

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?”

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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

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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.

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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.

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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!

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**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. Ours 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.

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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.

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