

THE POTTER'S HOUSE

Tonight's title is "The Potter's House." This story is told in the 18th chapter of the Book of Jeremiah. "The Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, 'Go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' So, I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do" [Jeremiah 18: 1-4].

Now, as we told you last week, these stories are parables. You have to extract the meaning from the story. In the 64th chapter of the Book of Isaiah you read: "O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou art our potter; we are all the work of thy hand." [Isaiah 64:8] Here he equates the Lord our Father with the potter; and it is stated quite clearly that we are the clay.

If I am to go down to the potter's house, I need not move from where I am. For am I not told, "We are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in us"? [I Corinthians 3:16] So, where could I go, other than just where I am? So, this [indicating the body] is the "potter's house."

The word "potter" means by definition in the Bible -- if you take James Strong's Concordance -- it means "imagination." It means "to determine; to form a resolution." Well, now, I determine to be a certain man which, at the moment, reason tells me that I am not. My senses tell me that I am not. Nonetheless, I would like to be that.

If I am not the man that I would like to be, then the clay that I am using -- which is the being that I am, for I'm told we are clay -- then that vessel is spoiled in my own sight; but instead of discarding it, I should rework it into another vessel, as it seems good to me to do. Well, how will I go about reworking this clay?

First of all, I must know what I would like to be, for it means "to determine." I must make that decision. What would I like to be? I do not modify it. I know the Lord is going to do it. Well, I know exactly what I would like to be.

Let me ask a very simple question: Suppose it were true? How would I see the world? What would I feel like? What would I hear if it were true? Then let me assume that it is true, that I am the man that I would like to be. Then let me look for confirmation in my imagination and see my friends as I would have to see them, were it true. Let them see me as they would have to see me if it were true. Now I am reworking the vessel in my own imagination, for that is the potter.

Will it work? I know from experience it does work. All I ask others to do is to try it. Don't judge it; try it. And you will see that we are living in a world of imagination, that the human imagination is God.

When Blake said, "I know of no other Christianity and no other Gospel, other than the liberty of both body and mind to exercise the divine arts of imagination"; Then he adds: "The Apostles knew of no other Gospel." [Wm. Blake, "Jerusalem - 'To the Christians'"]

This mystery has been told in the form of a tale because:

"Truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors."

Man finds it difficult to think abstractly; so he takes the great truth and he tells it in the form of a story. You and I were told the story, but we haven't gotten beyond the story to discover exactly what they are trying to tell us. What they are trying to tell us is: Our own wonderful human imagination is God. Why stand we here trembling around, calling on God for help and not ourselves, in whom God dwells?

If He dwells within me, I've got to find out where He is. When I find that He is the only creative power in the world, I find that to be my imagination. I will not always be in control of my imagination. In the course of a day I am ashamed, possibly, of unnumbered things that I have imagined; but as I am told in Scripture: "I am the Lord, and there is no other god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal" [Deuteronomy 32:39]. I create the evil and I have formed the good, the weal and the woe; for there is no other creative power in the world!

I cannot turn to an evil being and call it God and 'turn to a good thing and call that another God. It is the same creative power. -- The light that illuminates the room, it could electrocute me if I misuse it, and yet it serves to illuminate the room. I can put it to a thousand purposes, or I could misuse it. That is the same thing that we do with our imagination. The human imagination is God.

"Man is all imagination, and God is man, and exists in us, and we in Him." [Wm. Blake, from "Annotations to Berkeley's 'Siris'"] "The Eternal Body of man is the imagination, and that is God Himself." [Blake, from "The Laocoon, 'The Angel of the Divine Presence'"] That is the Divine Body that we call Jesus; and Jesus is crucified upon man, and is buried in man, and is awakening in man as the human imagination that every man aches for. And when it awakes within man, man will know Who Jesus is! He will know Who God is.

So, here the "potter's house" is just where you are seated right now. You don't have to go any place to find it. In fact, because you are one with God, God could never be so far off even to be near, because nearness implies separation; and He is not separated from man. There is no place where you can go and separate yourself from your imagination.

You can divorce yourself from the body. You can separate yourself from the body, but you can't separate yourself from your imagination, because "God (literally) became as we are, that we may be as He is." [Wm. Blake, from "There Is No Natural Religion"] He's not pretending that he is us; he literally became as we are, and He is our own wonderful human imagination.

We are told: "By Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made" [John 1:3]. Well, you name some thing that was not first only imagined. There isn't a thing that you can name that was not first only imagined. And if "by Him all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made," then we have to find Him. And you will find Him as your own wonderful human imagination. That is God!

The worship of God is simply using His gift. His gift is Himself. He gave me Himself! That is the true and real worship of God, -- not to get before something that human hands made and put up on the wall and then crosses himself for luck; but that is what the world does. They make some little thing and then worship it -- that which is made with the human hand.

No; the God I worship, and the God that the whole vast world will worship, -- to worship Him is simply using His talent. He said, "To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away," as we are told in the 25th chapter of the Book of Matthew [Matthew 25:15]. He went away, -- in other words, He became invisible. We are told, He becomes invisible; so He is not objective for me to worship. He takes His residence in me. He became as I am; and I've got to actually use that talent, and use it wisely.

I use it wisely every time I exercise my imagination lovingly. I don't care whether I do it for myself or for myself pushed out. The whole vast world is myself pushed out; so if I encounter an aspect of myself -- a friend or a relative or a total stranger, and I see the need, without his consent I can simply exercise my imagination lovingly on behalf of him and see if I can take that, instead of discarding it, and remold it and shape it into a better form.

What do I think he would like to be? Well, I could ask him, Are you satisfied with life? Maybe he tells me, No, he would like more money, a greater income, security, more health; -- he names it. Then without raising a finger or asking any one to help me, I could, by the use of my talent which is my imagination, represent him to myself as he would be seen by me if it were true; and without waiting for confirmation, let me assume that it is true, knowing in my heart that "The vision [which is now my vision] has its own appointed hour. It ripens, and it will flower. If it seems long, then [I must] wait, for it is sure, and it will not be late." [Habakkuk 2:3] It will not be late for the thing that I have done, for all little seeds have their own appointed hour. A man comes forward in nine months, the horse in twelve months; how long the elephant takes, I don't know, but a chicken in twenty-one days. So, every little seed has its own appointed hour.

So, that peculiar seed that I have just planted for a friend or for myself, -- how long it is going to take, I don't know; but I must actually believe it. And when I believe it, I drop it. A seed must fall into the ground and rot if it is to be made alive. I cannot hold it in my mind's eye; if I take it and do not drop it, then it remains just a seed. I must drop it into the earth and let it rot. And when it rots, it means that I have dropped it from my

mind. I've done it. That's all I can do. And then, in its own wonderful appointed hour it will ripen.

Now you try it and see how it works. I will wager that it will work. It is working morning, noon and night anyway. We are totally unaware that we are doing it; but all day long you and I are harvesting what we have done! We've imagined it, and then the thing is done; but we do not recognize our own harvest when it comes up, because our memory is very faulty, and we can't remember when we ever did a thing like that. And, yet, it couldn't possibly come up unless, at some moment, some one imagined it.

So, "Go down to the potter's house," - I'm always in the potter's house, - "and there I will let you hear my words." [Jeremiah 18:2] In a vision -- in a dream of the night, a deep sleep falls upon a man while he is upon his bed, and He opens the ears of men and He seals their instructions. This you will read in the 33d chapter of the Book of Job [33:15,16].

Well, many years ago I had this vision. I was taken in spirit in what would be the turn of the Century in New York City on Fifth Avenue, when they had these huge palatial homes, fully staffed, for these great financial giants of the day. This was before income taxes took it from them. If you made ten million, you kept ten million. You spent it, but you didn't pay anything in income taxes. So, these palatial homes were all on Fifth Avenue, and they kept their stables on the West Side. They were enormous homes. A few were left when I came to New York City in 1922. The Vanderbilts and the Astors -- they were still there. But I was taken in spirit into the interior of one of these palatial places, and here there were three generations. The oldest of the generations was not present. The man speaking spoke of him as "Father"; but he was the grandfather of those addressed. There was the grandfather, the father who was speaking, and the children whom the father addressed; and he was telling the secret of his father to his children, and he said, "Father used to say, while standing on an empty lot, 'I remember when this was an empty lot.' Then he would paint a word picture so vivid that you could actually see it as he painted it, with the building standing upon it, although it was an empty lot. And he believed in the reality of what he did. And now you and I are enjoying the fortunes that he left behind. That was his secret; 'I remember when -- ' and then he painted the word picture. He knew exactly what he wanted for that lot."

Now, that was the secret. I awoke and wrote it down. Then I fell asleep again and redreamed the dream, but this time, instead of eavesdropping and hearing a man telling his children what his father did to become successful, I became the grandfather. I was not talking to others. I was simply communing with myself. And I was saying to myself, "I remember when this thing was only an empty lot. Well, look at it now!"

Well, you could take that same technique and do it concerning anything in the world. "I remember when I didn't have a job." "I remember when he had no money." If I say, "I remember when he had no money," that would imply that now he has money. "I remember

when he couldn't contribute to any charitable cause in the world. In fact, he was on the receiving end!" That would imply that today he can contribute and he is on the receiving end.

Well, that was a lesson that was revealed to me. For we are told, "In a dream, in a vision of the night, . . . he opens the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction" [Job 33:15,16] in the form of a vision. It was told me so vividly; so I share it with you. If you can stand perfectly still and assume that things are as you would like them to be, but at the moment they are not; well, then, you can say, "I remember when."

Now, remain faithful to the vision and forget the appearance of the moment. The appearance tells you it cannot be. Reason denies it, and your senses deny it. But if you take this revelation which was given to me as it is to every one -- because all these dreams come from the depths of a man's soul; it is speaking to the surface mind. The surface mind is now telling you what it heard in the depths of its own soul. And the depths of my soul is one with me. Your soul is one with you, for there is only one God.

But it seems to be fragmented when it comes to the surface because there are unnumbered individuals in my world. But in the depths of my being there is only God. In the depths of your being there is only God. And because God is one, and only one, that depth is speaking to the surface mind in all of us.

So, here you can try it. Be perfectly still, and just remember when -- "I remember when I couldn't go into that club," or " -- when I could not dine in that place," which implies I can go there now, and I can dine where I want to now because I have the means. Well, just do that.

Anything in this world that you desire, take that technique and try it. Here is the story concerning the potter: he is reshaping; he doesn't discard the vessel. Man will discard a friend if the friend cannot make it. He doesn't want a further friendship, because he is always asking to be helped. Well, instead of discarding the friend, you reshape the vessel. Instead of discarding any one in this world, you reshape it in your mind's eye; and you will be amazed, as time goes on. He finds himself -- in a lucrative manner, he finds himself doing all the things he couldn't do before; and he doesn't know that you did it. You need never tell him that you did it. It doesn't really matter.

What does it matter if he knows that you planted the seed for him? For in the end, we are one anyway. There is only really one body, one Spirit, one hope, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all [See Ephesians 1:4]. In the end, when man discovers who he really is, he is going to find one body, and that one body is the one Lord. And we call that Lord "Jesus Christ." And Jesus Christ is your own wonderful human imagination, which is the Divine Body of God. But man beats it morning, noon and night by the misuse of his talent. He literally gave Himself to us, -- not in any uncertain manner. "He (literally) became as we are, that we may be as He is" (Wm. Blake, "There Is No Natural Religion").

This is the story of the Bible as I read it; so when I see it, I do not see it as secular history. I cannot see it as secular history, for I have experienced Scripture. The more man experiences Scripture, the more he integrates within himself Jesus. He is eating of the body of Jesus and drinking the blood as he experiences Scripture, for it's all about this One Being. The One Being is crucified on Humanity and buried in man. He remains buried in man until He awakes in man; and when He awakes in man, He is the man in whom He awakes. He is not another coming from without, as the world thinks.

The great and popular evangelists of the day depict the Christ as coming from without in order to save the world. Well, they will wait forever. If they wait till the ends of time, He cannot come from without. Is he not within? Are we not told: "Test yourselves and see. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?" [II Corinthians 13:5] Well, if He is in me, what am I looking on the outside for?

What signs am I trying to find in the world for His coming? You could find all kinds of signs. He isn't coming by these signs. His signs are spelled out for us in the story of Jesus in Scripture. Everything said of Him is literally true, and you are going to experience it. But in the meanwhile, we can exercise the talent, for the one who had the five made five more, and he highly commended him and said, "Enter into the feast of the Lord" [Matthew 25:21], which is the glory of God. The one who had two doubled it; he made four, and he was highly commended.

But the one who buried it because he was afraid to use it -- he was condemned. The talent was taken from him. So, do not bury the talent and say, "Well, now, this may be stupid, but we'll try it." And when you try it, it will prove itself in the testing; and when it proves itself in the performance, what does it matter what others say, or how unsound it may seem to the rational mind? If it proves itself in the testing, then use it. But to bury it, as so many people do, -- they will not even test it. Well, I ask you to test it, and you will find Who God is.

He's not even nearer than hands and feet, for you can sever the hand; you can't sever God. You can sever the foot, but you can't sever God. You can take out all sort of parts of the body; you can take out a lung. You can take out all kinds of things. They have even taken out a heart and put another heart in; but you can't do that with God, because He is your actual being. He literally became as you are, that you may be as He is.

(As some one enters the room): Come right in. Be my guest. You're late. We are just discussing the technique here, and you'll catch up in just a moment. Blake claimed that God is man's human imagination, called in Scripture "the Father." And we are molding and molding within our own mind's eye everything that is happening in our world; that the world is simply man's imagination pushed out. And instead of discarding objects in our world, we simply remold it. And the object is simply a man, any man, anything at all in the world that is our world; and we don't discard them any more, but we

discover who we are. We take the vessel made of clay -- and we are the clay. We are the "potter." The potter is our own wonderful human imagination. And we simply reshape it. We don't discard it; we reshape it, and then let it, in its own good time, come into being. "The vision -- " as you and I have now reshaped it -- "has its own appointed hour, and it ripens and it will flower." If it seems to us a long time in coming, be patient, " -- it is sure, and it is not going to be late." [Habakkuk 2:3]

These things always work. If something is great, it may take two years or a year or even longer. What does it matter? It will come if I am confident that it will come. I'm telling you it does work this way.

Now, return to another aspect of Scripture. It is not strange to me, though it may be to others; but it's not strange if you and I seem to have a far greater confidence in the sense of touch. We are more thoroughly convinced by the sense of touch than we are with sight or hearing or smell. This is told us in the 27th chapter of the Book of Genesis. If you are not familiar with this story, let me just refresh your mind, if you've heard it once but you may have forgotten it. It is the story of Isaac and his sons. He is about to die, or he thinks he is.

He says, "I have very little time left, but I don't know the date of my death, and I am blind. My eye is dim, and I cannot see." And he wanted to taste some savory food; so he called his son Esau and sent him into the field to hunt, to get him some game and prepare it in the savory manner that he likes, that he may eat. Now here is food.

His wife overheard what he said to Esau, but she loved Jacob; so when Esau went hunting for game to prepare it for his father, she then turned to her son Jacob and told him what the father had said. Now she said, "You do what I tell you. You go into the flock, and you take two kids and prepare them for me. I'll do the cooking and make them savory as your father likes them, and I will give you a coat that belongs to Esau. When you come to him, he will feel the hair on it -- on you. I will take the skins from the kids and cover your hands and the smooth part of your neck."

So, when he came with the food prepared as his mother had prepared it for him, the father said to him, "Come near, my son, that I may feel you. Your voice is the voice of Jacob, but come near that I may feel you." And when he felt him, he said, "These are the hands of Esau"; and then he gave him the blessing. The whole thing was determined by touch. He could feel him. He heard the voice, but he wasn't trusting what he heard. He wanted to touch him.

We find that same sense of touch carried through the Bible. When Thomas doubted the resurrection, he said, "If I could but touch you." He said, "Put your hands in and feel." [See John 20:27] He heard the voice, but he didn't believe it. He saw, but he didn't believe it.

Then, when the girl touched Him, He said, "Who has touched me? For I perceive virtue has gone out of me," [See Luke 8:46] -- all based upon touch.

So, it isn't strange that you and I have a far greater confidence and more thoroughly believe in the sense of touch than we do in sight or hearing or smell. So, here is this story, and now in a simple way this is how we apply it:

Think of something that is distant -- anything, I don't care what it is. It could be a place, it could be a condition that you think is going to take time to do it. Now, draw near. He said, "Come near, my son." Well, if you think of something, that is your offspring -- your idea. You think of a trip, say, to New York City. It is three thousand miles away. How would I draw it and make it near? Well, I stand right here where I am, and then I "draw it near." I draw it nearer and nearer, and then I occupy it. Man's great weakness is that he is always building and building, but he doesn't occupy. Perpetual construction but no occupancy. He doesn't go in and occupy it and give it what I would call sensory vividness and a sort of cubic reality. It is always like a sketch to him in his mind's eye.

As you occupy it, it surrounds you. I can't be in San Francisco and New York at the same time; but to prove that I am in New York, then let me think of San Francisco. I must see it to the west of me by three thousand miles. I can't see it under me or around me. I must turn my mind's eye to the west -- three thousand miles to the west. Then I give this -- now New York -- all the sensory vividness, all the tones of reality that I can muster.

Then I open my eyes, and what happens? Well, San Francisco returns. Well, that is the story as told concerning Esau and Jacob. Suddenly he remembers, and Jacob now vanishes. This objective state that I have just appropriated when I returned to my conscious, rational mind, has vanished; and this seems the only reality; but I say I cannot take back my blessing. I gave that state my blessing, the right to be born; and I cannot take it back. It is called the birthright. So, he gave it the birthright, the right of birth.

So, when this "state" complains that he was robbed, then the father says, "I have given it the birthright and I cannot remove it; I cannot take it back." In other words, having actually felt myself in New York, when I opened my eyes in this room and find I am kidding myself, that whole thing was simply self-deception. I say to myself, having done it time and time again, "It doesn't matter." It seems that I am self-deceived, but I know from experience that now a bridge of incidents will start to be built. I do not consciously build it, but some series of events will occur, and I will pass over this bridge of incidents that will take me from where I am now to where I was in my imagination; and I cannot resist it.

I ask you not to try it unless you are serious, because it will work. And many a time you will try it in an idle moment not knowing this thing is going to work; and when you least expect it, when you've made plans for other things, you will have to cancel those plans because it is going to work.

I will tell you of an experience of mine. Back in 1941, it was the month of February, and I had come out with the book called "Your Faith Is Your Fortune." My audience in those days in New York City numbered, say, a thousand people three times a week. I thought I would have a fair audience, but that night it snowed and snowed. It started about noon, and kept on snowing. I began my lectures in those days around quarter of nine, and suddenly no one came. I had not more than a hundred people, when I was accustomed to a thousand people. They couldn't get through. We must have had between fourteen and sixteen inches of snow, and no one could get through. So, when I went home I was a little bit disappointed in the attendance because I brought my new book out, and I wanted to have at least a good-sized audience.

That night, this is what I did. In an idle moment -- I didn't intend it consciously, but I did it; I went to sleep in my bedroom, and I assumed that I was in Barbados, two thousand miles away across the water to the little island called Barbados. I dropped off to sleep feeling I was in my mother's home. I could hear the coconut leaves against the woodwork. I could smell the odor that comes only from the tropics. I could feel the entire atmosphere of Barbados, and I thought of New York City and saw it to the north of me, two thousand miles away; and I fell sound asleep in that assumption.

When I woke in the morning, the snow was still on the ground, say, fourteen or fifteen inches of snow. I made plans for my wife and myself to go to Maine in the month of August for a vacation and sent off a deposit to hold my place for me. In the month of August -- late August -- I got a cable from Barbados saying that Mother was desperately ill; and they didn't want to tell me anything about it because war was on. At least, England was at war. And there was no transportation, just a couple of ships moving out; and they did not want to disturb me. Mother was desperately ill, and it was terminal. There was no possibility of any recovery. And if it was at all possible to make the trip, she wanted to see me before she died. All the others were present. I was the only one who was missing.

In 24 hours my wife and I sailed for Barbados. The ship was leaving that night, and we couldn't have gotten together all the things necessary, but we sailed for Barbados instead of going to Maine. I had no plans to go Barbados; but here suddenly came the cable revealing the need to go to Barbados, and we went to Barbados, and we did not go to Maine.

What I did in February took approximately seven months to mature. I did it -- consciously did it, not thinking for one moment -- I did it only to relax and to put myself into that mood because I was disappointed that the crowd did not come out and get my new book, "Your Faith Is Your Fortune." So, I tell you from experience, don't do it idly, because when you plant something, that is still coming into being. It is going to come into being and disturb your so-called conscious plans. It works that way. So, I do know that when it comes back into this world, it doesn't really matter. I stand here just perfectly simply now and do something in my mind's eye and give it sensory vividness and give it the tones of reality, and then I open my eyes, and this shocks me, because this tells me that what I just did was self-deception. You deceive yourself. It

is all in your imagination. But I know now that my imagination is the only reality; that this world is still the world of imagination, and that all the things that I see as an objective fact in my world -- they are all "pushed out" because of my imaginal acts.

To try to change circumstances before I change my imaginal activity is to work against the very nature of things. It can't change of itself. It can only change as I change the imaginal activity. So, if I now actually know the man that I would like to be, though at the moment reason denies it and my senses deny it, -- if I really know what I'd like to be so that I could write it out, name it, state it, -- well, then, in my mind's eye assume that I am that man. And to prove that I am that man, look at my friends' faces, look at the people in my world and let them see me as they would have to see me if it were true. Then if I want to carry on a conversation with them, carry on the conversation from the premise of my wish fulfilled, and then have them say to me what they would have to say. And I say to them what I would say, were I such a man, and then see what happens. And you mold yourself into that being. For you are not discarding yourself. You do not jump off the bridge because you do not like yourself as you are; you simply remold yourself.

So, the vessel in the hand of the potter was spoiled, but he didn't discard the vessel. He reworked it into another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to do. And the "potter" was his own wonderful human imagination. And that is addressed in Scripture as God.

Thou art our Potter. We are the clay. And "Thou" we discover to be I AM. "Go and tell them that my name forever and forever is I AM." [Exodus 3:15] You can't get away from I AM. How are you going to get away from it? Where would you go that you are not aware of I AM? I don't care where you go, you cannot go any place and not be aware that you are. That is God's name forever and forever.

When you use the word "God," you might think of something other than I AM. Well, that's not His name. His name is I AM. We give it the name "God," we give it the name "Lord"; we give it all these names. As I said to you earlier last week, if the name "God" or the name "Lord" or the name "Jesus Christ" conveys to you some existent something outside of man, that is a false god. You have the false Jesus Christ in that case. If you think for one moment Jesus Christ is something other than your own wonderful human imagination, you have the false Jesus Christ.

That may seem sacrilegious, blasphemous; but I am telling you what I know from experience. One day He will awaken in you, and He'll awaken in you as you. Then you will know the truth of it. No longer will you look for Him as coming from without. He can only awake from within. He is already in you, and He is buried in you. The Crucifixion is over. As Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" [Galatians 2:20]. He literally became me just as I am, with all my weaknesses, all of my limitations. He took upon Himself all of

these, and waits upon me just as quickly and as indifferently when the will in me is evil as when it is good. He became a slave, we are told in Scripture, and this [indicating the physical body] is the garment of a slave. He took upon Himself the garment of a slave -- emptied Himself of all that He truly is, and took upon Himself the garment of a slave. And this body is the garment of a slave, for you are enslaved by it. You have to feed it, bathe it, wash it, and perform all the normal, natural functions of that body. No matter how much money you have in the world, you can't pay any sum of money to another to perform the natural functions for you. You have to do them all by yourself. So, here, this is a slave, -- the garment that He wears. And one day you will take it off, when He awakes within it. Then He will take it off and return to the garment that was His "before that the world was." And when He does, you are told in Scripture, He transforms my lowly form to be one form with His glorious form. Don't try to even conceive what that form is. It is not this [indicating the body] at all. It hasn't a thing to do with the weaknesses and the limitations of this garment of flesh.

It is -- well, "fire," I could call it. It is human, I grant you that, -- at least, the face is, the voice is, the hands are. But do not try to even conceive of the body itself. I only know from experience that it is a fiery being of the night. That is the Being that it is.

Wherever you are, clothed in that body, is Heaven. In that body, if you walk through the petrified forest, it will burst into foliage. If you stood in the desert, it would bloom like the rose.

So, Heaven is not a location. It is not some area or realm; it is the Body that you wear. Wherever you go, clothed in that Body, everything is perfect. When you are not clothed in it, -- well, as Milton had his Satan say:

"Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell."
[Milton, "Paradise Lost"]

Wherever you are in this garment -- the Christ garment -- wherever you go, it is perfect. There is nothing inharmonious wherever you are.

That happened to me back in 1946. I was coming through the Caribbean Sea on the way to Mobile, Alabama, and suddenly this motion took place within my head, and I found myself actually clothed in this beautiful garment of light. I thought at the moment that I had overcome death, and a heavenly chorus was singing, "Neville is risen. Neville is risen." And then I saw this infinite sea of human imperfection, and I knew they were waiting for me. I glided -- I didn't walk; I simply glided. And when I got to this enormous crowd; the blind, the deaf, the halt, -- every one of them was transformed into perfect beings. Eyes that were missing came out of the nowhere and filled the empty sockets. Arms that were missing came out of the nowhere, and every one was perfectly marvelous. And, yet, I didn't raise a finger to make it so. I showed no compassion. No one asked anything of me. Just as I walked by, because Perfection was within me in its fullness, everything in my world had to be perfect! And when I got to the very end, that same

choral group that began by singing my praise, "Neville is risen. Neville is risen," -- when I got to the end it exulted and sang, "It is finished." And at that moment I crystallized and came back into this little body that was on the bunk on the ship.

That whole thing was altogether so vivid in my mind's eye. I had a manuscript that would have been, say, a book of 300 pages. I tore it up and threw it away and wrote the little booklet called "The Search," based upon that experience. Out of the blue, it happened! So, I do know from my own experience that when you are clothed in that garment, as you will be one day, you are in Heaven. It is your Heavenly Body. It cannot die. It is your Immortal Self. Wherever you are, it's perfect. If you went into hell, hell would cease to be hell and it would be heaven. Wherever you go, everything is transformed in harmony with the Perfection that is springing within you.

So, Heaven is not a realm, as our evangelists are talking about. I went to a party last Saturday, and this man -- a retired gentleman -- has studied them all. He has them all catalogued: No. 3, No. 5, No. 2, No. 7; he has millions who will never get to heaven. He has some peculiar concept in his mind's eye. He's all there. Then this sweet lady with her two little girls -- she had one, I presume, five months old, and then one, I daresay, oh, a year and a half -- sweet little children; and he said to her, including the two of us who are here tonight -- a gentleman here was with me, and he knows exactly what was said. No one had asked anything of him, but he said, "You know, I have the virility and the sex life of a youth eighteen and a half years"; and this mother of these two little girls very innocently said to him, "But you look so old." What silence! Dead silence. No one had ever had the courage to tell that man before, "Why do you look so old if you are this virile thing that you are talking about?" Then, of course, he got up and walked away.

People go through this marvelous world of ours with the strangest concepts of heaven and hell. It's all within the man. When you are clothed in this wonderful garment, -- and I am speaking from my own experience, -- everything is perfect. Forget the so-called second heaven, third heaven, fourth heaven, -- just forget it. You are clothed in that garment; the garment is perfect, and wherever you go, it is perfect. There is no hell when you are clothed in that garment. There is no room for it. No man could be blind in your presence. No man could have an arm missing in your presence. Not a thing could be imperfect in the presence of the Perfect One. You are Life Itself! You are the Resurrection and the Life. You resurrect all things, -- yes, the petrified forest won't be petrified in your presence. The whole thing will burst into blossom. The desert would begin to bloom if you walked into it. That's Heaven!

So, you don't have to go to a place. You simply have to be reclothed. We are told, "He will transform our lowly bodies to be of one form with His Glorious Body," which is the Body of Christ.

So, here tonight, you take me seriously and know that your own wonderful human imagination is the Divine Body of the Lord Jesus. Now, try to use it lovingly whenever you use it, and you

are using it morning, noon and night, whether you are conscious of it or not. Whenever you are in doubt, do the loving thing; then you have done the right thing. Whenever you are in doubt as to what you should do, do the loving thing, and it's the right thing.

So, let me now gather it together. If tonight you know what you would like to be but you are not that person, don't despair. Be honest with yourself, and ask yourself, What would I like to be? What sort of an income would I like? Where would I like to live? Don't do these things based upon what you think you are capable of doing. Just what would you like to be? Then dare to assume that you are it! And, then, see the world from that assumption. Dare to assume it, and then view the world from that, and try to give it sensory vividness and the tones of reality. And then believe what I told you: The vision that you have made so real in your mind's eye has its own appointed hour, and it will definitely, in its own good time, appear in your world in a way that you do not consciously know. It builds itself the bridge of incidents, the bridge over which you walk to its fulfillment.

Now, we can go into the Silence.

Are there any questions, please? If you have never heard this before, it might have shocked you, but I wouldn't apologize. We grow by shocks anyway. No one in my audience at any time, I don't care who he is, can tell me that he is more -- I would say, "rooted" in the Christian faith than the speaker. I am rooted in the Christian faith. I was born and raised in a Christian home, and learned the story at my Mother's knee. If I was ever beaten in my life, I was beaten in a Bible class in school when I was a child. Corporal punishment was allowed in those days. And I quoted correctly, but I was asked to produce my Bible to verify the quote. The quote was: "Take up thy bed and walk"; and my sadistic head master asked me to produce the Bible. Well, I didn't have it with me. I am one of ten in the family, nine boys and a girl. We didn't have ten Bibles; So, when I couldn't produce the Bible, -- well, he was allowed by law to give me all the beating he wanted. He was a sadist. So, he brought out a long cane and tapped on a little bench for me to kneel on it, and he proceeded to simply cut me in half. When my father saw what he did to me, my father that night intended to kill him. It took the nextdoor neighbors to restrain my father from going straight to his home, and he would have killed him. I was just a lad. And the next day he took me out of that school. I was bleeding from my buttocks to my knees.

I had quoted the Bible correctly, but it had been changed from "bed" to "couch." He said his Bible said "couch." Of all the nonsense in the world! But he was a sadist, and he blew his brains out that year. He was simply a peculiar sadistic creature.

So, I know my Bible, for I have studied it. But it happened that the whole thing occurred to me, not as secular history, but salvation history. The whole thing is true, but it's not secular. It is salvation history.

Now, are there any questions?

MR. BYERS: [Not distinguishable on my tape.]

NEVILLE: Well, Ken, as far as I am concerned, I would not deny what I have said. I still would repeat it, because all day long, every moment of time we are creating; so one should be watchful as to what they are imagining. But some definite thing that you are working on now, -- if perchance this very moment I got a call from, say, my brother in Barbados, and he said, "Neville, I have just mailed you or wired X number of dollars," I would trust him -- trust him implicitly. If it doesn't come tomorrow -- the bank doesn't call me tomorrow, I am not going to be concerned. I would believe what he said. At the moment I have no evidence that it is true, but I believe it.

Well, now, I must believe in God even beyond that. Well, if I believe that God is my own imagination, and I have no doubts about that, I must believe in my imaginal act as an act of God. So, if I really believe it, I am not concerned about it or worried about it. If I assume now that things are as I desire them to be, and I believe that that assumption will harden into fact, I am not going to be concerned about it. I will go along believing that it does have its own appointed hour.

MR. BYERS: You are not worried about it?

NEVILLE: And you are not going to drop back, because you believe in it. You actually accept it. But I must still be watchful, not for it, -- it's coming. I must be watchful as to what use I am going to make with my talent from then on. We must watch the use of that talent. If I bury it and do not use it, it's taken from me.

Take the talent of music, if I do not practice every day, -- well, I've heard it said of great musicians that if they do not practice every day, they can't give a concert. It may be all right as far as those who are not familiar with the music, but to himself he isn't all right. And those who really understand music will know he isn't right. Whether he has a concert schedule or not, -- Aldous Huxley told me that whether he had a commitment to write, he wrote. He wrote everything. He just couldn't let one day pass by, and he would get up early in the morning and write. He couldn't type because of his eyes. He was nearly blind. But he wrote; and he wrote and wrote and wrote, always every day. He could not get out of the habit of writing, whether he was committed or not.

In my own case, I read the Bible seven days a week. I don't think that I put in less than six hours a day in reading the Bible. And I don't read just the Bible; I read it with my Concordance. I have James Strong's Concordance, and I take nothing for granted. I read it, and then I take words that seem so familiar -- words change their meaning. So, I try to go back to the original meaning of the word, and not as it is now understood in the 20th Century. What was the meaning when they used that word? For, we have changed the meanings of words.

Any other questions, please?

A LADY: [Question not audible on tape.]

NEVILLE: We are told in the 12th chapter of the Book of Numbers, "God speaks to man through the medium of dreams, and makes Himself known in vision" [Numbers 12:6]. Therefore, every dream has its own significance, but we are past masters at misinterpretation, because most of them are highly symbolical; and everything in this world contains within itself the capacity for symbolic significance. So, you take it just as it is, and it won't make any sense. Even a simple little dream could be very, very significant if God speaks to me through the language of dreams. But man has completely forgotten this language of symbolism -- completely forgotten it.

For instance, here is a simple little dream that I had just about -- oh, it might have been, say, six or seven months ago. I saw a little dog -- it appeared to me to be a dog -- on a leash. Dogs in New York City are trained to be curbed; they go to the curb when you want to air the dog on the sidewalk. Here they run wild. Well, all dogs in New York are curbed. There are signs at every lamp post: "Curb your dog." And people do it. You put your dog on a leash and you take it into the street and you curb it.

Well, I saw this little dog with whoever had it on the leash. Well, then, the dog had to go, and right on the sidewalk. It moved not more than, say, three or four inches, and again it defecated. and then moved on and it defecated again.

Now, that seems to be a very silly little dream that would have no meaning to the average person who had it. But having had the dream, I said to my wife, "Darling, I am going to get an unexpected large sum of money, and right away." I told the dream to my wife, because in the 41st chapter of Genesis we read that if a dream repeats itself, it means the thing has been fixed by the Lord, and the Lord shall shortly bring it to pass if it repeats itself. Well, it repeated itself right on the sidewalk. It was a very startling thing.

Well, forty-eight hours later I got a call from the bank, asking me if I was expecting some money; and I said, "Well, I am always expecting money." She said, "Well, from whom would you expect it?" I said, "I don't know; it could come from my brother or sister." "Where would it come from?" I said, "Maybe Barbados." Then she said, "What reason would they have to give you money?" I said, "Well, the chances are they made more than they can spend, and they wanted to share it with their poor relatives." That amused her; so she said, "Come on down and get the money." Well, there was a check waiting for me for \$3,000. I didn't request it. I didn't ask for it, and he sent me a check for \$3,000. It was more than a dividend check. That symbolism meant a large, unexpected sum of money being sent in the immediate present.

Now, the average person would have said, "Wasn't that a horrible dream." And they would have been disgusted with themselves to have seen such a thing. Well, I look at my own dreams, using the language of symbolism, and it revealed my good fortune coming to me unexpectedly. I thought that was very nice news to receive. They can defecate all over the world now as far as I am concerned!

---oOo---