

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 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.

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.

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.

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.

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!

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.

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.

Volume 1, Day 8 — THE SECRETS OF INTIMACY

“The secret (friendship R.V.) of the Lord is with them that fear Him.” — Psalm 25:14

What is the sign of a friend? That he tells you only secret sorrows? No, that he tells you secret aspirations as well. Many will confide to you their secret sorrows, but the greatest mark of intimacy is to confide secret joys. Have you ever let God tell you any of His joys, or are you telling God your secrets so continually that you leave no room for Him to talk to you? At the beginning of our Christian life we bring many requests to God. Later we find that God wants us to become more intimate with Him. He wants us to become more attuned to His purposes. Are we so wedded to Jesus Christ's idea of prayer - "Thy will be done" - that we know the secrets of God? Are you so intimate with God so much that the insignificant things are as satisfying as His great big blessings. It is His presence with us in the mundane that shows His amazing intimacy with us. He knows every detail of our personal lives.

“... him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose.” At first we want the consciousness of being guided by God. As we continue to live so much in the consciousness of God that we do not need to ask what His will is. The thought of choosing any other will never occur to us. Once we are saved (sanctified) God guides us by our ordinary choices. If we are about to make a choice different from His, He will check. When He checks we must wait. Whenever there is doubt, stop at once. Do not ever rationalize thinking, “I wonder why I shouldn't?” God uses our choices to instruct us. His Holy Spirit within us guides our common sense, and we stop hindering His Spirit by continually asking, “Now, Lord, what is Your will?”

Volume 1, Day 9 — NO ILLUSIONS

“Jesus did not fully disclose Himself to them for He knew what was in man.” John 2:24-25

When we are disillusioned with others there are no more false assumptions about them. To be deceived by the illusions we have of others may leave us cynical and unkindly severe in our judgments. But the disillusionment which comes with God’s revelation brings us to the place where we see men and women as they really are without cynicism. We have no stinging, bitter things to say. Many of the cruel things we do or say spring from the fact that we do have illusions (fantasies) about ourselves or others. We are not truthful with each other about the facts. We are true only to our *ideas* of one another. Everything is either delightful and fine, or mean and dastardly based on our *ideas*.

The refusal to reveal and accept the sordid facts about each other is the cause of much suffering in life. It works like this: If we love a person and do not love God, we demand of that person every perfection and rectitude. When our expectations are not met, we become cruel and vindictive; we are demanding of a human being that which he cannot give. There is only one Being Who can satisfy the last aching abyss of the human heart, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. The reason our Lord appears to be severe regarding every human relationship is because He knows that every relationship *not based on loyalty to Himself* will end in disaster. Jesus trusted no man, yet He was never suspicious, never bitter. Our Lord's confidence in God and in what His grace could do for any man, was so perfect that He despaired of no one. If our trust is placed in human beings, we will ultimately despair of everyone.

“God is never disillusioned with me. He never had any illusions about me in the first place. ... “ — Graham Cooke

Volume 1, Day 10 — SHARING HIS SUFFERINGS

“Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.” 1 Peter 4:13

If you are ever to be used by God, He will take you through a multitude of experiences that are not meant to improve you at all. They are meant to conform you to His purposes and make you useful in His hands. They are to enable you to understand what transpires in other souls so that you will never be surprised at what you encounter. “Oh, I can't deal with that person.” “Why not?” God created ample opportunities for you to soak in His love so that you could. But you walked off because you thought it was a waste of time learning to dispense love to such persons.

The sufferings of Christ are not those of ordinary men. He suffered “according to the will of God,” not from the point of view of human nature. It is only when we are rightly related to Jesus Christ that we can understand what God is after in His dealings with us and others. It is part of Christian culture to know what God's aim is. In the history of the Christian Church the tendency has been to avoid the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Men have sought to carry out God's orders by shortcuts of their own. God's way always includes suffering from the human nature point of view.

Are we experiencing sufferings of the same kind as Christ's? Are we willing to let God to crush our personal ambitions? Will we let God destroy by transfiguration our individual goals and aspirations? This will not mean that we know **exactly why** God is taking us through suffering. That would make us spiritually arrogant. We seldom realize at the time what God is putting us through. But we go through it whether we understand it or not.

When we do come to understand it, we say, “Wow! God has used it to increase my trust in Him.

Vol 1, Day 11 — BY GRACE I AM WHAT I AM

“His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:10

The way we continually talk about our own inability is an insult to the Creator. The deploring of our own incompetence is a slander against God for having overlooked us. Get into the habit of examining in the sight of God the things that sound humble before men, and you will be amazed at how staggeringly impertinent they are. “Oh, I shouldn't say I am sanctified.” -or- “I'm not a saint.” When you say that, you are actually saying, “No, Lord! It is impossible for You to save and sanctify me. There are too many imperfections in me. No, Lord, it isn't possible.” Those statements may sound wonderfully humble to men, but to God it is an attitude of prideful defiance.

Things that sound humble to the ears of God may sound the opposite when heard by other people. To say and truly mean, “Thank God, I know I am saved and sanctified because God has done that for me is the acme of humility. It means you have so completely abandoned yourself to God that you know He is true regardless of what men say is true in contradiction of what God says. Never even consider whether what you say sounds humble before men or not. Always be humble before God and let Him be glorified in all you do and say.

There is only one relationship that matters, and that is your personal relationship to a personal Redeemer and Lord. Let everything else go, but maintain intimacy with God at all costs, and God will fulfill His purpose through your life. One single life may be of priceless value to God's purposes, and yours could be that life.

Volume 1, Day 12 — ARE YOU EVER DISTURBED?

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.” John 14:27

There are times when our peace is based upon ignorance, but when we awaken to the facts of life, inner peace is impossible unless it is received from Jesus. When Our Lord speaks peace, He makes peace, His words are ever "Spirit and life." Have I ever received what Jesus speaks? "My peace I give unto you." It is a peace which comes from looking into His face and acquiring His undisturbed tranquility.

Are you painfully disturbed just now, distracted by the waves and billows of God's providential permission, and having, as it were, turned over the boulders of your belief, are you still finding no well of peace or joy or comfort? Does anxiety still prevail? Then look up and receive the undisturbed peace of the Lord Jesus. Reflection of Jesus' peace is the proof that you are right with God. It is then, and only then that you are at liberty to turn your entire attention to Him. If you are not abandoned to God, you can never think about anything but yourself. If you allow anything to hide the face of Jesus Christ from you, you are either disturbed or you have a false sense of security.

Are you aware of Jesus now, in the immediate matter that is stressing you and feeling His peace? If so, He will be a gracious benediction of peace in and through you. But if you try to solve it yourself, you do not trust Him and deserve the stress. We only get anxious when we are not aware of His presence. Conferring with Jesus Christ eliminates the perplexity. He has no perplexity, and our only concern is to abide in Him. Turn it over to Him, and in the face of difficulty, bereavement and sorrow, hear Him say, "Let not your heart be troubled." And it won't be!

Vol 1, Day 13 — MY OBEDIENCE TO GOD WILL COST OTHER PEOPLE

**"They laid hold upon one Simon . . . and on
him they laid the cross." Luke 23:2**

If we obey God it is going to cost other people more than it costs us, and that is where the sting comes in. If we are in love with our Lord, obedience does not cost us anything, it is a delight, but it costs those who do not love Him a great deal. If we obey God it will mean that other people's plans are upset, and they will say to us, "You call this Christianity?" We can prevent the suffering; but if we desire to obey God, we must placate other people. We must let them pay the cost of our devotion to God.

Our human pride hinges on this point, and we say, "I will never accept anything from anyone or inconvenience them." We must let it happen or disobey God. We have no right to expect to be in any other relation than our Lord Himself was in. He was 4 days late, but just on time.

Stagnation in spiritual life comes when we say we will bear the whole thing ourselves. We cannot. When we are so involved in the universal purposes of God that we immediately obey God, some others are negatively affected. Are we going to remain loyal to God and go through the humiliation of refusing to consider others, or are we going to do the opposite and say, "I will not cost other people to suffer?" We can choose to disobey God and it will bring immediate relief to the situation, but we will grieve our Lord. But, if we obey God, He will look after those who have been pressed into the consequences of our obedience. Our's is simply to obey God and to leave all consequences with Him.

Beware of the inclination to tell God what you will **not** allow to happen to others when you obey Him.

Volume 1, Day 14 — PERSONALITY

"That they may be one, even as we are one."

John 17:22

Personality is that unique, peculiar thing that is meant when we speak of ourselves as distinct from everyone else. Our personality is too mysterious for us to grasp. Personality is like an island. We know nothing about the great depths underneath, consequently we cannot estimate ourselves. We begin by thinking that we can, but we come to realize that there is only one Being Who understands us, and that is our Creator.

Personality is the characteristic of the spiritual man as individuality is the characteristic of the natural man. Our Lord can never be defined in terms of individuality and independence, but only in terms of personality, "I and My Father are one." Personality merges, and you only reach your real identity when you are merged with another person.

When love, or the Spirit of God strikes a man, he is transformed, he no longer insists upon his separate individual independence. Our Lord never spoke in terms of individuality, of having his own way or his isolated position, but in terms of personality - "that they may be one, even as We are one." When you give up your right to yourself to God, the true nature of your personality immediately merges with God. Jesus Christ emancipates the personality, and the individuality is transfigured. The transfiguring element is deeply genuine love in personal devotion to Jesus. Love is the outpouring of one personality in fellowship with another personality.

Volume 1, Day15 — HOW WILL I KNOW?

"I thank Thee, O Father ... because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes."

-- Matt 11:25

In spiritual relationship we do not grow step by step. We are either there or we are not. Love either is or is not. God does not cleanse us gradually from sin. When we are walking genuinely in the light, we are cleansed from all sin. Obedience based on genuine love is the instantaneous perfection of the relationship. Shift your affection for one second and relationship is diminished with God.

All God's revelations are hidden from us until they are opened to us by abandon to God. You will never get them by philosophy or thinking. The instant you surrender wholly to God, you will obey, and inspiration and revelation come. Let God's truth work in you by soaking in it, not by struggling to obey. The only way you can know God is to stop trying to find out Who He is and being 'born again.' Obey God in the thing He shows you now and instantly the next thing is opened up. One reads volumes on the work of the Holy Spirit when one five minute moment of drastic obedience would make things as clear as a sunbeam. "I'll probably understand these things some day!" You can understand them now. It is not study that does it, but surrender in love to God. The tiniest fragment of obedience, and heaven opens and the profoundest truths of God are yours immediately. God will not reveal more truth about Himself until you have obeyed what you know already. Beware of becoming "wise and prudent."

Vol 1, Day 16 - POSITIVELY IGNORANT!

"Who art Thou, Lord?" Acts 26:15

"The Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand."
There is no misunderstanding when Our Lord speaks, He always comes with an arresting of the understanding. Has the voice of God come to you directly? If it has, you cannot mistake the intimate insistence with which it has spoken to you in the language you know best, not through your ears, but through your circumstances.

God must destroy our determined confidence in our own convictions. "I know this is what I should do." Suddenly the voice of God speaks in a way that overwhelms us by revealing the depths of our ignorance. We have shown our ignorance of Him in the very way we determined to serve Him. We serve Jesus in a spirit that is not His. We hurt Him by our advocacy for Him. We push His claims in the spirit of the devil. Our words sound all right, but our spirit is that of an enemy. "He rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." The spirit of our Lord in an advocate of His is described in 1 Corinthians 13. Love like Jesus loves!

Have I been persecuting Jesus by a zealous determination to serve Him in my own way? Judas Iscariot sure did. If I feel I have done my duty and yet have hurt Him in doing it, I can be certain that it was **not** my duty, because it has not fostered the meek and quiet Spirit, but the spirit of self-satisfaction. We imagine that whatever is unpleasant is our duty! Is that anything like the Spirit of our Lord? "I delight to do Your will, O My God."

Vol 1, Day 17 - LOOK AGAIN AND THINK

"Take no thought for your life." Matt. 6:25

A warning which needs to be reiterated is that the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, will choke all that God puts in. We are never free from the recurring tides of this encroachment. If it does not come on the line of clothes and food, it will come on the line of money or lack of money; of friends or lack of friends; or on the line of difficult circumstances. It is one steady encroachment all the time, and unless we allow the Spirit of God to raise up the standard against it, these things will come in like a flood.

"Take no thought for your life." "Be careful about one thing only," says our Lord - "your relationship to Me." Common sense shouts loud and says - "That is absurd, I must consider how I am going to live, I must consider what I am going to eat and drink." Jesus says you must not. Beware of allowing the thought that this statement is made by One Who does not understand our particular circumstances. Jesus Christ knows our circumstances better than we do, and He says we must not think about these things so as to make them the one concern of our life. Whenever there is competition, be sure that you put your relationship to God first.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How much evil has begun to threaten you today? What kind of mean little imps have been looking in and saying - Now what are you going to do next month - this summer? "Be anxious for nothing," Jesus says. Look again and think. Keep your mind on the "much more" of your heavenly Father.

When Jesus said, "I have overcome the world," He did not mean that the trouble and adversity would not come our way. He meant that His Spirit has overcome our negative reactions with His positive view of them!

Vol 1 Day 18 — REDEMPTION CREATES THE NEED IT SATISFIES

**"But the natural man receives not the things
of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness
unto him." — 1 Corinthians 2:14**

The Gospel of God creates a sense of need of the Gospel. Paul says - "If our gospel be hid, it is hid" - to those who are blackguards (spiritually diligent)? No, "to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." The majority of people have their morality well within their own grasp, they have no sense of need of the Gospel. It is God Who creates the need of which no human being is conscious until God manifests Himself. Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you," but God cannot give until a man asks. It is not that He withholds, but that that is the way He has constituted things regarding Redemption. By means of our asking, God sets processes to work whereby He creates the thing that is not in existence until we do ask. The inner reality of Redemption is that it creates all the time. As the Redemption creates the life of God in us, so it creates the things belonging to that life. Nothing can satisfy the need but that which created the need. This is the meaning of Redemption - it creates and it satisfies.

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." We preach our own experiences and people are interested, but no sense of need is awakened by it. But when Jesus Christ is lifted up, the Spirit of God will create a conscious need of Him. Behind the preaching of the Gospel is the creative Redemption of God at work in the souls of men. It is never personal testimony that saves men. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Volume 1 Day 19 — FELLOWSHIP

"Fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ."

— 1 Thessalonians 3:2

After sanctification it is difficult to state what your aim in life is, because God has taken you up into His purpose by the Holy Ghost. He is using you now for His purposes throughout the world as He used His Son for the purpose of our salvation. If you seek great things for yourself claiming, "God has called me for this and that," you are putting hindering God's use of you. As long as you have a personal interest in your own character, or any set ambition, you cannot be fully identified with God's interests. You can only get there by losing forever any idea of yourself and by letting God take you right out of your awareness of yourself and into His purpose for the world. And because your goings are strictly those of the Lord, you can never understand just why you are doing what your do.

I have to learn that the aim in life is God's, not mine. God is using me from His great personal standpoint, and all He asks of me is that I trust Him, and never say, "Lord, this gives me such heart-ache." To talk in that way makes me a selfish brat. When I stop telling God what I want, He can fully use me for what He wants without let or hindrance. He can crumple me up or exalt me, He can do any thing He chooses. He simply asks me to have implicit faith in Himself and in His goodness. Self pity is of the devil. If I go that way, I cannot be used by God for His purpose in the world. I have "a world within the world" in which I live, and God will never be able to get me outside it because I am afraid of being distressed or even inconvenienced.

Vol 1, Day 20 - IS GOD'S WILL MY WILL?

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification." — 1 Thessalonians 4:3

It is not a question of whether God is willing to sanctify me. It is the question, "Do I truly desire it? Am I willing to let God do in me all that has been made possible by the Atonement? Am I willing to let Jesus be made sanctification to me, and to let the life of Jesus be manifested in my mortal flesh? Beware of saying, "Oh, I greatly desire to be sanctified." You are not! Stop longing to be and make it a matter of purposeful commitment. - "Nothing in my hands I bring." Receive Jesus Christ to be made sanctification to you in implicit faith, and the great marvel of the Atonement of Jesus will be made real in you.

All that Jesus made possible is made mine by the free loving gift of God on the ground of what He performed. My attitude as a saved and sanctified soul is that of profound, humble holiness (there is no such thing as proud holiness). True holiness is based on agonizing repentance and a sense of unspeakable shame and degradation. It is also affected by the amazing realization that the love of God commended itself to me in that while I cared nothing about Him, He completed everything for my salvation and sanctification (see Rom. 5:8. R.V.). No wonder Paul says nothing is "able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Sanctification makes me one with Jesus Christ, and in Him one with God. It is done only through the superb Atonement of Christ. Never put the effect as the cause. The effect in me is obedience and service and prayer, and is the outcome of speechless thanks and adoration for the marvelous sanctification expressed through me because of the Atonement.

Vol 1, Day 21 -- RELATIONSHIP ACTION

"And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Matthew 5:41

The summing up of Our Lord's teaching is that the relationship which He demands is an impossible one unless He has done a supernatural work in us. Jesus Christ demands that there be not the slightest trace of resentment even suppressed in the heart of a disciple when he meets with tyranny and injustice. No enthusiasm will ever stand the strain that Jesus Christ will put upon His worker, only one thing will, and that is a personal relationship to Himself which has gone through the mill of His spring-cleaning until there is only one purpose left - I am here for God to send me where He will. Every other thing may be unclear. But this relationship to Jesus Christ must never be.

The Sermon on the Mount is not an ideal. It is a statement of what will happen in me when Jesus Christ has altered my disposition and put in a disposition like His own. Jesus Christ is the only One Who can fulfill the Sermon on the Mount.

If we are to be disciples of Jesus, we must be made disciples supernaturally. As long as we have the dead set purpose of being disciples we may be sure we are not. "I have chosen you." That is the way the grace of God begins. It is a constraint we cannot escape. We can disobey it. But we cannot generate it. The drawing is done by the supernatural grace of God, and we never can trace where His work begins. Our Lord's making of a disciple is supernatural. He does not build on any natural capacity at all. God does not ask us to do the things that are easy to us naturally. He only asks us to do the things we are perfectly fitted to do by His grace, and the cross will come along that line always.

Vol 1, Day 22 — DON'T HURT THE LORD!

"Have I been so long time with you, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?" -John 14:9

Our Lord must be repeatedly astounded at us - astounded at how un-simple we are. It is opinions of our own which make us stupid. When we are simple, that is not tangled up in opinions, we are never stupid. We discern all the time when we remain simple. Philip expected the revelation of a tremendous mystery, but not in the One Whom he knew. The mystery of God is not in what is going to happen in the future. It is now. We must see it in the present moment of the cataclysmic event. We have no reluctance in obeying Jesus, but it is probable that we are hurting Him by the questions we ask. "Lord, show us the Father." His answer comes straight back, "There He is, always here or nowhere." We look for God to manifest Himself **to** His children. God only manifests Himself **in** His children. Other people see the manifestation, the child of God does not. We want to be conscious of God. But we cannot be conscious of our consciousness and remain sane. If we are asking God to give us experiences, or if conscious experience is in our minds, we hurt the Lord. The very questions we ask hurt Jesus because they are not the questions of a child (simple as a child).

"Let not your heart be troubled." Am I hurting Jesus by allowing my heart to be troubled? If I believe the character of Jesus, am I living up to my belief? Am I allowing anything to perturb my heart, any morbid questions to come in? I have to get to the implicit relationship that takes everything in stride as it comes from Him. God never guides in our future. He always guides in the present moment. Realize that the Lord is here now, and the emancipation from all stress and anxiety is immediate.

Vol 1, Day 23 — SPONTANEITY OF LOVE

"Love suffers long, and is kind . . ."

— 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is not premeditated. It is spontaneous. It simply bursts forth in extraordinary ways. There is nothing of mathematical certainty in Paul's category of love. We cannot say, "Now I am going to think no evil. I am going to believe all things." The characteristic of love is spontaneity. We do not set the statements of Jesus in front of us as a standard to be attained. But when His Spirit is having His way with us, we live according to His standard without even being aware of it. On looking back we are amazed at the disinterestedness of a particular emotion, which is the evidence that the spontaneity of real love was there. In everything to do with the life of God in us, its nature is only discerned when it is past.

The springs of love are in God, not in us. It is absurd to look for the love of God in our hearts naturally. It is only there when it has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

If we try to prove to God how much we love Him, it is a sure sign that we do not love Him. The evidence of our love for Him is the absolute spontaneity of our love. It comes naturally. In looking back we cannot tell why we did certain things. We simply did them according to the spontaneous nature of His love in us. The life of God manifests itself in this spontaneous way because the springs of love are in the Holy Ghost. (Romans 5:5.)

When you wrongly define love as action, you cannot be in love at all. Everything that is based on expression alone contains no emotional content. It is only response to perceived duty or obligation. Love is never obligated to give. Love cannot help but give and to give generously without forethought or plan.

Volume 1 Day 24 — FAITH

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him.” — Hebrews 11:6

Faith in antagonism to common sense is fanaticism, and common sense in antagonism to faith is rationalism. The life of faith brings the two into a right relation. Common sense is not faith. And faith is not common sense. They stand in the relation of the natural and the spiritual; of impulse and inspiration. Nothing Jesus Christ ever said is common sense, it is revelation sense, and it reaches the shores where common sense fails. Faith must be tried before the reality of faith is actual. “We know that all things work together for good,” then no matter what happens, the alchemy of God's providence transfigures the ideal faith into actual reality. Faith always works on the personal line, the whole purpose of God being to see that the ideal faith is made real in His children.

For every detail of the common-sense life, there is a revelation fact of God by which we can prove in practical experience what we believe God to be. Faith is a tremendously active principle which always puts Jesus Christ first - Lord, Thou hast said so and so (for example, Matthew 6:33, “... seek first ...), it looks mad, but I am going to venture on Thy word. To turn head faith into a personal possession is a fight always, not just sometimes. God brings us into circumstances in order to educate our faith, because the nature of faith is to make its object real. Until we know Jesus, God is a mere abstraction, we can not have faith in Him. But the instant we hear Jesus say, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,” and believe it, we have something that is real. And that faith is boundless. Faith is the whole man rightly related to God by the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Vol 1, Day 25 - WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?

"Lord, what shall this man do? ... What is that to you? Follow thou Me." - John 21:21,2

One of our severest lessons comes from the stubborn refusal to see that we must not interfere in other people's lives. It takes a long time to realize the danger of being an amateur providence, that is, interfering with God's order for others. You see a certain person suffering, and you say, "I see his need. He should not have to suffer. I have what he needs and I will see that he gets it from me." You put your sympathy directly in contradiction to God's permissive will, and step in to prevent it. God says, "What business is that of yours?" If there is spiritual stagnation, never allow it to persist. Rather, get into God's presence and find out the reason for it. Possibly you will find it is because you have been interfering in the life of another; proposing things you had no right to propose; advising when you had no right to advise. When you do have to give advice to another, God will advise through you with the direct understanding of His Spirit. Your part is to be so rightly related to God that His discernment comes through you all the time for the blessing of another soul.

Most of us live on the borders of consciousness - consciously serving, consciously devoted to God. All this is immature. It is not the real 'Christ-life' yet. The mature stage is the life of a child which is never consciously doing things for God. We become so abandoned to God that the consciousness of being used never enters our mind. As long as we are conscious of being broken or poured-out for others, there is another stage to be reached. Spiritual maturity is when all consciousness of ourselves and of what God is doing through us is eliminated. A saint is never consciously a saint; a saint is consciously tuned to the Spirit of God and wholly dependent on God.

Volume 1, Day 26 -- FATHER HEARS MY PRAYER

"Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." — John 11:41

When the Son of God prays, He has only one consciousness, and that consciousness is of His Father. God always hears the prayers of His Son, and if the Son of God is formed in me the Father will always hear my prayers. I have to see that the Son of God is manifested in my mortal flesh. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," that is, the Bethlehem of the Son of God. Is the Son of God having full control of me? Is the direct simplicity of the life of God's Son being observed exactly as it was observed in His historic life? When I come in contact with the occurrences of life as an ordinary human being, is the prayer of God's Eternal Son to His Father being prayed in me? "In that day ye shall ask in My name ..." What day? The day when the Holy Ghost has come to me and made me effectively one with my Lord.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ being abundantly satisfied in your life or do you have a spiritual agenda of your own? Never let common sense prevail in your decisions and push the Son of God aside. Common sense is a gift which God gave to human nature. But common sense is not the gift of His Son. Supernatural sense is the gift of His Son. Never elevate common sense above Supernatural sense. The Son detects the Father. Common sense never has and never will detect the Father. Our ordinary wits never worship God unless they are transfigured by the indwelling Son of God. We have to maintain the supremacy of His Spirit and keep our spirit in perfect subjection to Him. This is a moment by moment commitment. Are we living in such human dependence upon Jesus Christ that His life is being seen in us moment by moment?

Volume 1, Day 27 — ALWAYS NOW

"We . . . beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." — 2 Corinthians 6:1

The grace you had yesterday will not do for today. Grace is the overflowing favor of God. You can always depend on it being there to draw upon. "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses" - that is where the test for patience comes. Are you failing to see the grace of God there? Are you saying, "Oh, well, I won't count this time?" It is not a question of praying and asking God to help you. It is taking advantage of the grace of God in the present moment. We make prayer the preparation for work. It is never that in the Bible. Prayer is the exercise of drawing on the grace of God in constant dialog with God. Don't say, "I will endure this until I can get away and pray." Pray now. Draw on the grace of God in the moment of need. Prayer is the most practical thing. It is not the reflex action of devotion or desperation. Prayer is usually the last thing in which we learn to draw on God's grace.

"In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors" - in all these things manifest a drawing upon the grace of God that will make you a marvel to yourself and to others. Draw now, not later on. The one word in the spiritual vocabulary is **now**. Your circumstances simply are what they are. Remain always aware of the ever present grace of God and keep drawing on it in every conceivable condition you may be in. One of the greatest proofs that you are drawing on the grace of God is that you can be humiliated without manifesting the slightest trace of anything but His grace.

"Having nothing . . ." Never reserve anything. Pour out the best you have, and always be poor. Never be diplomatic and careful about the treasure God gives. This is poverty triumphant.

Volume 1, Day 28 — GETTING THERE

Where the selective affinity dies and the sanctified abandon lives. "Come ye after Me." -- Mark 1:17

One of the greatest hindrances in coming to Jesus is the excuse of temperament. We make our temperament and our natural affinities barriers to coming to Jesus. The first thing we realize when we come to Jesus is that He pays no attention at all to our natural affinities. We have the notion that we can consecrate our gifts to God. You cannot consecrate what is not yours. There is only one thing you can consecrate to God, and that is your right to yourself (Romans 12:1). If you will give God your right to yourself, He will make a holy experiment out of you.

God's experiments always succeed. The one mark of a saint is the spontaneous originality which springs from abandonment to Jesus Christ. In the life of a saint there is this amazing wellspring of original life all the time. The Spirit of God is a well of water springing up, perennially fresh. The saint realizes that it is God Who engineers circumstances, consequently there is no whine, but a reckless abandon to Jesus. Never make a principle out of your experience and use it to teach others. Let God be as original with other people as He is with you.

If you abandon to Jesus, and come when He says "Come," He will continue to say "Come" through you; you will go out into life reproducing the echo of Christ's "Come." That is the result in every soul who has abandoned and come to Jesus.

Have I come to Jesus? Will I come now?

Vol 1, Day 29 — THE SUPREME CLIMB

"Take now thy son . . and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." — Genesis 22:2

Character determines how a man interprets God's will (cf. Psalm 18:25-26). Abraham interpreted God's command to mean that he had to kill his son, and he could only leave this tradition behind by the pain of a tremendous ordeal. God could purify his faith in no other way. If we obey what God says according to our sincere belief, God will free us from those traditions that misrepresent Him. There are many such beliefs to be got rid of. One might be that God removes a child because the mother loves him too much. This is likely the devil's lie! It is most certainly a travesty against the true nature of God. If the devil can hinder us from taking the supreme climb and getting rid of wrong traditions about God, he will do so. But if we keep true to God, God will take us through an ordeal which will bring us out into a better knowledge of and greater intimacy with Himself.

The great point of Abraham's faith in God was that he was prepared to do anything for God. He was ready to obey God, no matter what belief he had to cast aside. Abraham was not a devotee of his convictions, or he would have slain Isaac and said that the voice of the angel was the voice of the devil. That is the attitude of a fanatic. If you will remain true to God, God will lead you straight through every barrier into the inner chamber of the knowledge of Himself. But there is always this point of giving up convictions and traditional beliefs. Don't ask God to test you. Never declare as Peter did - "I will do anything. I will go to death with Thee." Abraham did not make any such declaration. He remained true to God, and God purified his faith.

Volume 1, Day 30 WANNABE SPIRITUAL?

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you." — Luke 10:20

As Christian workers, worldliness and sin are not our point of failure. Desiring to be recognized for our spiritual success is the most common failure. Never court anything other than the approval of God. Play to an audience of only One! Go "without the camp, bearing His reproach." If you identify with Jesus, you will be disrespected just as He was. Jesus told the disciples not to rejoice in successful service, and yet this seems to be the one thing in which most of us do rejoice. We tend to measure our own spiritual quotient in ways that satisfy our pride.

Our work begins where God's grace has laid the foundation. We are not to save souls, but to disciple them. Salvation and sanctification are the work of God's sovereign grace. Our work as His disciples is to disciple lives until they are wholly yielded to God. One life wholly devoted to God is of more value to God than one hundred lives simply awakened by His Spirit. As workers for God we must reproduce our own intimacy with God in others. Jesus' only direct command to His disciples and our unique testimony is, "Love one another as much as I have loved you!" Our commission is to reproduce that love in others.

Unless the worker lives a life of intimacy with Christ in God, he is apt to become an irritating dictator instead of an inspiring disciple. Many of us are dictators. We dictate to individuals and to gatherings. Jesus never dictates to us in that way. Whenever Our Lord talked about discipleship, He always prefaced it with an "IF," never with an emphatic assertion - "You must." Discipleship carries an option with it.

Volume 1, Day 31 — RIGHTLY RELATED
"... rejoice because your names are written in
heaven." — Luke 10:19, 20

Jesus Christ says, in effect, “Don't rejoice in successful service, but rejoice because you are rightly related to Me.” The snare in Christian work is to rejoice in successful service, to rejoice in the fact that God has used you. You never can measure what God will do through you if you are rightly related to Jesus Christ. Keep your relationship right with Him, then whatever circumstances you are in, and whoever you meet day by day, He is pouring rivers of living water through you, and it is because of His mercy that He does not let you know it. When once you are rightly related to God by salvation and sanctification, remember that wherever you are, you are put there by God. By the reaction of your life on the circumstances around you, you will fulfill God's purpose, as long as you remain in the light of the absolute truth of God.

The tendency today is to put the emphasis on service. Beware of the people who make usefulness their ground of appeal. If you make usefulness the test, then Jesus Christ was the greatest failure that ever lived. The lodestar of the saint is God Himself, not estimated usefulness. It is the work that God does **through us** that counts, not what we do **for** Him. All that Our Lord heeds in a man's life is the relationship of worth to His Father. Jesus is bringing many sons to glory. The Glory of God is the person who abandons himself to the purposes of God.

Volume 1, Day 32 — HELD AS IN A VICE

"For the love of Christ constrains us."

— 2 Corinthians 5:14

Paul says he is overruled, overmastered, held as in a vice, by the love of Christ. Very few of us know what it means to be held in a grip by the love of God. We are held by the constraint of our experience alone. The one thing that held Paul, until there was nothing else on his horizon, was the love of God. "The love of Christ constrains us." When you hear that note in a man or woman, you can never mistake it. You know that the Spirit of God is getting unhindered control in that life.

When we are born again of the Spirit of God, the note of testimony is on what God has done for us, and rightly so. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost obliterates that forever, and we begin to realize what Jesus meant when He said - "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Not witnesses to what Jesus can do - that is an elementary witness - but "witnesses unto Me." We will take everything that happens as happening to Him, whether it be praise or blame, persecution or commendation. No one can consistently stand like that for Jesus Christ who is not constrained by a passionate intimacy with Him. It is the only thing that matters. Unfortunately, it is the last thing realized by the Christian worker. Paul says he is gripped by the love of God. That is why he acts as he does. Men may call him mad or sober, but he does not care. There is only one thing he is living for, and that is to persuade men of the judgment of God regarding sin, and of the unconditional love of Christ. This abandon to the love of Christ is the one thing that bears fruit in the life. It will always leave the impression of the holiness and of the power of God, never of our personal holiness.