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Kanzo Uchimura : Japan : Its Mission

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Kanzo Uchimura

Japan : Its Mission

Naoshi Koike

Abstract

Every year since 1931, the year following his death, Commemorative Lecture Meetings of Kanzo Uchimura, a Christian reformer of Japan, have been held. This year it was held in Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and other places. It has been continued over 35 years. This shows how great an influence his thought and faith had among his country men. Here I want to introduce Uchimura's views under his title, "Japan: Its Mission," and also "One Day, One Life" (Ichinichi Isshio). The central thought of the reformer is a fusing of the Orient and the Occident, and that of the latter is Uchimura's impression as daily spiritual food quoting holy passages.

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1. Introduction

Kanzo Uchimura (1861-1930), the author of "How I became a Christian," wrote about seventy kinds of books on the Bible and Christian faith through his various experiences of life. He was a son of a Samurai

warrior and had a strong love for his own country, but not a narrow-minded patriotism like that of the militaristic and self-centered. He wanted to help his motherland rise from her paganism and to help her do justice for mankind. Before taking up the questions at issue, we have to know the points of faith of the author. The main points of his faith would be given as follows :

2. Points of Uchimura's Faith

1.) Layman, A Servant of Jesus Christ.

Uchimura's Christianity is first of all that of layman Christianity. He became a Christian through the influence of William Smith Clark (1826-1886) a layman evangelist. All his life Uchimura was a layman believer and his preaching was also that of layman evangelist. He did not belong to any denomination nor church. He baptized very rarely. He established no church (except the Sapporo Independent Church) nor formed any organization of his students or fellow believers. He was free from formal doctrine or theology and almost ignored all ceremonies. For faith is life in Jesus Christ and a life can never be confined within a certain system or creeds or ceremony. Therefore creeds are not the end or object of faith in themselves, but expressions of our fellowship with Christ and must not be mistaken for the object or center of our faith. Uchimura was rather a servant of Jesus Christ whose corn cannot be easily measured by the churches' own dogmatic bushel. Under the title, "A servant of Jesus Christ" he said as follows :¹⁾

A Servant of Jesus Christ.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ ! Truly so ! A servant ; not a friend, not a brother, nor even a disciple ; but a servant, a slaveservant, one whose will is not his own, but his master's. Of Jesus Christ ; not of men nor of groups of men : not of kings, nor of bishops : not of churches, nor of governments : not of society nor of humanity ; but of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Lord of man. His business is not social service, nor church-service, nor government service, but solely and entirely Christ-service. Paul, a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ ; therefore an independent, courageous, humble and kindly man ; a man, who without serving men and society, did most to uplift, purify, and renovate the

world. Oh, may I be like him, and be truly a servant of Jesus Christ!²⁾

2.) Centering in the Cross

His faith was cross-centered. For him, Christianity was essentially the religion of the Cross, it was not only simply the religion of Christ but also the religion of Christ crucified. Why did he especially say so? Because during his life-time as even today, many things pass for Christianity, which are not such as social service, ethical evangelism and international thinking, etc. He only believed in the Cross and lived only in the Cross. Through him, the gospel of the Cross was made known to the public at large in Japan on the lines of Paul—Luther—Uchimura.

3.) Bible Believer

His faith was from beginning to end Biblical. The authority of his faith was based upon the Bible and his study was that of the Bible; his scientific and all other studies were for that end. His evangelical work was that of the Bible. On the front page of his English Bible had been written in his own handwriting: "I am firmly resolved to die in the study of the Scripture; in them are all my joy and all my peace." —Erasmus. For Uchimura, the Bible was not of churches, neither of earth nor flesh, but that of heaven, of mankind, of spirit, and it was his own life. Indeed, the Bible was his biggest weapon, with prayer, against the world. He firmly believed the virgin birth, resurrection, miracles, the Trinity, heaven, the future life, judgment and Second Advent of Christ, etc. He boldly lived in them and boldly preached them and never hesitated to do so. The authority and might of his preaching came from this faith.

Uchimura mentioned under the title "Unity of the Bible" the following statement:

Unity of the Bible

Is the Bible literature or a book? It is literature, says the modern criticism; it is a book, says the Christian experience. To the Christian, the Bible is a single book, as certainly as is *Hamlet* or *Divina Commedia*. The author is one, the plan is one, the spirit is one, and the truth is one. The Bible is a cosmos, a unity in diversities, a harmony

in discrepancies, a perfection. He who *lives* the Bible, and not merely reads it, knows that it is so. Apart from orthodoxy, by the sheer force of logics of experiences, he is compelled to believe that it is so. Not a word is to be added unto it, nor a word is to be taken away from it.³⁾

4.) Independence and Freedom

His faith was that of independence and freedom. He was a son of a Samurai and lived in that spirit of chivalry. Uchimura did not pay a profound bow (*saikeirei*) before the Emperor Meiji's signature on the Imperial Rescript on Education while others did and also claimed Pacifism in the Russo-Japanese War. This caused him to be called "a national traitor". For this he lost his job and his financial situation became very difficult. Sometimes he was pressed by hunger.

His wife often had to visit the pawn-shop with her bridal kimonos. He, however, could not allow himself to run into any debt because he didn't want to lose his independence and freedom. Except for small gifts of money received as tokens of love from friends, he received nothing. His evangelical work had no support from foreign missionaries, he received neither financial assistance from them nor any other help. For this, he was disliked by the missionaries and church-men. But all through his life he had performed the fidelity of pure independence and freedom of faith. At the same time, he esteemed others' independence and freedom of faith. Through Uchimura, Japan won a noble Christianity.

5.) Patriotic and Fight for the cause of Justice

Uchimura was a son of a Samurai as I mentioned before, and patriot by birth. He himself was samurai-spirited and his Christianity was that of a patriot. His father was a good Confucian scholar and he was naturally greatly influenced with Confucian thinking and training before he became a Christian in his youth. It was a very good preparatory course for him to become a real strong Christian. "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."⁴⁾

Two J's, Jesus and Japan, were his lifelong lovers and friends, and for them he gave his life. As for the "Second J", some missionaries

protest that Uchimura was nationalistic. But others say that he was a hero or a great man. No matter how they criticized him, Uchimura had a strong patriotism for his motherland just as missionaries should also have for their motherlands.

For Uchimura, an advocacy of justice was the first step to save the world; —without doing this, propagation of the gospel would be fruitless, he thought, In order to hold honour and righteousness for mankind in his country, he bravely advocated Pacifism against public opinion and also, for the truth, he wouldn't give a profound bow before the Meiji Emperor's signature on the Imperial Rescript on Education⁵⁾, even if he were declared a traitor and forced to die. But the truth upheld him.

When Uchimura was young, he thought that there was the existence of righteous wars as well as unjust wars. In 1818, (Uchimura was 34 years old,) at the time of the Sino-Japanese War, he wrote "*Justification of the Korean War*"⁶⁾ and defended the righteous cause of Japan before the world; but later he knew and recognized that he was wrong. A little before the Russo-Japanese War, he took the standpoint of absolute pacifism—which means that all warfare is wrong. The reason which caused him to be an absolute pacifist was principally the Bible, especially the New Testament. He thought that killing people was clearly against the teaching of the Bible— "*You shall not kill; love your enemies.*"⁷⁾

It would be more proper to say that he was more faithful, loyal and devoted to Jesus than to say merely that he was a nationalist. For Uchimura, all was for God, as is shown in his own gravestone inscription:

I for Japan ;
Japan for the World ;
The World for Christ ;
And all for God.

In May, 1929, about one year before Uchimura passed away, he mentioned under the title "By the Grace of God."⁸⁾ the following:

By the Grace of God.

By the grace of God, I am what I am.⁹⁾ By the Grace of God, I was born a Japanese and the son of samurai. By the grace of God, I

found Christ in my youth, and became his disciple and servant. By the grace of God, I became not a Methodist, a Congregationalist, an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, or a member of any one of hundreds and thousands of churches into which the Western Christianity is divided, but remained just as a Japanese Christian, a child of God, a son of the East, not ashamed of having owned Confucius as my pedagogues, and honest sons and daughters of my land as my teachers and examples. It is all by the grace of God; my choice and self-will have had no part in it; I was driven thereto by the irresistible grace of God.

Uchimura was so proud that he was born a Japanese and a son of a samurai, that he became a genuine, brave believer in Christ still grafted to Bushidō.

3. Japan : Its Mission

In 1892, Uchimura had contributed a work under the title : "Japan : Its Mission" in *The Japan Mail* which was issued in Yokohama. It was two years before the Sino-Japanese War started and he was thirty-one years old. In this contribution, he had mentioned his hope and dream about her geographical features, ethnic characteristics and historic indication, which Uchimura cherished from his youth till late in life.

In his introduction first of all he suggested three questions :

1. What is the chief aim of man ?
2. For what purpose was the country made, of which he is a citizen, or what is its mission ?
3. For what purpose was he sent, or what is his mission ?

Uchimura said that these questions are important to a philosophical man who desires to serve his country and Creator to the best of his ability and he continues as follows :

The first question is mainly speculative, though its practical significance is not to be overlooked. It makes a world of difference whether a man looks upon this universe as his play ground for a definite period of time, or as his school where he is trained and disciplined for a higher state of existence. The question is important, but we dismiss it by answering in the words of the Westminster Confession, which, though two-and a half centuries old, yet appears to us to be the profoundest and

most philosophic of all the answers given to this highest of all human inquiries: —

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” Let those, who in the all-embracing word “God” find nothing but tinctures of superstition, substitute for it righteousness, justice, mercy, and good will; and they can form some idea, in this short incisive answer of the Puritan saints, of the sublimity and completeness of their moral conception concerning the destiny of man and creation.

The third question is more practical and comprehensive. Men in all times, especially great men, believed more or less in Providence appointing one kind of work to one set of people, and another kind to another set. Artist Michelangelo, composer Mozart, discoverer Columbus, statesman Cromwell, warrior Napoleon, philanthropist Howard, poet Whittier and songstress Lind were all intensely conscious of their special missions in this world. A man cannot be anything he chooses to be. The world must have lost much if, instead of painting the Sistine Chapel and chiselling Moses, Michaelangelo had followed the footsteps of his spiritual leader Savonarola and became a moral reformer of Italy; or if Cromwell had attempted to imitate Bunyan or Milton, and vacated Whitehall for a less worthy man. Every man has his own place, where he succeeds best and the world is benefited most. “Know thyself.”

If mankind in general with the earth he lives upon has a definite end and aim, and if each individual is destined for a specific work in his time and place, then a nation as a unit which goes to compose the whole human family, must have a work peculiar to itself and contributory to the welfare and progress of the whole. ...

What is Japan’s mission, or what can she do for the world? If Egypt and Babylon started civilization, Phoenicia dispersed it, Judea purified it, Greece polished it, Italy preserved it, Germany reformed it, England tempered it, and America executed it, is nothing more left for Japan to work upon it? Has she only to eat and drink and grow fat upon what others have earned for her, and be satisfied? Or can she do some great things for the world?—

Geographical Features.

The following points are evident in the geographical configuration of Japan : —

1. It is insular, resembling in this respect its sister Empire of the Atlantic.

2. As England lies near the centre of land-hemisphere, so Japan lies in the periphery of the same.

3. Its chief mountain system runs lengthwise. i.e. from S. W. to N. E., disturbed only the Hakone-Fuji range...

In respect to its mountain system, Japan bears a resemblance to Italy.

4. More indentations are found on its eastern or Pacific side than on its western or Continental side. In Kyūshū, however, the indentations are decidedly on the side that turns toward China, and the coast line is almost unbroken on the eastern side. In connection with this, let the student observe the situation of San Francisco, just opposite our Iwaki-Taira, and Vancouver, Taboma, Seattle, and Portland on its north, and San Diego, San Blas, Manzanillo, Acapulco on its south, all turning towards us...

Japan stretches one arm toward America, now enjoying the choicest fruits of European civilization. By the opening of the Vancouver line, she is today no farther from America than the latter was from Europe only a few years ago.

On the other hand, by means of Shimonoseki and Nagasaki, she stretches the other arm towards the responding arms of Korea and China, the whole making Japan a stepping-stone, as it were, between the Occidental and the Oriental continents. Winds and currents seem to imply the same thing, making call at Yokohama almost a necessity to a vessel that plies between the two continents. There she stands as an "arbiter," a "middle man" (nakahodo) between the 'Democratic West and the Imperial East' between the Christian America and the Buddhist Asia.

Ethnic Characteristics.

Uchimura mentioned that we arrive at almost the same conclusions as we approach our question from the study of the race characteristics

of the Japanese. He continued: The fact that we are and ought to become good sailors and merchants has been often said and urged. While we are not ashamed of our military prowess, it is a doubtful question whether we were made to cope with the sturdy Cossacks or the sinewy Scotch Highlanders upon the field of battle—In intellectual spheres, no less than in commercial, Japan is a stepping-stone between the East and the West.

Historic Indication.

That civilization marches westward, in a direction opposite to the diurnal motion, is a proposition constantly advanced by philosophers and statesmen— In 1847, San Francisco was opened, and in five years more the Pacific was crossed and the sun dawned upon Japan. America believed in her mission and has fulfilled it well. She received it from Europe and delivered it to Japan. Now it is Japan's turn to add a new proof to the grand possibility of the human race. The law of the westward march was not to be reversed when civilization reached Japan. She is now to set up another national example, which, in the words of Charles Sumner, "will be more puissant than army or navy for the conquest of the world."

Two streams of civilization flowed in opposite directions when mankind descended from their primitive homes on the table-land of Iran or Armenia. That towards the west passed through Babylon, Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, Germany, England, and culminated on the Pacific side of America, while that towards the East trailed through India, Tibet, and China, culminating in the Manchoo Court of Peking. The moral world is also a magnet with its two opposite poles on the opposite banks of the Pacific, the democratic, aggressive, inductive America, and the imperial, conservative, deductive China. There have been constant attempts for the union of these magnetic currents. Plato, born in a time and at a place when and where the two opposing currents were not far from the centre of equilibrium, has never been approached in the roundness and completeness of his philosophy. Grand tasks await the young Japan who has the best of Europe and the best of Asia at her command. At her touch the circuit is completed, and the healthy fluid shall overflow the earth.

We need not repeat here the internal preparations and disciplines we have had in our national history for such a task. We imbibed the best of Korea, China and India, and the assimilation is well nigh complete. Then within the past thirty years we swallowed everything that Europe had to give us, and digestion is going on briskly now. The system that takes in the East and the West will weave out a tissue that shall partake of the nature of both.

Conclusion

Uchimura's central idea in this article was to get a harmony between the Orient and the Occident. Today more and more weight is being added to this mission of peace which was assigned to Japan. He said: Japan's mission may be multifarious; but the one we have laid much stress upon is grand enough to call forth the highest aspiration of the nation. *To reconcile the East with the West; to be the advocate of the East and the harbinger of the West*; this we believe to be the mission which Japan is called upon to fulfill. We stand in our relation to Asia as did the ancient Greeks in relation to Europe. Here we will improve upon what we receive fresh from the West, that our westward neighbours may utilize and work upon it when the centre of historic activity shifts still west-ward. Here we will *Charily* keep watch over the rights and interests of Asia, and should another Xerxes of gross materialism, of rude irreverence, threaten the life and growth of the sacred East, we too shall fight our Marathon and Thermophylae to put an end to his depredatory march....We shall, if must be, lead humble Asia to curb the march of proud Europe; but we desire peace....In our attitude toward Europe and America, we nourish no other feeling than one of peace and goodwill. When we speak more of the East and less of the West, and are lenient toward Asia and somewhat harsh toward Europe, do other sentiments work within us than that of ardent love which seeks after the reconciliation of the younger with the elder and more advanced brethren. If at present we receive all things from the West, we hope to requite them by the reflex influence which a new form of civilization will have upon the old. It is said that through the *May-flower* the English Independents created a new world in America, and through America they re-created Europe. And what patriotic America fails to see is that the

nation which introduced Japan to the world needs re-creation as well? An influence akin to that reflected across the Atlantic may reach America across the Pacific, and much of demagogism, mammonism, and rumism, together with dissensions in religion and irreverence in politics may lose their power by such an influence.

Shine forth towards the East and shine back towards the West, O thou country of the Rising Sun, and thus fulfil thy heaven-appointed mission."¹⁰⁾

Over 70 years have passed already since Uchimura mentioned the mission of his country, The mission of peace which was assigned to Japan by Uchimura is growing bigger at present. She has been located in a valley between eastern and western politics and is exposed before the threat of atomic and hydrogen bombs. The fortune of Japan would depend on her own effort of whether she will carry out her mission or not. It would also have an important effect upon the world's fortune.

In 1926, Uchimura also advocated Japan's peaceful mission under the title "A New Civilization" in the Japan Christian Intelligencer :

A New Civilization.

".....Now is the time for Japan to awake from sleep. This Western civilization with its big budget for fighting machinery is to be completely disowned. She is to start a new civilization, a civilization which is civilization indeed, —a warless civilization, Denmark on a bigger scale, an army and navy on police-standing, an empire founded on the goodwill of the world, a secure, industrious, peaceful nation, the leader of "Christian" Europe and America, in the divine policy announced by God's prophet, twenty-six centuries ago.

And what need is there of waiting till these so-called "Christian" nations adopt this distinctly Christian policy? No number of Disarmament Conferences will bring about the desired disarmament. The thing must be done by somebody, without "conferring with flesh and blood." What a day will it be when my own Japan, by its sovereign decree, will decree the disarmament of the nation, as it decreed the disarming of samurais fifty years ago, and so bring in the new civilization to the whole world. As I pen these words, another oracle of the Jew Isaiah comes to my lips and makes me write¹¹⁾ :

O house of Jacob (Japan) come ye, and let us walk,
In the light of the Lord.¹²⁾

4. Ichinichi Issho (One Day, One Life)

Uchimura published a book, "Ichinichi Issho" (One Day, One Life) in October, 1926 for the first time.¹⁾ Uchimura modeled it after "Güldenes Schazkästlein der Kinder Gottes" written by Karl Heinrich von Bogatzky (1690-1774), a German hymnist.¹³⁾ In his diary of February 13, 1923, Uchimura mentioned that he had tears of thanks in his eyes when he had read the following lines in Bogatzky.

A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths, and promises, and blood.

In his diary of May 27, 1923, Uchimura mentioned that he had read verse 10 of chapter 61 in Isaiah which was dated on the same day in Bogatzky.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my soul shall exult in my God ;
for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Uchimura, thinking that Jesus would be his garment, robe, garland and jewels, found that his heart was greatly filled with peace.¹⁴⁾

This book shows the character, faith, thought and the view of life of Uchimura the best.

The book is the condensed essence of Uchimura himself and that of the Bible. It is not only a literary interpretation of the Biblical passages allotted to the days, but it also talks of the principles of Christianity, a deep and bold faith, various practical and applied problems of life through the author's unique experiences and speculation. On that point, the book is different from that of Bogatzky.

In Uchimura's late years, he read the book with his folks during his table-talks. The book has many sincere readers for daily spiritual food.

The following is a part of my translation—from February first to March thirty first. The first seven days of January are shown in the Memoirs of the Muroran Institute of Technology, vol. 5, No. 1, 1965, pp. 381-384. From January eighth to January thirty-first are shown in the Memoirs of the Muroran Institute of Technology, vol. 5, No. 2, 1966, pp. 502-511.

February 1

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1.)

Freedom is not peculiar to us. Therefore, if we want to be perfectly free, we must go to God, who has perfect freedom. That is, only in God can we truly be free. Tennyson said, "Our will is ours to make it Thine." Our will must be one which we should offer with our own will to God. Of course, man is not a divisible individual so in any case he should not be absorbed by another body. However, when man offers his freedom for a nation he can gain such freedom even nation-wide; likewise, when he offers it for God infinite, he can gain infinitely great freedom, which is true freedom.

February 2

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints. (Colossians 1:3, 4.)

Faith, hope, and love are three and one in reality. Hope does not occur without faith, but faith can't be held without hope. Love also depends upon the motive of its activity hope, but love without hope is like a lamp-light which has extinguished its oil, and returns finally to darkness again. To force love without giving hope is heartless. Faith with insufficient hope is stubborn and cold-hearted. Hope is the most feminine one among these three sisters. Serving by her hope, love casts off the yoke of duty and becomes free. Tenderly influenced by her, faith will cease becoming stubborn and will be graceful. Hope calls for heavenly harmony and melts sufferings on the earth. Hope has warm tears. She opens the heavenly door and shows the holy figure that is

inside and for which we long.

February 3

Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. (James 4 : 8-10.)

There is pleasure to gain, there is pleasure to lose, there is pleasure to be blorn, there is pleasure to die, there is pleasure to be loved, there is pleasure to be hated. Concerning the nature of pleasure, lost pleasure is higher than gained pleasure, dead pleasure is purer than born pleasure, pleasure to be hated is deeper than pleasure to be loved. Believing in God, we can't get rid of pleasure under any circumstances. We only know that pleasure of grief would increase several times more than pleasure of joy.

February 4

Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air : they neither sow nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6 : 25, 26.)

Poor people keep closer company with nature since it is easier to be independent from the world. Poor, of course, does not mean poverty. Poor means that it depends not on man-made riches, but on favours given by God. Therefore being poor is to be like the birds of the heaven and the lilies of the field.¹⁵⁾ That is to say, enjoying sunlight, and basking in a refreshing breeze without striving for it, one becomes unliable to worry and suffering. Nature's pleasure can't be gained without becoming poor. One who wants to enjoy "high thought" as Wordsworth, must be contented with "a humble life" also as was he.

February 5

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16, 17.)

As for what reason Christ came down, the teachings in the New Testament are clear. It was to redeem the sins of mankind by his blood (death). And his ascending to heaven after death, opened the doors of heaven to give us the power to become the sons of God. This is the greatest purpose of Christ's descending to the earth, and the other happenings are only a sidelight supplementing this purpose. It was necessary for God to send His beloved Son and let the world crucify him in order to pay for the sins of mankind, and to open the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit to the sons of men burdened down with sins. When we see the life of Christ only as the life of the Redeemer, the New Testament can be explained most satisfactorily.

February 6

Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. (James 1:17, 18.)

A good thing is to believe in God and a bad thing is to leave God and depend on man and oneself. Other than this there is neither good nor bad. Sickness is not always a bad thing. If the sickness leads us to the Lord, sickness, too, is a good thing. Health is not always a good thing. If it makes man dependent upon himself and causes him to think that he alone is clever, and forget God, on the contrary, health could be a bad thing. It is the same with poverty. It is also the same with riches. Christ said, "Why do you call me good? no one is good but God alone."¹⁶ Being separated from God, there is no good. The good is God and the facing toward God. To go away from God and do against God is the bad. Just this is the distinction between good

and bad, and this is the distinction between life and death.

February 7

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (Matthew 5 : 8.)

God is one, therefore He is simple. He is not complicated, nor intricate, since He is one. He must be one that can be understood by any man if he is pure in heart. He must be just like an infant, naive, sincere, and honest. That which is difficult to understand about God is not because it is complicated, but it is too simple and too transparent. Man cannot understand God, because He has a heart like that of a hero, as bright as the moon after a storm, not a speck of dust to be seen. Man easily believes in the plurality of gods, but he does not easily believe in the sole divine God. They cannot be endured with pure heart. Therefore, they want many impure gods and cover their uncleanness.

February 8

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day. (Matthew 6 : 34.)

His language was a poetical composition. His prayer was thanks. When the work of a day had finished, He was asleep on the cushion in the stern of a tossing boat on the waves drifting about by a hurricane.¹⁷⁾ (Mark 4 : 37, 38.) Not only that, but also when He was to be delivered to His enemy in the night, in spite of the fearful death that drew near, He kept the passover with His disciples and taught them earnestly. "And when they had sung a hymn, they went to the mount of Olives." (Mathew 26:30.) It is clearly understood that with a hymn He enjoyed their simple and holy supper. He was indeed a man of sadness, at the same time He was also a man of joy. He knew well the way of controlling intense grief. He, himself, was not anxious for the morrow. He was the greatest optimist who never existed in the world.

February 9

Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. (II. Timothy 4:2.)

There is no more delightful thing than true missionary work in the world. This is the work of works we cannot transfer to other work after we have once tasted its pleasure. It is to save the soul of a man. It lets him renew himself from the bottom of his heart. On a certain occasion, we witness that a sinner throws away his sins in a moment and returns to God. His family is purified; his wife, children, and sisters become a joy and his principle of life takes an entirely new turn. By him the new work is planned and it is achieved. It is indeed surprising to think that a bit of gospel gave birth to such a deep great change.

February 10

Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. (Isaiah 53:10.)

Christ's work completed with His death. Like that, the work of His small disciple will also be completed with my death. Death is the greatest work, and it is the highest summit of life. A man cannot say that his work has been achieved till he dies. Really there is nothing successful in a Christian during his life time. His work begins with his death. He cannot see his work's success with his bodily eyes. Being able to give his life as an offering for the world's sins, he will see that his work will prosper eternally in God's hand.

February 11

The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, every man to his home, and will leave me alone; yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. (John 16:32.)

When we want to do something beneficial for mankind, we need not seek worldly avenues. We can serve mankind by ourselves alone.

A man is a part of mankind. So we can serve ourselves and at the same time we can serve others. We alone can find the truth. Alone we can make contact with God. The believer can alone purify his spiritual condition and can make progress toward perfection. We can offer ourselves as good specimens of mankind to the world. Being alone is no indication of inactivity.

February 12

After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him. Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." (John 6:66-69.)

Christ is my moral universe. Mentally I live, and move in Him, and I also am in Him. Therefore, I can do nothing when I leave him. When I am separated from Christ, I am like a monkey that has fallen from the tree, none such pitiful as I in the world. Obeying Christ is not my profit nor virtue; however, it is, now my necessity for existence itself. If I am separated from Him, only disgrace and failure are waiting for me. If I want to spend an honorable life, there is no other way except to depend on Christ, piteous and enviable one though I may be.

February 13

To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles. (The Acts 26:22, 23.)

A Christian's hope of resurrection does not depend upon himself, but on the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer does not want to be resurrected as a man. This is impossible even if he wanted to. He will be resurrected in the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, Christ repeats the resurrection in him. The believer is one in whom Christ dwells. Saying "I am the resurrection, and the life," (John 11:25.) He dwells in the

body of the believer in order to resurrect him too.¹⁸⁾ Where Jesus' spirit is, there is always the resurrection. Receiving Jesus' spirit, we can see that resurrection is the natural result.

February 14

God saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (II. Timothy 1:9, 10.)

This world is too imperfect to be able to carry out our ideals. I think it is the greatest misfortune that we were born here as men, if all things are ended with this world. In this world, there is nothing sadder than that we cannot realize our ideals which we have. However, lives of all noble men are unfilled. There is no real thing to meet our ideal, while it is the universal law that the real thing should exist. Is this not the surest evidence of an existence of a future life?

February 15

Now faith is the assurance of things' hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1.)

Faith seems like a superstition to contain men. To others, faith is a kind of adventure. Following this, one may fail. However, the believer knows that faith is not superstition. Faith is the response of the believer confronted with God's voice which is speaking in the mind. He sees not the form nor has the evidence, but he surely believes. Yes, he is being allowed to believe. For him faith itself becomes the proof that the One exists which he had not seen. He says, the faith was born in him, therefore the real thing responding to this must have existed. It is not to prove faith with the real thing, but to prove the real thing with faith. This is the power of faith. Lacking this power, faith cannot be called faith.

February 16

Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Matthew 28: 18-20.)

The doctrine of the trinity is a moral teaching. Through believing this, a man's view of life is changed completely. When he rejects it, a change of his life begins. All the teachings of Christianity have a great relationship with this doctrine. Those who think that this may be taken away or abandoned do not understand Christianity as yet. Since Christianity is an actual power to save the world, we cannot hold this power without believing in the trinity of God. I believe without doubt that Jehovah's God must be the triune God in the light of my Bible, also in appealing to my reason, especially also in the applied experiment of my life.

February 17

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God; not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2: 8-10.)

False prophets and the false pastors have often told me that God cannot save me unless I myself repent. Yes, I myself cannot be saved unless I repent, however, God lets me repent by means of the Holy Spirit. I did not repent with my own will's strength, which I cannot do after all. However, God stays in me, makes my will His, and through His will's ability makes me repent. I have not repented by myself alone, however, God accepts it as my repentance. Ah, the mystery of mysteries is that of God and His will, moreover, the mystery of the atonement exists in this mystery. We can not explain this philosophically. And yet, we know this is a most sure fact. Because we know the fact concerning our will best of all.

February 18

For his anger is but for a moment, and his favour is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalms 30:5.)

Jehovah can not help but be angry. The punishment can not help but come to us. But it is for only a moment. His favor extends over and covers our lives through. The punishment is exceptional, and the favor is usual. Tears sometimes do stand in my eyes, but this is simply like a traveller staying a night at my house. When the morning comes, he leaves, and in place of him the delight lives with us eternally. The anguish is for a moment and the joy is eternal. Tears leave like the traveller, and the thanks come like the family members and live with us. Yes, the delight will come with the morning. When the morning sun rises shining through the darkness, the voice of glorification comes from my lips.

February 19

His soul draws near the Pit, and his life to those who bring death. If there be for him an angel, a mediator, one of the thousand, to declare to man what is right for him; and he is gracious to him, and says, Deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a ransom. (Job 33:22-24.)

The human race degenerated from God to corruption. He fell from holding the position of God by the side of God in the "Heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:3). All griefs that come to him are caused by this degeneration. The sin of sins is throwing away God. In accordance with this, we understand what salvation is. For salvation, the first thing to do is to bring man back to God. And Christ's cross is standing between God and man and it does this unique service. Christ did not preach on morality merely in order to improve the human mind. He destroyed sin itself. That is to say that through Christ the gap that existed between God and man was taken away.

February 20

Behold, my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. As many were astonished at him—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men— so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand. (Isaiah 52:13-15.)

Resurrection is truly a big miracle. But pure holiness of the character is a bigger miracle. And when this miracle exists, the other is not a miracle. The very existence of Jesus was the biggest of all miracles. In the moral court, the existence of a man who had not even a minute fault is itself the biggest of miracles. And the resurrection existed in this man. There is no mistake to see this as the natural result. Jesus is a man and yet is not a man. In order that the internal be manifested externally, in order the body conform to the spirit, in his instance, life triumphed over death, he died and resurrected in a higher state.

February 21

Although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. (I. Corinthians 8:5, 6.)

Heaven and earth are large. Men are many. But there are only two men therein. They are God and I. He loves me. I also love Him and I do everything on hearing His command. I delight as I am praised by Him, and I cry as I am blamed by him. It is my aim in life that He would admit me good. Working with Him, I share glory and disgrace with Him. If He is worshipped I delight, if He is desecrated, I get angry. Being taken by His hand, I stroll in the universe which was made by Him; all beasts therein and all birds in the sky are shown, and their names are given whatever I call.¹⁹⁾ I am truly the first Adam of

this present world. There is no man but I, only God is with me, —God and I only. Therefore I love all men and all things in Him. Unless I depend on God I am not connected to anybody or anything. In God I am connected with all things.

February 22

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. (I. Corinthians 15:20-22.)

The believer does not arise himself, but Jesus, who lives within him arises. When Jesus arises in the believer, He resurrects the believer. The believer is being accompanied by the resurrection of Jesus. He is being raised with Him. "Because I live, you will live also."²⁰ (John 14:19.) In this way, there is nothing strange concerning the resurrection of the believer. Thus the resurrection of the believer is nothing particularly strange. The resurrection of the believer is reasonable and natural as that of Jesus was reasonable and natural.

February 23

With the mighty deeps of the Lord God I will come, I will praise thy righteousness, thine alone. O God, from my youth thou hast taught me, and I still proclaim thy wondrous deeds. So even to old age and grey hairs, O God, do not forsake me, till I proclaim thy might to all the generations to come. (Psalm 71:16-18.)

In ancient times, 1900 years ago, all of Christianity was existing as an infant in the crib. At that time there was no Divine Comedy of Dante nor England of Cromwell as yet. There was only Mary's tender hands and Joseph's untiring patience to protect Him. Moreover, a tree which God had planted grew and became higher than the cedar of Lebanon. Nowadays, what shall we fear in order to plant a branch of it on this earth? Now, the whole universe will help our works, and also tens of thousands of saints will prove our words. How will future generations criticize us if we do not refine and purify this small dark earth?

February 24

For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10.)

It is love that the spirit demands. It is pure and unselfish love. It is also vast and boundless love. The Spirit's requirements are enormous. It is not at all satisfied with something like a palatial residence. Its hunger and thirst can never be appeased with things like beautiful dresses and delicious food. Serving the Spirit with three thousand court ladies, only increases its sorrow. Even with a happy home and good friends, they can never meet His wholehearted desires. The Spirit indeed demands the love of the only living, true, sole, matchless God, Creator of the universe. Without this, the Spirit is dead. If the Spirit has this, He has all the "things" He wants.

February 25

Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised. "For yet a little while, and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls. (Hebrews 10:35-39.)

Faith does not mean to believe that which is not to be believed. I cannot believe that two and two are five even though the universe may vanish. I cannot believe telling a lie is good, even though I am being harassed with fire and water. And I shouldn't believe it. I don't believe that one can lead men properly with threatening means, no matter what proof may be had. Faith is believing that which is to be believed having no fear nor hesitation.

February 26

Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state

I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:11-13.)

When Jesus comes into my heart, giving thanks becomes my life, there is no good thing that I can not do. I can forgive any faults of my enemy freely. I can endure any hardship. I can pay any sacrifice. At that time, I have courage for that which is good, and rich in love, and I feel that wherever I go, my defiled body gives off a good fragrance. If this is not salvation nor resurrection nor ascension, I do not know what salvation, resurrection and ascension are. Then I sing, borrowing the poet's words:

He made my feet like hinds' feet,
and set me secure on the heights.²¹⁾

February 27

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son. (John 5:21, 22.)

When God judges us with Christ, the judgment becomes not as fearful as we expect. When we hear of judgement we become very fearful, but, when we hear the judgment is by Christ the fear goes away and thanks giving comes. Who is the Christ? He is the only one Mediator standing between God and man. He intercedes with God for man, He designs the reduction and pardon of man's sin, mild saviour, a friend of sinners..... God left the judgement to Christ and expected the reduction and the forgiveness of sin Here is our hope of acquittal and discharge in spite of the many sins we committed. Now we can stand before Him without flinching because we know who is the one to judge us.

February 28

Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and

supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians 6 : 17, 18.)

Faith in Christ saves me from sin. However, faith is also the gift of God.²²⁾ I am saved not only in believing, but saved also in that He lets me believe in Him. Hereupon I am convinced that I have no power to save myself at all. What then shall I do? For even my faith also must be sought from God. The believer should pray ceaselessly. Yes, his life is prayer. He should pray as he is still imperfect. He should pray as his faith is not enough yet. He should pray even though he cannot pray enough. He should pray either when blessed or when cursed. I will pray even if I may be raised high in heaven or dragged down into hades. I will pray though powerless by myself; all I can do is to pray.

February 29

Take care, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3 : 12, 13.)

Jesus of Nazareth, I thank you since you had this temptation and victory. Through this, I know that you were tempted as I am. In all things you were tempted as I am; so you are sympathetic with my weakness.²³⁾ You fought against the devil yourself, and know well that his power is mighty. We are many times deceived by him. While we want to serve you, making plans, demanding the praise of others and on the contrary we often got down on his knees. I pray that you will give your wisdom to us now, so that we can also distinguish the voice of God from that of the devil. And modeling our lives after you, may tread your paths of righteousness with clear eyes,²⁴⁾ turn neither to the right nor to the left but pursue a straight way and win over all temptation through you, help establish your Kingdom of Heaven here, and participate in your glory in heaven, Amen.

March 1

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until

the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. (Genesis 32:24, 25.)

Rejoicing time is when my sin was pointed out to me by God. It is the time that a big haughty muscle in the hollow of my thigh is cut by an angel as was that of Jacob in Peniel so he could not walk. It is also like the time that David, who was questioned about his sin by the Prophet Nathan, who was sent from God and was told, "You are the man."²⁵⁾ Then I will leave men and myself and cling to God. Then the cross shines before my eyes. Then there is not even a single doubt in me. When he feels that he was the chief of sinners he should believe in and accept that Christ Jesus came into the world to save all sinners.²⁶⁾ And this feeling will not occur without having his blemish (sin) pointed out to him by God. While he thinks that he is righteous, and as long as he blames the other's sin, this rejoicing and lovely sense will not occur. When I stand before God without a word of excuse, Christ reveals Himself before eyes of my heart bearing His Cross on his back.

March 2

Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. (I. Corinthians 3:21-23.)

When we understand Christianity, lives of people are that of a dream. It is a kind of an interpretation of a thing which is not really there, and interpreting it as a rising to heaven instead of descending into the hell. Talking about war and diplomacy are the smallest problems we have. If we see them with Christ's heart. "What does it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?"²⁷⁾ If the Russian Czar gained the whole of Asia as he had wished, such a thing like the Manchurian problem must be the smallest for him when he thinks that he must go to eternal death with a bombshell. If he took it, it would be such a small thing, only 52,250,000 square miles of this globe. The man who has been given the right to live eternally in the endless universe will not pour his whole

power into such a small thing.

March 3

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3.)

The man who wishes to be rich in heaven must be in dire poverty in the world. And the zenith of poverty is not poverty of the body, but that of the spirit. Those who live in dirty poverty, would at times say that they are justified before God and man. Those who speak like this, are very rich in the spirit even though they are poor in the body. There are inner and outer in poverties. The poor in spirit have nothing in their heart of which to be proud. The example is Paul, an apostle. He was poor in spirit. He had no intelligence to be proud of, nor virtue to be depended on, but was the chief of sinners as he confessed himself.²⁸⁾ Thus standing before God, he was taken down to the bottom of modesty, was able to be admitted to the virtues in Christ and had been pulled up to the glories of heaven.

March 4

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:29, 30.)

No man can be the heavenly citizen in his own person. Flesh and blood cannot succeed in the kingdom of God. Neither can man's intelligence, talent, riches and rank make him a son of God. Only one who has been chosen by God will be able to see the Lord in His glory. Establishment of the kingdom of heaven is God's work; man's taking part in it is as a laborer only. Its program, process and completion all follow God's will. God has his own will. Man cannot change it, neither expand nor contract it. Only one whom God called could be able to be called His own. Those who have intelligence, ability and precociousness cannot be citizens of heaven without being called by God.

March 5

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us— for it is written, “Cursed be every one who hangs on a tree.” (Galatians 3:13.)

Christ’s bodily pain showed only his spiritual pain. Favor of pardon does not come through His nervous pain, but it comes through His spiritual grief. The place in which the sin of mankind was atoned was not on Mt. Calvary, but rather indeed in the Garden of Gethsemane. That which had put the crown of thorns on Christ’s head is my sin. That which gave Him a drink of a bitter cup is my sin. That which crucified Him is my sin. Roman Catholics always wear a cross on themselves and think of Christ; also some sincere protestants always put a statue of Jesus on the cross on their desk, to remind themselves, “Your sins gave this pain to Christ,” and blame their own sins. This must not all be rejected as superstition and heretical doctrine.

March 6

Jehovah forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s. (Psalms 103:3-5.)

Know that your sincere God is the superintendent of the universe and endless in love. Remember that your position toward this God is not that of subject to sovereign, but a baby’s position to a loving mother. We cannot return to God even one tenth of what we receive, since our sincerity itself is God’s gift. Even if we offer our wealth, body and spirit to God, He receives only His own things. God is the Giver and I am a receiver. God is a Blessor and I am one being blessed. God is lover and I am one being loved. Endless love requires to love and does not require to be loved. He who wants to love God, must be loved by God.

March 7

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of

a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11:11-13.)

Genius would be yearned after, however, it is not a match to the more superior Holy Spirit. Genius is like a single sum, there is a danger that we may run out. The holy spirit is like a life pension, you receive according to what you are worthy of. Genius may be given to only a small number of people and the Holy Spirit can be received by everybody. Genius may also be given to those who reject God. The Holy Spirit can be received only by those whom are bathed in the Father's love. Genius is aristocratic; the Holy Spirit is like a commoner. We want to be modest to take part in this heavenly gift with all the people.

March 8

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans 8:10, 11.)

Although a believer is a person in whom Jesus resides, his flesh passes away since it is born in sin. However, when Jesus resides in the believer, He resides in the believer's spirit, so the spirit becomes alive because of the righteousness of Jesus. The flesh dies because of his sin, and the spirit lives because of the righteousness of Jesus. In the believer, the resurrection begins with his spirit, but his resurrection will not stop with his spirit. Lodging Jesus's spirit, the resurrection comes further up to the flesh. Man consists of not only spirit, not only flesh, but both spirit and body. The spirit and the flesh are both sides of his existence. Therefore, the resurrection which began in the spirit has to come obligatory up to the flesh.

March 9

And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:39, 40.)

“Now the Lord is the Spirit.”²⁹⁾ Lord Jesus is the Special Spirit. It is not the same spirit of which is usually said—“There is spirit in a man.” It is the spirit which is the source of new life. It is the spirit, the essence of spiritual existence. It is a germ of the new life saying “God’s nature abides in him.”³⁰⁾ This seed abides in a man and therewith it begins a growth of the spiritual body, and it enters into the eternal life through the resurrection and ascension at the last. The Lord’s saying “I am the resurrection and the life.”³¹⁾ shows this fact. The resurrection of a believer does not exist separately from Jesus. The resurrection is in Jesus, and only in Him.

March 10

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you. (Matthew 5:10-12.)

Christ said, “Whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God.”³²⁾ They persecute us since they believe that we are wicked. So we should extend our sympathy to their persecution. They intend to kill us for justice. They intend to carry off our lives for society, humanity, yes, in some cases, because of the Christianity which we believe in. Therefore, there is a piece of lovable sincerity in their anger. We ought to pray for them and must not hate.

March 11

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the

earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. (John 12:24.)

Death is not death, but a birth to a new life. With death a new life starts. In the flesh, there is not a spiritual life free from any obstacle. "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other."³³ If the spirit wants to be spiritual perfect, it is obliged to expect to become extinct of the flesh, its enemy. By removing obstacles which are against the spirit, death will be able to accomplish its progress freely. Separated from the flesh, the spirit will grow up of itself and will flourish in its activities. The spirit is one person's spirit as it abides in the flesh, however, separating from the flesh, it can join with many spirits together. "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."³⁴ Even Jesus could not draw all men to him and turn them into himself until separated from his flesh and lifted up from the earth.

March 12

And he saith unto them, Because of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, "Remove hence to yonder place"; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (Matthew 17:20.)

Faith is the spiritual ability in this case. This privilege was given to man as man is lord of God's creation, and it is said that with this ability, there is nothing impossible to him when he wants to exercise this ability over the natural world. Nevertheless, mankind had lost this ability at the time when he was separated from God. He does not now control nature but he is in pain of its restraint. One of the great purposes of Christ's descent is to give this first privilege to mankind again. That is, to give the same ability to us, who believe and love Him, as Christ himself has who was always above nature and was not been held back by its restraint.

March 13

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It

is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. (Psalms 118:8, 9.)

The one to rely on is God, not man. It is much better to rely on Him than on a marquis or a count. Depending on man, the disappointment is ceaseless, depending on the marquis and count, there are many disgraces. Their hate and love are inconstant, their praise and censure at times are changeable. Jehovah is not so, He is the unchanging rock eternally. He is our refuge when we become weak.³⁵⁾ He is our support when we die. In depending on Him, darkness sends forth light glowingly, downfall increases consolation still more. Depending on Him there is no disgrace. Depending on Him, our lives will get nearer to heavenly welfare increasing in glory in proportion as our ages increase like the rising sun increases its brilliance more and more and goes up to the high noon. Jehovah turns His holy face toward us and heals our solitude while riches, honour, court, rank and decoration offer us no consolation.

March 14

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and forever. Be not carried away by diverse and strange teachings. (Hebrews 13:8, 9.)

In history I read that countries rose and fell to ruin again, nations prospered and declined. Only one thing I see, that firmly stands in a decaying age, looking toward heaven. The cross of Christ is this. The Cross emits its brilliancy ceaselessly while the world passes and man changes. Only this will remain alone and will shine on the world when all things come to trifling. The Cross is the fulcrum of history, and it is a solid rock, on which human life depends. Without depending on this there is no firmness, no eternal life. All things are dayflies except the Cross. Only Christ is the person who is everlasting.

March 15

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul

waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning. (Psalms 130:3-6.)

There is not even a bit of good within me when I reflect on myself. There is only uncleanness, malice, evil desire and avarice. Supposing I cannot get near God unless I have to clean them away myself. I will not be able to get near God after all. However, God is greater than my sin. He will save me in spite of my sins. That is, He will kill my sins for me to make me belong to Him. The hope of my salvation exists wholly in God's favor. There is not a hope that I can be saved unless He will bestow favor on me.

March 16

We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body. (II. Corinthians (4:8-10.))

If one wants to do something for God, one first of all must die to himself. Party spirit or patriotism are still mixed with ego. After I have died in myself, then for the first time I will live in God. I have no fear when I live in God. Leaving fear, I have clear understanding. In gospel-preaching for God, anxiety, policy and method (except the natural common way) do not make any confusion in my work. The world should turn into me and I should not submit to the world to fit the world's taste. Although the world stands on the opposite side altogether, I have to stand firmly alone on this side. It exists in me as that pine and oak which do not wither under heavy snow and frost. In me, it remains composed as a great mountain stands solemnly. My existence benefits all people, and a voice of mine calms high seas. Doing for God, for the first time, the mission work benefits the world.

March 17

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (I. Corinthians 1:18.)

How to save my spirit? —Without loud lament Christianity cannot be understood after all. Christianity is not a kind of philosophy, something like Buddhism as some one says. Nor is it a device for training of courage like a Zen³⁶ sect. Christianity is the great ability in order to save the spirit. Descending of Christ and the atonement on the Cross are in short, all acts of God to save the spirit; so we cannot understand its true meaning if we apply these happenings to things out of the spirit.

March 18

Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face." (Judges, 6:21, 22.)

However, it was not necessary for Gideon to be afraid, he would not die. Jehovah did not appear to Gideon to kill him. He appeared to him to save him and to save his home and country through him. Also, God did not appear to him as God, but as Jehovah, Jehovah is God; but He is not God as the sovereign of the universe. He is God as the Saviour of mankind. He superintends the universe. His hands have power and ability. However, when he came to the world to save men, he appeared as being a form of man with modesty in him. Jehovah is God that can be seen by man. He formerly appeared to Moses, and revealed himself as Jehovah. Later on, he appeared to the world as Jesus Christ, and atoned for the sins of all people.

March 19

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. (Psalm 73:24-26.)

Spirit and flesh is originally one, and these two things can not

easily be separated from each other. However, as a result of sin, man had fallen into a misfortune that caused spirit and flesh to become separate. It is indeed extremely sad, likewise, that worldly sinners should be doomed to a death sentence. That we not only abhor death, but we are fearful of death is that we know mankind to be condemned to death as a punishment of sin. That the idea of death is accompanied with an extremely sad feeling is due exactly to this, I believe. Ah, who does not fear death? Also, who does not hope for resurrection? If a man should once meet death as a result of his sins, then is not hoping for new flesh to be given as a result of the forgiveness of the sins, a fair prayer to be lurking at the bottom of his heart?

March 20

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (I Corinthians 15:42-44.)

Saying that the resurrection may be superstitious is the same as saying that prayer may be superstitious. After all they don't understand what it is all about. The resurrection which Christianity teaches is that this flesh does not mean to come to life as it is again. The true meaning of the resurrection is revival, life is given to the flesh anew. We are not those who want to return to this world after death. We hope that we will be given a new life still more after death and go to a new world.

March 21

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (Matthew 5:13.)

Earthly life is easily corrupted. Its flesh time is short, and the term of its lively period is a little while. The earthly life corrupts at once and hardens after a while. Herewith, the salt is necessary. Something

that may preserve good things already acquired, exalting its beauty to help cultivation of the earth anew is necessary. It is necessary, for a believer who has received God's word of life in his spirit to respond to this request of the earth. By him, various virtues other than those of the gospel, and the good other the believer's good are kept, displayed and circulated. And it is a fact that cannot be hidden in the world. Through the gospel of Christ, old morals and faith had been resurrected in their real meaning.

March 22

For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing. (II. Timothy 4:6-8.)

A believer is a servant of God. He was entrusted with special important works by his Master. So he should not die until he carries out these important works, and he will never die until that time. Livingstone's saying "We shall not die till we finish our mission." is the conviction of a believer. While he has not finished his mission as yet, he will not die. However, if he has finished what he should have accomplished, he will die. He must not urge God with prayer for long life. For him who has nothing to do, it already, is needless to live longer in this world. "Why should it use up the ground?"³⁷⁾ The servant, if he has carried out his master's work, may than leave. He should say to himself that he doesn't want to live any longer, but he only wants to do his master's work.

March 23

And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. (John 9:1-3.)

Here a disaster has been interpreted entirely from the standpoint of favours. Jesus said decisively here that blindness is not Divine punishment, but an opportunity to bring favours; in spite of that it is considered a special Divine punishment, in every country. These are bold words indeed. This cannot be said except by the Son of God. With this word of Jesus, the attitude of mankind toward the disaster has been completely changed. Yes, it should be a complete change. It is not a disaster, nor heaven's vengeance, nor an expression of God's anger, it is the opposite of them. The disaster is an opportunity that God's act may appear openly. Therefore it is a favour if man employes it according to its purpose. All fleshly hardships are favours which God gave us. This is the great gospel which Jesus had particularly conveyed to men, all Christians ought to interpret human life in accordance with this Gospel.

March 24

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily. Rejoice the soul of the servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all who call upon thee. (Psalm 86:3-5.)

There is the judgment of God in the future, that is sure. However, the God of love Himself does not judge a man, He left all of that to His Son. And while we are judged by Christ who is merciful and fond of forgiveness, we are judged most favorably. When Christ judges a man, He puts the weight on the pity of the man since He is fond of the pity and does not regard the festivities themselves. Pity is the standard when Christ judges a man. The so-called righteousness is not things of purity nor innocence, and so-called faith is not perfection in doctrine, ceremony and mission work. It is pity, forgiving heart, favoring nature and the act of love. The eternal fortune of man is decided by this. The last judgement is that of love. The distinction between endless punishment and eternal life will be decided by whether we loved or not.

March 25

We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28.)

Observe the universe and human life in the believing of resurrection. Then what a beautiful place the universe would be! How human life would become joyful! "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."³⁸⁾ Having this faith indeed, death will leave no fear, and frightful and sorrowful things will vanish from the world. Spring coming after winter, a nightingale singing the melody of early spring on the branch of a plum-tree, flowers' morning and moonlight evening, all will become the foundation of hope and pleasure with not even a speck of tragic particles mixed in. We will come to enjoy the beauty of nature and not to think of its sorrow and misery.

March 26

Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:53, 54.)

"I"—Jesus Christ, full of ability, He, who said that He was given all powers in heaven and on earth, He, having had experience of raising one from the dead during the time He was in the world, He, having done various other mysterious deeds, He, being the greatest historical power in elevating the human race, He, dwelling in our believers' spirit and accomplishing moral changes which no one can do, He, son of God, king of the human race, our Saviour, Lord Jesus Christ will raise us from the dead, it is said. It is not said that Peter or Paul or John did this miracle. Jesus Christ, the Son of God who said, "I am the resurrection and the life,"³⁹⁾ will do this thing. This is no wonder, but natural.

March 27

Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. (Genesis 5:21-24.)

“To walk” means walk quietly. It is not to fly, nor to run, but to walk. It is not like a great leap, nor speeding away nor crying out, but spending our daily life quietly dependent on God, with patience following His command. It is not to dare a great undertaking, nor great missionary work, nor a great miracle; however, only thinking much of God’s command, obeying His words, believing that belief in God, work and spending a modest life are not something comparable to inactivity. The most part of faithful faith is in patience. It is quiet, and waiting and hoping; it is the life that is sufficient in himself in God. Also, if he receives nothing from God, he does not ask for other things because he was given God Himself.

March 28

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah, 43:18, 19.)

When a man is born in the world, he is newly born. He receives very little of his ancestors’ heredity. A virtuous man is born from a wicked man, and a healthy boy is born from a constitutionally weak mother. God begins newly His holy work with everybody. It is not necessary to fear bad ancestors. Man, every one, is created directly by God like Adam and Eve. A voice of reform rises at each infant birth. Hope is coming momentarily in this world. We need not to be overly afraid of accumulation of corruption.

March 29

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who

both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts : and then shall evry man have praise of God. (I. Corinthians 4:5.)

One who becomes enraged with imperfect creation, gets angry that Christians have many faults, blames God, scorns believers and rejects the gospel or throws it away, does not want to see it at its perfection though he sees God's holy work only halfway. The salvation has already begun. However, it has not yet been finished, it is on the way to perfection. And when it is accomplished, it shall be what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.⁴⁰⁾ Therefore, we should wait. Believers should wait for perfection of themselves. Non-believers should also wait until the time comes, when they want to make their final decision concerning God, and the Gospel and believers.

March 30

Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. (Galatians 1:4.)

Christ is not a physician nor statesman. His mission was to be the saviour of the spirit, He was the matchless being among mankind in view of the nature of the work He did. The one who redeems the spirit is the same one who forgives man's sins and gives satisfaction to his conscience. Such a man is not a moralist nor a philosopher. No matter how great a noble man, virtuous man, or a great scholar he is, he cannot redeem man's sin nor forgive him. It will not be hard to know what a man Christ is, if we know the existence of the spirit and what it requires. We must say it is very necessary for our existence to have such a person as Christ descending and works which have been done by Himself, since we have spirit.

March 31

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come

to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (I Corinthians 15:53, 54.)

Yes, I believe that my saviour has risen from death. Jews, who killed the righteous man and believed that man died, were so superficial. Why didn't they strike the Himalayas and believe that the mountains would fall down? The One whom I love did not die. Nature does not abandon its own creation. Will God slight one that He made? His body would have rotted, the hemp garment which wrapped his dead body would have returned to dust. However, His heart, His love, His courage and his fidelity. —Ah! if these vanish with flesh together, the universe would have preached to us an error, and the saints have deceived the world. I don't know in what way, with what body and in which place, I will see Him again.

“Love does dream, Faith does trust
Somehow somewhere meet we must.”——Whittier.⁴¹⁾

5. Notes :

- 1) Kanzo Uchimura, “The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura” Vol. 15 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), pp. 454-456.
- 2) Romans 1:1.
- 3) Kanzo Uchimura, “The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura” Vol. 15 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), pp. 444-446.
- 4) Galatians 3:23, 24.
- 5) See Naoshi Koike, “Kanzo Uchimura: A Summary of His Life and Faith” (The Memoirs of the Muroran Institute of Technology, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1965), pp. 356-358.
- 6) Kanzo Uchimura, “The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura” Vol. 16 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), pp. 26-36.
- 7) cf. Matthew 5:21.
cf. Ibid., 5:44.
- 8) Kanzo Uchimura, “The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura” Vol. 15 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), pp. 546-548.
- 9) I. Cor. 15:10.
- 10) Kanzo Uchimura, “The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura” Vol. 16 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), pp. 24-26.

- 11) Kanzo Uchimura, "The Complete Works of Kanzo Uchimura" Vol. 15 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), p. 573.
- 12) Isaiah 2:5.
- 13) See Naoshi Koike, "Kanzo Uchimura: Summary of His Life and Faith" (The Memoirs of the Muroran Institute of Technology, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1965), p. 381.
- 14) Kanzo Uchimura, "The Complete Works of the Diaries and letters of Kanzo Uchimura" Vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kyobun-kwan, 1964), p. 314.
- 15) Matthew 6:26.
Ibid, 6:28.
- 16) Mark 10:18.
- 17) Ibid., 4:37, 38.
- 18) John 11:25.
- 19) Genesis 2:19.
- 20) John 14:19.
- 21) Psalms 18:33.
- 22) Ephesians 2:8.
- 23) Hebrew 4:15.
- 24) See Matthew 6:22.
- 25) 2 Samuel 12:7.
- 26) 1 Timothy 1:15.
- 27) Mark 8:36.
- 28) 1 Timothy 1:15.
- 29) 2 Corinthians 3:17.
- 30) 1 John 3:9.
- 31) John 11:25.
- 32) Ibid., 16:2.
- 33) Galatians 5:17.
- 34) John 12:32.
- 35) Psalms 46:1.
- 36) Dhyana, a kind of Buddhism, silent meditation.
- 37) Luke 13:7.
- 38) 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.
- 39) John 11:25.
- 40) 1 Corinthians 2:9.
- 41) John Greenleaf Whittier, 1807-1892. American poet.

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