

Thinking Of & Thinking From

by Neville Goddard

The first power that meets us at the threshold of the soul's domain is the power of imagination. Dr. Franz Hartmann

I WAS FIRST made conscious of the power, nature, and redemptive function of imagination through the teachings of my friend Abdullah; and through subsequent experiences I learned that Jesus was a symbol of the coming of imagination to man, that the test of His birth in man was the individual's ability to forgive sin; that is, his ability to identify himself or another with his aim in life.

Without the identification of man with his aim, the forgiveness of sin is an impossibility, and only the Son of God can forgive sin. Therefore man's ability to identify himself with his aim, though reason and his senses deny it, is proof of the birth of Christ in him. To passively surrender to appearances and bow before the evidence of facts is to confess that Christ is not yet born in you.

Although this teaching shocked and repelled me at first — for I was a convinced and earnest Christian, and did not then know that Christianity could not be inherited by the mere accident of birth but must be consciously adopted as a way of life — it stole later on, through visions, mystical revelations, and practical experiences, into my understanding and found its interpretation in a deeper mood. But I must confess that it is a trying time when those things are shaken which one has always taken for granted.

Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. Mark 13:2

Not one stone of literal understanding will be left after one drinks the water of psychological meaning. All that has been built up by natural religion is cast into the flames of mental fire. Yet, what better way is there to understand Christ Jesus than to identify the central character of the Gospels with human imagination — knowing that every time you exercise your imagination lovingly on behalf of another you are literally mediating God to man and thereby feeding and clothing Christ Jesus, and that whenever you imagine evil against another you are literally beating and crucifying Christ Jesus — ? Every imagination of man is either the cup of cold water or the sponge of vinegar to the parched lips of Christ.

Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor warned the prophet Zechariah. When man heeds this advice, he will awake from the imposed sleep of Adam into the full consciousness of the Son of God. He is in the world, and the world is made by him, and the world knows him not: Human Imagination.

I asked myself many times, "If my imagination is Christ Jesus and all

things are possible to Christ Jesus, are all things possible to me?"

Through experience I have come to know that when I identify myself with my aim in life, then Christ is awake in me.

Christ is sufficient for all things.

I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. John 10:17, 18

What a comfort it is to know that all that I experience is the result of my own standard of beliefs; that I am the center of my own web of circumstances and that as I change, so must my outer world!

The world presents different appearances according as our states of consciousness differ. What we see when we are identified with a state cannot be seen when we are no longer fused with it. By state is meant all that man believes and consents to as true. No idea presented to the mind can realize itself unless the mind accepts it. It depends on the acceptance, the state with which we are identified, how things present themselves. In the fusion of imagination and states is to be found the shaping of the world as it seems. The world is a revelation of the states with which imagination is fused. It is the state from which we think that determines the objective world in which we live. The rich man, the poor man, the good man, the thief are what they are by virtue of the states from which they view the world. On the distinction between these states depends the distinction between the worlds of these men. Individually so different is this same world. It is not the actions and behavior of the good man that should be matched but his point of view. Outer reforms are useless if the inner state is not changed. Success is gained not by imitating the outer actions of the successful but by right inner actions and inner talking.

If we detach ourselves from a state, and we may at any moment, the conditions and circumstances to which that union gave being vanish.

It was in the fall of 1933 in New York City that I approached Abdullah with a problem. He asked me one simple question, "What do you want?" I told him that I would like to spend the winter in Barbados, but that I was broke. I literally did not have a nickel.

"If you will imagine yourself to be in Barbados," said he, "thinking and viewing the world from that state of consciousness instead of thinking of Barbados, you will spend the winter there. You must not concern yourself with the ways and means of getting there, for the state of consciousness of already being in Barbados, if occupied by your imagination, will devise the means best suited to realize itself."

Man lives by committing himself to invisible states, by fusing his imagination with what he knows to be other than himself, and in this union he experiences the results of that fusion. No one can lose what he has save by detachment from the state where the things experienced have their natural life.

"You must imagine yourself right into the state of your fulfilled desire," Abdullah told me, "and fall asleep viewing the world from Barbados."

The world which we describe from observation must be as we describe it relative to ourselves. Our imagination connects us with the state desired. But we must use imagination masterfully, not as an onlooker thinking of the end, but as a partaker thinking from the end. We must actually be there in imagination. If we do this, our subjective experience will be realized objectively.

"This is not mere fancy," said he, "but a truth you can prove by experience."

His appeal to enter into the wish fulfilled was the secret of thinking from the end. Every state is already there as "mere possibility" as long as you think of it, but is overpoweringly real when you think from it. Thinking from the end is the way of Christ.

I began right there and then fixing my thoughts beyond the limits of sense, beyond that aspect to which my present state gave being, towards the feeling of already being in Barbados and viewing the world from that standpoint.

He emphasized the importance of the state from which man views the world as he falls asleep. All prophets claim that the voice of God is chiefly heard by man in dreams.

In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. Job 33:15, 16

That night and for several nights thereafter I fell asleep in the assumption that I was in my father's house in Barbados. Within a month I received a letter from my brother saying that he had a strong desire to have the family together at Christmas and asking me to use the enclosed steamship ticket for Barbados. I sailed two days after I received my brother's letter and spent a wonderful winter in Barbados.

This experience has convinced me that man can be anything he pleases if he will make the conception habitual and think from the end. It has also shown me that I can no longer excuse myself by placing the blame on the world of external things — that my good and my evil have no dependency except from myself that it depends on the state from which I view the world how things present themselves.

Man, who is free in his choice, acts from conceptions which he freely, though not always wisely, chooses. All conceivable states are awaiting our choice and occupancy, but no amount of rationalizing will of itself yield us the state of consciousness which is the only thing worth having.

The imaginative image is the only thing to seek.

The ultimate purpose of imagination is to create in us "the spirit of Jesus,"

which is continual forgiveness of sin, continual identification of man with his ideal. Only by identifying ourselves with our aim can we forgive ourselves for having missed it. All else is labor in vain. On this path, to whatever place or state we convey our imagination, to that place or state we will gravitate physically also.

In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also. John 14:2, 3

By sleeping in my father's house in my imagination as though I slept there in the flesh, I fused my imagination with that state and was compelled to experience that state in the flesh also.

So vivid was this state to me, I could have been seen in my father's house had any sensitive entered the room where in imagination I was sleeping. A man can be seen where in imagination he is, for a man must be where his imagination is, for his imagination is himself. This I know from experience, for I have been seen by a few to whom I desired to be seen, when physically I was hundreds of miles away.

I, by the intensity of my imagination and feeling, imagining and feeling myself to be in Barbados instead of merely thinking of Barbados, had spanned the vast Atlantic to influence my brother into desiring my presence to complete the family circle at Christmas. Thinking from the end, from the feeling of my wish fulfilled, was the source of everything that happened as outer cause, such as my brother's impulse to send me a steamship ticket; and it was also the cause of everything that appeared as results.

In *Ideas of Good and Evil*, W. B. Yeats, having described a few experiences similar to this experience of mine, writes:

If all who have described events like this have not dreamed, we should rewrite our histories, for all men, certainly all imaginative men, must be forever casting forth enchantments, glamor, illusions; and all men, especially tranquil men who have no powerful egotistic life, must be continually passing under their power.

Determined imagination, thinking *from the end*, is the beginning of all miracles.

I would like to give you an immense belief in miracles, but a miracle is only the name given by those who have no knowledge of the power and function of imagination to the works of imagination. Imagining oneself into the feeling of the wish fulfilled is the means by which a new state is entered. This gives the state the quality of is-ness. Hermes tells us:

That which is, is manifested; that which has been or shall be, is unmanifested, but not dead; for Soul, the eternal activity of God, animates all things.

The future must become the present in the imagination of the one who would wisely and consciously create circumstances. We must translate vision into Being, thinking *of* into thinking *from*. Imagination must center itself in some state and view the world from that state. Thinking from the end is an intense perception of the world of fulfilled desire. Thinking from the state desired is creative living. Ignorance of this ability to think from the end is bondage. It is the root of all bondage with which man is bound. To passively surrender to the evidence of the senses underestimates the capacities of the Inner Self. Once man accepts thinking from the end as a creative principle in which he can cooperate, then he is redeemed from the absurdity of ever attempting to achieve his objective by merely thinking of it.

Construct all ends according to the pattern of fulfilled desire.

The whole of life is just the appeasement of hunger, and the infinite states of consciousness from which a man can view the world are purely a means of satisfying that hunger. The principle upon which each state is organized is some form of hunger to lift the passion for self-gratification to ever higher and higher levels of experience. Desire is the mainspring of the mental machinery. It is a blessed thing. It is a right and natural craving which has a state of consciousness as its right and natural satisfaction.

But one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal. Philippians 3:13, 14

It is necessary to have an aim in life. Without an aim we drift. "What wastest thou of me?" is the implied question asked most often by the central figure of the Gospels. In defining your aim, you must want it.

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Psalms 42:1

It is lack of this passionate direction to life that makes man fail of accomplishment.

The spanning of the bridge between desire — thinking of — and satisfaction — thinking from — is all-important. We must move mentally from thinking of the end to thinking from the end. This, reason could never do. By its nature it is restricted to the evidence of the senses; but imagination, having no such limitation, can. Desire exists to be gratified in the activity of imagination. Through imagination man escapes from the limitation of the senses and the bondage of reason.

There is no stopping the man who can think from the end. Nothing can stop him. He creates the means and grows his way out of limitation into ever greater and greater mansions of the Lord. It does not matter what he has been or what he is. All that matters is "what does he want?" He knows that the world is a manifestation of the mental activity which goes

on within himself, so he strives to determine and control the ends from which he thinks. In his imagination he dwells in the end, confident that he shall dwell there in the flesh also. He puts his whole trust in the feeling of the wish fulfilled and lives by committing himself to that state, for the art of fortune is to tempt him so to do. Like the man at the pool of Bethesda, he is ready for the moving of the waters of imagination. Knowing that every desire is ripe grain to him who knows how to think from the end, he is indifferent to mere reasonable probability and confident that through continuous imagination his assumptions will harden into fact.

But how to persuade men everywhere that thinking from the end is the only living, how to foster it in every activity of man, how to reveal it as the plenitude of life and not the compensation of the disappointed: that is the problem.

Life is a controllable thing. You can experience what you please once you realize that you are His Son, and that you are what you are by virtue of the state of consciousness from which you think and view the world.

Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. Luke 15:31