

## **Experiencing the Presence of God**

### **Chapter 11: Reconciliation Through Needed Pain**

And into my heart there stole another new love for God I never knew so strongly before. I felt like saying:

"God, I do not know Thee nor this universe nor my own self. Everything becomes more mysterious the longer I think about it. But I thank Thee that Jesus showed us that Thou art burning, yearning, eager to do more for us than Thou canst. Thou art like those plowmen who must break the soil and tear it apart before seeds will grow. Thou hast plowed my heart tonight until it is tender and ready for something to grow. I thank Thee, God, I thank Thee, because I could not have felt thine healing hand if the pain had not been so acute.

"God, how can we reconcile this need of pain with our effort to abolish all misery?"

The answer seemed convincing to me:

"If you abolish the physical suffering of the world, there will still be disappointed love, yearnings which cannot be satisfied, which will leave hearts bleeding even as they do today. Mansions have as many burning hearts as do poor houses. The things which drag men down to grossness and incessant selfishness must be wiped out. Then hearts will become sore over infinitely larger things than selfish needs. They will learn to bleed for a world with the heart of Jesus." There will be more suffering than today, for only love knows how to suffer divinely. But the meanness of suffering for one's own selfish disappointments will be gone, and we will see a magnificence and sublimity in suffering that will make us glad.