

Neville Goddard Lecture



The Heavenly Vision

Neville Goddard Lecture - The Heavenly Vision 11-15-1968

The most that can be expected of any man is that he be true to the vision he has seen. Paul, the greatest and possibly the most influential figure in the history of Christianity, was such a man. When brought in chains before the king, he said: "Here I stand on trial for hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead? O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Here I stand testifying, saying only what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass.' As he made his defense Festus said, 'Paul, you are mad; your great learning is turning you mad.' But Paul said, 'I am not mad. I am speaking the sober truth. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought in me.'"

Paul knew no physical Christ, but defined him as the power of God and the wisdom of God, telling us: "From now on I regard no one from a human point of view; even though I once regarded Christ from a human point of view, I regard him thus no longer. I know only Christ and him crucified." Paul urged us to always bear in mind that scripture was a mystery . . . a shocking mystery. It is told so beautifully, unless you take the trouble to look up the words as you read them you will accept their surface meaning, as one billion Christians do. Tonight, if I used the word, "crucified", the average Christian would see a man impaled upon a wooden cross, or maybe hanging on a tree, but that is not what Paul meant when he used the word, "crucified."

If you will look up the word, "crucified" in the James Strong's Concordance, you will discover that it is made up of two Greek words. The first word means "union by

association; companionship; completeness” and the second word means “to extinguish passion.” That is the purpose of the union.

Paul, seeing Christ as the creative power of God, says: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” Then he continued by saying: “You were bought for a price, so glorify God in your body.” The price paid is union with Christ. That is the heavenly vision Paul referred to when he said: “Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead? O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.” For by this act God gives you himself, thereby transforming your mortal body of beliefs into a body of glory. This is done by a creative act.

You will find scripture is filled with creative acts. In one story, the Risen Christ is made to say: “Who touched me, for I perceive that power has gone forth from me.” (The word “touch” here means “to set on fire” and is a euphemism for “to lie with a woman,” as touch is a creative act.) The story is told of a woman who touched the hem of the garment of a man called the Son of God and was healed, but Christ is not a man, Christ is the creative power of God. That power is expressed through man supernaturally, not physically, for God, his Father, is Spirit and therefore he is Spirit. You cannot separate Christ from God, for God and his creative power are one, but it takes a man to express God’s power.

In the Book of Matthew, his disciples came to him, saying: “Explain the parable of the sower,” and he answered: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world. The good seed means the sons of God.” When the Son of man comes he plants his spiritual seed in those whom he calls. This act of crucifixion (which is the planting of the seed), far from being painful, is the most ecstatic experience possible. No union on earth can compare in ecstasy to this spiritual act. And when you, an individual, are called, you are told to “There remain with God.” There is no need to change your job, join a monastery, or go into a nunnery after the act. If you are a housewife, mother, father, businessman, or doctor when you are called, there remain with God and lock the memory of what has happened within you. Do not broadcast it to the world, for . . . not understanding . . . they would condemn you for talking such nonsense; yet this is the way God raises the dead.

Only Christ is raised. “We are born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” But to be raised, the seed must be penetrated by Christ. This ecstatic union

takes place your own wonderful human imagination as you walk the earth doing earthly things. Then, in due time you are raised and born from above as the drama of Jesus Christ unfolds within you.

The word translated “seed: is the Greek word “sperma,” which means “the male sperm.” Penetrated by Spirit, he leaves his spiritual sperm which bears his image of God which you carry within you, until it completes itself and you are raised, born from above, and unfold within yourself everything said of Christ in scripture. This is how God, being the Son of man, produces sons for the kingdom.

Now the Risen Lord asks this question: “Who do people say that the Son of man is?” and they answered: “Some say John the Baptist come again, others say Elijah and still others say Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” Then, identifying himself with the Son of man, he asked: “But who do you say that I AM?” You will notice that when he first asked the question concerning the Son of man they brought in a physical state, but when he asked: “Who do you say that I AM?” Peter answered: “Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.” Then he said: “Blessed are you Simon bar Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to your but my Father who is in heaven.” Here we see that the drama must unfold within the individual, for no man of flesh and blood could have told Peter, it had to be revealed to him.

In Paul’s case, as in Peter’s their seat of authority was not in scripture as a dead written code, but in experience. Having experienced scripture, they could identify the Son of man with the I AM and Christ, for he is the power of God who impregnates the chosen ones. Eventually all will be called, and all will be raised through the impregnation of Christ, the Son of man who is God.

I know that on the surface this shocks people. If anyone read the Bible as I have just explained it to you, they would close the book and call it pornographic, yet from beginning to end, the Bible speaks only of the creative power of God. You can take that same creative power and use it here in the world of Caesar, for it is your own wonderful human imagination. If you will conjure a scene which would imply the fulfillment of your dream and remain faithful to that vision as Paul was to the heavenly vision, your desire will come to pass.

Paul did not expect the vision. It came upon him suddenly, like some great catastrophic earthquake. You cannot conjure the vision, it simply happens. But you can conjure a

scene which would imply the fulfillment of your desire, remain faithful to it and it will project itself upon the screen of space. I've done it unnumbered times.

Take a simple scene. Would someone congratulate you if they heard of your good fortune? Then allow them to do so. Accept their congratulations, just as you would if they came to you in the flesh. Now remain faithful to that vision. If you need a more complex scene, like two people discussing your success, eavesdrop on them. Listen to their words of praise or envy, then do not forget that vision. Conjured in your imagination, carry it with you, knowing that what it implies will come to pass, for its potency is not in the scene itself, but what the scene implies.

So Paul, in this heavenly vision, saw the creative act of God. He saw individuals being raised and singled out to play their part, for God needs man as his agent. Every error (as well as truth), needs man to express it. God uses man as his agent to express everything in this shadow world, as well as the spiritual world. And so in the creative act of God it takes man, but not a man of flesh and blood.

Everything here is reduced, as we are completely encased and insulated. What thrills you here pales to nothing when the garment is taken off and you are Spirit, performing the act of God by glorifying him in your body. As his image, called Christ, you radiate the glory of God and are the express image of his person as you impregnate, but it is done selectively, never haphazardly.

The night I was called and taken into the presence of the Risen Christ, I had no idea it would happen. The year was 1929. Having read scripture before the vision, I thought the words "Faith, hope and love" were the words of Paul, but this night I discovered they were the words of God spoken by Paul, for he said: "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought in me," therefore these were the words of Christ.

The night I was taken into the presence of the risen Christ (the embodiment of God's creative power) all I could see was infinite love. All I could think of was love. And when he asked me the simple question: "What is the greatest thing in the world," I answered automatically: "Faith, hope, and love. These three, but the greatest of these is love." At that moment he embraced me and we fused. That was my heavenly vision, my union with the Risen Lord. I can't describe the thrill I experienced when I became one with the Spirit and the body of the Risen Lord.

Then I was taken to stand before a being who seemed to radiate infinite power. In him I felt no compassion or love, simply raw power. As his eyes penetrated mine, I heard his thoughts, as a voice rang out in the heavens, with this command: "Time to act." At that moment I was propelled out of that divine assembly to find myself back in this little insulated body and . . . like Mary . . . I pondered what had happened to me.

I was only twenty-four at the time and knew nothing of the mysteries and wondered what had happened, as my room was flooded with an unearthly light which remained for the longest time. Then, in good time the mystery unraveled itself within me. We are told: "When he was about thirty years of age, he began his ministry." Thirty years later I experienced my resurrection and birth from above. That pregnancy took thirty years to ripen and come to fulfillment in me.

If today you took me before any person who had the power to put me in prison or put me to death, like Paul I would still remain faithful to the vision. Paul said: "O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." The word "Agrippa" means "a wild horse tamer". The mind is symbolized as a horse. Here is a wild mind that Festus considered mad, but Paul knew he was not mad. He was speaking the sober truth, but it is shocking and difficult to believe that this is what God told the prophets.

Paul told the Galatians that the story of Abraham was an allegory. In the story, Abraham was told that, in spite of his age and the fact that the womb had ceased to be after the way of women for Sarah, his wife, she would conceive and bear a son. If this story is an allegory and Abraham is the origin of all humanity (for he is the father of the multitudes) then everything that comes from this origin must be an allegory, for all things run true to their source. If the origin is an allegory, no matter how you bring it down to culminate in Jesus Christ that, too, has to be an allegory. But that does not mean it is not true.

Scripture is a great truth told in the form of an allegory. Try to find out the fictitious character of its stories and discover the meaning. And when you do, hold onto your discovery until vision either confirms or causes you to modify your belief. The story is told that Abraham had two wives and two sons, one born of a free woman and one born of a slave. The free woman, called Sarah, bore Isaac; therefore he was spiritually born and not something of the flesh. Sarah was told that she would be blessed with a child of God. If I am blessed with the begetting of the son of God then I must be his bride, his emanation yet his wife 'til this great sleep of death is past.

Paul experienced this heavenly vision and remained faithful to it. He did not waver even though they tortured him. Time and again he was brought before some tribunal. Being a

very learned man and one of the Pharisees, he was born a Roman, yet was also a Jew; therefore, he could claim whatever suited him. If the Jews began to persecute him, he would claim his Roman citizenship . . . or his Jewish ancestry when necessary. He had everything, but in spite of his great learning, when the vision possessed him he could do other than live by it.

Paul was used in the capacity of Christ as one who expresses the creative power of God. Having experienced the crucifixion, he wrote these lovely stories concerning his experience, saying:” “I have decided to know nothing whatsoever but Jesus Christ and him crucified”” The average person will see a man impaled upon a cross, but having had union in order to extinguish passion, one becomes the sower, sowing seeds to the selective. And the one selected should not scream it from the housetops, but like Mary was told in the 2nd chapter of Luke, keep the vision locked in your heart and ponder it until the time is fulfilled.

No physical child is born, for the child you meet in the mystery is only a sign of your spiritual birth; but you couldn't be born from above except through the resurrection of Christ within you. Therefore, man is born again through the resurrection of Christ, who has to be within him in order to rise from within. Only that which is now in you can rise in you. Only that which descended can ascend. So the seed descends into man, and when it matures Christ rises and Man is born from above.

I know it doesn't make sense on this level. It cannot, for it does not take place here. As a child I was taught the Christian story by my mother and my Sunday school teacher. I believed them and never once questioned the historicity of Jesus Christ or the physical reality of the being. Then came the night of the shock when I discovered that Christ was the power of God buried in me, waiting for the fullness of time when it would explode and reveal me to myself. I didn't realize how literally true the statement: “Unless you believe that I AM He you die in your sins,” was, until the night he erupted in me and I discovered who I really was. Even then I did not know I had been singled out to play the part of the apostle. But it's all done on a high spiritual plane, all within the individual.

In the Old Testament the story is told of Jacob who wrestled with the Lord and was touched on his thigh, causing it to shrink. Read this story carefully. Look up the word “thigh” in your Concordance and you will discover what is really being revealed. The truth is being told in a gentle manner so that the so-called “good” people of the world will not be shocked.

Perhaps if you are here for the first time you, too, will be shocked by my words, but those of you who have been coming regularly will not be, for you have been trained to understand. Like Paul, “If you will not receive the things I tell you of the earth, how will you receive the things I tell you of heaven?” What images can I use to tell you of the heavenly state when there are no images here to describe it? Do you know that “Eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, nor has it entered into the hearts of men the things already prepared for those who love the Lord?” What image of earth could I use to describe things that cannot be seen by the mortal eye? Or understood by the mortal mind?

I can describe the moment of the crucifixion, but I cannot describe the ecstasy. That night, in vision I led a throng in procession to the house of God, when suddenly a voice came out of the nowhere saying: “God walks with them.” A woman at my right questioned the voice, asking: “If God walks with us, where is he?” And the voice replied: “At your side.” Taking the words literally, she turned to her left (she could have turned to her right) and looking into my face she began to laugh and said: “What! Neville is God?” and the voice answered: “Yes, in the act of waking.”

Then the voice spoke from within me and to me alone, saying: “I laid myself down within you to sleep and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed...” and I, knowing the end of the sentence would be that he is dreaming he is I, became so emotional that I was sucked into this body on the bed as my hands became vortices, my head a vortex, my side a vortex and the soles of my feet vortices. These six vortices created the greatest ecstasy imaginable, a feeling that was the exact opposite of intense pain!

Having experienced the vision, I have not been able to forget the moment he buried himself within me. And because He did, in due time He rose in me; yet I am still encased in this insulated body until that moment when he calls me to return to the glory that was mine before I was sent, restoring my rank at that time. I do not know when; I only know that when the moment comes that he calls, no power on earth can stop me from answering his call.

So the heavenly vision is a glorious experience. Everyone is destined one day to awaken as God, because everyone was selected in the beginning. One day you will have a mystical experience that is sheer ecstasy. Its purpose will be revealed later when you rise and are born from above. Then, if you are a teacher or an apostle (or whatever your role will be) you will play your part until that moment when your insulation is removed and men call you dead. But far from being dead, you will be in the kingdom.

You will not have gone through the little gate called death to be restored to like in a terrestrial world like this one, to do all of the things we do here. That's the normal passage of death until that moment in time when Christ rises with you and you are a Son of the resurrection and die no more. For you there will be no more passages through the little gate called death, but . . . wearing a body of glory which was the price paid by Christ . . . you will live in an entirely different age.

There was never any money exchanged for your life. God paid the price by dying that you may live. He exchanged his life for yours, and you bear his seed which has the power to save you. God is the sower and you are the field. The purpose of the planting of that seed is so that you could become the Son of the kingdom. God is now waiting for the unnumbered sons which he promised to Abraham . . . more sons than the stars of the heaven, more than the sands of the sea.

In the end everyone will be saved, but there are degrees in the kingdom, just as there are in the army here on earth. Not everyone is an apostle, a teacher, or a miracle worker. The highest rank is the apostle who God calls, selects, and sends in his name so the apostle can say: "He who sees me sees him who sent me, who is God the Father, for I know my Father and you know not your God."

May I tell you: when you experience the heavenly vision you will never forget it or turn aside from it. After it happens in you, your values change. You have no desire to possess things anymore, because you know you own it all. King Agrippa had everything and possessed nothing. Paul had nothing and possessed everything. What could Paul want when he knew the truth of the 50th Psalm: "If I were hungry I would not tell you for the earth is mine and all within it. I would simply slay and eat, for the cattle on a thousand hills are mine." I know this statement to be true, and have no desire to possess things anymore. All I need now is enough to pay Caesar his taxes. I want to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, but I have no ambition to pile up things of this world.

Tonight, take any passage from scripture and check each word in the Concordance, for the meaning of words changes. Perhaps 2000 years ago those who heard the word "crucify" understood what Paul meant, but through the years our priesthoods have organized the great truth and changed the meaning of the word. Now we see a man impaled upon a cross and can ask ourselves the same question asked the Galatians: "O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish having begun with the Spirit, you are

now ending with the flesh?” Are you seeing a man of flesh, rather than the dramatization of the power of God?

When you read scripture, see a man step on the stage (like a moving picture) and think of it as an allegory. Learn to distinguish between what you are seeing and what you are being told. And when you discover the fictitious character, extract its meaning and abide by it. Jesus Christ is portrayed as crucified, as having union by association to extinguish passion, at which time the seed (which is the image of the Living God) is planted, making your redemption assured.

You cannot be born from above (which is essential to enter the kingdom of God) unless first Jesus Christ rises in you. So you are redeemed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ in you . Nothing can emerge from man which was not first submerged, so Christ has to descend. When one the being who has already been raised and selected for that part plants the seed, the image of God descends, and nothing can ascend but that which first descended.

Now let us go into the Silence.