

Lessons from the Apostle Paul's Spiritual Life

By Eva Peck



Just over a year after Jesus started working with James Padgett and communicating spiritual messages through him, in December 1915, Jesus spoke about the apostle Paul and his dramatic conversion and calling based on a speaker's interpretation of the Bible account in Acts 9. Quoting from [the message](#) (emphasis mine):

“... the whole discourse was taken from the Bible, and ... [the speaker's description of Paul's experience on the way to Damascus] is partly true, and partly not. ... When he was felled to the ground by the brightness of the great light that shone about him, Paul heard what I said, and answered me, and went into the town; but he was not blind, nor did the prophet Ananias do anything to him in the way of curing any physical blindness; *he only helped to open the spiritual blindness of Paul, and show him the way to the Father's Love and Kingdom.*

“Paul, as you know, was a very learned man among the Jews, and was a strict believer and follower of the Pharisees' doctrines; but as to knowing anything about the Divine Love, he had never experienced it, nor even did know what it was intellectually. *My summons* to him was not only for the purpose of stopping the persecution of my people, but for the further purpose of *enlisting him in my cause*, as not many of my followers were educated or learned men, and I realized that my doctrines and truths must be preached among not only the learned Jews, but also among the gentile philosophers; and as the first requisite in such cases is to hold and, in a way, convince the intellect, *I saw that I must have a disciple who would have the mental qualifications to present to these learned men, in a convincing way, my truths, and be able to withstand the logic and reasoning of these gentile philosophers.*

“John was filled with Love, and wherever he could come in close communion with the common people, *he could, by the great power and influence of that Love, persuade these people to embrace and receive my truths*, and as a consequence, feel the inflowing of the Holy Spirit. But Paul had not this Love to that degree, as to be enabled by virtue of its power or influence to convince and compel his hearers to receive my truths, and embrace that faith in my teachings as would cause them to seek the Love of the Father; and hence, *his mission was the more intended to be the teachings of my truths to the intellect and mental perceptions of a large number of persons of greater intellectual development than those with whom John and the other disciples would come in contact.*”

“[Paul] ... became a wonderful power in spreading my truths, and in convincing men that the Love of the Father was the one great possession to be obtained, and in causing them to believe in me as the son of the Father, and His messenger to declare to the world the great plan of man’s salvation.

“Paul finally became a man filled with this Love *as far as his nature was capable of receiving it*, and in his gospel will be found wonderful exhortations to his hearers to seek for it. *But he was not the disciple of Love, but rather of the intellectual parts of my truths; and when he taught, his teachings were intended to appeal more to the mental perceptions, than to the soul perceptions.*”

In a [follow-on message](#), Paul himself comments: “... *my only blindness was that which covered my spiritual eyes at the time. And, when I went into the town, the only blindness that I recovered from, in a way, was that which had kept my soul in darkness* and caused me to persecute the followers of Jesus under the belief that I was doing the work which God had called me to do. ... *I was more of an intellectual Christian in my early ministry than a Christian possessing the Great Divine Love of the Father.* Yet, thanks to him, I continued to preach and believed as best I could until, finally, I became a redeemed child of God, filled with His Love.”

At least three concepts in these two accounts bear commenting on. They are God’s calling, healing of spiritual blindness, and an intellectual versus a soul approach.

God’s Calling

While God gives each and everyone of us a free choice whether or not to accept His truth and/or gift of Divine Love, I believe that we each also receive a calling. The above message

uses even a stronger word, namely “summons”. Jesus’ *summons* to Paul was not only for him to stop organized persecution of Christians but also to be *enlisted* (another interesting word in this context) in Jesus’ cause.

The Bible uses the same word in an encouraging context in the Book of Isaiah, speaking in a national context to Israel, but the same would apply individually to each of God’s children. Isaiah 43:1 – “But now, this is what the LORD says—*he who created you* [created your soul], ... *he who formed you* [formed your body in the womb] ...: “Fear not, for I have *redeemed you; I have summoned you by name*; you are mine [my created child with the potential to become my true child through the transformation by my Love].”

And again in Isaiah 45:3 – “I will give you the *treasures* of darkness, *riches* stored in secret places [hidden treasures of the Celestial Kingdom that need to be discovered – see Matthew 13:44], so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who *summons you by name*.”

And once more in Isaiah 49:1 – “*Before I was born the LORD called me* [when I was just an un-incarnated soul]; from my birth he has made mention of my name.”

One could say, we are not Isaiah, the apostle Paul, or James Padgett, who all had an obvious function and purpose in God’s plan. That is true, but we all have God-given gifts and a purpose in God’s plan of salvation. The New Testament talks about a calling in numerous places, but I’ll just quote Romans 8:28, which speaks collectively and is very encouraging: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who *have been called according to his purpose*.”

The question may arise, if we are called (or even summoned) by God, where is free choice? It is still there as we can reject, refuse and/or resist our calling. But of course, the law of cause and effect will apply, and worse still, we would be rejecting a wonderful privilege, reward and future. So once we are given spiritual understanding and our eyes are open to this, we would much less likely want to reject our calling. And that brings us to the next point ...

Healing of Spiritual Blindness

Regarding Paul’s calling, or to use Jesus’ word, “summons”, which was more dramatic than most of us might experience, Jesus says: “[Ananias] *only helped to open the spiritual blindness of Paul, and show him the way to the Father’s Love and Kingdom*.” Paul himself

elaborates: “... *my only blindness was that which covered my spiritual eyes* at the time. And, when I went into the town, *the only blindness that I recovered from, in a way, was that which had kept my soul in darkness.*”

The Bible uses healing from blindness in several meanings, ranging from a one-of opening eyes to physical or spiritual realities, healing those who were physically blind, and revealing spiritual truths to which many are blind by virtue of ingrained beliefs, acquired prejudices, being too steeped in the material world, or other factors. Further healing of spiritual blindness at a deeper level involves opening of soul perceptions which happens as Divine Love begins transforming the soul.

In Paul’s case, his eyes were opened to see what kept his soul in darkness and to see the way to God’s Kingdom through the Father’s Love. In recounting his Damascus road experience to King Agrippa in the book of Acts, Paul explains the commission that Jesus subsequently gave him: Acts 26:17-18 – “... I am sending you to them [the gentiles or non-Jews] *to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light*, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”

This can also be seen as our calling and commission – *to open people’s eyes and turn them from darkness to light*, which if they then follow the path of light will lead them to forgiveness and a place in God’s Celestial Kingdom.

How can this be done? There are various ways, according to our individual gifts and guidance. As the above message says, John did it through the abundance of God’s Love in his soul. Paul did it through intellectual teaching and reasoning. One could say that John was very much of a “soul person” whereas Paul was a lot more of the mind and intellect. Was one a better servant of God, or spiritually superior than the other? Sometimes, we may get the impression that those among us who are more soul-oriented are better or better off. But let’s continue ...

Intellectual/Mind versus Soul/Heart Approach

The above message clearly shows that both the “soul people” and the “mind people” are needed to carry out God’s plan. That’s because the world has both types and multitude of shades in between them. We are all unique in this and other respects, and God has need and use for each and every one of us who has had their eyes open to understand spiritual truths and has accepted His calling to help bring about His plan of salvation.

In the time of the early church, Jesus needed “a disciple who would have the mental qualifications to present to these learned men, in a convincing way, [his] truths, and be able to withstand the logic and reasoning of these gentile philosophers. ... [Paul’s] mission was more intended to be the teachings of my truths to the intellect and mental perceptions of a large number of persons of greater intellectual development.... His teachings were intended to appeal more to the mental perceptions, than to the soul perceptions.”

With the Western world in particular being largely mind-oriented, it too no doubt needs those who can meet people where they are in this way. Those among us who are more intellectual are just as needed as those who operate more from the soul. The key is not so much mind/intellect versus soul. Rather it is that the mind, intellect and soul are all on a spiritual wavelength and working together. Time after time, in order to get into spiritual condition sufficient to make rapport with the angels, James Padgett was exhorted to think spiritual thoughts and to pray more. That would then result in soul longings and more Divine Love in the soul, which would lead to increased soul development.

In conclusion, whether we are more like John or more like Paul or anywhere in between, let’s all accept ourselves and one another, work together, use our gifts, support and encourage each other, and look forward to our indescribably beautiful, happy and glorious future in God’s Celestial Kingdom.

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