

PAUL'S PRAYER INTERPRETED

About fifteen or maybe twenty years ago, I heard the Archbishop of Canterbury speak at Trinity Church in New York City, which is at the head of Wall Street. That is, I heard him and saw him on TV; I did not attend the service. And he took as his theme that great benediction of fPaul, taken from the last verse of the 13th chapter of Second Corinthians: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of and participation in the Holy Spirit be upon you all." And he treated it beautifully. He's a cultured, educated man, but he treated it on this level, and they all loved it. It was perfectly wonderful. If they only knew the Benediction!

From time to time when I go to dinner at other people's homes, if they have the custom of saying grace before dinner, sometimes I am asked to say grace. Well, I will invariably use this benediction. I don't explain it. If I explained it to them, they would be mortified! For here, this most elaborate benediction of Paul is a description of an experience which was the central fact of Paul's life.

This is the center of the work, for he was pursued by the Great Lover. In spite of his resistance, in spite of his evasions, he was found. And then this is what he said in his benediction; he wishes every person in the world to have this experience. For this is God's method of regeneration. It is not spelled out, but this is God's method of regeneration.

Let me quote it again: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship and participation in the Holy Spirit be with you all."

Now, let us go into the story and find out what he means by it. Mary wonders, "How is this thing possible, seeing that I know not a man?" And the Angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God."

Here he tells us the theory of supernatural conception, how it's done. The power of the Most High he equates with the Holy Spirit; and in his benediction, now, he is wishing us to have this experience -- the experience of Mary. So, the office of the Holy Spirit is that the sons of God, by union with their Father, may by His grace become their own father. That is what he is asking for every one in the world. If you would actually transcend this level and enter what is called "the Kingdom of Heaven," or the New Age, you do it with the body you "wear" here; and you can only do it by a complete transformation and a radical transformation, which is brought about through union with the Father. And he tells us, the Father is all Love.

"And love of God," -- that's the Father. He emphasizes the Holy Spirit as the office by which this union is brought about, as told us in the story of Mary: that "the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." Now the power of the Most High is called Christ Jesus, for we are told: "Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God."

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"Who touched me? for I perceive that force," -- that creative power, -- "has gone out of me," because some one touched him. Here is an actual creative act. On this level, it offends people, but on the highest level it is the most radiant, glorious, ~~ecstatic~~ event that you can ever conceive of, for you are being lifted up to an entirely different level.

On this level, it would seem immoral, incest; and here, the story is telling us, if we know the story as one should know it, that he who came out of his mother, as you are told in the story, was her Husband. He was his own father. "I and my Father are one." For, did he not say, all things were made by Him, and without Him was not one thing made that was made?

So, here, who then is Mary? Are we not Mary? Are we not the emanation of God, from whom God hid His face only for a moment, for a short while? As we are told in the 54th chapter of the Book of Isaiah: "Sing, O ~~barren~~, and those who have not borne. Break forth into singing. You have not been in travail, for your Maker is your Husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name."

So, here we are the "barren ones." We haven't brought forth the Promise. The Promise was a son. That was the Promise made to Abraham, the beginning of it all. And man waits and waits and waits, and he gives up in despair, because he hadn't brought forth the son.

Now he tells us the time has come; and when it came, then there is a method, a definite method, by which it appears in the world, and the Great Lover finds you; and in spite of your evasions and your resistance, you are now one with Him. There is union between the Father and the Son, for He is going to make the Son one with Himself. And this union is an embrace of love; so he incorporates the three states: "and the love of God," -- he puts that into the benediction. And Love embraces you. That is, by the office of the Holy Spirit, who impregnates you, for you fuse with the Father, and you become one body with Him.

That fusion is oneness. You put Him on just as you would a garment. As you are told in Scripture: "All who are baptized into Christ put on Christ." So, the first event recorded in the Gospel, after the prelude of the mission of John, is that of baptism. This is the baptism. So we are told as John is coming to the end of his picture: "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Here is a secret. He tells you it's a mystery. "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." He is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, He is the one who impregnates you. He impregnates you with an embrace after you have actually answered correctly, which is: Love is the greatest thing in the world. So, he incorporates into the benediction, "and the love of God." He starts off with the Son first; then he comes to God the Father, and calls it Love; and then he comes to the Holy Spirit, and he calls that now, "participating in the Holy Spirit." And he calls it a fellowship, a union.

So, here, if I wish you this, I could not wish you anything greater in the world, for if that wish was granted tonight, I could then

prophecy whether you remain in this world or depart from this world, but it will still be "thirty years" from that moment of the wish being granted, when you are embraced and there is union with the Father; and thirty years later you are going to actually bring forth the sign of your "birth from above"; and in just a few months following that you are going to bring forth the consciousness of being God the Father.

So, it takes thirty years from the wish being granted; and so the Great Lover is seeking and calling us, one by one, in spite of our resistance and our evasions. He said, "I hid my face from you for a short, short while, but now I will give you my everlasting love, and will never take it from you again."

So, "Sing, O barren ones. Break forth into singing, you who have not borne, who have not been in travail."

So, here, this wonderful benediction that people, taking it on this level, have no concept of the depth of it -- what Paul is really wishing for every one in the world; for he ends the benediction, "with you all," -- not just a few. May all have this experience. He is describing an experience that was actually fundamental. It was basic in his life. That changed his entire world. He never knew the Old Testament until this experience took place; and then, in the fullness of time, it broke forth, and then he understood what happened to him thirty years before.

I know, when it happened to me, I only made a note of it. I did not understand the experience. And true knowledge is not merely experience, but the understanding of experience. I pondered it and talked about it. I told others about it. They pooh-poohed the idea: "That was a vivid, vivid dream, Neville." All right, -- to them a vivid dream. I still kept it alive in my mind's eye and pondered it, and I lived with it; and thirty years later, to the month, it erupted. And that embrace that took place thirty years before, which was an impregnation from my Father, unfolded within me and I discovered, I am my own Father!

I am the Father. He gave Himself to me. That is the purpose of God: to give Himself to man directly, without an intermediary -- just directly. So, these three mentioned in this benediction are one. This is not what the churches talk about -- about three persons; this is simply one. These are three offices: one is the creative act; one is God the Father, infinite love in unthinkable origin -- you can't conceive of the origin of it; and then here is the Son, the one who actually is brought forth who discovers himself to be his own Father!

So, you speak of these mysteries in the Scripture. How can a man be his own father? How can he be his father's father? All these questions are asked in Scripture; and if this benediction is accepted and realized by any one here tonight, I can prophecy for you, should you remain in this world for thirty years or should you depart this world, it will be thirty years between the acceptance of it -- the fulfillment of it when you are embraced and then the expression of it. And then you will know you are God the Father! So, in the end there is nothing but God the Father -- nothing but God!

So, here, this simple, wonderful statement of all of his benedictions -- I would say, every letter of his always has some blessing -- begins with it, or he ends with it, or maybe beginning and end. But this is the most elaborate of all. So, in my own case, I will always say it, but I never explain it. If called upon to say a blessing at grace, I will always use this; and they say, Isn't that wonderful; that's Scripture, and therefore that's nice. And they all say, Amen, and we start to eat, not knowing what I am asking for them.

But this story of Scripture, if really understood, would shake the entire structure of those who call themselves so proper and so altogether right, because the whole thing is one grand "sex" act, but on an entirely different level -- an entirely different level.

A few years ago, a book came off the press telling of the inside stories of the prominent people of Europe at the turn of the Century, in the days of Victoria. Well, she had quite a son; he was quite a boy who got around. And so it was rumored that he was living with the Duchess of -- I won't mention her name, but it is in the book. You can always find it in the book. And he was living openly. Every one knew he he was living with the Duchess; but the Duke could do nothing about it because, after all, he was the Prince. And some nosey lady went to Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who was very prominent in those days, -- she was an actress, accepted in all the circles, and told her that she had heard that "our Prince is living with the Duchess. Isn't that a horrible thing?" She was blaming the Duchess.

And Mrs. Campbell said, "I don't care what they do, so long as they do not do it in the street and frighten the horses."

Now, she would understand this benediction, Mrs. Campbell would. Others would simply be like the one who gossiped and told her about it; they were so completely disturbed that this man was living openly with the Duchess.

So, when one knows the inner side of the story of the Bible, you see the whole thing as one grand creative act; that the Father actually has union with His sons, that the sons may be the Father! And they are called one by one into such a union. "I will call you one by one, O Children of Israel." And one by one are called, and they are embraced after they have actually fulfilled their place by answering correctly; What is the greatest thing in the world? You are in the presence of the greatest thing in the world; you are in the presence of God, and God is Infinite Love. And Infinite Love asks you the question. Well, you can't think of anything but Love in His presence. You answer, Love. Then He embraces you; and that is ecstasy -- sheer ecstasy.

So, when you are "sent," then, back into the world, you tell only what happened to you, but you don't understand what happened to you. You are as innocent as the Virgin; and you can say with her, "I do not know; I know not a man. How could I possibly -- I was embraced by Infinite Love, but how can I have a child, seeing that I know not a man?" And, then comes that moment for delivery when suddenly you bring forth the child, and you are as surprised as any one could be, because you didn't know all along in these thirty years that you were "pregnant."

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And so, it is said that "He began his ministry when he was about thirty years of age." It is thirty years from the moment of the impregnation -- not thirty years physically, because that is not when you started. You started at that moment when you were impregnated by God the Father. And thirty years later you bring forth the Son, which is your Self; but the Son is going to prove in the not-distant future that he is the Father, for five months later -- in my own case 139 days later -- you discover you are God the Father, because His Son stands before you and calls you, Father. And you know without any uncertainty that he is your son, and you also know that he knows you are his father.

So, evwrything is just perfectly told in Scripture, but it is all adumbrated. It is all foreshadowed. It is not spelled out in detail, any more than Paul's benediction is spelled out in detail. To say that this is his description of an experience is really to go a little bit far, because is it really described? Here, we are asked: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship and participation in the Holy Spirit be with you all." Why, that is an experience of Paul. But I can't really call that a description of the method by which he actually brought forth the child.

He does say in his Letter to the Galatians: "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me, then I conferred not with flesh and blood." So, the Son came forward. He doesn't tell us it took thirty years, but Luke tells us he was about thirty years when he began his ministry. And here we find that this is all based upon baptism, and that is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For, "There is one coming after me who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." No one tells you what that baptism is; and they think it is simply going to church when a child is an infant and putting water on it in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. That's a shadow. It conveys nothing concerning the deep mystery.

And, yet, millions of us -- I was baptized when I was simply three or four weeks old. My mother insisted that my son, when he was two, should be baptized or he wouldn't go to heaven; and she took that literally on this level. I said, "Mother, if it pleases you, I'll take him to church this coming Sunday, and we will baptize him." So, we did. He was two years old. It pleased my mother, because she said he could not go to heaven, should he die now, -- "what's going to happen to him? He can't get to heaven unless he is baptized." She didn't know what baptism meant.

The baptism is union with the Father. That's baptism. Until one is actually embraced by the Father and actually has union with the Father, he doesn't have the Seal impressed upon him of the Father; so he can't bring forth the Father's image. So, here, he brings forth that Father himself! Not a likeness, -- he comes forth as the Father. And time proves that he is the Father.

So, here, when you read any portion of Scripture, know you are actually looking at a mystery. Paul uses the word "mystery" twenty times. He tells you it's a mystery. The whole thing is a mystery, but he doesn't explain it. I am trying my best to explain to you, not based upon any theory, but based upon my own experience; for if I would come and speak with authority, I must speak from experience. They say, "He speaks not as the Scribes and the Pharisees, but he speaks as one

having authority," -- because he is speaking from his own personal experience.

Now, you have an experience; you don't quite understand it. Wait for the fullness of the time for that experience to flower, and then you speak with authority. I had no knowledge, no concept, for what that union meant. I felt the union. I was embraced; we became one -- Infinite Love. So, I actually put on, like I would a garment, the Being who embraced me, and the Being who embraced me was Love. But I didn't understand it until thirty years when He erupted within me; and then all that He embraced me and contained within Himself, for the story is His story; and as He embraced me, He simply transferred to me His story that I would unfold within my own being and become as He is.

So, the birth had to be just as His. The Resurrection had to be just like His. The discovery of David had to be just like his. The ascent into Heaven like the fiery serpent had to be just like His. The descent of the dove was just like His, because He impressed me with Himself. And that was giving Himself to me! For, "all things bring forth after their kind," so that the end is always like the origin. And here was the origin; so the end had to be just like the origin. For this is a basic law set up in the beginning: that all things bring forth after their kind. So, if He impresses me with Himself and I fuse with Him, when I bring Him forth, it has to be exactly what He is.

So, I say to any one: I can ask for nothing greater for you than that which is contained in this benediction. You will find it in the 14th verse of the 13th chapter of Second Corinthians: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," -- and "grace" means the gift -- unearned, unmerited -- the gift of God Himself; that's the grace, because grace comes through Jesus Christ, -- "and the love of God," -- he brings that in because he is telling you exactly how it is going to happen; you are going to stand in the presence of Love, and you are going to use His words from the 13th chapter of First Corinthians, for these are His words. When asked to name the greatest thing in the world, Paul answers, "Love"; so he brings in: "and the love of God." John tells us, "God is love." Then he brings in the office of the Holy Spirit, which is the "impregnating" one; but it's all one; the three are one. You are standing in the presence of one Being, and then you are embraced; but all these things are present: the gift is there, which is "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ"; Love is embracing you, so the "love of God" is present; and then the actual impregnation is present, which is the Holy Spirit, for "the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, that which is to be born of you will be called Holy, the Son of God." Well, when the Son comes out in this form, the Son then blossoms into the Father, and he is God the Father.

So, this is the story of that simple, wonderful benediction which you can read in just a matter of seconds; and I would ask you to commit it to memory, and if you are ever invited to say grace, just say it. It takes just a matter of ten seconds to say it. And then they will all join with you and say, Amen; and you need not explain it to them, because they would be shocked just like any one else is shocked when they hear Mrs. Patrick Campbell's reaction to the Duchess.

So, here, we take this same theme, and put it now on this level. I was embraced, and then I brought forth the nature of the One who embraced me. So, now, you put yourself into a mood of empathy with some

one that you want to help. Get into the mood. Wouldn't it be wonderful if she or he or they were this, that or the other? And bring them before your mind's eye, and wouldn't you normally, naturally embrace them because of their good fortune? Wouldn't you congratulate them? But I personally am given towards embracing people; so it's not difficult with me to embrace any one. I embrace them because I feel like it. I just want to do it. So, I embrace, and then feel the thrill that they have told me their good fortune; and the first reaction is to embrace them because they have just told you of something marvelous about them.

Well, take the same technique, and bring them into your mind's eye; put yourself, first, into a mood of empathy, not sympathy, -- empathy. You are rejoicing with them. And then, as they tell you, and in your mind's eye you listen to it, then embrace them, and feel the thrill that is yours because they have accomplished their objective in this world.

I can do that with male or female equally. In fact, when I embrace men publicly, -- my father, I always kissed him. I didn't care; I wouldn't go in behind the door to kiss him. If I came to the store at any time of the day -- and here I am, a man with my children -- I would embrace my father and kiss him. Always to me that was the most natural thing in the world, and he expected it. If I met him on Fifth Avenue, I always kissed my father. It wasn't strange. It wasn't something that -- well, you had some restraint about it. I always did it.

And, here, I meet my friends on Fifth Avenue, Broadway, any place, and I embrace them. I went down to see a friend off the other day to the Orient. He was gone for several weeks. And here was Charley waiting for me, and we had about twelve others coming to have cocktails to see him off. When I came to the door, he expected it and I wanted to; I embraced him and kissed him. He's a man a few years older than I am. And one man coming down, -- I had never seen him before, -- said, "What's going on here?" He thought that was a strange thing to do. Not to me, -- it isn't strange, because I love people. And male or female, it's all the same to me.

So, in my own case, I can practice this easily because it's natural with me to empathize with some one -- to feel a thrill because they really have what they want in this world. And when I feel myself working to that point, it's like a real creative act; wouldn't it be wonderful? and then at that moment I embrace them and feel the thrill for them -- not for me, it's for them. But at that very moment, I have imparted to them all that I am feeling. They've got to bring it forth. They will bring forth into their world what I was feeling when I embraced them, just as I brought forth what my Father felt when He embraced me.

So, He embraced me, and I was carried beyond any concept in the world that concerns ecstasy. You can't conceive of the ecstasy. And that's what He felt for me. He was actually within Himself -- all that He had He gave me. It was His purpose then to give me Himself; and the method by which I would unfold that Self that He gave me, and it was a definite method: First, He would awaken me within my grave -- my own skull, and then I would come out, and the symbols that He foretold in Scripture would surround me. And, then, I would go one step further and discover my Fatherhood -- that I am the Father. Not looking to a father; I am the Father. I am He. Then comes one more and

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one more, and all these unfold because they were all contained within Him. And when He embraced me, He gave me the method by which they would unfold within me.

So, here, this night, this simple, simple benediction, -- and I can't ask anything greater for you. If I asked this night that you be -- well, you name it, it would pale into nothing compared to this. If you wanted to be a billionaire, -- all right, so it's a billionaire, and maybe you'll leave it tomorrow for some one else to spend. And maybe you'd want to be famous in this world and have all the papers talk about you and your pictures; and then fade tomorrow. Well, this cannot fade. This is forever! So, could I ask anything greater for any one than this benediction, and quote it sincerely, meaning for them? But he included all people in the world: "with you all," said he, as he closed the benediction.

But tonight you can put it into the most practical manner and use it lovingly for every one that you meet. Fall in love with any one that you meet -- just fall in love with them; and then you don't have to meet them socially or go out with them. Just love them, because behind the mask there is your brother. Behind every mask is your brother who is in Eternity, and you are going to do it for him. And, so, you embrace him here.

And, then, one day our Father will embrace him, and he will become the Father. He can't volunteer for it. He's running from it. The whole vast world is running from it; but the Great Lover will find them, one after the other. And when He finds them, in spite of their protest, He embraces them. And then, in the interval of time, -- that "pregnancy" lasts thirty years, -- they will bring forth the Son; and then that Son will only reveal to him Who-He-Is, and he will have confirmation of that 139 days later. He is the Father.

And, so, when you read it, that "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, he it is who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." And, so, every one incorporated into that Body becomes the One who is doing the impregnation, for he is the Father! After incorporation and then the "birth from above," from that moment of the "birth from above," he is part of that creative power of God who is used in the impregnation. So, every one is coming, one by one; and we will all then be used in that one Body, for "There is one body, one spirit, one lord, one God and Father of all."

You know, our great poets, they tell this in their own marvelous way, and it is so hidden. I daresay that every one present has seen "Julius Caesar," and you've read it -- those who went through high school, undoubtedly you read "Julius Caesar." But you have pictures, and I have seen the play on Broadway a few times; I have seen it on the screen, and I had occasion to look up something in "Julius Caesar" this past week. So, I took my Concordance on Shakespeare, and I said I could find what I am seeking in the first act, the second scene. So, I started, and then my eye fell upon a simple little speech of Caesar. And here, what we are talking about tonight, -- these are the words of Caesar as Shakespeare put them into Caesar's mouth:

"Forget not in your speed, Antonius,
To touch Calpurnia, for our elders say,
The barren touched in this holy chase,
Shake off their sterile curse."

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They "shake off their sterile curse." So, --

"Forget not in your speed, Antonius,
To touch Calpurnia," --

for Calpurnia is Caesar's wife, the "barren one." She was barren.
So, do not fail to touch her, --

"for our elders say,
The barren touched in this holy chase,
Shake off their sterile curse."

Well, isn't that the student of the Bible? All great poets are students of the Bible, and they are inspired to tell it in their own way; so, here was this statement put into the mouth of Caesar. If you could but touch -- well, the Father touched me, and then my barrenness came to an end, for I brought forth the child, and he was simply taking the 54th chapter of Isaiah and putting it into his own wonderful words in the story of Caesar.

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