

Q: Is giving a spiritual principle? (9-21-24)¹

A: No, it can't be. It can't be. If giving were a spiritual principle, God would just be flooding us; God would be forever giving. But God is never giving, so thanksgiving, or giving, is not a spiritual principle as such, but it is the fruitage of spiritual realization.

It is the fruitage of spiritual realization because—and mark this well; it comes from the Master—there are three kinds of soil: stony, barren, and fertile. And he was referring to consciousness, states of consciousness: the stony state of consciousness, which has nothing to give and can't receive; the barren state of consciousness, in which you can plant, and a little growth may come, but it'll be right on the surface, and the slightest wind or heat or cold will make it disappear; and then there is the fertile consciousness in which the word of God takes root and bears fruit richly.

You will find in your experience with mankind that the stony state of consciousness not only is never giving, but it never needs to concern itself very much with receiving because no one seems eager to give it. It doesn't attract to itself very much in the way of love, in the way of gifts, in the way of sharing and cooperation, because it isn't giving. The barren soil, likewise, has little to give and little to get. However, there is something within consciousness that, at the proper time, stirs, moves, and changes our nature.

When the Spirit of God, when the Christ, touches an individual, that is when giving, forgiving, gratitude... that is when all of these qualities touch their soul, proving that love, gratitude, givingness, is not of man. It is of God, and as long as man is man, with his stony consciousness or his barren consciousness, he is not a giver. He is neither a giver nor a receiver. He's really nothing much of anything but a selfish being, sometimes living hardly above the animal level of life.

But there comes a moment to each when a touch is felt, when something touches consciousness, and all of a sudden, that barren ground begins to become fertile. Even the stony ground begins to become more toward the better quality of the barren ground, and then finally, the fertile, not by virtue of itself. And this I bring to you out of a full heart. No person, in and of themselves, is loving, giving, forgiving, or grateful. Those are qualities which touch the soul when God touches the individual soul and shows forth its own image and likeness as individual you and me.

In other words, as humans, selfishness controls us, and that is why it has been said that self-preservation is the first law of nature, meaning, of course, the first law of human nature. And therefore, if there's any giving to be done, we'll give it to ourselves first. And next to our own relatives, and after that perhaps, to somebody down the street.

But the Spirit of God is no respecter of persons. It gives to the saint and the sinner. It gives to the white or the black, the Christian, or the Jew, or the atheist. It makes no difference, for there are atheists with a full and complete Spirit of God in them, only they know it by a different name.

Now, let us remember this. The fertile soil, which is the consciousness of any individual living in any degree in God-awareness—and remember, it makes no difference now whether we're talking of the ordinary sense of God-awareness, the orthodox sense of God-awareness, whether we're talking about the mental sense, the spiritual sense, or any other sense—as long as an individual is reaching toward the transcendental, that which is beyond thought or speech, there the presence of God is stirring within them in some degree, some more, some less.

And as this touch of the Father, as this finger of the Christ touches the heart, mind, and soul of an individual, they become more and more fertile soil. They bear fruit much more richly. They have a greater givingness, a greater forgivingness, a greater sense of gratitude, and all of this is an emanation of that Spirit which touches the individual soul. And it is the evidence, really, of God's presence. It is the evidence that consciousness has turned from being human nature to divine nature, the divine nature that takes the world into its heart.

I think that is why it was said before that in loving our neighbor as ourself, don't give all of the love to those of your own spiritual household, those of your own state of consciousness. Be sure that these other people, too, are brothers and sisters, and let our help extend to their level of consciousness without our looking for any gratitude or appreciation, doing it only as a measure of fulfillment of our own lives, of our own souls.

I suppose the thought that comes to me most often is this: I have to live with myself. And that means, then, to me, that when I am out of tune with my own highest nature, I am in misery. Even if no one else knows my deflection, I know it, and that's where my misery comes in. And I'm sure it must be so with everyone. When we are not living up to our own highest sense of integrity, something is missing in our experience, and we're being cheated, even though we are being cheated by ourselves.

And so it is that praying to be seen of men doesn't constitute righteousness. Giving alms to be seen of men does not constitute righteousness. Actually, this afternoon, whether I was right or wrong—I am not going to sit in judgment on myself—but I threw an appeal for funds into the wastebasket without sending any check to it because it consisted of a whole page of names photographed from checks, advertising who contributed. And I think that was a violation of confidence. Those who gave, I'm sure, wanted no such advertising, and I think it was using the nature of a giving individual in a wrong way. They'll more nearly approach rightness when they understand the nature of giving without advertising and receiving, without feeling it necessary to be an advertising agent for somebody else's charitableness.

Let us see this. No one can take credit for being charitable or benevolent. It is the grace of God. No one can take credit for being of a forgiving nature. That is the grace of God. The only thing we can do is pray for God's grace, pray for God's gift of God to ourselves, and then let it flow through us. And if it wants to flow through in giving, and forgiving,

and gratefulness, let it be so, but without I-ness, without the sense that I'm doing it, or I'm virtuous in doing it.

There is, you see, the whole question of this thing. Once we understand that God gives us Himself, we can never feel that we are doing the giving. And when we receive, we can always be grateful, knowing that it was God's grace that prompted the giving that we received.

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