

I suppose there will always be problems,
I hope so,
because without problems we would all vegetate.
We would become useless.
---Fletcher A. Harding

SPIRIT in ACTION

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We Welcome You!

The Flame and the Forge Fletcher A. Harding

Once while discussing the turbulence in my own experience, a wonderful friend said to me, "You know, Dr. Harding, it's pretty difficult to experience the glory of Christ without experiencing a little of the cross."

Everyone loves Kahlil Gibran and his writings. There is no way, according to this Lebanese poet, who wrote the book *The Prophet*, to experience the true glory, without a little of the cross. He was a very sad man; yet, he wrote this beautiful inspiration that lifts the hearts of millions of people. Everyone goes through turbulent times.

On occasion I read in metaphysical literature that nobody should have problems. Nonsense! Everyone has problems. The trouble is that *we acknowledge the problems, we validate them, and we give them authority*. We do not understand the affirmative use of the problems that we have in the normal course of living. The problems with which we are confronted are the tempering factors that make us strong. They are the forges into which we place the mental that is to be tempered into hardness, into strength---not cold and mean hardness, but character building strength. They are the issues that send our roots deep into the meaning and richness of life. they are the issues out of which glory is fashioned.

Have you ever read the life of St. Paul? Probably one of the most exciting treatments of the life of St. Paul, just for the joy of reading, is Taylor Caldwell's *Great Lion of God*. Few people in all of the history of mankind have had such an impact on the thought of the world as did Paul of Tarsus. He was to become a giant, not only among men in his own time, but a giant among men in all of the annals of history. How profoundly he suffered at various times in his experience, but never did the suffering become the dominating factor in his life. He looked upon his suffering as an opportunity to *rise higher* by virtue of overcoming. And at one point Jesus said, "The people who are most blest in life are the people who overcome," *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* 1 John 5:3, 4, 5

As a child, I used to love to listen to my father tell stories about my great uncle, Lebius Harding. There is a name to inspire confidence! He was a man of great strength and he ran a blacksmith's shop. I myself was raided on a farm where my father did some of his own blacksmithing. I still remember how my father would take the long tongs and stick them into the heat of a fire to make the metal malleable, and how, as soon as the metal was white with heat, he would pull it out of the fire and place it on the anvil and fashion it with a heavy hammer into the shape of *usefulness*. Un-useful metal was fashioned into the tools of productivity, or into the parts of a machine that would make it operative.

I think of us as we approach the issues of life. No one goes through life, hopefully, without some challenge that goes to fashion the deep soul into more productive issues. The problems of life are what help us to build the “characterological” structure that is equal to the storms of experience. Some people take these problems and forge them into something that contributes to their strength. They do not let these issues be determinants of their weakness. Each of us has a built-in forge, but the fire of our forges is not as the fire and the forge that my great uncle once fanned into white heat. Our forge, that make our problems malleable, is a quality for passion. Maybe I should call it intensity: the passion for living, for joy, and passion for making something wonderful out of the issues of our lives.

When you have a problem, do you ever think about sitting down and inducing a mood out of that problem? Sit down with the problem and induce a mood of impassioned intensity to do something constructive with it.

The people who are in ill repair are the people who run into the limiting factors of lives and sit down and feel sorry for themselves. They are the ones who say, “What can I as one person do about this? After all, it really was not my fault; I am an innocent victim. I just had some bad breaks.” The people who think in this direction are the people who never lit the fire in the forges of their souls.

But there are those who have found some element of passion in life, who know how to induce a mood of intensity, who know how to say, “I will not succumb to this. God has given me the forge and the anvil and the desire and the strength. I will fashion victory out of this apparent defeat.” Of such stuff are the victories of life made.

You have never had a problem in your life that could not be made malleable enough with the forge of your emotion to be made into useful growing, into the strengthening fiber of character structure, into spiritual muscle that enables you to go into a more productive direction in your life. We cower too often in the face of adversity. I can think of no other refutation of the power of God equal to a man or woman sitting down in the middle of despair and limiting circumstances and saying, “I surrender to this restricting factor. I give up in the face of this problem.” This refutes the divinity of self. This cuts off man’s sense of oneness with God. This is the ultimate surrender. It is the beginning of death.

On the other hand, look back to the time of Abraham, look at the life of Moses, of Isaiah, of Ezekiel, of Daniel, of John the Baptist, of Jesus, of St. Paul; look at any of the lives of people who have contributed to the great good of mankind, and you will always find a forge and a fire. You will find somebody who did something with the adversity, who stuck his problem in the intensity of emotion and made it malleable, and fashioned it, if you please, into growth. This is what life is all about.

There is not one person to whom God has denied the faculty of overcoming. It is a built-in piece of spiritual equipment, but nobody can make you use it but YOU. YOU have to heat the metal to make it malleable. YOU have to take it out and put it on the anvil and strike it in a direction of *your choosing*. But

when you do, what magnificent and useful instruments are drawn out of the turbulence of life.

Do not let this day pass without acknowledging a good, healthy problem. Then sit down for a few minutes and put it into the forge of your enthusiasm until you have an impassioned desire to make it something glorious. Pull it out and subject it to the determination of your prayerful thought and see what you can accomplish in the way of divine growth. *God has made of you a blacksmith*. Approach the forge of your soul with confidence and fulfill and fashion a great victory.

For everything that you bring to me, God, I give thanks. I understand it as my increase. I accept it as such and arise on Thy wings of glory.

The Joy of Understanding

Harry Gaze

Let us pray that the whole world may come into the light and joy of understanding. What a transformation it makes in the world if we first understand God, then ourselves, then our neighbor, and then the whole world!

In our age, understanding is absolutely essential to our welfare and even to our survival. Long ago, too, its value was recognized by master minds. Now, this understanding is the heritage of the people as a whole.

Solomon said, “with all thy getting, get ...
Understanding; wisdom is the principle thing.”
Proverbs 4:7

Today the people of all nations know this. Our task as individuals and as a nation is to give to the world a practical exemplification of wisdom and understanding.

The ability to see and honor another’s point of view is indispensable. We can accentuate the points of agreement, and as we do this they will grow in number.

Joy in the home, in society, and in the place of business grows through mutual understanding. The more we understand the fundamental Truth, the reality and nature of God and the relationship of all to God, the more understanding unfolds and the more the happiness of all peoples and nations increases.

Affirm: *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.*

“Happiness is a butterfly.
Pursued, it is always just beyond your grasp;
but if you will sit down quietly,
it may light upon you.

---Nathaniel Hawthorne 2

(From time to time it is good to review the principle that Divine Science was built upon. The eleventh chapter entitled "Conclusion" from our text: *Divine Science Its Principle and Practice* sums up, very succinctly, this understanding. The following excerpt is from the eleventh chapter. ---Editor)

Divine Science is a Christian religion based upon the teachings of Jesus, expounding the principle of the omnipresence of God and proving by the law of expression that innately *man can be only what God is*.

Divine Science emphasizes the law of expression for upon this law or trinity --- Creator, creative activity, and creation --- the unity and fulfillment of all law is based.

It provides the understanding by which man can bring his thinking and experience into unity with God's idea of him and the divine plan and purpose for his life.

The law of expression is the very foundation of unity for it proves that man is the All-Good in manifestation.

Man at one with God, and acting in accordance with the law will express perfect results, since that which is born of Spirit is Spirit and like produces like.

Divine Science establishes fully and absolutely through its teaching that in reality there can be no dual power, no duality anywhere.

God has nothing but Himself out of which to make His children.
They are perfect because He is perfect.
They live because He lives.
There is only one Mind, and they share it;
only one Spirit, and they are Spirit.

Spirit can manifest nothing from within itself that is not a likeness of itself.

Man exists as God-idea brought forth into form; he is one in nature; a unit complete in Being.

Divine Science is a definite system of teaching based on the all-ness and everywhere-ness of the one, and the now-ness of Eternal Life.
Thus, it is established that "the Father and I are one."

Jesus' teachings make it clear that he saw, and that we must see the unity of substance; that he accepted, and that we must accept, the truth that we are one with the Father.

In Him we have being;
in sonship is life;
substance is eternal, invisible and visible;
the I AM of the individual is co-eternal and self-existent in God.

Divine Science teaches the sacredness of the body.

We should often affirm:
"My spirit is divine Life and Substance;
my living soul is divine Life and Substance expressed;
my body is divine Life and Substance manifest."

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."
"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."
"I and my Father are one." ...

That which has no place in God or His creative action has *no* place, no existence, is not, never was, and never can be.

Every seeming illness, sin, or lack belongs to the false belief of separation from the Good, the True, and the Real.

It is for each one to know God, even as he is known of God; then all false conditions will be dissipated and proved unreal.

Nothing but direct expression of the Most High is expected in treatment.
At-one-ment with the Eternal is the end desired.

Love is as a flower in full bloom --- a soft place on which to rest and refresh the soul with the nectar of acceptance and the soothing pollen of tender concern. It is always open and giving, and yet receiving the contact of heart to heart. Love does not enclose the spirit as a tight bud, for it cannot entrap. It gives freedom. It releases with confidence, provides power for flight, and encourages the exploration of new fields to seek out the hidden blossoms of new knowledge. The true fragrance of Love is the full scent of trust given in the freedom of release. The true nourishment of Love is the wise, selfless giving that strengthens and refreshes the weary heart. Oh, Lord, let my love be as an open, giving, scented flower within your garden of life. ---N. C. Boles

Chains or Freedom

Man binds himself
With chains of wrongful thought,
Then asks why God withholds
The good he sought.

The freedom of choice
Is God's great gift to man;
He can have all ... who thinks,
And **knows**, he can.

--- Rae Cross

*Blessed be the Lord,
who daily loadeth us
with benefits.*

Psalms 68:19

Our Scriptures did not come to us through mentalities given to moping or idle dreaming; nor did they come through men whose lives were filled with such economic security and creature comforts that they had no firsthand contact with the problems that beset all of us.

Our Scriptures were given to us through men of sweat and brawn who knew the pressures of inhuman treatment, sickness, plague, and poverty.

Our Bible is the voice of authority announcing to the consciousness of men that every human problem has a right solution.

The Inner Light of Consciousness inspired the men of Bible times to search for Truth --- and they found Truth.

They found a Power that overcame limitations.

Today God is revealed to us as Spirit, the universal Mind behind and supporting the creative order.

The kingdom of heaven is Consciousness of God, which is established in us when we realize our oneness with our Source.

With this new discernment, divine guidance is an accepted fact.

The influx of new life and power, which comes to us in the wake of such enlightenment, renews the body, and spiritual healing is a common experience.

Success and prosperity come into our lives as we learn to work with the nature and laws of the universal Spirit.

---Irwin Gregg

I watched the tight bud stir with life,
a sepal downward curling,
a touch divine releasing power,
the petals now unfurling.
I waited breathless the event
when opens wide the heart,
and golden flower is revealed ---
its petals thrust apart.
This stir of life the evening brings
can touch the heart of man;
the opening primrose in its hour
reveals the Father's plan.
Within the closed bud of my heart
a quickening impulse whirls;
New wisdom stirs as my heart's flower
Love's holy hand unfurls.
---Eleanor May Young

My Holy Mountain Emmet Fox

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, said the prophet. Isaiah 11:9

God has promised that any one of us
who really desires it, and means business,
can have peace of mind, poise, and security;
and with these qualities go naturally
freedom, harmony, and a joyous and interesting life.

God has promised us that if we really desire it and mean business, we can live in perfect safety no matter what may be happening around us; and that we shall not only be safe but that we shall realize it and thus be free from even groundless fear. And, because God is divine love, He has ordained that we can produce these conditions, at least to a large extent, for those we love and wish to help. So, this is not just a selfish arrangement for taking care of ourselves exclusively.

God makes this glorious promise in the pages of the Bible, in many different texts throughout the whole book --- each worded differently and approaching the subject from a different angle, but teaching the same lesson.

The gist of the matter is that to bring these things about, we have to pray frequently to try to get as good a realization of the presence of God within us as we can, and to train ourselves to give all power to Him --- which, of course, means giving no power to anything unlike Him. Needless to say, this is not completely attained overnight. It takes time; but it is surprising how much can be attained, and how one's conditions can be radically improved for the better even in a few weeks --- *if one means business!*

This, of course, is really what some of the old mystics called the "Practice of the Presence of God." The important thing to remember is that it is *not* something mystical, abstract, intricate; but something plain, simple, and practical, *if not exactly easy.*

Remind yourself frequently throughout the day that God is with you, caring for you, and guiding you; know that when you speak and act according to your true nature, it is God speaking and acting through you. Not very subtle or abstruse, is it?

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."
In the Bible, *mountain* always means uplifted thought, awareness of the presence of God, and is therefore holy --- which means, not pious or sanctimonious, but peaceful, healthful, harmonious, and joyous. The promise is clear and unmistakable. We cannot be hurt in any way if we dwell much of our time on the holy mountain.

Jesus charged us to be of good cheer because He had overcome the world. What He did, we can do. ... Let us make a persistent effort. ... moment by moment, until you and I can stand forth in the liberty of sons of God.

---Nona L. Brooks 4

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In This Moment Edward W. Hagen

A year ends and another begins.

Beyond the need for a terminal point in our accounting, for a starting point to measure time, we wonder whether December thirty-first and January first have any spiritual significance. Is there any good reason for the ringing of bells, the blowing of whistles at the stroke of midnight; for making the occasion a time of celebration and a holiday? Is it profitable to review the past twelve months, to anticipate the next twelve as carriers of something better?

For the earth-bound observer, looking with worldly eyes, the dawn of New Year's Day will be no more than the dawn of another day much the same as yesterday. Although he may hope that there will be a magic turning point in his fortunes, no such day will appear unless he begins to look with different eyes. Time is not a carrier or a creator of events or circumstances. Time does not bring things to pass, nor does it heal. Only changing consciousness makes a year, a day, a moment, or a thing new --- the changed consciousness of the observer. There is nothing new under the sun, yet all things are new when seen in a new light, with new understanding.

If we would experience a better year, we would do well to stop looking at the year as a big package with dramatic possibilities and turn our attention to the present moment. A year is made up of moments; of the ceaseless passing of one instant and the immediate and simultaneous arrival of another in a never-ending flow. Each instant is a framework --- not of time, but of awareness and experience. The awareness and experience of each instant is fathered and colored by awareness and experience in the preceding instant.

As a gourmet sips and nibbles his food
to enjoy the ultimate in taste,
so we who would taste life fully
must take small bites, tasting, relishing each bite.

The important moment of the year is this one, the one we are living as we read. In this moment the new year begins, whether it is July or January, night or day. It is useless to relive the moment just past, impossible to live the next

moment before it arrives. Now is the only real and living moment. What will we do with it on this New Year's Day? We can begin with the recognition that the basis of everything and everyone is Spirit; that the only substance there is, is spiritual. We can affirm this truth despite the fact that our hearts may not accept it in the current moment, thus turning our attention Godward. We can announce to ourselves that we are the "being" of Spirit; that we are the living essence taking form. We can, if we will, feel the "nowness" of being; we can be aware that we are a *flowing*, the movement of spirit. Looking outward from this viewpoint, it is not difficult to "see" or to know that the things in our environment are basically spiritual; that their hard form is but a moment's freezing, as when a single frame in a strip of motion picture film is frozen for an instant in the light from the projector. Nothing is fixed, not even a mountain; all things are "becoming," changing, moving ... are the streaming forth of God. If there seem to be aberrations, we can know that this is only a momentary phase of the becoming, or the perspective from which we view the thing or circumstance. Only if we persist in seeing our environments and associates in the same old light do the appearances seem unmoving and unhappy.

There is somewhat of good in every moment. If we will look for it we will find it; and the current experience will change color and meaning for us. But to ignore the glory in this moment is to delay the desired change. "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder;" no more significant thing was ever said. As we seek and find the spiritual in this moment, it becomes easier to find the good in the next. A sage has said that a journey begins with a step. Until that step is taken, the good fortune, the magic, shining moment never arrives.

To assure a Happy and Prosperous New Year we need to make and keep one resolution: that we will live this year by the moment ... beginning with this one. As we look out upon an icy world or a sunny one, on a brown landscape or a green one ... as we waken to pain or to comfort, to lack or to abundance ... we will look toward Spirit and find peace and joy. Any moment, this moment, is the time for beginning again. And the world becomes new.

What do I think of God?

How do I feel in my heart toward Him?

Does He seem to me to be a Being dwelling beyond the skies,
who looks down upon mankind,

sometimes helping, sometimes restraining?

Do I think of God as an impersonal Principle,

a Law of cause and effect?

Is He a mysterious Force

which I must somehow "contact" to gain my desires?

Jesus said that God is our Father, that we are *one* with Him. He said that God loves us, forgives our mistakes, and wills only the best for us, now and forever. He taught that:

God is Spirit and that our innermost being is God's kingdom.

That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. John 3:6

This clearly means that we are not "merely human," but spiritual beings, sons of God and heirs to all that God has and is. This is the basis of Divine Science. ---B.L. Wolfe 5

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JANUARY 2006

A Divine Science Federation International Newsletter

L ove
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We Welcome You!

MEDITATION

I begin this day, with God, in quiet prayer.

I turn my thoughts first to the good things in my life and acknowledge how much, how very much I have to be grateful for.

Silently naming each blessing, I whisper, "Thank you, Father, for the good I see."

I turn my thoughts, next, to anything that may have been troubling me ... facing the problem ... and bravely, definitely letting it go.

Gently I release it to my Father's care, saying softly, "Thank you, Father, for perfect harmony and healing."

I think next of my heart's desire, my deepest, most secret dream.

I do not need to put it into words. God knows.

My prayer is, "Thank you, Father, for the perfect fulfillment that only you can bring about."

I let go of fear; I do not need to struggle or strain to find answers. I simply shift the feeling of responsibility to that One who is wiser and stronger, and infinitely more loving than I can even imagine.

I rest in stillness. I trust. I am utterly secure and at peace.
Amen

Your Father knows your needs before you ask him.

Matthew 6:8; Moffatt