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## IN THY PRESENCE IS FULNESS OF JOY

**T**HE BIBLE is full of contrasts in incident, story and statement. At one time God appears as a big personality, wrathful, revengeful; then again he is an Infinite Presence, or a tender, loving Father. At one time, an arbitrary sovereign punishing the disobedient, and then a father welcoming with joy his erring son.

Since Truth is eternal and changeless, what makes these contradictions? Much light is thrown upon the Bible when we realize that man did not grasp Truth all at once; he grew into it, and still grows into it, gradually. And all the way along he pictures God and interprets events according to his own outlook. Someone has said, "In the beginning God made man and man has been busy ever since making God."

We read the Bible in the light that we bring to it. Each finds his own belief there. The Presbyterian finds his predestination; the Methodist his free will; the Mormon his authority for bigamy. A most interesting pamphlet was written some years ago by a man who was given his choice of giving up his liquor business or his official position in the church. The pamphlet proved from the Bible that the liquor traffic was altogether righteous.

All of those who appreciate the meaning of Omnipresence delight in those Bible utterances that indicate the perception of God as a universal, all-powerful presence of wisdom and love. And the general trend of Bible thought gives us the right to consider this larger view of God its chief teaching.

The living Bible is within man—that Something that pulses with Life, that discerns Truth, that radiates Love; there we find God's real Word. The Book itself is but the record of a nation's search for God during a few centuries of its existence. The larger Bible is written in the hearts of humanity, as its struggles, its aspirations, its achievements.

To enter into the spiritual thought of any age is helpful and stimulates us in our own inner growth; but the Bible becomes a winding sheet to the one who dares not read beyond the printed page.

Moses' outlook was good for his day—but it was not for all time. Jesus, because he saw beyond the vision of Moses, dared to give the sermon on the mount. Dared to say:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth (Moses' law):

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.—Matthew 5:38, 39, 43, 44.

Jesus expected fuller revelation to man after his going. To his disciples he said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

Just as in olden time patriarch, poet and prophet looked into his own soul and spoke, so Jesus with his clearer spiritual understanding gave his message direct from his inner consciousness.

Shall not we, trusting in the Spirit of Truth which Jesus saw would bring larger vision, shall we not speak with confidence from our soul consciousness? Is not this our true authority? It was the only authority by which the ancient seer uttered his word; it was Jesus' authority to speak the healing word with absolute power.

Learn what portions of the Bible a generation quotes most often and you will know the temper of its religion. The religion taught in my childhood was a gloomy affair. The darkness of the crucifixion was emphasized far more often than the glory of the resurrection. "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," was the usual picture presented of Jesus.

It is true that Jesus passed through some dark moments. He wept over Jerusalem, he had his struggle in Gethsemane, he was tempted in all points like as we are. But his faith triumphed quickly.

We err if our conception of Jesus does not represent him as a radiant soul. Love brings joy and he loved deeply; service brings joy and he served supremely; assurance of unchanging and abounding good brings joy and his parable of the prodigal son shows his certainty of this.

The impress of his life upon ours should give us peace and joy. This was his expectancy. Among the last words to his disciples were these:

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also.

Peace—Joy—Power.

As these were the keynotes of Jesus' character, so will they be of ours, when we, like him, rise into conscious oneness with the Father.



## The Gifts of the Months

RUTH DALZIEL ELDERKIN

ONCE on a time, a long while ago, in a far country, Hans went out to play on New Year's eve. As he ran through the great forest he came to an open space—still and white. In the center stood Old Father Time, his scythe leaning against a tree, while he worked patching up with the Dust of Time from a sack at his side, the months for the New Year. Hans was fascinated by the glitter and sparkle, so slipping up quietly, while Old Father Time was busy, and grabbing both hands full of the Dust of Time, he ran home as fast as he could and locked the doors and windows.

At midnight came a great thumping and knocking on the door. Each month was lacking something and all had come to demand of Hans the Dust of Time that would make them complete. But Hans refused to give it up until he had made a fast bargain that each month should bring him a gift in return for the Dust of Time.—From an old legend.

Now comes January, tall and thin and white, glistening like the icicles on the eaves, his eyes like the stars on a frosty night, and the gift he brings is wrapped in clouds; it is the "Mystery of Life."

Great and wonderful is the Mystery of Life, so still, so luminous, so filled with possibilities, that one thrills at the very thought of it! As we awaken to the mystery of life even the common acts of every day take on a glory, magic lurks round the corner, facts have new meaning, nothing is stale or unprofitable.

The burdens of time and space slip away; for in the limitless possibilities of mystery lie opportunities for all.

No dream of happiness is too great but that its fulfillment may lie in this mystery.

No plan for the good of humanity so big but that the Mystery of Life is amply able to meet it—for the **Mystery of Life is the Omnipresence of God.**

## Integrity

After we study Divine Science we find that integrity means more to us than it meant before. If we are to live a life of integrity we must be true to our Divine Love-Nature. Love knows no fear. If we fear people, places or experiences, we need a greater realization of the God-Presence. Let us walk in the fellowship of faith in our neighbor, and the light of integrity on earth.

We are true to our Divine Love-Nature when we consider the rights of others. Love never hinders the work of another, but co-operates and uplifts. Furthermore, "Every man should enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God." (Eccles., 3:13.) Let us serve one another in love. This is the highest integrity and the Divine Way.

Each soul must live its own life. Integrity relies upon itself, for it is the gift of God. Stir up this gift within thee. Declare to thyself in the silence: Self-interest does not influence me. Impulse does not guide me. Opinion does not bind me. Sufficient unto each moment and for every occasion is the Wisdom within me.

## A Dream

JESSIE T. MOSS

I DREAMED that the change called death had come and that I had awakened in "the beyond" with a great feeling of loneliness, for since I was the first to leave the home circle there was no one to meet me save the Guide whom the Father had sent.

As I looked about me wonderingly the ground burst into bloom, roses, violets, lilies—all my favorite flowers were there swaying towards me, shedding a perfume of love.

The Guide said: "Since God's Mind is universal, the flowers have a degree of intelligence and in a dim way have realized your love and care. No love is ever lost; some day, somewhere, all you have sent out will return to you."

Then I saw many animals, and the Guide continued: "You fed the birds when the ground was covered with snow; cared for sick dogs and cats; caused drivers to treat their horses humanely. You gave them their share of love and care, realizing that they were all God's creatures."

"If all that I loved when on earth come to heal my loneliness, why do no children come? No mother cared more for her little ones than I."

"Yes," answered the Guide, "but they were yours. What did you do for the other little ones?"

"I was too poor to give money," I replied, "too busy to do much for others, but I prayed for the whole world. Where are all those I prayed for?"

"You prayed, but what did you do? Helpful thoughts should bring helpful deeds. Every loving deed is a prayer dear to God's heart. One can serve God and humanity without money or without doing the so-called great things. An ancient legend tells that the first robin got his red breast by plucking a thorn from the Savior's brow. As he did so the blood sprinkled his breast. He did not think he could do nothing because unable to remove the entire crown. He did what he could. You in your earth life could have called on the sick and troubled; given a word of cheer and a handclasp to those you met; written letters or phoned the lonely ones; welcomed strangers in your church home."

Suddenly the thought came to me, "I want to hear God's voice."

Immediately the Guide said: "God speaks in all nature. The whispering pines are telling of God's peace, rest and love. The breaking of the waves on the shore, the rushing of mountain torrents, speak of God's power and life. The uplift caused by music is God's urging us to lose self in service for others."

Again the thought, "I want to see God and nothing else."

At once all was bathed in a light more brilliant than any ever imagined, yet soft and restful, and a voice said, "God is light in whom is no darkness at all."

I realized as never before that in this omnipresent Light all that seemed to be loneliness, sin, sickness or sorrow was but a dream. A wonderful sense of peace and joy came to me—a realization of resting forever in the Light of the Father's Presence. And I knew that all that was needed for unfoldment throughout eternity was faith and love—the law of love being service.



## PRACTICAL LESSONS IN DIVINE SCIENCE

MRS. C. L. BAUM

## LESSON 2

Topic: The Open Road

IN THAT wonderful essay of Emerson's "Spiritual Laws," we find this passage: Each man has his own vocation. The talent is the call. There is one direction in which all space is open to him. He has faculties silently inviting him thither to endless exertion. He is like a ship in a river, he runs against obstructions on every side but one; on that side all obstruction is taken away, and he sweeps serenely over a deepening channel into an infinite sea.

We are told definitely to "seek and ye shall find," but the great questions with all young students are "What am I to seek? How shall I begin?"

First, I am to seek God—the Universal Spirit—as the Source of all Life. Next, I am to know myself as the expression of God. Finally, I am to begin my quest for Truth by endeavoring to see the Spiritual Reality of the Universe and all that is included in the Universe.

So much time appears to be lost by wandering around in the dark, looking for a door, which does not open of itself and seems to be hidden from our sight.

With the ignorant teaching and practice of hundreds of years, the only wonder is that we have even a glimmer of spiritual understanding, but we can be thankful for the little light we have, knowing that more will come as we follow the gleam before us.

We all desire to live, and to live more abundantly, thus showing that not death but Life eternal is the Law of the Universe; so, as eternal Life is before us, and as it is a waste of time and energy to mourn over the mistakes and failures of the past, we will begin at once to follow the Christ that reigns in the spiritual kingdom today; thus material concepts will pass from us and we shall steadily grow in spirituality.

Right thought and right action are the beginning of the "road," and as we persist in this individual work, all shadows will disappear, and this emancipation will bring happiness and freedom.

There is no abiding happiness outside of Truth. This we must face if we really want freedom.

Sooner or later we must know the Truth, which does prevail notwithstanding the many physicians, practitioners, sanitariums and hospitals.

All the signs and appearances of sickness, disease and death that are so apparent are simply confessions of race ignorance and lack of understanding. They show to the discerning mind that the race in general is still living after the manner of the flesh and not by the Word of the Spirit, which is health, peace and riches forevermore.

We have long known that fear was the great enemy of mankind, yet fear is but a negative belief and has no real existence in the Omnipresence of All Good, hence we may feel helped and comforted by knowing that courage and faith can utterly cast out this enemy and its train of consequences.

The world seems to be inhabited by a race of cowards, so persistently have we been taught to fear the atmosphere we breathe, the food we eat and the altitude in which we live.

As we know that God is all Life, Intelligence and Power, everywhere, at all times, every delusion that contradicts this Truth will be destroyed.

Let us no longer be slaves to tradition, but seek with Wisdom the better way. Quietly and restfully we can turn our thoughts wholly to Our Father, the loving Presence close at hand, expecting Divine Intelligence to teach us and guide us into more understanding.

After we have cast out fear by courage and faith, what is the first thing to do then in our search for Truth?

The first thing is to arouse ourselves to the knowledge that we are all right now, that nothing is wrong with the Real Self, the Ego, and to stop taking any thought for the things we desire to eliminate.

On the contrary, we can trustfully and expectantly center our attention upon that which we wish to make manifest.

We should not tolerate one moment of discouragement nor should we encourage timidity, self-pity or depression.

Do not depend upon external help for healing. This matter is between ourselves and Truth, and it indicates mental weakness to want others to carry us until we "grow strong." We grow strong only through the use of our own strength and power, and no one on earth can do as much for us as we can do for ourselves. Self-healing through the knowledge of Truth is the only permanent healing there is.

"Regeneration is not a matter of growth, progress, evolution or experience; it is a question of Realization."

Burnell wrote: "Do not browse after what you already are."

Do not seek the crude information of men; seek the Wisdom of God; cast out all intruding negative beliefs; be open and receptive to the inner Voice; wait patiently; Divine Love always hears and always answers.

Drop all the old petrified beliefs just as you would drop a stone from your hand; they cannot return unless you invite them again into your thought.

Now devote all the power of your thought to the attainment of greater wisdom and fuller understanding. This means elimination of all so-called evil from your life. Here is the open road to serenity, poise and perfect peace, and "against these there is no law."

There is only one question of any vital consequence before the world today and that is the question of Realization.

The Kingdom of Heaven, which we are told to



"seek with all thy heart," is the Kingdom of Realization.

Seek first the Kingdom of Realization which is within you and everything else "shall be added."

The following from Locksley Hall, written in 1842, is of special interest to us today:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;  
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, ships of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;  
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;  
Far along the world-wide whisper of the southwind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the thunderstorm;  
Till the war-drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags were furled  
In the **Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.**  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber lapt in universal law.

#### HERE'S A GOOD ONE

Here are some pearls of wisdom gleaned from The Log, the official publication of the United States Naval Academy. It ought to perk you up. If it doesn't send a thrill up your spine, there's something radically wrong with you. Here it is:

"If you think you are beaten, you are;  
If you think you dare not, you don't;  
If you like to win but you think you can't,  
It's almost certain you won't.  
If you think you'll lose, you've lost;  
For out of the world we find  
Success begins with a fellow's will;  
It's all in a state of mind.

"If you think you're outclassed, you are;  
You've got to think high to rise;  
You've got to be sure of yourself before  
You can ever win a prize.  
Life's battles don't always go  
To the strongest or fastest man;  
Yet soon or late the man who wins  
Is the one who thinks he can."

In a letter received the other day were these words:

"Divine Love conquered over the cruel sword, the gun and the cannon, for which we are all rejoicing and trusting that there will be now an everlasting Peace. May Christ's kingdom be erected in each heart, may health, peace, understanding and prosperity that is grounded in righteousness be added unto all nations, is my prayer."

#### Signs That Follow

Here is some of the good news that comes to us:

My son ran a rusty nail into his foot. The physicians were called and worked to prevent blood-poisoning. However, in about a week the spot began to swell and they cut away a portion of the flesh from about the wound. After three days more the leg was found to be swollen up to the thigh. They took him to a hospital, declaring that his leg must be amputated.

I knew a little of Science and called a practitioner. She told me what to do and we both worked spiritually for his recovery. The next morning when the physicians came they were astonished to see the swelling almost gone. The third day my boy returned home and the limb has been in perfect condition ever since.

The Word had healed him. Thank God!

\* \* \*

The physicians in one of our finest hospitals said to me: "We have done everything in our power for your sister, but she is beyond all aid and will pass away in a few hours."

At this time my dear one could neither see nor move. I called by phone a practitioner whom I knew slightly and said: "Although I know nothing of Divine Science, I am not willing to let my sister die without trying it. Please treat her."

My sister began to improve immediately and in a week came home a well woman.

\* \* \*

A physician was returning home to die. His own verdict was: "It is impossible for me to live longer than a few weeks." His lungs were almost gone. One who was a young student in Science said to him: "I will treat you; I will know that God's power is with you to heal you."

She treated faithfully and the physician was restored to perfect health and lived to help many others in the same way.

\* \* \*

Three prominent surgeons diagnosed my friend's case as cancer. They insisted upon an immediate operation, one remarking: "If you were my sister I would not let a day pass; I would take you to the hospital this minute."

My friend had, some years before, been healed in Divine Science, and upon returning to her home decided to try it again. She called in a practitioner, who began her work immediately. In five weeks my friend was well.

This was ten years ago and she is strong and well today. There has been no hint of return.

\* \* \*

**How is it done?** There is just one way to practice spiritual healing, and that is to give attention to the One Presence and One Power and to that alone. God is this Infinite One and when His Life is realized as all in all the healing is done.

Philosophies change in different men, but the love of God is the same in all men.—George Moore.

So act as if your action were to be a law for all human beings.—Kant.



## RELIGION AND SCIENCE

AGNES M. LAWSON

**O** WEARY wanderer, in a gloomy world astray, watch for the rift of light in thine own soul and "after it, follow it," it will lure thee onward and upward; it will carry thee Godward. God exists for thee. For thee his sun shines; for thee his life is freely spent; for thee his peace, love and life abundant. Lift thy life out of the lowlands of mortality and walk a free soul on the highlands of the Spirit.

But think not that this art of arts, this science of sciences—the science and art of life—can be obtained without work. In no line of art do we attain proficiency without knowledge and practice of the principles underlying it. The doors of science are forever closed to the one who will not ascertain its facts. The heights climbed and kept by great men are the result of purposeful study, persistent diligence, definite endeavor and intelligent comprehension. If we would have the fruits of the Spirit in our lives, we must work for them; work in theory and practice as intelligently and persistently as we work for proficiency in music, in literature, in painting, in business or housework. The art of life embraces in its scope all arts and all sciences. One's particular work should be the result, or, I might say, the outburst of one's spiritual life. "Never a perfect work from an imperfect artist." The spiritualization of the artist must precede the perfection of his art. Do what he will, he must project himself into his work. If that self be spiritual, true, powerful, so will be the work produced.

The science of life, the art of life, is the dictum of Christianity. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Christianity teaches the perfecting of the individual life and the perfecting of the social life. It teaches us to live from the real world.

In the long history of this planet, out from all the illumined minds that have sent their rays down the corridors of time, only one man could send forth the clarion tone that grows stronger and clearer with the passage of time: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," rings down the centuries. To understand this spiritual alchemist is to comprehend spiritual law and the potency of a soul energized by spiritual consciousness. The life abundant must follow a life of freedom, of peace and of power, a life conscious of its inheritance from God. The race has advanced far enough in practical spiritual demonstration to understand what Jesus clearly saw, that there was a law enunciated in the words: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Knowledge gives us freedom and proficiency in any line. This light of truth upon life makes man a free agent to carve out his ultimate destiny—likeness to God.

The soul, conscious of its unity with God, is free, and every soul indelibly stamped with the image and likeness of the Creator, and conscious of it, must attain this freedom. Why procrastinate? Why not do

it now? "Now," says the Christ, "is the day of salvation." "Now is the accepted time." Now may we lift veil upon veil that hides the fair face of the Spirit. Now may we begin to see, face to face, and to know even as we are known.

We may live in the bright realms of the Spirit and become citizens of the kingdom of God right here and now, while we still abide on dear mother earth and do our daily work faithfully among the children of men. The life of the Spirit does not call us out of, but rather into, life. Jesus, knowing that all he did was accomplished through his comprehension of spiritual law, said: "The works that I do, ye shall do also." Man is discovering in this renaissance of Christianity, ushered in by the nineteenth and maturing in the twentieth century, that, hidden away in the book that we all possess but seldom read, are stories of spiritual power that hold us spellbound and entranced; stories that fire the imagination, stimulate mental activity and energize soul-powers. It is the story of man's venture into the spiritual realm and the mighty results thereof. A wonderful world is disclosed through it—the world of the Spirit. A dazzling secret is revealed by it: the spiritual world is the seed-ground of the physical world—that for every effect there is a spiritual cause. In it man discovers that the keys of the kingdom of heaven are in his own hands through his ability to comprehend spiritual forces.

Through religion man grows into conscious unity with the transcendent Mind and Power, thus gaining poise, strength, faith and will, which enable him to do the work of the Spirit. All forces are spiritual forces. Man does not possess these forces, but he is the receiver and transmitter through and by which spiritual forces flow. Man uses all the elements of the universe and subjects them to his needs. Water, fire, air, earth and electricity are his when he knows how to employ them. Spiritual forces of love, health, prosperity and peace are also his when he reaches the mountain-top of spiritual discernment.

The sage of Concord said that it must be possible to make such a statement of religion as would render all skepticism ridiculous. With the union of religion and science that man is discovering today, this statement is definitely proclaimed. Skepticism merely proves the spiritual inexperience of the doubter. There are spiritual laws that we may demonstrate daily, and to fail to do it is to rob one's self of the supreme good and to be out of touch with the progress of the age. A new era is here—a spiritual awakening. To ignore this is to defraud one's self of one's birthright. A wonderful movement is unfolding. Religion and science are united in the bonds of holy matrimony, and the world thrills at the union. With clasped hands and unveiled faces they move onward, carrying mankind, their children, into heights of useful endeavor, of creative activity and established character.

The twentieth century ushers in a new era—an



era that is comparable to nothing in history. Scientific discoveries in new directions and through unexplored regions and spiritual revelations of deep and significant import are flashed upon us from every side. Nature that hitherto has seemed mysterious in yielding up her choicest secrets, nay, even the mind of God, through unfolding life, is becoming an open book for whosoever can read. It is not a finished creation that is breaking upon our waking consciousness, but a warm, pulsating, perfect universe that reveals.

"One God, one law, one element  
And one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves."

a universe that is working out the indwelling reality.

In the last analysis everything comes home to God. This form of life that we call religion is the life of God manifested in the soul of man—as man's highest nature. Religion, being a life, is to be lived, to be used. It is something practical. "Practical" is to be the great word of the twentieth century. Philosophy is centering around it, and what the philosophers call pragmatism or practicality is taught as the outcome of psychology, sociology, the physical sciences and all learning. Humanity's daily, nay hourly, use is the test that the twentieth century will apply to everything.

Religion, touching life at every point, is not confined in its action. It is a form of knowledge but a knowledge that is more than intellectual comprehension, it is spiritual discernment. "The truth hath its arguments which the understanding cannot question." We seek the truth, and when we have found it in religion, devotion bids us adore it and to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. No other form of truth affects us in this way. Truth in other lines gives us pleasure, satisfaction, ecstasy and sends us to work or to play, but in religion, knowledge and devotion go hand in hand and man is sent home "to his central solitude."

From this "central solitude" we build our lives into health, beauty and helpfulness. We live more, we love God and our fellow beings more; we seek in the silence the innermost place of the Most High; we learn, lowly listening, that guidance may be

ours, and, having helped ourselves, helping others becomes our watchword. This helpfulness to self and to others is brought about by the recognition of what I have defined as religion—namely, the life of God in the soul of man.

When we recognize that God is the life of the world, as we all do either in a large or limited sense, that he is the ever-present, the all-powerful source, center and circumference of all things—if we really recognize this, and the further fact that unto us is given dominion, if we will but exercise it, over feeling, thought and action—then there is nothing that we cannot do that is in line with beneficent, constructive law. "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

Our religion today then is to be a practical application of the principles of Christianity. The power given to us is "all power in heaven and on earth." Let us learn to use it. Welcome the gospel of Christ. Be not satisfied with a glimpse of the glory of the spiritual life; make it real in thine own experience and become, thyself, a quickening spirit. What a day will dawn when humanity awakens to the power of the inner life! Then "the merchant will change his market cart into a chariot of the sun" and humanity will stand on the mount of transfiguration.

The purpose of these articles is to remind people of the things they are, the things they can know and the things they can do. We are working for a free humanity: a humanity conscious of the power within. The horizon of the human race is broadening, and the message of the gospel: "Beloved, now we are the sons of God," is being practically worked out in an ever-increasing efficiency, a mutual desire for helpfulness and a deeper research into spiritual realms. Our one aim is the practical application of truth in our business, social and individual lives; for the refining of the individual and the betterment of society; for a new outlook for humanity and the development of a finer race than has yet trod this globe; for that time predicted of yore when no man shall say: "Knowest thou God?" for all men shall know Him, from the least to the greatest, and men, following an inward light, worship together in "that fane most catholic which God hath planned."

## THE BIBLE

ADA B. FAY

**W**E have reached a crucial epoch in our unfoldment where we are passing from one way to another of approaching God. To ascertain the origin of religion and the precise age in which it was matured is now beyond human possibility. A single thought, however, is enough to assure one that it could not have attained the marvelous perfection in which we find it pictured in the relics of various esoteric systems except after a succession of ages. Philosophies so profound, moral codes so ennobling and practical could not be the growth of a generation or of even a single epoch.

The Christian Bible was written by men, **human beings**, not angels, nor was this done all at once, it covered many centuries. It is without exception the most remarkable work in existence. The story of the origin and nature in which is set forth the supreme desires and contritions of men, their hopes and realizations in their search after God; how it was preserved during remote ages, and how it came to its present form is a highly interesting chapter in the history of literature.

"The Bible came out of religion, not religion out of the Bible." The history of the United States



grew out of the experiences of our country, our wars and other events did not come out of the history.

More than four centuries before Jesus, Nehemiah and Ezra, his scribe, gathered together the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua as we have them. Afterwards, Nehemiah added to these all the books concerning the kings and prophets, and all of David's writings. Later Judas Maccabeus brought together all the writings that had been lost in the Jewish wars; and with few changes, made during the first century before Jesus, gave us the Old Testament as we now have it.

The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. by Titus, brought about a most important event, the dispersion of the Jews and Christians, and marks the point at which the diffusion of Christianity throughout the world began. The most important result in this dispersion is found in the necessity it created for a written document relative to the origin and nature of Christianity. This need was felt all the more strongly as the apostles one by one were put to death and the infant religion was thus left without direct testimony of the teachings of Jesus.

In this way arose the Gospels compiled in great measure from the written notes of the apostles but largely supplemented by the legendary stories that were going about at that time. Obviously these documents compiled by different persons at different times could never possess the authority which was conceded to those men who had walked and talked with Jesus, but they were the best authorities that could be had and the followers of Jesus went forth into the world armed with these; they did not hesitate to supplement them when necessary by their own oral testimony.

It required time, and the experience of needs which were not felt at once, for the Christian church to perceive the importance of the early documents. Latent convictions which have not been formulated, exercise far less authority than those which have been definitely put forth and for some time accepted without question. Special circumstances, too, had to be considered, as they were of a nature to retard for a time the formation of a canon of New Testament. The fact that Christians already had a Bible, the Old Testament, must first be noticed. Great as the veneration for the apostles was, there could not be the same feeling for new writings as for those which had long been hallowed. The Old Testament supplied the place of Christian Scriptures and was used as a source of Christian instruction to an extent which we find hard to understand. The divine truths newly imparted and the actual facts of the life of Jesus and his teachings were read between the lines of the ancient Scriptures. See Luke 24, 27-44; Acts, 8, 35, 18-28; 2 Tim. 3, 14-15-16.

The Gospel message and the new law had first been delivered by word of mouth, and there is good reason to believe that even the memory of the oral teaching of the apostles was for a time, a rival of their own written testimony in the affections of the Christians. For some time little appreciation was shown of the importance of reproducing accurately the individual testimony of different writers. However, from the first days of the church Jesus' words must have been treasured as divine oracles, and a sense of their authority must have preceded their

being committed to writing.

According to Jortin, the New Testament was compiled by the first council of Nice which was held early in the fourth century. This council of Nice is one of the most famous and interesting events in ecclesiastical history; and yet what is most surprising, scarcely any portion of church history has been so neglected or passed over with such rapidity.

The action of Constantine in the fourth century, combining pagan customs with the Christian religion as the public faith of the Roman Empire, almost destroyed the religion of Christ on the earth. It produced the dark ages, for it led to a compromise between the church and the world, from the effects of which neither the church nor the world has recovered.

But through these centuries of darkness and selfishness, there have always been a faithful few who knew that these spiritual powers and privileges pledged by the Master of Life, Jesus, could be enjoyed by his true followers.

We believe that all that is claimed by higher criticism is, that the Bible as well as all literature should be in accordance with its intrinsic worth; that we have the privilege of taking a practical and intelligent view of the Book.

While all of the other sacred books of earth reveal noble and beautiful truths, the Bible alone fits man for all good works. By all good works we understand all work essential to the spiritual upliftment and happiness of man.

In no previous century of the Christian era, has there been such widespread interest in the study of the Bible as is seen today. This statement is verified by the unparalleled amount of biblical literature now at the command of every student. That Jesus was a diligent student of the Bible is seen from his frequent references to the scriptures.

It is our own conception of the Bible that is the real book. Men may be taught by others, but they must know for themselves; they may be inspired in their seeking, but they must select and discriminate for themselves.

The demand that reason be held in abeyance when the Bible was approached, has given it an unnatural and mechanical character. The Roman church has kept it from the masses lest they might misinterpret it, and Protestantism has put supernatural restrictions upon it for much the same reason. There has been a feeling that the Bible could not be trusted to stand alone, upon its merits, and that some kind of priestly explanation must accompany it, as if its inherent spiritual quality and power were not plain enough to show its divine character. Theologians have been impelled to defend it and support it by supernatural and superstitious props and defenses.

The Bible is not dependent upon the authenticity of its reputed writers, the historic genuineness of its ancient manuscripts, nor upon the accuracy of its translations, but its influence lies in its life-like portrayal of human character and its needs, and in its power to energize life and motive. The real test of its inspiration lies in the measure of its ability to inspire others. The passing from the literalism of the past to a deeper spiritual interpretation is general and rapid, we are seeing Life as whole for we are in the life of larger vision and larger hope.



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