

Series 2 Lesson 7

"SPIRITUALITY, OR PRAYER AND PRAISE"

U N I T Y

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY

LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

2-23-71

WITH THANKFULNESS AND PRAISE

How many things there are to praise
In this glad world of ours!
The strength and beauty of old trees,
The gaiety of flowers;
The lovely songs that rivers sing
For those attuned to hear,
And birds that chirp on winter boughs
With courage and good cheer.

How many things there are to praise
Around us where we are!
The gentle joys of commonplace,
The challenge of a star;
A window with a changing view,
A quiet road to walk,
And simple rooms that kindred souls
Enrich with friendly talk.

Oh, let mine eyes be opened wide
That I may clearly see
How often, in another's guise,
God walks the road with me,
And, seeing with how great a good
He glorifies my days,
Acknowledge His eternal love
With thankfulness and praise.

--R. H. Grenville

QUESTIONS

for

Series 2 Lesson 7

"SPIRITUALITY, OR PRAYER AND PRAISE"

1. What is the significance of the number twelve as used in the Scriptures?
2. What is meant by the promise, "And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28)?
3. What does the gathering of the disciples in the upper chamber symbolize? Name these disciples, and the spiritual faculty each one represents.
4. How is death of the physical body to be done away with?
5. What is the true method of prayer?
6. Define praise and show why it must be active in the life of every man.
7. What is the effect of praise on man's body? What is the effect of praise on the earth?
8. What is the true and sure way for man to bring good to himself?
9. What is joy? Where is the source of joy? Why have so many persons been disappointed in their search for joy?
10. Explain the meaning of the Scripture, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matt. 21:22)

Series 2 Lesson 7

"SPIRITUALITY, OR PRAYER AND PRAISE"

In our previous lessons we have been considering man as mind. Our greatest physical scientists say that evolution is mind action and the embodiment of ideas is its goal. We study ideas in the absolute and in the concrete. Man is the embodiment of God ideas. That which man has named "body" is the temple of the living God and this temple is produced by the action of mind, which always builds under a definite law. Blind people develop in the ends of their fingers cells similar to those that are found in the brain, indicating that the mind makes its own center, or nucleus, and this central point or idea builds its form in correspondence to its functioning or action.

There are certain numbers that run through all the Scriptures, yet there has been little special significance attached to them in general Bible interpretations. The number twelve is one of these mystical symbols.

In Revelation we read of the twelve tribes and the twelve foundation stones. There were twelve loaves of shewbread on the table sanctuary. Twelve stones were set up as a memorial of the crossing of the Jordan river. There were twelve sons of Jacob, and Jesus Christ had twelve disciples; the tree of life bears twelve manner of fruits. The number twelve refers symbolically to spiritual fulfillment.

There are twelve spiritual powers, twelve mental faculties expressed in twelve centers of consciousness, and these powers or faculties have avenues of expression in the physical body of man. With this as a starting point, much of the symbology of the Scriptures is made plain. Twelve, the multiple of three and four--three symbolizing the Deity, the Holy Trinity, and four symbolizing the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical phases of man's being--is a covenant number; it marks the agreement between God and man.

Man, a spiritual being, is free spirit, unfettered and unbound. In spiritual consciousness he discerns this Truth and knows no limitation.

"The fault . . . is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

--Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar,"
Act I, Sc. 2

When man learns that he is essentially a spiritual being having all power and all dominion, he is freed from the belief in bondage to anything. But when man believes himself to be only of the earth, he holds himself to earthly conditions. All is Mind, and the belief in any other power controlling man is to be overcome by understanding of the truth: that man in his real nature is the son of God, limitless and free.

Our goal is to bring into manifestation the man created in the

image of God, and when this likeness is made actual, we have dominion over all. Man is to sit on the thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. These are the twelve mind centers in the consciousness of each of us. The ideas that we have in mind have a certain attraction for one another according to their character, just as people who are intellectual have their societies, and people who are spiritual have theirs. They are drawn together by ideas in mind; ideas dominate; ideas make conditions through the power of thought.

"The idea is the directing and controlling power.
Every Idea has a specific function to perform" (Mysteries of Genesis p. 21).

The Hebrew word that is translated throne is generally thought to have as its meaning the idea of "covering," the covering being a mark of honor. Hence when man sits on his throne we may say that he is covered or overshadowed by the Holy Spirit in his action of judging. A throne is the emblem of regal or absolute authority, complete dominion. The seat is raised higher than an ordinary chair, requiring a footstool to support the feet. Man is exalted; that is, he steps up to a greater power and authority than he previously had. This seat is also ornamented, adorned; the structure that he occupies to direct proceedings is embellished, for before he can have this place of power and honor man must add to himself, to his consciousness, that which has integral beauty and grace.

In what is called his natural state, man thinks at random, but the time has come when he is beginning to ask for details, and he is learning to arrange his thoughts in an orderly way. The ideas that make up God's nature of absolute good are in divine order, and if we would work intelligently with the Father we must analyze our thoughts and put them in their right relation, i.e., in divine order to the ideas of God Mind. Instead of being subjects, we are to be sovereigns in our individual thought world.

Palestine represents man's body. As Jesus went up and down that land preaching the Gospel, casting out devils, healing the sick, and raising the dead, so each of us must be about the Father's business and do this same work in our body temple, cleansing and purifying it, raising it to the divine consciousness.

The Bible is a textbook on physiology, but not as physiology is taught in our schools where blood and bones are studied as material things. Jesus Christ represents spiritual man, and His disciples, those under spiritual discipline, are the twelve faculties of this man. Christ or I AM, our spiritual identity, is higher than limited personality. Christ is the source of abundant life in man; He is the light of the world; and a new race is to come into expression through the releasing, unfolding, or developing of the Christ Mind, the Superconscious of every man.

Jesus Christ sought to make all people understand that they had the same powers He had. He said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12); "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14); "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). The failure to recognize the Christ in man has held the race in littleness and limitation. We must renew our mind by entertaining new ideas

in regard to God and to man (God's idea). New thoughts will be followed by new words, which will take the place of old, limited beliefs, and the new understanding must become a matter of conscious knowledge. We are "joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17), but we must be "born anew": we must consciously develop this new state of consciousness. The more divine ideas we hold in mind, the more we expand our consciousness; the more steadfastly we cling to the truth of the unlimited nature of man, the more quickly will our mind and our body be brought into right relation.

We must call our "disciples" (our faculties), and train them in the work of the Lord. Heretofore these faculties have worked subconsciously in the personal consciousness. Now man is to consciously direct these faculties so that rather than be bound by limited personal expression, they will be free to function true to divine principle. Man has a multitude of ideas, desires, thoughts, impulses, and he must be diligent in "casting down imaginations . . . and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5).

The faculties must have avenues of expression in the body of man. Among these we have certain aggregations of mind force, of thought force, which are manifest in what physiology calls nerve centers, or ganglia. The solar plexus, located in the abdominal cavity, may be termed the "great body brain." Another center; or ganglion, is called the cardiac plexus. This is located in the thoracic cavity, in front of the spine. Nerve fibers run from one to the other of these, and there is a close relationship physically and metaphysically. The cardiac center or "heart" is the ganglion through which love is expressed in the body, and we term it the "love center." Regeneration of the body is not possible without the functioning of the love faculty. The solar plexus lies back of the pit of the stomach and forms what we term the "substance center." In Scripture, the love center is Jerusalem, "city of peace," where all the Jews went to worship God. Bethlehem, six miles below Jerusalem, is the "house of bread," the substance center.

We get ideas from the Absolute--Spirit or Divine Mind, which is the source or origin of all ideas. Man has the privilege of laying hold of these ideas that are in the Father-Mind, the universal Mind substance, bringing them consciously into his own mind, and in the chemistry of mind a new body is built up, the Jesus Christ body. Primarily this body is the soul of man as a "body-idea," a body composed or built up from spiritual thoughts, aspiration, impulses, which start as divine ideas and later fill the whole consciousness and are pictured forth in man's physical body.

"Every idea projects form. The physical body is the projection of man's idea; we carry the body in mind. . . . If the body-idea is grounded and rooted in Divine Mind, the body will be filled with a perpetual life flow that will repair all its imperfect parts and heal all its diseases.

"When man realizes that there is but one body-idea and that the conditions in his body express the character of his thought, he has the key to bodily perfection and immortality in the flesh" (Christian Healing, p. 34).

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the substance center. The new body must have a substance form. David was also born in Bethlehem. The substance of the new mind and the new body must be spiritual in character in order that it may be enduring. At Bethlehem, the substance center in man, a union of love and wisdom takes place, and thus the Christ is brought forth in substance, and an abiding consciousness of life is realized and made manifest. The crown of the head symbolizes the center through which spirituality or reverence is expressed in the body, the "land of Judah." Judah means "praise Jehovah." Through this consciousness, the Christ Mind makes its presence known in man's mind, and from this point distributes itself all through the consciousness. It is here that positive, enduring life is generated. By learning the nature of divine ideas and how to use them, the individual makes them a part of his organic structure, spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. Such organization and use of these ideas enables man to turn away from limitations and to center his thoughts on God, absolute good.

Enlightened man goes through the various centers and rebuilds them with the word of Truth. The cellular structures are changed and manifest man is entirely transformed. First, the mind is renewed; second, through this renewal the body is transformed. Instead of the cells going the way of all flesh there is a quickening and a right understanding of spiritual substance that gives a new concept to the appearance called "matter." The abiding consciousness of life--pure, spiritual, omnipresent, eternal--keeps every cell alive and alight. In this way the physical body is transmuted and becomes incorruptible, immortal. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 2:2). This identification of manifest man with the spiritual man, or Christ, leads always to a greater expression and manifestation of divine power.

The reason men "look up" in prayer is that the consciousness naturally turns to the center at the top of the head where the individual mind comes in touch with the Father-Mind, the "secret place of the Most High" (Psalms 91:1). This Superconscious phase of mind is above or higher than all the various states of mind in man, but is not separate from them. It pervades every phase of thought as an elevating, inspiring quality. All lofty ideals come from this Judah faculty whose office is to pray and praise; it is the inspiration of everything that elevates and idealizes in religion, poetry, art, in all things that are real and eternal.

The gathering of the apostles in the "upper room" symbolizes the gathering of all the mind faculties at the center of spirituality, until all are baptized or imbued with the consciousness of spiritual reality through conscious communion with the Father-Mind. Jesus instructed His disciples to gather in the upper chamber at Jerusalem and there to await the coming of the Holy Spirit. They were aspiring, expecting, looking for the Holy Spirit, and it descended from the Most High and filled all those who were aspiring and looking for its manifestation. Thus the Holy Spirit descends into the mind (conscious phase) and the heart (subconscious phase) of man, then to his body to make it alive and luminous--an electrical body, a glorified body filled and aglow with Spirit.

The twelve apostles symbolize twelve thought agents in man. An

apostle is "one sent." These twelve thought agents preside over and direct the work of the human consciousness. It is well to bear in mind that they are primarily "centers of consciousness" and do not have physical location, yet they do express their attributes physically:

1. PETER: represents faith. His center of expression in the body is in the pineal gland, center of the brain. Faith is the "perceiving power of the mind" (Prosperity, p. 43).
2. ANDREW: representing strength; comes into expression in the lower back, at the loins. Strength is the sustaining, enduring idea or power.
3. JAMES, son of Zebedee: represents judgment. This center has to do with discrimination, evaluation, choice. "James is the faculty in man that wisely chooses and determines" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 21).
4. JOHN: symbolizes love; the center for the expression of love is the heart. "Love is the attracting, harmonizing, unifying, equalizing, binding idea in Divine Mind" (Annotations for Lesson One, Lessons in Truth).
5. PHILIP: representing power; expresses through the body at the root of the tongue. It is the idea of dominion and authority. Its root meaning is "to be able," thus it is "the ability to do, to perform, to accomplish, to produce and effect, to make a change, to master a situation" (Annotations for Lesson Two, Lessons in Truth). The power center in the throat controls "all the vibratory energies of the organism" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 524).
6. BARTHOLOMEW: represents the function of imagination; has its center of expression in the brain between the eyes. Fulfilling its true purpose, imagination makes no false images.
7. THOMAS: represents understanding, the knowing idea expressing through the front brain. Thomas is "called the doubter because he wants to know about everything" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 21).
8. MATTHEW: represents will, the ability to act upon a choice made by the judgment faculty, expressing through the same brain area as understanding--the front brain. Understanding and will are very closely related in their functioning; understanding provides the vision and the will provides the motive power to act.
9. JAMES, son of Alphaeus: represents order, his center of expression being in the region of the navel. "Order is heaven's

first law" (Alexander Pope, "Essay on Man," p. 4 line 1) comes to have meaning when we study the necessity for right relationships (order) of all things, if we would produce harmony.

10. SIMON, the Canaanite: functions as zeal, and his center of expression is the medulla oblongata. "Zeal is the affirmative impulse of existence . . . the mighty force that incites all things to action" (Keep a True Lent, p. 159).
11. THADDAEUS: represents renunciation or elimination functioning in the abdominal region of the body. "The denial apostle is Thaddaeus . . . the great renunciator of the mind and the body" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 21). Elimination of error thoughts is as important to the mind as the elimination of waste from the body.
12. JUDAS: represents life, his center of expression being in the generative functions. As Judas betrayed Jesus, so life seems to betray us when this power is not rightly used. "We need life, but life must be guided in divine ways" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 22). Righteously expressed, Judas becomes Judah.

Prayer develops the consciousness of the Absolute, which also means guidance in the development of the faculties that will enable the twelve powers to be used in the right way. Jesus Christ represents God in man, the universal Presence individuated in the human. Thus, the twelve foundation ideas (powers) in Divine Mind were and are brought into unity and manifested as Jesus Christ.

The Man who walked by Galilee and first completely manifested God was a forerunner of the new race of men. His statement that we should be saved through His flesh and blood has a scientific basis. When man consciously understands and then applies his understanding that his life is Christ life, that his body is the body of Christ, composed of eternal divine substance, death will be done away with. Death of the body is no part of the divine plan; it is missing the mark of manifestation of the life idea. The belief in death as reality will be wiped out of consciousness when we lay hold of substance, the "body" of God, and begin to use the powers of mind and body in the right way. To do this we must overcome by denial the errors held in the mind and begin to affirm the Truth. The conscious realization of substance and life carried into the body by thoughts and words of Truth will continuously renew and sustain the "body of Christ" in consciousness, atom by atom, cell by cell; and our so-called physical body of flesh and blood will be transmuted into a glorious, radiant body of life and light.

"When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:6).

We must pray to the Father within. If we have been in the habit of

praying to a God outside of us, we must change our method of prayer. We go consciously into the upper chamber, get still, and wait for the realization of the presence and power of the Father-Mind. When we do this, we are consciously enlightened, our mind is made alive and aglow with spiritual realities. We must not forget to praise, for prayer and praise go hand in hand.

All modes of worship have the creative law as their foundation. We find in the Psalms, and among the works of many of the poets, that the idea of praise is a form of worship. The question naturally arises, "Why should a great Being who has everything and is everything want admiration and praise?" The object of praise is not to satisfy some kind of personal God who requires that men praise Him, but to carry out a divine law that will add, not to God, but to man. We sing praises in order to arouse enthusiasm in ourself. Through singing and praising we free energy within, letting out or expressing the inner feeling of joy and thankfulness, of grateful love and reverence pent up within us. We realize that God is constantly pouring increasing blessings on us because we are His beloved children. Whatever we set free should be given the right method of expression. The law is exact. A mournful dirge makes a mournful thought atmosphere and sets man and his world working in a consciousness that tends to tear down rather than to build up. If the music changes and becomes a song of joy and praise, the keynote is changed and man builds into his consciousness strength and stability. We must first recognize that there is but one Mind and that we are free agents who may use the ideas of that Mind as we will. We may praise or not as we choose --we have free will. Praise is the divine Self expressing itself through man; it is the bursting forth of holy, healthy joy; it is the expression of the indwelling spirit of joy and good will, bursting into song and hymns.

In Christian Healing, pages 78 and 80, we read:

"Through an inherent law of mind, we increase whatever we praise. The whole creation responds to praise, and is glad. Animal trainers pet and reward their charges with delicacies for acts of obedience; children glow with joy and gladness when they are praised. Even vegetation grows best for those who praise it. We can praise our own abilities and our very brain cells will expand and increase in capacity and intelligence when we speak words of encouragement and appreciation to them. . . .

"Turn the power of praise upon whatever you wish to increase. Give thanks that it is now fulfilling your ideal. The faithful law, faithfully observed, will reward you. You can praise yourself from weakness to strength, from ignorance to intelligence, from poverty to affluence, from sickness to health."

Persons who go to mediums and fortunetellers for information and guidance limit their own power and place themselves in bondage. By knowing that we are free and that by the power of our thought we can produce any condition we desire, we keep ourself from falling into the delusion that something outside of us has fixed our present or future condition. No one can tell definitely what is to come to pass in the future, for in Spirit--and man is a spiritual

being--there is no time; there is only the eternal now. Each of us has the choice, and can be what he wants to be. Conditions, circumstances are in man's making, for every thought and word of man is invested with creative power, and seeks to come into manifestation.

"It has come to be recognized as a law of mind action that men become like that which they behold; they manifest that which they mentally see. One who knew this law wrote, 'Nothing foretells futurity like the thoughts over which we brood'" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, under Law, p. 396).

God as the Father-Mind is the one Source of wisdom, and man's help comes from the Lord, the Christ Mind or law within him. As we trust completely in this Christ Mind, our steps are guided in a plain path. By consulting outsiders, we often lose conscious touch with God, and as we go hither and thither for help we descend to a lower level of consciousness. It is God who inspires and illumines man. By the law of thought, if man believes a medium, he will bring to pass what the medium tells him about some coming event in his life. When he believes the medium, he gives assent, and the uniting of his thought force with that of the medium or fortuneteller starts the formative action on its way to manifestation.

The way to bring about the good that we desire is by applying the law. Praise. Praise God. Praise yourself. Praise others. Praise your wisdom and your ability. We must say, "I can and I will." This self that we are to praise is of course our real Self, the Christ. Good comes to us when we believe absolutely in God, in His rule, in our oneness with Him. If we would be prosperous and successful, we must not enter into the thought atmosphere of pessimistic persons. Let us talk about prosperity; let us associate with those who believe in success and prosperity, who talk on the positive side. We need to remember that praise of substance and abundance brings increased manifestations of good.

Sing! Pray! Rejoice! Let us make union with the great joy and bliss of universal Mind. Let us not wait for joy to come to us from without. If we wait for it we will be disappointed, for joy originates in the Spirit of joy, in Divine Mind where it is waiting as an idea, eager to be made manifest.

We are surrounded by a pulsating, energizing substance which physical scientists call the universal energy or light. Jesus called it the kingdom of the heavens. Out of this energy we can make whatever we want. Before Jesus multiplied the loaves and the fishes He gave thanks, and at the grave of Lazarus He said, "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me" (John 11:41). Man uses this universal etheric substance continually. Often his thoughts are unworthy, so the results that follow are disappointing. Man must choose to have thoughts that are spiritual; he must have an inner knowing that nothing has reality except God, the great pulsating, radiant substance.

Every word and every attitude of mind has its effect on our life. Every time we sing or pray or praise we are carrying out the creative law of our being. If we would succeed, we should be very careful how we talk of failure. If we want health, then we should praise

health and bless it until it becomes manifest in our body. We need to talk about health to the children in the home. We should teach them the Truth, and health laws in the care of the body.

The more we study the Bible, the more we see that it is based on universal Truth. The Psalmist sang:

"Let the peoples praise thee, O God;
Let all the peoples praise the. . . .
The earth hath yielded its increase:
God, even our God, will bless us" (Psalms 67:3, 6).

No clearer statement of the power of praise with its law of increase could be given. It is by man's word of praise and blessing that the earth is to be restored to perfection, and the desert made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. "Thy kingdom come . . . on earth" (Matt. 6:10).

The Israelites were shown that their sufferings and afflictions came not because God willed it but because they were disobedient to the law of praise. "All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee . . . Because thou servedst not Jehovah thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things" (Deut. 28:45, 47).

Divine Mind does its work in the realm of ideas. In our communion with the Father-Mind we should not be ignorant of divine law that moves ideas into expression and manifestation. By understanding it we make our thoughts and words correspond with divine ideas and the law of their righteous expression.

In Spirit or Truth every demand is instantly granted, hence Jesus could say, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). In this promise of Jesus we find again the truth that "use is the law of increase." The key word is believing. In believing, one is using the law of faith, that is, he is perceiving the good and is molding and shaping it in his imagination before there is any evidence of it in the outer. The full knowledge of any principle, and an understanding of the laws that govern its use, inevitably open the way for the increase of its "fruits."

If we think that our prayers are to be answered in some future time, we place mental barriers in the way of our acceptance of Omnipresence. God is Spirit, Divine Mind, and is not limited to time or space, for He is Omnipresence. When we abide or dwell in spiritual consciousness we may speak creative words with power, and there is instant compliance. Jesus realized this when He said: "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me. And I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:41). We are to learn to translate our prayers into action and bring the ideas into manifestation. While we "live and move and have our being" in God, we must learn to abide consciously in His presence and power. We open our soul so that Spirit may fill us and move through us as energy. Praise, being acknowledgment of God, is the great releaser of spiritual force or energy.