

MYSTIC LIGHT

Judge Not

WHEN WE consider humanity as a whole, so far as their ambitions and achievements are concerned, we find great variation, but in the matter of faults to be overcome we are all very much alike. We all have the same fundamental imperfections sometime in our development, and we all have to go through the same process of correcting them. First, we must recognize our wrongs, then through vigilance and struggle and perseverance right those wrongs.

For a long time we don't know what we are like—don't seem to care what is right with us or what is wrong. We are so accustomed to being just what we are by nature, doing what comes naturally, that we seldom stop to analyze our behavior in the light of construction or destruction; seldom stop to note whether the thoughts we habitually think, the feelings that automatically flash forth toward people or conditions, what we daily say and do, are moving us nearer to the Light that liberates us from human woes or whether they are pushing us deeper into the matter that binds and afflicts us.

Not until we begin to think seriously about life do we wonder about the causes of its many adversities, the tribulations throughout the world that seem to have no end. Not until we begin to think of the world within ourselves, its ups and downs beyond our control, its nervous discontent, its deep, peculiar longings that give us no rest, do we begin to question the causes and our relation to them.



Oil on canvas. Guercino (Giovanni Francesco Barbieri), 1591-1660. Dulwich Picture Gallery, London

Christ with the Woman Taken in Adultery

"He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone"

Then we face the truth that we are not satisfied with life as it is, that something we need is missing from our lives and that it is time we make it our business, at any cost, to get hold of that Something which alone can make life worth living—that Something which can lift us from under the feet of life and place us where we rightly belong.

So we study the Law that governs life and we learn what that Law demands of us if we would have it serve us, if we would receive its infinite blessings, use its infinite power. We learn that when we live according to that Law or Principle we release a dormant power within ourselves that can literally set us free from the tormenting uncertainties and lashes of normal existence. Then, and then only, do we watch ourselves with a view to changing what we are naturally to what we must become, and the wonderful truth is that there is no limit to what we can become if we are willing to strive for it.

The secret seems to be one of house cleaning or, as the occultists term it, transmutation through

purification. Deep within the confines of every human structure lives a God, an infinite divine power sufficient for every need. If we are willing to provide this God within with clean instruments, pure vehicles through which His light may shine, our lives will be transformed, we shall live daily in the Kingdom with all its wisdom, power, and enduring joy at our disposal, and unto us will all things be possible.

It seems advisable, therefore, to inventory the faults that rob us of the riches of this inner divinity, faults that imprison and bind this magic power which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Whether he knows it or not it is there within him just the same. The fault of judging others has so many in its vicious grip, and its destructive effect on our bodies is so binding that the Christ lays heavy emphasis on this major obstacle to the experience of the indwelling Spirit.

One reason why we ought not to judge another is because we are not capable of judging rightly. We cannot see clearly nor far enough. We are not at all able to see the real man we judge. What we mistake for the man are the conditions against which he is struggling. We don't see the man and we don't see the struggle; all we see are the enemies or temptations that assail him. The following illustration might make this clear.

Recently on a religious broadcast a letter was read which was signed "Only a Sinner." In it the writer said: "Will you please pray for me? I have tried so hard to pray for myself. Just now, as I listened to your hymns and your prayers I have been kneeling beside my radio with the tears streaming down my face, begging God to give me strength to resist temptation. I have brought much misery to my family; I stay out half the nights in sinful places which I detest and which I would give anything to resist, but the whole thing seems too strong for me to handle alone. How often I have longed to return to my family, to sit beside my wife in church as I used to do. I am ashamed and miserable. If you and others will pray for me as I shall continue to pray for myself, perhaps the help I need to resist this evil will be given me. Signed: "Only a Sinner."

How many of that man's accusers saw that? If they had seen clearly they would not have con-

demned him at all. They would have pitied and helped him because he, the Ego, or Higher Self, wanted to go straight. It was his lower self (the bodies) which was guilty and deserving of judgment. Yet every self-appointed judge of that unfortunate, struggling soul would brand him as one who wanted to live that kind of life, who cared not a whit whether his family suffered or not, one who was very pleased with his selfish indulgences—else he would change. Only God sees the heart and only God knows how often those we dislike and condemn for one fault or another hate themselves and their faults more than any spectator possibly can. The forces of the desire body rushing through their other vehicles are so powerful that the weak will feel unable to cope with them

And that brings us to a second reason for not judging; namely, although we may know what it is like to live in our own bodies, we know nothing about the bodies in which another is living. If we were to spend half an hour in the whirling, tempestuous vibrations of the desire body of one who has faults or temptations we do not have, it is possible we also could not endure those tempestuous vibrations. We can adjust ourselves more readily in the desire and mental bodies, as their composition is of our own selection and making, than we can in the physical body, which is made of material assimilated from the bodies of others, and which, since it has had a much longer evolution, is less pliable and less amenable to change.

Here are seen the insight and understanding of Max Heindel. A friend tells of seeing a worker at Mt. Ecclesia committing the same offense several times. It occurred once when Mr. Heindel was present, so the friend remarked : "That fellow, being an occult student, knows better. He can't be trying very hard to live the life or he would not continue to do a thing like that."

Mr. Heindel turned to him with these illuminating words: "You are not in that man's body, so how can you possibly judge how hard he is trying, what he is struggling against, or what progress he is making within. You have no idea what physical forces that man is struggling against and until we can put ourselves in another's body we are not capable of judging him." Whenever we so glibly

say what another ought to do, or what we would do were we in his place, these powerful words of Max Heindel ought to make themselves heard in our consciousness.

Judging another is also a waste of time, because the man we criticize and resent today and pigeon-hole in our consciousness as a certain type might not be the same man at all tomorrow. This very night he might have a certain experience, talk with a certain person, read a certain book, which could change him completely. Is not that what happened to some of us the first time we read *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*? One moment we were indifferent to our actions, we thought and did that which was natural for us to do; the next moment a light was dawning within our consciousness, a light that revealed to us a great purpose in life and fired us with a determination to deny ourselves daily, at whatever cost, so that we might follow that Light, might live in and as that Light.

There may be some time before a change is apparent in the outer man, because we know how deeply entrenched in our vital bodies are old habits and how they reassert themselves again and again in spite of our efforts to control them. Yet belying the external sameness is a definite change within, a growing that we can feel long before it is visible to the passerby, much as the growth of new fruit must be felt by the tree long before it appears on the branch. So it is that we are apt to injure ourselves by condemning another who is no longer the one we had judged.

Another important point to remember is that what we see in the personality of another is what the man was in his past life and not at all what he is striving to be in this life. The personality is made up of the mind, the desire, vital, and physical bodies. Were not these made from the seed atoms brought over from a reworking of the past life, just as the seed you drop in the ground was made, not when you plant it, but during the life of the plant from which it was previously taken? So were the seeds from which our bodies grow in this life impregnated with all we achieved in our past existence; seeds that were tucked away between lives until we needed bodies again. Thus those seeds were modified by the assimilation of the past life's experience and



Oil on canvas © Lucille W. Burkett

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

planted, as it were, in their respective worlds which we passed through to rebirth. These seed atoms drew to themselves substance according to their nature and power, according to the pattern and magnetism stored in them when they were extracted from their last embodiments. These, then, determine the equipment the man brings with him in his present existence, they are the barometer of the man who died but not of the man reborn, because the man himself has changed, he has progressed much since he breathed his last on earth.

Think of what he must have learned in Purgatory, what lessons must have been impressed on his consciousness as he viewed his last life, what resolutions he must have made; and after that, the heaven world, where he knew the thrill of living in a pure body, a pure mind, having been purged of all evil in Purgatory. Here he finds peace at last and experiences the indescribable joy of harmony flowing through his being; the heaven world with its Teachers, its innumerable lessons and opportunities. How he must have resolved again so to live in the next life as to retain those blessings of the

Kingdom—lessons and resolutions that made him a far better man than when he left the earth plane; a far better man than the personality he brings with him, the set of tools forged when he was not so good, bodies strong with tendencies of other times, strong with impulses and wills of their own which often shame and discourage the man inside them; bodies which restrict and oppose him constantly, an outfit from the past which is the outer vesture and not the inner man.

Knowing how often we are misjudged because of our self-willed personality, why can't we make allowances when we so readily criticize and condemn the slightest word or action of another? Why can't we make allowance for the difference between the individual and the difficult personality which he would gladly exchange if he could, the personality which is his cross, forged by himself in the past and placed on his shoulders as he entered this semester of life's school and which he will have to bear until he leaves again? What he now strives to become is the material he is storing up for his next life's equipment, but what he has brought with him today he must bear until the Angel of Death lifts it from him.

And, finally, it is poor business on our part to rob ourselves as we do every time we condemn another. As occult students we know that we are alchemists, that our bodies are literally laboratories in which we are gradually transmuting the base substance of the personality into the pure gold of the Spirit. That may sound like an abstract formula but it is as practical and scientific as extracting radium from pitchblende. The difference is that in extracting radium external heat is applied to break down the crude ore so the pure substance, radium, can be released.

In spiritual alchemy the same process goes on internally, the heat being the power of a determined and persevering will. In exerting such will power over the crude ore in our bodies—the deposits made by thoughts and desires and feelings that are not spiritual, the things that do not make for love, peace and harmony in our environment or within ourselves—we separate out the crude ore of our lower nature as truly as fire breaks down pitchblende, and little by little we liberate the radium of

the soul. In time we become conscious of an uplifting warmth permeating our bodies; we find ourselves meeting people and circumstances with poise and inner assurance and guidance; and we became aware of surges of indescribable joy welling up within us many times during the day for no immediate reason. We are beginning to know what it means to claim even a little of our heritage as Children of God.

If this sounds abstract, this effect of the thoughts and feelings on the substance of our bodies consider this illustration. You are calmly talking to a friend. Suddenly a thought enters your mind. You think you neglected to disconnect the electric iron when you left the house hours ago; the house might now be in flames and everything lost. The person before you knows nothing about your thoughts, but at once he sees your whole physical body undergo a change; the color is drained from your face, the muscles grow hard and taut from fear, and your dense physical body is leaden.

A thought process has changed the chemistry and dynamics of your bodies as scientifically as any change in the chemist's laboratory.

So do destructive thoughts, unkind, unloving feelings, and the indulgence of gross appetites constantly condense and harden the substance of our vehicles, the gross ore which imprisons the Spirit that we so long to liberate. The less we tend to the flame of the Spirit the more do we suffer the woes of adversity, the misery of unsatisfied longings, the griefs and stings of this world.

Analogously do right thoughts and feelings make their changes in the constituency of matter, rendering the instruments more and more pliable and amenable to the higher influence, more receptive to the manipulations of the Spirit.

Therefore, the more we spiritualize our bodies through discipline and purification, the less can they be affected by the ills that flesh is heir to, and the more will the blessings of the Spirit flow freely through us to heal and strengthen, to uphold and guide, to enrich and redeem. The place to start is right where we are, the time to begin is now, and with each of us, as the Chinese say, it is later than we think. □

—Emily W. Lortcher