

How often do we hear the words, "Oh, I wish I had a different job...Wouldn't it be nice to take a trip?" Basically, this is what I call wistful wishing.

You know Jesus gave us an exact method for bringing whatever we really desire into our lives. He says, "All things whatsoever you pray and ask for, believe that ye have them, and ye shall have them." This verse contains two keys. The first is found in the word "believe." All great spiritual teaching places emphasis on this simple word, believe. When we hold our minds and wills in a positive attitude of faith, we discover the power that lies behind it. We must also consider the second key, that is to carefully analyse our desires. Since Jesus prefaced his teaching in the power of belief with "Whatsoever ye pray for...", he showed that our lives can be molded only from thoughts that are strong and sure, not from vague wishes.

Wishes start when we are young. Through the years they grow like a ball of string to which odd bits are added, and the wishing goes on never seeming to end. But we all have the responsibility of checking the depth and the importance of our every wish, and its place in the creative process of our lives. Amelia Erhardt, the great woman flyer, once said, "I flew the Atlantic because I wanted to." To want in one's heart to do a thing for its own sake, to enjoy it, to concentrate all of one's energies on it is not only the surest way to guarantee success, it is also being true to one's self. Certainly your greatest power comes from the fact that you want tremendously to do that very thing and to do it well.

Do you really know what you want? Can you put down on paper the steps that you would take today if you would make your life exactly what you desire it to be? We need to ask ourselves questions like these from time to time, if we are ever going to come to the point of being true to ourselves and true to the divine flow in us. Not long ago, a teacher asked a room full of people to write down their wishes. Many wishes were mentioned, many dreams were discussed, perhaps for the first time in public for some persons. But after all of them were carefully thought through, it was discovered that out of the persons present there were only five who had formulated their basic desires and were actually trying to bring them into manifestation in the way that Jesus had taught. Yet, when we concentrate all of our senses on a common aim, as Amelia Erhardt did, certainly we raise the creative, positive, and intuitive forces as we get into the flow of the divine process.

If you study the lives of those persons who have added to the storehouse of the world's knowledge, I believe that you will find one fact that appears again and again in the pages of their biographies or autobiographies--these persons knew what they wanted from life, and what they wanted to give to life. Some had this knowledge in their early years, others acquired it in their later years; some came from homes where prayer was as important to the daily routine as eating and sleeping, others discovered its power through books, schools, and friends--all of them learned how to charge themselves from the great creative flow.

Remember, Jesus told his followers that only those who tried his message showed the results. He said, "Many are called, but few are choosen." His calling is the desire we feel, the inner yearning to be something more than we are, to do more with our lives, to make our lives account for something. But God's choice of us depends entirely upon ourselves, for unless we make our desires of paramount importance, God cannot use us, the creative flow cannot unfold through us. Thus, we can analyse our desires week by week, day by day, and hour by hour, and cut away the things that hinder us from our main purpose--; these desires recede into a dream stage and they become part of the ball of what I call wistful wishing. Perhaps, they even fade entirely from our consciousness.

Let me tell you about a certain young woman who made a very practical demonstration in her life. For years she had vaguely searched for truth and the good life. Though she has an excellent mind, full of beauty and music and art, she took

a position in a manufacturing firm in her early years and was never able to look beyond this job into anything more creative or fulfilling. It seemed she never could decide what she wanted to do with her life. Many times she almost married, but yet she never did. She dreamed of trips to California and Europe, but never took them. She talked of going to college, yet she never enrolled in one.

But several months ago, she began to read Unity literature, and her prayer hours took on a new meaning. Her ears heard and her eyes saw; in one clean stroke she revised her life. In her sixteenth year with the manufacturing firm, she handed in her resignation and began to plan steps for the future. Admittedly, she doesn't know what all those steps will be, but the positive decision that she does want to change her life is her first step. Each week she receives new thoughts and ideas. This past summer she registered for part-time work in various fields, and she is absolutely convinced that with prayer and her new insight, she can have what she asks for exactly as Jesus had said.

Now remember that the word "ask" in the original root, both in Greek and in Aramaic, actually has a connotation of claim, not asking in terms of begging, but plugging in as when you ask electricity to work for you by throwing the switch. Now many of you will say about this particular girl, "But I am not in the same position; it is easy for a young woman to quit her job, but I must think of my wife and children, my mother and my aunt." Of course that is true. Each of us has a different framework, a different divine plan within us through which we will grow and obtain. This holds true for each one, but when the "still, small voice speaks," and we feel our desires concentrate and point to a direct line, then we know that we are to prepare ourselves for a new and great work. Our part is to hold our mind open to all new thoughts. None is to be rejected because it appears to upset our present plans, or that it involves too much effort, or that it may bring about some kind of insecurity. The divine flow alone can unfold the divine plan completely, and this God process will work out the details if we are faithful to the calling.

Now let us ask ourselves the question, "What do we really desire for our lives?" Perhaps in all honesty we may not really know. Our thinking may have become so muddled with what we have piled into our heads that we may have lost the clear purpose that was given to us when we were born. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who is a wonderful example of someone who followed God's prompting, gives this advice, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know, the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found out how to serve."

As we use ourself for the divine process in its unfolding, as we become concerned to give of ourselves to the betterment of our society, the helping of our brother, the light grows brighter, and the voice within us grows stronger, and we discover powers in us we didn't know we possessed; truth becomes understandable, the forces of love and happiness awaken and start a flow of creativity through our minds; new thoughts and new ideas arrive. Then we begin to discover our real wants. We should never be disturbed because we can't say immediately what we desire. A great ideal can be helped by all of us--to live with God and for God, to live in the creative flow under divine guidance. If we will we can dedicate our next hour to the great aim of living in the creative flow, of living under the guidance of this infinite process to the best of our ability.

But the choice is yours. You can choose to continue in the narrow way with the limited thoughts of lack and inability, or you can get into the creative flow and feel the fulfillment of knowing that you are doing the thing that you do because you can't help yourself, because there is a divine process that is working through you. The choice is yours--to wistfully wish or to creatively dream and let the divine process flow through you. Choose wisely.