

Volume 1, Day 1 — Brave Comradeship of God

“Then He took unto Him the twelve.” -- Luke 18:31

God was brave in trusting me! You say - “But it was certainly not wise to choose me, because there is nothing in me; I am not of any value.” That is **why** He chose you. As long as you think there is something valuable in you, He cannot choose you because you have ends of your own to serve; but once you have let Him convince you to stop pursuing your self-sufficient ends, then He can choose you to go with Him anywhere, and that will mean the fulfillment of purposes which He may not even discuss with you.

We are likely to say that because a man has natural ability, he would make a good Christian. It is not a question of our abilities but of our humility; not of what we bring with us, but of what God puts into us. It is not a question of natural virtues of strength of character, knowledge, and experience - all that is of no avail in this matter. The only thing of value is that we are consumed by the big compelling of God and made His comrades.

The comradeship of God is with men who know their poverty. He can do nothing with the man who thinks that he is of use to God. As Christians we are not fulfilling our own cause at all! We are only interested in the cause of God, which can never be our cause. We do not know what God wants specifically, but we must maintain our relationship with Him whatever happens to us. We must never allow anything to injure our relationship with God. If it does get injured, we must take time to heal it. *“The main thing about Christianity is not the work we do, but the relationship we maintain and the atmosphere produced by that relationship.”* That is all God asks us to nurture, and it is the one thing that is being continually ignored.

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Volume 1, Day 2 — CAREFUL INFIDELITY

“Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.” Matthew 6:25

Jesus sums up *common-sense carefulness* in a disciple as *infidelity*. If we have received the Spirit of God, He will press through and ask us, “Now where does God fit into this relationship, into this planned holiday, in these new books? He always presses the point until we learn to make Him our first consideration. Whenever we put other things first, there is confusion.

"Take no thought . . ." don't take the pressure of forethought upon yourself. It is not only wrong to worry, it is *infidelity*, because worrying means that we do not think that God can look after the practical details of our lives, and it is never any thing else that worries us. Have you ever noticed what Jesus said would choke the word He puts in? The devil? No! It's the cares of this world. It is the little worries always. I will not trust where I cannot see, that is where *infidelity* begins. *The only cure for infidelity is obedience to the Spirit.*

The great word of Jesus to His disciples is abandon.

This is not surrender in defeat to a conqueror. This is a full surrender of one's self to God as we do to our most significant other in matrimony. This surrender compels us to give wholly and selflessly to the other to insure their pleasure and happiness.

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Volume 1, Day 3 — CARRIED AWAY with LOVE?

“She hath wrought a good work on Me.”

— Mark 14:6

If human love does not carry a man beyond himself, it is not love. If love is always discreet, always wise, always sensible and calculating, never carried beyond itself, it is not love at all. It may be affection, it may be warmth of feeling, but it has not the true nature of love in it.

Have I ever been carried away to do something for God not because it was my duty, nor because it was useful, nor because there was anything in it at all other than the fact that I love Him? Have I ever realized that I can bring to God things which are of value to Him, or am I mooning round the magnitude of His Redemption while there are any number of things I might be doing? Not Divine, colossal things which could be recorded as marvelous, but ordinary, simple human things which will give evidence to God that I am abandoned to Him? Have I ever produced in the heart of the Lord Jesus what Mary of Bethany produced?

There are times when it seems as if God watches to see if we will give Him the abandoned tokens of how genuinely we do love Him. Abandon to God is of more value than personal holiness. Personal holiness focuses the eye on our own whiteness; we are greatly concerned about the way we walk and talk and look, fearful lest we offend Him. Perfect love casts out all that when once we are abandoned to God. We have to get rid of this notion - "Am I of any use?" and make up our minds that we are not, and we will be getting near the truth. It is never a question of being of use, but of being of value to God Himself. When we are abandoned to God, He works through us all the time.

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Volume 1, Day 4 — THE PATIENCE OF FAITH

“Because thou hast kept the word of My patience.” — Revelation 3:10

Patience is more than endurance. A saint's life is in the hands of God like a bow and arrow in the hands of an archer. God is aiming at something the saint cannot see, and He stretches and strains, and every now and again the saint says - "I cannot stand any more." God does not listen. He goes on stretching till His purpose is in sight, then He lets fly. Trust yourself in God's hands. For what do you need patience for just now? Maintain your relationship to Jesus Christ by the patience of faith. "Though He slay me, yet will I wait for Him."

Faith is not a pathetic sentiment, but robust vigorous confidence built on the fact that God is holy love. You cannot see Him just now. You cannot understand what He is doing. But you know Him. Shipwreck occurs where there is not that mental poise which comes from being established on the eternal truth that God is holy love. Faith is the heroic effort of your life when you fling yourself in reckless confidence on God.

God has ventured all in Jesus Christ to save us. Now He wants us to venture our all in abandoned confidence in Him. There are spots where that faith has not worked in us yet, places untouched by the life of God. There were none of those spots in Jesus Christ's life, and there are to be none in ours. "This is life eternal, that they might know You." The real meaning of eternal life is a life that can face anything it has to face without wavering. If we take this view, life becomes one great romance, a glorious opportunity for seeing marvelous things all the time. God is disciplining us to get us into this central place of power.

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Volume 1, Day 5 — OFFENSE OF THE NATURAL

“And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” — Galatians 5:22

The natural life is not sinful in and of itself. We must have nothing to do with sin in any shape or form. Sin belongs to hell and the devil. I, as a child of God, belong to heaven and God. It is not a question of giving up sin, but of giving up my right to myself, my natural independence and self-assertiveness, and this is where the battle has to be fought. It is the things that are right and noble and very good from the natural stand point that keep us from God's best.

To discern that natural virtues antagonize surrender to God, is to bring our soul into the center of its greatest battle. Very few of us debate with the sordid and evil and wrong, but we do debate with the good. It is the very good that hates the best, and the higher up you get in the scale of the natural virtues, the more intense is the opposition to Jesus Christ. “They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh” - it is going to cost the natural in you everything, not just something. Jesus said - “If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself,” that is, his right to himself. And a man has to realize Who Jesus Christ is before he will do it. Beware of refusing to go to the funeral of your own independence.

The natural life is not spiritual, and it can only be made spiritual by sacrifice. If we do not resolutely sacrifice the natural, the supernatural can never become natural in us. There is no royal road there; each of us has it entirely in his own hands. It is not a question of praying, but of being!

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Volume 1, Day 6 — INDIVIDUALITY

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself.” — Matthew 16:24

Individuality is the husk of the personal life. Individuality is all pushing and shoving to get what it wants. It separates and isolates. It is the characteristic of the child and we all agree. But if we mistake individuality **for** the personal life, we will remain isolated. The shell of individuality is God's created natural means of protecting the personal life. But individuality must be removed in order that the personal life to be fully realized as it is brought into fellowship with God. Individuality counterfeits personality in the same way that lust counterfeits love. God designed human nature for Himself. Individuality debases human nature for itself.

The characteristics of individuality are independence and self-assertiveness. It is the continual assertion of individuality that hinders our spiritual life more than anything else. If you say, “I cannot believe.” That is because individuality is in the way. Individuality never can believe. Personality cannot help believing. Watch yourself when the Spirit of God is at work. He pushes you to the limits of your individuality, and you either have to say, “I won't!” or have to surrender. Surrender will break the husk of individuality and let the personal relationship emerge. The Holy Spirit narrows it down every time to one thing (cf. Matthew 5:23-24). The thing in you that will not be reconciled to your brother is your individuality. God wants to bring you into union with Himself. But unless you are willing to give up your right to yourself He cannot. “Let him deny himself” If you deny the independent right to self, then the real life has a chance to grow.

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Volume 1, Day 7 — VISION AND DARKNESS

“An horror of great darkness fell upon him.”

— Genesis 15:1

Whenever God gives a vision to a saint, He puts him, as it were, in the place of wondering what it means, and the saint's duty is to be still and listen. When darkness comes by excessive light, then is the time to listen. Genesis 16 is an illustration of listening to good advice when it is dark instead of waiting for God to send the light. When God gives a vision and darkness follows, wait. God will let you see the fulfillment of the vision He has given if you will wait for His timing. Never try and help God fulfill His word. Abraham went through thirteen years of silence, but in those years all self-sufficiency was destroyed. There was no possibility left of relying on his own common-sense ways. Those years of silence were a time of discipline (learning), not of displeasure. Never pump up joy and confidence, but stay upon God (Isaiah 1:10,11).

Do I still have any confidence in the flesh? Or have I abandoned all confidence in myself and in men and women of God; in books and prayers and ecstasies; and is my confidence placed now in God Himself, not in His blessings? “I am the Almighty God” - El-Shaddai, who is Father-Mother God. The one thing for which we are all being disciplined is to know that God is real. As soon as God becomes real, other people become shadows. Nothing that other saints do or say can ever disturb the one who is fully trusting God's character and nature.

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