

COMPREHENSIVE VISION

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Comprehensive Vision

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Merry Christmas

from

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Comprehensive Vision

Socrates is said to have made an observation to the effect that humanity suffers only from its mistaken judgments.

If any hope is offered for resolving the muddled state of personal, national, and world affairs as they seem now, we will do very well to investigate any help offered by the acknowledged sages whose words have survived times like ours.

If your personal affairs do not reflect the chaotic state of national and world affairs as of the end of the year 1957, it is because you have already accepted reason and revelation as your standard of judgment, rather than appearances as they present themselves.

We intend through this message to offer a platform to stand upon that will never be shaken in any wild storms of men's antics. This

platform is not to have its locale in some airy point in outer space from which to launch investigation into remote and more remote heavenly areas, but will have a firm foundation right where we find ourselves standing on this earth. There is no answer to be found either in locomotion or in distant points, which only reveal more and more of the same—whatever the same is! But the promise of our Lord is: *On earth* as it is in heaven. And here we take our stand.

Not only do we make our point of stance on this earth, *now*, but we also bring ourselves to the place of our own personal stance—the point at which you stand when you think of, or express the word “I,” Just what *do* you mean when you say “I”? There must always be a starting point, a beginning. The evangelist John said, In the beginning was the Word. In this case, our beginning may seem to be words, but what other means of communication have we to transmit the message of reality?

With every conscious self the beginning of the journey through life is at the point which

he calls “I.” the “I” to each of us becomes the point of identification with all the facts of life. It is at the point of “I” that simple being in the process of creation has become so complex: we start with our being, add life to being, add consciousness to life, and add rationality to consciousness; and we have what we mean by “I.”

It is at the point of this I-being that complex life appears difficult to deal with. But it is also at this same point, and at this point only, that the solutions to the problems are uncovered.

It is at this pivot point of “I” that we seem to have pulled away from all other beings; but this sense of separation is not actual, therefore it is at this same point that we can also find the universal Being from whom we can never pull away nor be separated.

Return to our true being and life and consciousness, and rationality is not a matter of going anywhere at all, actually. But inasmuch as we have followed the world mind into counter-creations and have become exiled from reality, having projected our sense of being into a

point of experience that has no valid existence, we must be coaxed back into our true life through channels that pass as normal processes in the state of our exile. This return to our true life is therefore experienced as a journey. We have authority for this method offered in many scriptures. Solomon advised his students to Remember! He did not advise them to project their imaginations into new and remote counter-creations, but to *remember* the Creator. And the parable of the Prodigal Son has depths upon depths of meaning waiting only for our comprehension and vision.

It is because we are convinced that we are away from God, that this journey to the true meaning of the true "I" is necessary. The outward movement of the self leads to greater and greater complexity; but in the progress of every "I," there is also a turning point, a journey of return to the Source. And on this journey, which is not one of movement, but of perception, the whole aspect of life is gradually or suddenly transformed, and in the end is seen

in the blazing glory of comprehensive vision—From God to God. Nothing can have a destination which is not at the same time, its source.

In order to comprehend this cycle of being, we need to deliver our understanding of time, our sense of past and future, from their mysteries, that we may rise up to that perception of ever present eternity, which is the vital breath of all progress. The cycle contains the truth of life, the truth that pours through time to reveal the eternal now of our being in the presence of God. Mere duration in time is an attenuation of time that ends by destroying itself.

We prepare for our journey to vision by taking three clearly defined steps on the road of reason; by arguments of reason we arrive at perception, which delivers to our mind illumination for our journey, so that we need not stumble and fall over obstacles of irrationality. So, let us begin our journey to vision—as we would any journey—by finding out what our goal is and then studying the complexities of the way and the manner in which Providence

has decreed the solution of complexity into simplicity, and given us ways to re-orient ourselves when we get off the path.

As on any journey, we discover new things; the things themselves are not new, but seem so to us when we see them for the first time. The highway of life is clearly marked by intelligent direction, but what each person needs is the wisdom to read the directions and apply them to his own progress. Also, we have been supplied with a picture of our route, a road map which, while it provides an over all picture so that we may see both our place of departure and our destination at a glance, at the same time specifically and minutely shows the many courses which may be followed to arrive at our predetermined destination. The map itself shows all ways—the mountains and the valleys, the high roads and the low. By studying our map, we can discover where we are in relation to the whole scope of our experience.

Just what is this road map charting the course of life? We might call it "religion" if

the term "religion" had not come to be so confused in men's minds with moral preachings and fanciful pictures of an after life, both of which foster anxiety and an accompanying sense of guilt and insecurity in THIS life. Or we might call it "philosophy" if philosophy had not failed to spark man's spiritual initiative. The word "theology" also fails to express what is meant by this charting of the course of life, because it is too abstract and theoretical to be useful as our practical everyday road map.

Nevertheless, in spite of their failure to fulfill our need for a quick and ready reference, there can be no satisfactory charting of any way of life without these three true ways—religion and its accompanying philosophy, backed by theology.

When we speak of "religion," "philosophy," and "theology," we do not mean the mistaken ideas *about them*, which, in a popular sense, have come to mean crutches to lean on, or isolations from life, or abstract contemplations about life; but rather, what they truly are, life's

strength and fortification for experience.

The road map to happiness is not for fugitives from life, but for wayfarers to vision of life. The fugitive is always running away from truth, wrestling with himself over details, scrupulous over his mistakes or "sins"—that missing the mark of his aims. He is always worrying over the accusations of his conscience, and proud of his worrying. Consequently the fugitive from life is always anxious and insecure. To him, religion could mean at best a temporary sanctuary when current problems become too pressing and persistent.

This fugitive "I" runs away from everything, hoping to be saved from the darkness of life's problems. The more he runs from problems, the more convinced he is of problems to run from. This "I" tries to run from itself, to change itself. But it cannot eradicate its sense of "I." What happens is that his struggling pride, in the egotistical attempt to pull himself

up out of the quagmire, instead of becoming true humility, degrades with an inferiority complex. Even trying to free the ego from selfishness, becomes a trap because it is done for a selfish motive.

The fugitive type is exemplified by the young woman who could not face the responsibilities of marriage and family. To compensate her inadequacies, she began orgies of dissipations. Finally, when her life was almost wrecked, she was "saved" at a revival meeting; she took up religion as a drowning man might grasp hold of a plank. But this is a temporary expedient, for clinging to anything, even the Cross, is not the purpose of life.

Our life is not a negative thing, needing constant protection and support, but the positive strength and virtue of God, the Truth. If we have the negative view, there comes a time when our hold on the support slips; and if the transmission of interior strength has not been

effectual, the second state is worse than the first.

The fugitive at heart cannot run from himself. His attempting to do so keeps him a fugitive. If he is really to be "saved," he must be converted from his fugitive nature and meet life in the open. At the moment when the fugitive turns about and actually faces and accepts life, his deliverance begins. All attempts to shun life only add to the feeling of insecurity, for these attempts reveal the belief in remoteness from God, Who is our only security. Insecurity is actually only the manifestation of our feeling of remoteness from God. Life is, however, our contact point with God; therefore the more we accept life, the more we accept God.

The wayfarer may cover the same ground as the fugitive, but he does so in a different manner and with a different spirit. The fugitive keeps close to the ground, hugging the earth in an attempt to achieve security and concealment from adversaries; he is held down by the gravity of his own fears and anxieties. The wayfarer

uses the ground as his springboard. With each step he pushes the earth away rather than cling to it; he springs along with a sense of purpose that seems to levitate his every movement. And he makes use of his road map to maintain his course, rather than to seek out byways and hiding places.

What are the requirements for successful wayfaring? First the establishment of correct bearings; that is, knowing your source and your destination. If you look on an ordinary travel map, you can put your finger on the exact spot of the beginning of your travel—you are from this city in this state. In your conscious life also, you think you can pinpoint your beginning; your parents were a man you name "father," and a woman you name "mother." Your heritage you believe to be of this nature, all cut out and determined according to the dimension of your perception. And the place toward which you think you are going, is also a point on the flat surface of a mundane consciousness. These meager bearings may be all that you can recognize of the source and reason for your existence.

Consequently, in trying to run away from the very futility of existence, you become a fugitive. But it is not necessary to be so blindly short-sighted.

There is a higher level of perception in which the chart of your journey is used to greater advantage—a translation into another dimension. You can accept the fact that your life is more than surface lines indicate, that your life was before the mark on the map designated your point of beginning, and that when you come to the edge of the depicted surface lines, you will not fall into oblivion. In fact, because you, yourself, are not contained in the map, you can fold it up or open it out at will. You are not map-bound, and therefore the lines and figures traced on the map are at your service for your guidance.

What man needs to know is his real source and his ultimate end and reason for being. Only this awareness can provide complete orientation

with life and experience; only this understanding can elevate conscious life to an inspired experience.

There are scientific explanations of beginnings. "How Life began" is a favorite consideration of science. Science has charted development from the single cell to the complexities of the human physical and mental organism. But beyond the beginning of the chart is the ever present mystery—still unexplained. If life is the result of the combination of certain chemicals, where did the original chemicals come from?

Philosophy is a science of beginnings and reasons for beginning; first causes and first principles are explored and investigated. Metaphysics also has its philosophical and rational approach to the mystery of life. Religion and theology also join forces in guiding man to more profound reasons and higher ends. Actually, no one need be content with a mere surface map since the higher sciences are available

to chart the course of life on the spiritual plateaus.

Probing into the mysteries of beginnings, can rule out chance if for no other reason than the continued order of natural cycles. It takes intelligence to create and maintain order in universal causes and movements and to preserve by universal laws the balance of the world. It takes intelligence to chart the courses of the universe. It also takes intelligence to recognize that the proceedings are the work of intelligence. The arrow that hits the bull's-eye precludes chance, definitely indicating an archer's skill. There is an affinity between an arrow and a bull's-eye, but it takes intelligence to effect the proper relationship. It requires intelligence to take proper aim, to pull the bow and let fly the arrow. And even though the archer is not visible to the eye, intuition convinces our intelligence of an intelligence to direct the flying arrow to its destination. In the same way the decree of order reasons intelligence as the source of life and being, and our inquiry into sources leads us by way of intuition to the

supreme Source of life and being.

There is an order in all life and being which the prevailing sense of current disorder cannot refute. For without preexisting order, there could never be a sense of disorder. When one is able to recognize disorder only through order, he has virtually attained the vision called the inability to conceive of an opposite of order.

Vision, comprehensive vision, is man's objective. To have such vision, man's natural instincts of rational inquiry need to have received their spiritual illumination; for comprehensive vision is the crowning end of all man's mental wayfaring. And comprehensive vision sees the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, as in one single point or punctum.

To inquire into these hidden ends needs rational, consecutive thought—but thought that is receptive of illumination. When this light comes, the struggle and the effort disappear, and the contemplative faculties come to rest in the function called vision. There is no longer the effort of trying to reason or see, because vision has taken over and fulfilled the whole

action with comprehension.

For the purpose of charting our course, we need to offer the dimensional groundwork; for until the course is clear in our minds, the whole picture is unrecognized. Our enlightened vision is the point of transmission between the picture and the substance, for it is this transdimensional vision that comprehends all at a glance.

There is a story of the man who one time found a penny on the ground, and ever after that he kept his head bent and eyes down looking for his fortune—and at the same time missing the really important values around him. How much better to walk as God intended us to walk with our feet on the ground but with our sights raised to broad horizons. God made man right, even as to structure. He placed his intellectual faculties at the highest place but kept his powers of locomotion in direct contact with the road he travels on the earth.

Man himself is an example of transmission,

a living symbol of intelligence applied to action. No wonder man is called God's masterpiece! The universal principle of being is manifest in man. From God, to God, and in God, is the comprehensive vision summed up and projected in a rational, intelligent, human being. Man is made to the image and likeness of God. We cannot see God, we *can* see man. But what we see of man does not give us a comprehensive picture of God. What we know of man is misleading, and God is presented to us for comprehension only as the incomprehensible.

How, then, are we to look at man that we may see God? We are told that when we really see God, we ourselves shall be like Him. But now, because we have not lifted our vision to its dimensional capacity, we neither see God, nor ourselves as we are. Our unilluminated vision continues to search the earth for pennies—trivialities—when the treasures of real substance are at hand but unavailable because the full dimension of consciousness has not yet lifted our eyes.

The fugitive from life never seems to see

what he is missing. The idle wayfarer also misses real values. Only the dedicated wayfarer keeps his eyes on the goal and achieves his gift of vision. He knows his source and his destination, and nothing can cause him to deviate from his course. He knows he is from God—not from God in the sense that he has departed from absolute Being, but “from” in the sense of God as his source of being. It is in this understanding of source that we speak of God as the Creator of heaven and earth and as the Father of us all.

Like the prodigal son we may try to seek our fortune in worldly things—looking toward the earth for our wealth and happiness, only to be disillusioned as he was, eating the husks, and wallowing in the mire—when all the time, in the true dimension of our being, we already possess more than we could possibly comprehend in our limited vision.

We do not gain this full treasure by making it ours through our own efforts, but by penetrating the barriers of our forgetfulness and remembering our Creator. This journey back to

our Father, our source of being, is not accomplished by locomotion; for the word “from” is not indicative of physical departure, but rather of losing our consciousness of our true self—it is a journey of forgetfulness.

The most devastating mode of exile is to have the awareness of “home” taken out of the mind. How can one ever find his way back when the recognition of “home” is smothered in unawareness? No wonder there are so many fugitives in life—they are lost and running from the creativeness of their own minds.

But if we find ourselves away from God, how are we to remember, to become aware, to recognize all this that is forgotten? In the parable of the prodigal, he is said to have “come to himself.” He could not start on the return journey to the Father until he had recollected himself. This recollection of himself did not require his actually going anywhere. He was really just as much himself when he was wallowing in the mire and eating husks as when enjoying the fatted calf. If he had remembered

himself in the mire, he would not have wallowed; if he had recollected who and what he was, he would not have looked to husks for nourishment. The king's son is the king's son everywhere at every time; current issues and changing pictures cannot obliterate the reality of being.

Who is to judge himself by his environment? Only the fugitive who has not yet faced himself, only the man who looks in the mirror and goes his way forgetting what manner of man he is. But at the same point where we seem to depart from ourselves, we may also return—not by going anywhere, but by remembering. What we need is a point of remembrance, a punctum of transmission.

A personal example of this may be helpful. I came out from the deep sleep of an anesthetic and was unable to orient myself in the surroundings. The familiar room looked like some fantastic Chinese torture chamber. "Where am I?" "How did I come to be here?" Then I saw a bowl of camellias and I knew these had come

from the garden at home. I knew then that if I could follow back through my dark forgetfulness by means of the camellias, I would find myself again.

I will never forget the amazing experience of my clearing vision. Without any alteration in the room, the articles of furniture began to evolve out of the obscurity; the dresser on which rested the bowl of camellias began to look as it ought to look; the chair by the dresser, without changing a line of structure, lost its foreboding appearance and resumed its fitting relation to the dresser and the bowl of camellias. It seemed a miracle. Without changing a thing, a torture chamber had become a familiar and pleasant room in which I felt "at home." The transmission point was a bowl of camellias.

When one can find a point in experience that lays hold of memory, and this point is held to, experience itself will swing into its congruous associations without any structural changes in the material of the world being necessary.

Maybe, without any visible change in your

ordinary pattern of living, the torture chamber aspect will fade away, and you will discover a real joy in conforming to the pattern itself. It is not the things that change, but your way of seeing the things. The spark of vision is within your own intelligence; find this spark and hold to it, and the comprehension will follow.

To say it isn't so much what happens to a person that matters as the way in which he takes it, seems trite, but actually there is valid truth in the statement. A woman, the wife of a coal miner, had, to all appearances, a hard life. It was before the days of all the modern conveniences that do our work for us. All week long, she washed, by hand, on a washboard, quantities of coal-blackened clothes. Every day when her husband returned from the mines, he found his bath ready and clean clothes laid out. The neighbors often expressed sympathy, but always she answered with a smile that she liked to make John happy. What to most women

would have been drudgery, was to this woman a greater opportunity to give service and love to her husband.

It is said that we can give without loving, but cannot love without giving. Certainly this distinction is apparent to us all. Whatever is done in the spirit of love is inspired. Love is called the alchemy that turns menial tasks into glorious privileges. The transformation which takes place may not in any way change the character of the task performed, only the disposition of the one performing the task. The menial task may remain menial, but the inspired person who performs the act, will inspire the very performance.

What is the inspiring spark some people radiate? It is not mere optimism, for this is very tiresome when only a disposition. This inspiring spark is deeper than disposition, and it may bring with it optimism; but its source is indestructible, and it is not modified by outer circumstances. I know people who, no matter what their physical state, retain a radiating light of healthfulness; and still others, in the best of

health and surrounded with comforts, who keep their light "under a bushel."

Is it that some have light and others do not? Saint John the Evangelist wrote of the life that was the light of the world. This light came into the world, but darkness knew it not. Why should any one refuse light when it is offered? Why are there still some who persist in remaining in darkness?

This habit of keeping the eyes of the heart closed to the source of light, can be healed. But first one needs to recognize that it is not circumstances that produce the blindness, but the blindness that causes depressing circumstances. Vision is offered direct from its source. The gift of spiritual light lets us be aware, rather than heedless, of it.

Actually, there can be no vision without life. Dead eyes do not see; an atrophied mind does not understand. But every one of us who can say "I" has this divine life, which is all the life there is.

This sense of being we should awaken to, is

summarized for us in three wonderful quotations.

* . . . the I AM which he possesses is a direct gift to him from God, and . . . it is not his I AM, but God's I AM.

**God gave me being in order that I should give it back to Him . . . If I accept this gift it is . . . fatal, its virtue becomes apparent through my refusal of it. God allows me to exist [seemingly] outside himself. It is for me to refuse this authorization.

Humility is the refusal to exist outside God. It is the queen of virtues.

*** . . . it is the evasion of one's self . . . that constitutes the discovery in himself of the absolute I AM.

If we are to radiate this divine spark, we must keep it true to its source. Spiritual amnesia is mental darkness. Forgetfulness of the source of vision paralyzes the perceptive organs. Real

*Chronicle of Reality 147,
by George Edwin Burnell, page 11.

**Gravity and Grace, by Simone Weil, page 35.

***Chronicle of Reality 278,
by George Edwin Burnell, page 12.

vision, real understanding, operates through the faculties and the mind, but does not originate there.

Comprehensive vision is not blind to the every day problems that constantly beset man. Just the reverse: it recognizes and estimates situations at hand; and by means of the intelligence, which is the vision, grasps a general conclusion, which includes all the particulars presented on the surface. Back of the obvious, lies an over all directive of the spirit of the message.

To illustrate this inclusive vision: In some states a person, applying for a driver's license, among other things is questioned regarding the shape of certain road signs. In a sense it is reading the shape of things to come. For example, a sign that is round means "railroad," an octagonal sign indicates "stop," a sign in the form of a diamond always means "caution." Each individual sign may have different wording, but over and above what is written, is the general injunction. For instance, the diamond shaped sign may read "school zone," or

"curve," or "narrow bridge," but the general message transmitted by the shape is "caution;" the shape remains the same; the wording increases and confirms the meaning of the forms.

Our travel through life does not seem to demand a driving license; yet it is important to read the direction signs and to be able to gauge by the shape of these signs, a deeper and more general comprehensive message. There is an intuitive power that interprets observations with increasingly fuller meanings and brings to knowledge an understanding which is rightly called intelligence. Every intelligent wayfarer learns how to use the means provided to achieve his proper destination, and how to judge the signs which direct his activity on the path. For, actually, a wayfarer must also be a comprehender. As the wayfarer he makes progress; but as the comprehensor he holds within his vision as a simultaneous whole, the complete journey as fulfilled. Comprehensive vision does not cause one to neglect the details of the way; it gives him the light to move with confidence because

he knows the secret of fulfillment.

In earlier times travel was mostly on foot, or on the back of some beast of burden; then came ever increasingly complex methods of conveyance. But no matter what the devices that eased the hardships of the journey, the real sense of "drive" was in the intelligence that had set the goal. It is this intelligence that will not be misdirected or diverted, but which knows the true purpose for which life was created; and, once on the course, this intelligence cannot be deflected. It is not so much how travel is accomplished as it is the power to maintain direction. Aimed by intelligence, the end is assured; for the aim is directed by the source.

"From God to God" is the circle of intelligence. He who knows the true source of being holds the secret of happiness in life. Man travels in a circle to arrive at his destination, for beginning and end are not separated, but are one and the same. "I Am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end," says the Lord. What man accepts as his beginning must

be also his accepted end. For this reason materialism is a most pessimistic philosophy, and the too easily accepted statement, "from dust to dust," leaves the human intelligence hopelessly frustrated.

When, however, religion is raised to perception of pure reality, and one can let his heart rejoice in the revelation, "From God to God," even the way "from" and "to" is the satisfying experience of becoming what you are.

By now it should be clear why man, to fulfill his being, must travel in a circle. If he does not, he soon finds himself running off on a tangent—a frustrating detour.

No matter what man's mode of progress, the principle is the same: man must know himself and his relation to God and to God's universe. These answers are not discovered in the world nor in events nor even in man himself. When man, by means of scientific or philosophical explanations, tries to arrive at a reason for existence, he finds only a specific tangent that may look valid; and this he may follow until

he finds that it leads him into another dead-end way. These tangents cannot satisfy the inner cravings of his rational intelligence. Man can look at himself under a microscope or resort to philosophical arguments, but the real sense of being is not satisfied nor fulfilled. He has run off the track. Although he may enjoy great personal achievement, he is conscious of the feeling of lack and of frustration until he can return to the authentic course. In fact, personal achievement does not assure a happy life. In many cases it is just the reverse—too much material success diverts one from the true path of life and introduces too many deviations to pull him off his true course.

It is not, however, that material success itself diverts man from achieving his true end, which is comprehensive vision. It is not the success that diverts, but, rather, that people experiencing success consider this achievement to be the end for which they are ordained. Actually, if they have comprehensive vision, they will have success in all forms of experience; but the successful experience will be complementary

to the vision, rather than itself being the end.

All forms of travel, whether on land or sea or in the air, demand the exercise of intelligence to correct errors in the instruments and the operators. For instance, a compass is essential to navigation; but a compass is liable to magnetic interferences, which would mislead the pilot if he were not trained to see and recognize them.

In our journeying through life, human nature is played upon by external and internal influences, such as personal feelings and vascillating circumstances that cause us no end of confusion and danger unless intelligence sits in the driver's seat and keeps the course, regardless of influences. Intelligence knows how to make adjustments to the variations in life, to compensate for inaccuracies.

Navigation offers a good example of the constant need for intelligence in the pilot, to correct mechanical deviation in the instruments. The pilot uses a compass set for "north," but the magnetic pole and the "north pole" are not identical; and unless one is in direct line with

both, the degree of variation must be known and compensated for. Such influences as wind direction and velocity must be known and incorporated into the calculations if the destination is to be reached.

Whether the craft be a prairie schooner, a passenger liner, an airplane, a yacht, or a little sailboat, the guiding spirit of intelligence is required to know the goal and correlate all the factors involved, in order that all parts of the craft—as well as outside influences—may contribute to the end desired. The machine or craft cannot compensate for its own shortcomings, but the intelligence of the navigator, comprehending the laws of the machinery, the laws of navigation, and the desired goal, can use even the opposing influences to advantage. The one absolute necessity is that there be a fixed point, a point that does not change with circumstances. For the navigator this is a star, always above the horizon, so remote that it is immovable from the earth viewpoint. For the spiritual wayfarer navigating the sea of human experience, this absolute point is the comprehensive

vision of the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega. When we hold to this point of perception, all the relationships and the deviations are caught up into the inclusive circle in such a comprehensive manner that even opposing currents and influences are used to enhance the value of the whole life.

Human “machinery”—mind, body, soul—has its influences of attraction and repulsion. What can intelligence tell us of these, and how can these forces be made to complement and fulfill each other to attain the comprehensive vision?

The two poles which pull man’s strongest faculties, his intellect and his will, are truth and good. Intellect is drawn to truth as its perfection; will is drawn to good as its satisfaction. Human activity of thought has separated these two magnetic poles to such an extent that man, in trying to attain truth, has seemed to himself to have lost the good things of life; and in seeking after good, he feels he has, somehow missed the reality, or truth, of their existence. With these two strong faculties pulling against each other, it is no wonder that frustration has

been so enveloping. To look for good in what is not true, leaves man always disillusioned; and to see in truth something that is not good, is man's greatest despair. How is comprehensive vision to unite these poles so that man will no longer destroy himself in trying to fulfill his nature?

The secret is not in trying to change the forces, but in discovering that truth and good are identical. The logic of this is simple. Good must be true, or there would be no good at all; and the true must be good, or it would not be the perfection of the mind.

How does such perception apply to us on our journey? To experience this wonder of goodness and truth, is to be captivated by a divine beauty which takes hold of all the faculties and thus obtains a permission to pass right through the body of flesh to the soul.

Legend tells us of a venerable chieftain who, while on a journey, always took time out to rest and to contemplate. When asked why he sat so silent and immobile, he answered, "I am waiting for my soul to catch up." This would be a

good practice for men and women today—to stop and give their souls a chance to bring beauty and health and peace into their flesh. It is well to give the soul an opportunity to remember that God is absolutely good, eternally and unchangeably good, at this very instant. This is an incontrovertible fact: there actually cannot be anything in the universe at any time but this good and its revelation. When your soul catches up with your insight, you will experience the reality of good in your life; and you will discover the power of good working in you and for you to your perfection. You will no longer see this perception of good as an abstraction which leaves you struggling against contradictions in the material world.

The word "God" means the reality of good. Truth is God, good is God, therefore truth and good are identical. To the perception of Reality, the attribute of good simply adds the recognition of desirability.

*The Lord has wrought all our works in us.

*Isaiah 26: 12

This divine action in us does not discredit our own individual ability. Although, actually speaking, God is the immediate source of all our power—as He is the source and subsistence of our very life—yet He does not preside in us in such a way as to cancel His gift to us of our own power, a power with which He endowed us. God Who is the creator of heaven and earth, does not destroy the order of secondary causes He Himself has created. Instead, He bestows active power on these secondary causes. If created things lacked the operation proper to them, they themselves would be purposeless; for perfect operation is the purpose of everything. The recognition of God working in us, is truly the way to see that all things we do have their proper operation.

Man perfects his wonderful and comprehensive vision because God has given him this power; and God works in him as intelligence, that he may experience this proper fulfilment of his nature. "In Thy light we shall see light." This wonderful light is given to man that he may see all things in God and refer all things

to God in Whom all things have their end. He Who creates all things, also provides in all things the power to "see" truth and to know and love the true good.

God delights in making His providence conspicuous. Let us also delight in recognizing this same providence and in availing ourselves of the gifts it bestows.

Sometimes it seems that what is most conspicuous in itself, is most obscure to the mind that has become distracted by the mere details of life. The limitation of vision is not from the outside, but from the inside. We cannot comprehend anything outside to which we ourselves have no correspondence. For example, a first grade pupil going into a college lecture would grasp nothing of the meaning of the words spoken, for as yet the child has not mentally awakened to the intellectual point of correspondence. The intelligence is in the child, but is not yet developed; hence the child would be heedless of the wisdom offered. In a like manner, heedlessness to providence is not due to

outside concealment, but to lack of inner recognition. We simply fail to see what is closest to us.

God has given us an inner correspondence to Him. As scripture tells us, we are made to His image and therefore are capable of infinite and eternal things. We have a capacity for God. Our rational soul is like a mirror capable of receiving the divine image and likeness. When we say "mirror," we do not, of course, mean a piece of glass, framed, and hanging on the wall. Our greatest handicap in spiritual perception is our tendency to become lost in material reflections.

The soul is a spiritual mirror that is living and therefore highly sensitive to the touch of divine light, a light which, in its very nature, is luminous with God. It is in this light that we see light as it is. So completely can the soul be illumined by this divine light, that it becomes virtually impossible to think of anything or to see anything as reality, apart from God. This

is literally to see and know all things as they are.

Of course, in our realm, we do not see the entirety of anything because our minds are themselves finite. Plotinus says that each being is an eternal product of a whole and is at once both a whole and an individual manifest as part, but, to the keen vision . . . known for the whole it is.

The presence of embodied truth is enlightening. The very presence of an individual who has the comprehension of the whole, is healing to those around. Actually, what we in this world need most, is the embodiment of this light in those who travel the paths of human experience. It is extremely important in these times for us to keep this light of comprehensive vision shining. The average wayfarer has become a victim of constantly increasing intellectual confusion, for he has concentrated too much on the physical world and its problems and has been heedless of the real place man occupies in the universe because of his relation to God.

Because of lack of vision, the true order of

human life has been unbalanced. This order is restored, not through alterations within the nature of man, but through recognition of the divine authority of his being. We may be heedless of this divine nature, but it is never really lost to us. The life of our soul is God, the life of our body is our soul; but our soul bestows on our body, without interruption, the life God has given it to bestow. The restoration is by vision rather than by any sort of management. We do not restore this vision by studying the world, for physical science does not even expose the truly important facts of the world. Nor can man, by merely studying himself and his neighbors, find out what makes humanity "tick." A person who seeks to know only the world—or just man and his world—has a blurred and distorted vision and is really ignorant of both. What happens is that the mind becomes so hopelessly entangled in this mass of meaningless detail, that man remains in darkness although the light is truly shining.

Man, unlike a stone, is made to see; and to see is the intellect's proper good; therefore lack

of vision is termed evil. If this evil, which is merely negative, becomes actively positive, it is then a double darkness—first, of not seeing what is there, and second, of seeing what is not there. This maze of confusion leaves man feeling utterly hopeless and helpless. But there is an immovable and unchanging intelligence to which we can turn if we will—an intelligence which gives meaning to man and his world. It is only in the divine light that things have significance, and are seen as they are in reality. The world has meaning only in terms of man and his relation to God; and man has meaning only in his true relation, as beginning and ending in God. For this reason it is vitally important for man to know about God. Until he can see things in the light of God, he cannot possibly know what is really important about the world nor about his own nature.

The spiritual wayfarer, then, cannot merely travel the surface of life to obtain the comprehensive vision; he must open his consciousness to *unexplored* dimensions. Transcending heights and profound depths must unite in the

wholeness of his perception. The incredible paradox of existence must not be seen as a double aspect of life, but as the revelation of non-duality. This activity is just as an image in a mirror; it does not produce otherness, but, instead, manifests the one presence. Until we have seen this, the journey of life seems to present hard lessons in detachment. But why should God seem to detach Himself from us, except in order to really be one with us?

The words "from God, to God" suggest to the finite mind, movement in relation to an immovable. Our comprehensive vision is directed toward this "immovable" and who it is that is "to" and "from." Hence, comprehensive vision includes God and ourselves. And what is it that makes this journey necessary to us? It is the fact that we always seem to take a stand as being "away from" God, that makes this restoration of whole vision imperative. Actually we cannot ever be "from" God in the sense of being separated from Him and His providence; but because we are so heedless of His presence within and without, and because we are so convinced

that we are apart from God, the journey to God is necessary. As Evelyn Underhill says in the treatise on Mysticism, "Nothing hath separated us from God but our own will, or rather, our own will *is* our separation from God."

We seem to make the journey home to the Father in order that our vision may be truly comprehensive. Finite life is not, however, ended when it returns to the Father's heart. In other words, finite life is not ended, in the sense of ceasing to be, with the realization of the infinite life. Instead, it is brought to its proper and eternal perfection as the manifest and conscious expression of the true Self.

The entire cycle of the journey of attainment may be regarded as "becoming" what you are, a matter of forgetfulness and remembering; the forgetful finite image is conscious only of itself and unconscious of the infinite which must ever be the ground of finite being.

Because of such forgetfulness the finite creatures must ever look "up" to that presence of the infinite, although, without the infinite the finite could not be. In remembering, the

finite being must ever be filled, according to its measure, with infinite presence. The infinite cannot ever be outside the finite any more than it is within. From a finite perspective it may seem forgotten and thus above or beyond, and be so described; yet truly speaking, it is the very essence of being and therefore remembered and regarded as within.

Our journey "home" to our Father, like the return of the prodigal, seems to be an outside journey; but, actually, the outer activity is, in principle, only an awakening to the supreme life of all. This appears in the world as a search, as a quest, as a journey, although truly it is but revelation of being to being; for only being can know being.

This eternal cycle from God to God, from goodness to goodness, from truth to truth, is the comprehensive vision of all life. As "comprehensive," it includes every aspect, every picture. It distinguishes the natural from the spiritual, not to separate, but to unite, for unless the breath of heaven is in all so-called natural life,

it cannot remain even natural.

We cannot climb up from the natural to the supernatural, from the material or finite to the spiritual and infinite; but because of God's providence, the spiritual permeates everything and thus includes all that is good and true and authoritative in nature. The spiritual or infinite maintains and ameliorates life on this earth continuously, bringing into the natural the degrees of divine perfection; and thus decreeing the supernatural, the active divine life on this earth.

Comprehensive vision really means the perception which takes place at the point of junction between the finite seeing instruments and the infinite light of intelligence which is the power to see and to know. This junction point, which may seem like the meeting place of two, is really one eternal Self, a Super-Unity—the Experiencer of all and the fulfillment of all.

It is that vision of embodied truth which is both wayfarer and comprehensor. This point of

perception is present in each of us, for the arousal of recollection. We may seem to ourselves to be arduously working our way home to our Father, but in each of us "from" and "to" are in our own consciousness. We may seem to die to one vista and to be born to the next, but this moving of past into future is not one of local motion, but rather of awakening awareness of the divine life already within.

As the light of vision begins to dawn, the arduous aspect of the journey will melt away and all the chains of ignorance fall off, taking with them the many petty problems of the world that distract and thwart us. We will awaken to that true freedom of spirit experienced only when breathing the air of God.

God is what He is, and we cannot change Him by any views of ours. He is the unchangeable. Our views of being *with* God or *apart* from God is only in ourselves.

For our own happiness then, much depends on the way we place ourselves in relation to God. But our acceptance or denial of God does not change His relation to us. Even the fool

who said in his heart, "There is no God," does not cause God to cease to be. Actually atheism proves God rather than disproves Him. For an atheist, when thinking he is unveiling a mystery, really is only betraying his own psychology; for the very fact that he denies God, unwittingly becomes proof of God. If the metaphysical content of the perception of God were not of such vital importance, the troubled will of the atheist would not have need of such vehement protestation. Frank Werfel says that atheism offers no escape from God—neither does darkness. Even the fugitive from life cannot really run away from existence. In spite of himself he must always have being with him, even as a point from which to escape. Consequently, the fugitive nature builds up its own frustration.

But this same point of being is also the salvation point. This point is the fixed, immovable junction between the true Self and the manifestation of self as fugitive or wayfarer. It is also the point at which the wayfarer, becoming free from the fugitive aspect, discovers

himself to be the comprehensor also. For this point of union between the finite and the infinite, is the place where the vital seed of true living enters the heart and mind of the traveler of life's highway, and where, as it were, he becomes a new being, not by destruction of the old, but by illumination.

This true Self once received into the individual being, once accepted, perceived, felt, and experienced, becomes the ability to see and to know that which is—as it is. The adjustments are not on the outside, for truly there is nothing to remedy, correct, or heal. The adjustment needed is within our conscious self. We have the truth to see. Let us see it by that being which is truth. The spirit of truth leads us into all truth and teaches us the inner meanings of life. Being is God's gift to us, the power to accept Him as our beginning and our end. He unveils to our heart His own heart and unites His divine and eternal Being with our human cycle of being, that we may see that all life and

existence is from God, to God, and in God.

According to Saint Augustine: It is by His gift that I speak, by His gift that he comprehends who does comprehend, and by His gift that he who does not yet comprehend, believes.

GENEVIEVE BURNELL ROBINSON



