ANNOTATIONS

LESSONS IN TRUTH (Cady)

Lesson 6

FAITH

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QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

for

LESSONS IN TRUTH (CADY)

Lesson 6

"FAITH"

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2. What part does faith play in our accomplishment?

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Lesson 6

FAITH

1. What is faith? Explain the definition of faith as given in Hebrews 11:1.

1. Faith is an idea or quality of Divine Mind, thus it is one of the ideas that constitute our divine inheritance. It is a spiritual power or principle that operates as a faculty of our mind. It embodies hope, belief, trust, and expectancy.

Faith is an integral part of our being. Through the ages mankind has sought to know God and it is faith that has been the directing power of this search, as well as our individual yearning and seeking for God.

Charles Fillmore refers to faith as "the perceiving power of the mind" (page 43, Prosperity). This "perceiving power," acting as a faculty in our consciousness, sees the possibility of a thing or result long before there is any evidence of it in the visible realm. Faith "sees" the good and perceives it to be worthy of our consideration. Faith prompts our mind to give attention to that which is good without letting any doubts creep in.

Faith produces a feeling of deep inner conviction, a state of being certain in our mind that a desire for something will be fulfilled in the outer at the right time. This feeling does not depend on the five senses to report how or through what channel the fulfillment of the desire is to come. Faith is possessing in mind a picture of a thing desired before there is any sign of it as a form in the outer world.

Faith goes beyond intellectual belief, although when faith first moves in our consciousness it starts its expression in us with intellectual belief. Faith is a positive agreement between the conscious phase of mind (the faculty of thinking or as is often referred to, the intellect) and the subconscious phase of mind (the feeling nature, or what is often referred to as the heart) with regard to the desired good. Faith is the "single eye" of which Jesus spoke, for it keeps our attention focused on good, or God.

We may say that faith is both the vision of good and the power to bring that vision into expression. It is the faculty of mind that gives divine ideas a firm place in our consciousness. Faith keeps ideas active in our mind while they are taking form to meet the specific need in our manifest world.

In its action, however, faith is not confined to religion or to things spiritual. It operates in varied degrees at all levels of consciousness:
"Faith is a faculty of the mind that finds its most perfect expression in the spiritual nature, but in order to bring out one's whole character it should be developed in all its phases" (page 85, Christian Healing).

Faith brings into actuality or manifestation whatever we have fixed our attention and our expectations on. We are always using the power of faith, but if this power is not directed according to spiritual law, we bring many things into our world that fall short of God's standard of good. Jesus tells us most explicitly where we are to place our faculty of faith, when He says: "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22).

Faith, being an idea of God, can have no opposite. That which is called fear is not the opposite of faith, but rather a belief in evil.

With these explanations of faith we reach a clearer understanding of the definition found in Hebrews 11:1. The authorized version of this passage reads, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Every form of manifestation ("things hoped for") was at one time an intangible idea that had to be fostered, fed, and nourished by the "soil" of the mind. Faith is to an idea in our mind what soil is to the seedling; it is the very "substance" that promotes growth and maintains life.

We cannot see this "substance" referred to in this scriptural passage with our physical eyes, yet it does manifest as the form of everything we see in the visible universe. The very fact that we exercise faith in any given situation is itself the "evidence," or proof, that the outer form of the desired good is ready to manifest in our life.

2. What part does faith play in accomplishing our desires?

2. Faith plays a very vital part in accomplishing our desires. Faith perceives the good, directs us toward it, and is the power that keeps us on the path toward a definite goal. As the "perceiving power," faith calls forth other needed faculties or ideas required for any desired accomplishment.

"Faith working in spiritual substance accomplishes all things. This is the faith that co-operates with creative law. When faith is exercised deep in spiritual consciousness . . . it brings results that are seemingly miraculous" (page 68, The Revealing Word).

We can see that faith furnishes the motive power to go forward. It is the power that makes accomplishment possible, for it exists in some degree in every act of life. Without the inner assurance of faith that a thing is possible of accomplishment, it would never be started, let alone completed.

Faith keeps ambition active; it is the incentive that brings the joy of completion.

"Even so, faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself" (Jas. 2:17).
3. What is meant by blind faith?

Blind faith is a term that is used to indicate the use of the faculty of faith without complete understanding; it is an instinctive trust without conscious awareness of the principle of faith involved.

As a divine idea, or spiritual power, faith cannot be blind, but we can direct the power of this faculty in a blind manner without enlightenment as to its true nature and function.

So-called blind faith does reach beyond appearances with a feeling that there is something higher to be trusted, but what that higher "something" is has not been made clear to one in an unenlightened state of consciousness. One in this limited consciousness waits patiently for his good to come to him sometime, somewhere, but where, when, or why, he does not know, because he has not grasped the truth that there is a principle back of all life that can be understood and used.

Anything that is blind must grope its way because its action is not consciously based on a principle. We may, by so-called blind faith, stumble on the correct answer to a problem without knowing why or how. This may solve the problem at the time; however, because we do not know how, why, or from what source the solution came, we cannot duplicate the process in connection with another problem that arises. So we continue to feel a lack of assurance, of poise, of confidence, until we are able to go beyond blind faith; until we reach the state of consciousness that is acquired with the knowledge that understanding faith is based on unchanging law that always works for good when correctly applied.

"There is but one real faith; the avenue of expression determines the character and power of faith" (page 29, Twelve Powers of Man).

4. What is intuition and how does faith work with intuition?

Intuition is the "still small voice" (I Kings 19:12) of God or the Holy Spirit speaking to our soul (our thinking and feeling nature) giving us guidance. It is direct knowing moving into our consciousness as ideas, without intellectual reasoning.

The knowing to which we have referred as intuition does not come through the usual channels through which we ordinarily obtain knowledge in the outer, such as schooling, observation, experience. However, the "still small voice" of intuition may use any of these mediums. Most of us have had the experience of listening to a teacher or a minister or of reading a book, singing a song, speaking words of Truth and actually "hearing" God "speak" to us through the audible or written words.

"Communion in mind can be said to be without sound. It is the 'still small voice,' the voice that is not a voice, the voice using words that are not words. Yet its language is more definite and certain than that of words and sounds, because it has none of their limitations" (page 33, Jesus Christ Heals).
Intuition, sometimes called the "inner tutor" or "inner teacher," quickens and illumines the faith faculty and causes it to become activated to good. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17 A.V.). The stronger our faith in God becomes, the more we follow the guidance of intuition, and the more we listen to intuition, the stronger our faith becomes. Faith "is born of intuition" (page 63, Lessons in Truth). Thus we see that intuition and faith are closely related. In addition to quickening our faith, intuition quickens other faculties, especially the faculty of understanding, which is able to guide us in the right use of our faith faculty in every phase of our life. Without the guidance of intuition, our use of the faith faculty could become fanatical, unloving, and unreasonable.

There is usually a quick response in our feeling nature to both intuition and faith but they are never intended to set reason aside. Rather, intuition illumines the intellect so that our thinking and reasoning are based only on Truth.

Intuition, the voice of God, is not to be confused with conscience. Intuition points out the true way for us to follow; it says, "This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isa. 30:21). Conscience, on the other hand, is the voice of the soul that speaks from experience. It says to us, "Do not do that because it is wrong." Our past experiences, our race, religion, culture, and our associations all determine what our conscience shall tell us.

"The voice of conscience in man calls his attention to his shortcomings and encourages him to do right" (page 420, Metaphysical Bible Dictionary).

Conscience "warns us when we have transgressed the divine law" (page 48, Metaphysical Bible Dictionary), but it is intuition, the voice of God, that illumines and guides us to the pathway of light.

5. What is understanding faith? Does an understanding faith increase one's power to demonstrate?

5. Understanding faith is faith functioning according to Principle, with a knowledge of God as the underlying plan of good. It is the perceiving of the principle of good, or God, at work in every situation of our life. It is the faith that understands the law of mind action ("like begets like"); such a faith understands the mental law of cause and effect because it has been experienced and proven by use.

Understanding faith does not depend on blind faith or an instinctive trust to accomplish results, for it knows that nothing is accidental. It knows that all good results are based on universal law, so both reasoning and feeling enter into its operation.

We have only an intellectual concept of faith if we merely know about it. However, when we actually know and experience faith by feeling as well as thinking, then we have added understanding to our faith. The faith faculty "perceives" that which is good, but may not know the why or wherefore. When our consciousness is awakened through prayer and comes to understand that God is the creator and source of
all good, we have added understanding to our perception and thus we build a consciousness of understanding faith.

Faith combined with understanding may seem to come in a flash at times. In reality understanding faith is the culmination of a step-by-step unfoldment through study, observation, experience, prayer and use. All of these have had a part in the preparation of our mind so that intuition, or the voice of God, might quicken and illumine our faith faculty. Blind faith gives us a hope that good results will come forth; but with understanding faith we are always sure of the results because we conform our thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting to the laws of God: the law of love, the law of order, the law of peace, the law of health, the law of prosperity.

Understanding faith does increase our power to demonstrate good. The true knowing of any principle and an understanding of the laws that govern its operation inevitably open the way for demonstration.

Use is the law of increase. The more we learn how the law of mind action works, the greater is our ability to use this law according to Principle (God). In order to get right results, it is just as necessary to learn the right use of the laws of God (Principle) as it is to know and use the principles of music or mathematics.

Faith measures our capacity to receive—"According to your faith be it done unto you" (Matt. 9:29)—and can be likened to a measuring cup that we hold out to be filled. Our demonstration of good can be no greater than the amount of faith that we are using. As we build a conscious awareness of God and realize our ability, as His sons, to bring forth His good, we establish an understanding faith that increases our power to demonstrate good in our mind, body, and affairs.

We may have a certain degree of faith that God is our life, but until we have understanding faith we are not fully aware of the manner in which we are to lay hold of this life. Through understanding faith our affirmations for health become more effective, and our body manifests wholeness, vitality, and strength, for we know the Principle of perfect life back of our healing words.

Through understanding faith our relations with other persons become harmonious, loving, happy, and satisfying. The perceiving power of faith linked with understanding not only reveals the Fatherhood of God but also the brotherhood of man. We see others unfolding their divine capacities and growing in ways that meet their particular needs.

Faith coupled with understanding gives us assurance that God is the source of every good that we desire. Our affirmations for supply have deep conviction for they are based on understanding faith that God-substance is the source of our supply.

When understanding faith has become established in our consciousness, we are confident of success for we are assured that God's power is at work in our every endeavor.

6. How may we know what effects will follow certain states of mind?
6. We may know what effects will follow certain states of mind by the results in our life. All things act in obedience to the laws of God, each in its own particular sphere. We may be sure of results because the laws of life work without variation according to the way they are utilized.

We must understand that we are always using the law of absolute good. This law operates through us as "the mental law of cause and effect" to produce results in our life according to our understanding and use of it. Everything that we have experienced or are experiencing is the result of states of mind that we have put into operation through our thinking and feeling.

"All true action is governed by law. Nothing just happens . . . All happenings are the result of cause and can be explained under the law of cause and effect. This is a teaching that appeals to the innate logic of our mind, yet we sometimes feel like doubting it when we see things happen that have no apparent cause . . . Man does not demonstrate according to the law but according to his knowledge of the law, and that is why we must seek to learn more of it" (page 58, Prosperity).

If our thoughts are disorderly, discordant, fearful, anxious, conditions of a similar nature will result from these states of mind. The Bible makes this point very clear in Galatians 6:7, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If we build states of mind that are loving, peaceful, joyous, strong, courageous, wise, prosperous, and make them the predominant trend of our thinking, then we can expect the manifestation of these positive states in our mind, in our body, and in our affairs.

7. What are the "promises of God"?

7. The "promises of God" are declarations of eternal, unchanging laws, or truths, whether they are found in the almanac, in the physical universe, or in the Bible.

The word promise comes from the Latin promissum meaning "to put forth" from pro (forward) and mittere, to send. The "promises of God" are "put forth," "sent forward" to indicate what may be expected as a result of obedience to the laws back of the promises, for as we have already learned, everything is governed by law.

In the almanac we find the time of the "rising and setting" of the sun, the dates of the different seasons of the year, and the like. We find the "promises of God" in the universe as the stars that indicate position and direction, as all the signs that indicate climate, atmosphere, weather, temperature. The understanding of the latter has been invaluable to scientists in delving into the secrets of the universe, and especially the attempts to conquer outer space. In nature we find the "promise of God" in the tiny grain of wheat, which, planted under proper conditions, "promises" an abundant harvest.

So far as we are concerned, the "promises of God" relating to us as His children are more in the nature of a contract, covenant, or agreement between us and God. Our part in the contract or agreement
is to make the demand or claim for the good that is ours by divine inheritance through the use of affirmative prayer backed by understanding faith. We then follow our prayer with obedience to divine laws. God's part is to honor our request or demand with His supply of good in the form of the divine ideas needed to manifest in our life as: illumination and peace in mind, healing and strength in body, harmony and love in human relations, achievement and abundance in our affairs. Our scriptures tell us,

"Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your God spake concerning you" (Josh. 23:14).

Every promise in the Bible points to a good result that will follow certain action on our part. However, many of the Bible promises, such as the following, have been interpreted as implying future time for fulfillment:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7).

The "shall" as used here does not mean in the future, but rather indicates a certainty of the action of divine law. Our part is to do the asking, seeking, knocking (that is, make the demand for some good) by use of affirmations, and by abiding in the consciousness of God as the source of all good. Then automatically the promises will be fulfilled for God's laws always work. Should the promise appear not to have been fulfilled, it is because we have not kept all of our part of the contract. We have not exercised sufficient understanding faith in God to permit us to claim what has been promised to us. Perhaps we have not followed up our claim, or demand, by acting in conformity with the laws of God.

8. Does asking for the thing we desire play a part in spiritual demonstration?

8. Yes, asking plays a very important part in bringing about spiritual demonstration. Asking is an act of faith in God. It shows not only that we have a vision of the good desired, but it also puts in motion the power that will bring the manifestation of that good into our lives. Asking is desire in action.

The dictionary gives some of the root meanings of the word ask as: "to demand; to seek; to request; to claim." Asking is not a begging or a pleading with God to give us something. It is using our freedom of choice with understanding faith through affirmation or affirmative prayer, in order to claim the blessings of God so abundantly prepared for us.

"Prayer is not supplication or begging but a simple asking for that which we know is waiting for us at the hands of our Father and an affirmation of its existence" (page 67, Jesus Christ Heals).

As these lessons have emphasized, the ideas of Divine Mind are governed by the law of mind action, and our asking (affirmation) starts the law into action in us. The law is always active but we must take the initiative, that is, the action must start in and through us. If
we want light from the electric lighting system, we press the button; if we want water from the reservoir, we turn on the faucet. So with the good of God, it is always available awaiting our call (demand) when we ask for it and claim it.

While we are heirs to the ideas, or powers, of God, we need to learn their value and learn to use them in an understanding way. The supply is already provided, but we have to raise our consciousness to the truth that God's good is for us as His sons.

"Jesus advised asking for what we want and being persistent in our demands. People ignorant of the relation in which man stands to God wonder why we should ask and even importune a Father who has provided all things for us. This is explained when we perceive that God is a great mind reservoir that has to be tapped by man's mind and poured into visibility through man's thought or word. If the mind of man is clogged with doubt, lethargy, or fear, he must open the way by persistent knocking and asking" (page 68, Jesus Christ Heals).

By asking we may receive as much as we are capable of consciously accepting in proportion to the development of our faith faculty, which has been called the "measuring cup."

Asking, in the form of affirmation spoken silently or audibly, opens our mind to the ideas of God-Mind. True asking reaches beyond the limits of human thinking for it recognizes, through the perception of faith, the good that is ours for the claiming.

9. What is desire? What is man's true desire?

9. Desire is an inner urge or impulse of God, the Good, seeking expressing through man, which was brought out in Annotation 10 of Lesson 2.

The God-urge or impulse within is interpreted by us according to our understanding as a desire for something specific. For one person it may be the longing for more material good. To another it may be the desire for release from the burden of material possessions. One person may long for more power, while another may have the desire to channel his power in another direction than what he is now using. A very artistic person may have a longing that causes him to desire things that will satisfy his love of beauty. Another person, just as appreciative of beauty, may desire the simplicity of life that sees beauty in nature, in simple things, rather than having many beautiful objects around him.

"Desire is the onward impulse of the ever-evolving soul" (page 27, Prosperity).

Our true desire, whether we are aware of it or not, is to know God consciously. We really desire to know God as the wisdom of our intellect; the love of our heart; the life of our body; the harmony, peace, happiness of our relationships; the success and prosperity of our affairs.

All good results in our life come from seeking the kingdom of
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God and His righteousness, whether we have realized it or not. However, all the desires we have ever had, have now, or will have in the future, are part of the one desire—to truly know God, not merely to know about Him. Our desires may seem to be just for healing of the body, for food and clothing, for a home, for companionship, for prosperity and success, yet back of all these desires will be the one yearning of our soul—to know God!

"If you desire a thing, you set in motion the machinery of the universe to gain possession of it, but you must be zealous in the pursuit in order to attain the object of your desire" (page 131, The Twelve Powers of Man).

Being "zealous in the pursuit" is made possible through our periods of prayer that put us in direct contact with the ideas back of our desires. We use the processes of denial and affirmation to prepare our consciousness to lay hold of the God ideas, then we follow through in the outer with actions based on this new state of consciousness.

10. In reality, can we desire that which belongs to another?

10. No, we cannot, in reality, ever desire that which belongs to another, for we have learned that the cause of our desire is an idea of God seeking expression through us.

What we want is that which is essentially our own. We may view the outer form of someone else's good, thinking it will satisfy our need, but in reality our real desire would be the idea that the form represents. An idea can come into our consciousness only from God-Mind. The idea is the nucleus of our desire, and when we conform to the law of mind action the idea gathers substance and brings forth in the outer world the form that will bring wholesome satisfaction into our life.

We need to make conscious contact individually with the divine idea back of our desire, learn its nature, appreciate its value. When it comes forth into outer form, it will then be a product of our own consciousness, just as the thing belonging to another is the product or result of the working of his consciousness.

Envy springs from lack of understanding of ourself as a spiritual being and of our inheritance of ideas from God. When envy takes over, we think we have to have that which another possesses. With the dawning of understanding we see that we must demonstrate our own good but only by working with the mental processes in our own mind or consciousness.

When we become conscious of some outer good that we feel will make for better living, we must begin to work within our own consciousness and not try to possess what belongs to another. Those who do reach out for that which has not come to them in legitimate ways are operating contrary to the laws of our society as well as divine laws. Countries and governments fall into the same error ways as individuals by thinking they can take from others by force something that represents good to them, such as more land, more food, greater opportunities for expansion. Back of this desire for something that belongs to others is fear that there is not enough good to fulfill
the needs of their people. Men and nations must come to see that their true desires are but the love of God seeking to express in their lives. Only then will they turn in understanding faith and make conscious contact with the presence of God within themselves. This Presence is the source of the ideas that will take form or come into manifestation as the desired good. With this awakening there will be a greater sharing of divine ideas. Then people will come to recognize the brotherhood of man which is made possible through the Fatherhood of God. In other words, a greater spirit of co-operation will be expressed inevitably, not only among individuals but among leaders of the nations of the earth.

"Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (The Lord's Prayer).