Mind, Idea, and Expression.

In the current Annotations for Lesson Eleven, Lessons in Truth, the three phases of the Godhead (or Holy Trinity) are outlined both religiously and metaphysically, but it is well to repeat and enlarge on that explanation: (See also Lesson Five, How I Used Truth, Annotation Four, on "Holy Spirit.")

| 1st phase of the Godhead, or Holy Trinity | God the Father | This is God as Creator, Principle, First Cause, Origin, Source, Divine Mind, I AM THAT I AM. |
| 2d phase of the Godhead, or Holy Trinity | God the Son | This is the perfect created offspring of God the Father; God's own image-likeness called by the names: Christ, I AM, Word of God, Logos, Seed of God, spiritual man, the Idea of Divine Mind. |
| 3d phase of the Godhead, or Holy Spirit | God the Holy Spirit | This is "God in movement" (Lessons in Truth: page 124); the Breath of God, breathing all the ideas of Mind into expression. This is why in the metaphysical explanation we say the Holy Spirit is Expression. |

When we use the statement, "The nature of God is absolute good," we are describing the essence of the Godhead. When we say, "There is but one Presence and one Power," we are stating that the Godhead is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, unchangeable, unlimited.

The first chapter of Genesis opens with the words, "In the beginning God." This is God as Mind, as the Principle of all creation. The second verse states that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Here we find Mind expressing as the Holy Spirit, moving into action. Charles Fillmore gives a very simple definition of this phase of the Godhead or Holy Trinity when he states in Jesus Christ Heals (page 182) "the Holy Spirit is . . . the whole Spirit of God in action."

The second phase, "God the Son," is the Idea of Mind, into which
the Holy Spirit breathes or expresses all that the Father-Mind is. As the Son is the Idea of Mind, so every form of creation is an idea of that same Mind moving into expression and manifestation by the creative power of God. Spiritual man is the image of God, the Christ, I AM. He has inherent within him all of the God nature and the power to release this essence through his being.

The Godhead or the fullness of the God nature is inherent in every human being. Manifest man's business is to discover and express this inner spiritual nature (spiritual man), and the ideas or qualities of which it is composed.

What occurs when an idea is "born" in our mind illustrates in some degree the activity of the Holy Trinity, or Godhead. Our mind (consciousness) with its capacity for thought conceives an idea. Before this idea can come forth into manifestation in some form, there has to be a "pressing-out" or expression of it. This usually takes more than just our thought-power. Often actual physical effort is required if we are to continue with an idea until it is a mental picture clear enough to be formed in the outer. This applies to all new inventions, to discoveries in science, and to all phases of progress in the human family.

The expression of the idea in all its details is comparable to the movement of the Holy Spirit in us. No idea of our mind could possibly come to fruition until we had, as it were, "breathed" into it the breath of life. In fact, for an idea to be made manifest all of our nature has to be put into it. We could say that the expression is our whole nature in action to bring forth the idea. Sometimes we forget that if we do not interpret an idea correctly, but form a wrong concept or belief about it, we still "put ourselves" into it and it manifests—but not in the type of conditions we desire.

The "whole Spirit of God," or Holy Spirit, moves the whole nature of God into action through the Idea (Son) and brings forth only perfection. We can see why Paul could say of Jesus Christ, "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). As the Holy Spirit moved through Jesus Christ there was nothing in Him to prevent its perfect expression, so He was the actual manifestation of the God nature. Paul tells us that Jesus was tempted but He was "yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). From this we conclude that Jesus, being aware of His place in the Holy Trinity as the Son, allowed the Holy Spirit to move through Him without interference. Jesus was able to say, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

The Godhead or Holy Trinity is not some mysterious entity set apart from our lives. Right understanding reveals our place in the Godhead. Charles Fillmore refers to the Holy Trinity and our part in it as follows:

"If you would know the mystery of Being, see yourself in Being. . . . Throw yourself out of the Holy Trinity, and you become an onlooker. Throw yourself into the Trinity, and you become its avenue of expression. The Trinity is known commonly as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; metaphysically it is known as mind, idea, expression. These three are one. Each sees itself as including the other
two, yet in creation separate. Jesus, the type man, placed Himself in the Godhead, and said: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' But, recognizing the supremacy of spiritual Principle, which He was demonstrating, He said: 'The Father is greater than I!' (Christian Healing: page 20).

10. Explain the meaning of the Scripture (text, page 79): "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil [evil]" (I John 3:8).

10. The word devil is used to symbolize what man terms evil in all its forms. In other words, devil stands for all in man's consciousness that is adverse to the perfect will or plan of God, the good. We read in The Revealing Word, page 54:

"The 'devil' is a state of consciousness adverse to the divine good. . . . There is no personal devil. God is the one omnipresent Principle of the universe, and there is no room for any principle of evil, personified or otherwise."

The "works of the devil" as mentioned in this question are all the undesirable conditions that have resulted from the unrighteous use of the power of thinking. The "works of the devil" are the things or conditions that we term evil, for these bring pain, suffering, death, unhappiness into our world. The primary cause of our wrong use of the formative power of thought is our unawareness of our true heritage as sons of God. (See the first Annotation of Lesson One, Lessons in Truth.) In this unenlightened attitude of mind we do not have a true premise upon which to base our thinking. Therefore, our thinking centers on appearances, and especially on limited conditions. It follows that conclusions are drawn from a false premise rather than from the Truth.

To manifest means "to bring forth," so that a thing or situation is recognized by any or all of the five senses. Our true nature as sons of God has to be manifested. That is, our true nature must come forth in our thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting in order to effect a change in the limited conditions ("works of the devil") in our life.

"Son of God--The fullness of the perfect-man idea in Divine Mind, the Christ. The true spiritual self of every individual. The living Word; the Christ idea in the Mind of God" (The Revealing Word: page 181).

Jesus Christ, our Elder Brother, recognized Himself as the Son of God. Through this recognition He fulfilled, in actual experience, the perfect God idea of man. Jesus showed us how to redeem all the false formations of mind ("works of the devil") that have come forth in body and affairs through misconception and wrong use of our mental powers. In one sense, there is never any actual destruction ("destroy the works of the devil"). It is, rather, a reversal of our wrong thinking to right thinking. Paul instructs,

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).
We must come to know that it is only through the power of God, the Christ, or I AM, at the center of our being that we are able to renew our mind with divine ideas.

"Sometimes we pray to a God outside of ourselves. It is the God in the midst of us that frees and heals" (Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters: page 25).

Only thus can we be transformed in every phase of our experience. Knowing the truth of our relationship to God, we allow the process of denial to cleanse our consciousness of all limiting thoughts and beliefs not true of the Son of God. Through affirmation of Truth we begin to manifest the nature of the Son and "prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" in our mind, body and affairs. If we are centered in Truth the "destroying" of "the works of the devil" (error beliefs and conditions) is not a struggle or a difficult process. It is the gentle erasing of that which does not belong in the life of a child of God. The wisdom of gently cleansing the consciousness is emphasized by Charles Fillmore when he says:

"A denial is a relinquishment, and it should not be made with too much vehemence. Let us make our denials as though we were gently sweeping away cobwebs, and our affirmations in a strong, bold, positive attitude of mind" (The Revealing Word: page 53).

Reaching the place in consciousness where we know and apply the Truth may require a great deal of mental effort and self-discipline, much prayer, and obedience to spiritual guidance. It is not an effort for the student to erase his wrong figures, if he knows the principle he is working with. However, until he does know the principle, and how to work with its rules, he may find it difficult to reach the right answer. Once he understands the principle, the erasure is a simple matter. Each of us must assume the responsibility for the dominion God has given him as His son, in order to erase or "destroy the works of the devil."

Claiming our sonship and our dominion is an individual work. Once this is accomplished in consciousness, the change begins in our own life and radiates into the whole earth. That is why we need to affirm constantly,

"Heavenly Father, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me."

Finally, overcoming takes place individually as we transcend or "destroy the works of the devil [evil]" in our own life and start the renewing process in the earth.

"You have a spirit in you! It will meet Whatever comes to pass and climb up higher; God's Spirit that will take life as it is And shape it into something nearer His! A spirit that will fire Your heart and mind with faith, direct your feet, Steady your hands, and lift your eyes to see The certain vision of the victory!"

--James Dillett Freeman: Best-Loved Unity Poems.