

Neville Goddard Lecture



Paul's Autobiography

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Paul is the greatest and most influential figure in the history of Christianity. After you hear his story you may judge just who he is. After his credentials have gained him public confidence, Paul begins. Paul wrote 13 letters, if you take the double letters as two: like 1st and 2nd Corinthians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, and 1st and 2nd Thessalonians. He first appears in scripture in the Book of Acts . . . and bear in mind the Book of Acts was once part of the Book of Luke. The same author who wrote the Book of Luke wrote the Book of Acts. They were once one volume, or one book in two volumes. Our early fathers divided the two and placed the Gospel of John between them. He first appears in the book that we will call the Gospel of Luke, only we now call it the Book of Acts.

He was present when the first Christian martyr, Stephen, was stoned to death . . . and Paul consented unto Stephen's death. Those who stoned Stephen placed their coats at the feet of Saul. (His name was then Saul. Acts 7:2) In the 9th chapter, he starts the great journey to Damascus, and he carries with him letters to the high priest in Damascus. He pledges himself if he finds anyone belonging to "the Way," be he man or woman, he will bring them bound to Jerusalem. All who believed it were called "followers of the Way," not Christians. On the way to bind those who belonged to the Way, he was blinded by the light, and then the whole thing was revealed to him, and his name was transformed from Saul to Paul.

The remaining portion of the Book of Acts is devoted almost exclusively to Paul, at least the last 16 chapters, which would begin with the first verse of the 13th chapter to the 28th, where he ends his days still propounding this mystery and trying to persuade

everyone of the truth of Jesus. Beginning with the law of Moses and all of the prophets, he explained to them in all the scripture the truth concerning Jesus. Some were convinced by what he said, while others disbelieved him. That's the story.

If I would read Paul and take one of his letters that will really explain Paul to me, I would go to the letter of Galatians for in Galatians (which scholars claim to be the first book of the New Testament . . . it came before the Gospels, it came before any book, so they say) in this letter, he makes the claim: "I Paul, an apostle not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." Here is a declaration of complete religious independence from all men, and dependent on God, repudiating in this letter all authority, institutions, customs, and laws that interfered with the direct acceptance of the individual to his God. No intermediary between the individual and his God, none, called by any name. Then he said: "The Gospel which I preach is not the Gospel of man, for I did not receive it from a man, neither was I taught it, it was given to me by revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:11) "For when it pleased God to reveal his son in me, then I conferred not with flesh and blood." (Galatians 1:16-17)

You ask the question of Paul: "Was he or Christ once really a man?" If you asked that of Paul, he would say: "Was?" "He is the heavenly man." Well, does that answer you? You are asking the question: "Was he really ever a man?" and you'll reply: "Not was . . . he is the heavenly man." "As we have borne the image of the man of dust, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly man." That still doesn't satisfy. "Was he really a man as we understand a man?" He doesn't respond, in time. Then you read his words: "From now on we will regard no one from a human point of view, even though we formerly regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer." (2 Corinthians 5:16) Then he makes the statement in the same chapter: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not counting any trespasses against them, and entrusting us with the message of reconciliation." (v. 19) You will see later on what Paul is trying to tell us, if I would substitute the word "imagination" for "God," and "imagining" for "Christ." Imagining means the activity of imagination . . . that imagination was imagining, reconciling the world to himself and not counting any trespasses against them, and then entrusting to us this message of imagining.

Now we will go to this great Book of Galatians, 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Bear in mind imagining being that son, imagination being God the Father. Now let us go to the first

two verses of the 3rd chapter: “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?” Listen to the words carefully: “Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.” Do you know what “portray” means? I think we all know, but let me refresh your memory: “To depict in a drawing or painting; or in some verbal description; or as an action on a stage,” a play on the stage. “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?” Answer me only this: “Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?” “Are you so foolish? Having begun with the Spirit, are you ending with the flesh?” Do you get it? The whole vast world has fallen victim to believing in the flesh of Jesus. Have you, having begun with the spirit . . . are you falling now, actually blind, and a victim of the flesh?

You were shown the whole thing like a play going on a stage tonight, and someone moved across the stage and they played the perfect play of God’s only salvation, the only way that man could be saved. And he walks across the stage and he plays it, and every scene he enacts is a mystical scene to be experienced by the individual. That was all done. Now are you going to confuse it? Can’t you now have that little spirit of observance and separate the action of walking across the stage from what he is trying to portray? For he is portraying it. If you go to a play and someone is shot, you know he will go home after being shot and have the most wonderful time . . . for their day begins at night. But you will weep, sitting in the audience, as you see him being shot, being abused. But he wasn’t shot and he wasn’t abused, save as an actor . . . but not the being who put on the mask, who played the part. So, let me repeat it: “Whose eye beheld Jesus Christ publicly portrayed as crucified.” The world thinks he was flesh and blood. No, he wasn’t flesh and blood. This is the fulfillment of all that was told in the Old Testament, but no one understood it, [except] the one to whom it was revealed (you call him Paul now). “When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, I conferred not with flesh and blood, and the Gospel that I preach to you is not man’s Gospel. I did not receive it from a man nor was I taught it but it was revealed by Jesus Christ.” The whole thing was revealed and I saw the mystery of it all, the mystery of salvation: that Christianity is based upon the affirmation that a series of events happened in which God revealed himself in action for the salvation of man. The thing happened, for the play said it did. I went to the play and I saw it and I was part of the gathering, and they hoped I would have the spirit of discernment to separate the action of the actor from what he was acting, and see the spirit, not the flesh. Did I see the spirit? Then after a while come the teachers, who did not participate, and they tell you he is flesh and blood. He was born of

a certain woman, on a certain day, in a manner that you were born . . . only he didn't have a physical father. And that isn't true at all. This birth is something entirely different, as told us in the Book of John: "He is born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." An entirely different birth takes place, which is all explained as the play unfolds. You saw the spirit . . . but don't go back, not to the flesh.

Now the story begins. We are called the followers of "the Way." Is that the way of salvation? I'll believe it. I will wait patiently until it unfolds in me, for that is the way of salvation. Then in the 14th [chapter] of John, we are told: "And now you know the Way." And Thomas said: "We do not know the way. We do not know where you are going so how do we know the way?" He said: "I AM the way, and the truth and the light." It is not a man, "follow me home." All that you will see me do upon the stage, . . . that is the way . . . so, "I AM the way." He didn't say I AM this, that or the other . . . "I AM the way." You follow the whole thing . . . that spirit that moves before you and you will see the way of salvation. They still didn't understand him. They said a way to what? A way to everything, but primarily "the Way to the Father." "For no one comes to the Father but by me." So, don't look upon me as flesh and blood . . . "I AM the way." Follow my story through this series of events and you'll come to the Father. So the state unfolds on the stage and they all see the spirit, but many could not discern and discriminate between the action of the actor and what the actor was portraying.

We come back to Galatians: "Before whose eye Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified." There you see it. The whole thing is unfolding on a stage, but man cannot lose himself to the point where he gets beyond the action of an actor. And he cries and weeps with the actor. He's portraying something, but they can't get what he is portraying. Read the story of Jesus and don't think of Jesus as flesh and blood. He is God himself, unfolding it before you in the form of a man that can see a man walking across the stage.

So, is Paul the initial awakened being? You judge it . . . I don't know. I am led to believe he is, that Paul [is] the most influential, the most important figure in the history of Christianity, that he was the one to whom it was revealed. He was fiery in his destruction of everything other than the outer observation of the law, and then to him it was revealed. So take courage. If you are violent today in supporting something that is external that you must observe, it doesn't matter. Paul did the same thing and suddenly he was blinded by the revelation and he saw the mystery of life. And he saw that Christ was within him. "And when it pleased God to reveal his son in me, then I conferred not with flesh and blood." To whom would I turn and ask them to throw light upon an

experience that is not understood by mortal mind? But having known the Bible as he did . . . he was well grounded in it . . . he could return to his Bible and see where it was all foretold, but he could not on that level understand it. It had to be unveiled. As it was unveiled he saw the interpretation of the ancient Scripture. Then in the end of Acts, when he stands before King Agrippa, he says: "Here I stand before you chained, condemned for hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. Here I have hope in that promise and stand in chains before you because I know it is true." And then he spent the rest of his days expounding the story concerning . . . what he called then . . . Jesus. And the whole world of Christendom thinks it is a man of flesh and blood.

Jesus means, "Jehovah saves," "Jehovah is salvation." There is nothing in the teaching of Paul but God and man . . . no intermediary. So God himself is inwoven in man and unfolds himself in man in a series of events. And as he then unfolds, as he unfolded in Paul, then he knew the mystery of the scripture. When he tries to tell it, those who followed him in the past (because he condemned and allowed the death of others for believing in it, then he himself fell victim to his belief) . . . well, who'll believe it?

As I go across this country the one question that is always asked me, whether it is a social gathering or any place: "Well, don't you believe in a physical Jesus?" No matter where I go, I get it. I go to a small little dinner party of four or five . . . "I know what you say Neville, but don't you really believe that he did live, that he walked this earth 2,000 years ago and was called Jesus, and his mother was Mary and his father was Joseph . . . or maybe it wasn't Joseph?" To the unprepared mind, how can you explain what Paul said in the first three verses of the 3rd chapter of Galatians: "O foolish Galatians who has bewitched you?" For they went astray to some physical sense: "Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified." Now I ask you one thing: Did you receive the spirit from those works of the Lord, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish, having begun with the spirit are you now ending with the flesh?" For the whole vast world today is ending with the flesh and they can't see the spirit which is Christ Jesus.

Christ Jesus is in man, us, the way, "Christ in you is the hope of glory." And in 2 Corinthians 13, Paul says: "Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you, unless of course you fail to meet the test." I hope you realize we have not failed. If Jesus Christ is in me, then I should start looking to find out where he is. I have found him by a search and an experiment. When he said "God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not holding any trespasses against them and entrusting to us the spirit of reconciliation," so then, God is Christ and Christ is in me, then who are we? And I discovered that God is

my own wonderful human imagination. God in action is Christ, and imagination in action is imagining. So, imagination imagining is reconciling the world to itself. Now to those who discover it, he entrusts this great secret of reconciliation.

So, you take every being in the world . . . all right, let them go astray, it doesn't matter. If with God all things are possible and he works and creates only through Christ, and Christ is now imagining . . . I could imagine you are what I want you to be, if I really believe in Christ, for "Christ in you is the hope of glory." And though at the moment you don't respond, and tomorrow you still do not respond, I'll persist, for that is the attribute of patience.

Read the fruit of the spirit. It is not only love and joy and peace . . . it is patience, it is persistence. In the end of the book of Galatians he gives you the proof of the spirit. So, I can persist, I can be patient. I will imagine they are as they ought to be, though at the moment reason denies it and my senses deny it, and everything denies it. But this is the fruit of the spirit. I'll be patient. I will imagine things are as I would like them to be. That is God in action, and God in action is Christ. I like what I am doing there, for the spirit bears the fruit of love, joy, and peace. These are the first petals that come out. Then come the other attributes and among them you will find there is patience, there is persistence.

So, Paul, to me, is the first in whom the vision took place. It came to one of the smallest tribes, Benjamin, a child of Abraham. Abraham is faith. It was all shown to Abraham and he believed it, and waited patiently for the fulfillment of what was shown him. He saw the play, too. It was all portrayed to Abraham. "And Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day." Then he went into the foreign land, as he was led by the spirit, but he still remained faithful to what he had seen in the play. The play unfolded before him and God played the part and God was Christ Jesus.

You say: "How could this Lord, this exalted Lord become human?" Again Paul answers, in his letter to the Philippians 2: "He emptied himself and became obedient unto death, even death upon a cross." Again he is speaking in a mystery, for Paul is very fond of using the word "mystery" . . . in fact he uses it no less than eighteen times. This . . . the body. . . is the cross. To him the cross was not the grievance of God but the love of God, and that crucifixion is the most delightful state. It is not a painful state, as the churches portray it. They don't portray the true thing at all. It happened to me right in this present embodiment, where it was shown me so vividly how it was done. And the thrill that was mine the night my hands became vortexes, and my head a vortex, and my side a

vortex, and the soles of my feet vortexes. I was in a pilgrimage over some invisible Mecca with some thousands of people, and a voice out of the blue announced: “And God walks with them.”

“I have been crucified with Christ, it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Listen to these words: “If we have been united with Christ in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” The resurrection has taken place, but it is also taking place. It took place, and that first one . . . whether you believe it or not . . . is Paul, and from that moment on it is taking place in every being in the world, as we march toward this invisible Mecca. And along the way we are pulled out of the crowd one by one, and he awakens in the individual. And that one, without losing his distinctive individuality, is God.

So, Jesus Christ is God himself. The play is on. God became man and played the part and showed us all before we started the journey, but we can't quite discriminate between the action and what the actor is actually trying to portray. Go back and read the words carefully: “Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.” An actor depicts the thought, but man can't quite discriminate between the thought depicted and the actor depicting the thought, and he thinks now the thing is flesh and blood . . . and it isn't.

You dwell upon it, and one day you will find yourself in that journey. The most colorful crowd in the world. Nothing on the screen compares to it in the color and the joy as you move towards this invisible Mecca, and you will hear a voice in the crowd, and the chances are it will always repeat itself in the same way. Someone will be at your side, and you will ask and they will ask: “But if God walks with him, where is he?” and the voice will come back: “At your side.” And they will look into your face and become hysterical, it will strike them so funny that you . . . a normal man, with all the weaknesses of a man . . . could be God. And the voice will come back and all will hear it: “Yes, in the act of waking.” Then, from the depths of your soul will come the same voice, and no one but you will hear it. And you . . . I put it in words that the world will understand, but the words differ: “And God laid himself down within you to sleep.” It isn't that. “I laid myself down within you to sleep, and as I slept I dreamed a dream, I dreamed” . . . he is going to complete it . . . “I dreamed I AM you.” That is what you are going to hear.

Then, at that moment you are going to find yourself being crucified in the most unique manner in the world. You will be sucked back into the body that is on the bed. Your

hands are real vortexes, your feet vortexes, your head a vortex, and the right side a vortex. It's a whirling joy as you are nailed once more to this body. Then you will know Paul's words: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is not I who live but Christ who lives in me and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." And the Son of God, in whom there is life, is your own wonderful human imagination. Imagining is life itself. What you imagine becomes animated, it takes on life, it takes on motion, vibration. Read the whole book of Galatians and that wonderful 3rd chapter, and see Paul's confession. No one taught it to him, he didn't receive it from a man . . . it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. "And when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me I conferred not with flesh and blood." God will reveal his Son in you in an explosion and you will see him standing before you and you will see that Son as your Son. Then you will know the meaning of the words: "No one comes unto the Father but by me, for I AM the way, I AM the truth, I AM the light." Not a man called Jesus, or Neville, or Peter, or any other name. No. "I AM the way." The Way is a series of mystical experiences. And you come to the Father in no other way save by me. So, watch this picture as it unfolds, for before you unfolded is the story. Before your eyes, Jesus Christ was publicly revealed in this garment.

So, that is the play. If you heard my story, that is the Way. There is no other way. Not a man called Neville . . . what he experienced is the Way to come to the Father. And you will be brought by this series of experiences, for Christianity is based upon the affirmation that a series of events happened in which God revealed himself in action for the salvation of man. We are told in Luke [of] a series of events, and you are the being spoken of and you are brought right up to fatherhood. But "no one comes to the father but by me." "I AM the way." You go back and you see the first appearance of the Way is the story of Paul (Acts 9). He went through the experience of the Way, and he comes back and goes through hell, but not for one moment could he relinquish his experience. So, he closed his days explaining to everyone who would listen to him the story of the Way. And some believed him while others disbelieved him.

Now let us go into the Silence.

QUESTION: Was Paul a man as we are?

ANSWER: If there is any man in the Bible that is a man as I AM, it is Paul. If there is any man that walked this earth as you and I walked it, it is Paul. It's the story. The others are states of consciousness. There is one person in whom it began to awaken, and he was grounded in orthodoxy. As he claimed in his own confession: "I AM of the tribe of

Benjamin, child of Abraham, grounded in the law . . . and then he didn't understand the fulfillment of that law until it happened in him. He denied he ever heard it from a man, for no man could have taught it to him: "The Gospel that I preach is not the Gospel of a man, it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. And when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, then I conferred not with flesh and blood." Here is a perfect revelation of how this thing takes place. I can tell you: I hadn't the slightest concept, and I was raised in a strict orthodox Christian environment. I had no idea this thing was actually alive in man, in woman. It happened just as you are told in the scripture, only it happened in the depth of the soul . . . and he goes through all these experiences.

When I started to teach this, I was teaching only the Law of God. I started on February 2, 1938, and I only spoke of God's Law . . . and I have proven it and it worked. But I had no idea of the profundity of this teaching until it began to happen in me. All of a sudden the birth from above took place and everything as described in the Gospels, even to the story of the dove. That I never conceived to be an actual fact, and then it happened in the depths of my soul. So it happened to Paul. He is the one character I would swear actually walked the face of the earth.

QUESTION: Will you say something on "My yoke is easy and my burden is light"?

ANSWER: The cross in itself is light. He declared himself to be the light of the world. Yoke is union. Union is light. If you saw that unfolding as a picture on the screen, could you believe it? Belief is union, that's yoke. It is very easy to believe it, but man has to be free from his prefabricated misconceptions. If it comes with your prefabricated misconceptions and you see it, you will not find the yoke easy. Maybe in this audience tonight there are a few who are unwilling to believe what I said this night. They still believe in a Jesus of flesh and blood . . . and flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. "Those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." If you still insist he is flesh and blood, then you will be unwilling to believe that he is simply portraying the state of God becoming man that man may become God. If you don't want to believe it . . . then don't believe it.

So, how can you share your vision with another who is unwilling to share it with you? But you tell it anyway. You tell it until the end of your earthly days, because you are making your departure. Can you tell the time of my departure? No. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." These are Paul's last words. He has kept the faith. The faith of what? The faith of Abraham. He said: "My teaching is not new, it is as old as the faith of Abraham." It is the fulfillment of that faith, but no one

knew it . . . and suddenly all that Abraham was shown in the beginning, is now fulfilled in him. And so, I do not bring a new religion. It is not man-made. It is one that is as old as the faith of Abraham, but who will believe it? When we think of Paul as being a convert . . . we think of a convert as one who was once a Jew and became a Christian, or vice versa. That is not a convert, not in the true mystical sense of the word. It is the fulfillment of the vision. He never for once, not for one moment, ever gave up Judaism. His last plea before King Agrippa is: "I stand here in chains for the hope of the promise made to our fathers . . . by God Himself." He isn't denying that faith, he is only fulfilling the 53rd chapter of Isaiah.

Let Us go into the Silence.







