**THE WAY OF GETHSEMANE**

LUCY HAYS REYNOLDS

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In a certain garden, according to Scriptural record, the most momentous struggle of all time occurred, one that was to point the way of emergence for the whole human race from the suffering and tragedy of the will of the flesh to the spiritual freedom and fulfillment of the will of God. Desertion, betrayal, mockery, and the challenge of a frustrated mission were all squarely faced and overcome before their outward experiences transpired. So heavy and terrible was the weight of the world in this struggle that three ascending endeavors were made before spiritual supremacy was fully attained. Then at length, through surrender of human selfhood in the garden of Gethsemane spiritual majesty, might, and dominion were demonstrated by the meekest but mightiest man who ever lived, even Christ Jesus.

The Master proved that the way of divine glory was one not of personal glorification, but of total self-renunciation. We are told in the Scriptures that Jesus fell on the ground and earnestly prayed three times: that if it were possible the cup might pass from him, nevertheless that God's will be done; then again he prayed that if it were not possible, still that God's will be done; finally, reiterating this willingness, he reached the sublime pinnacle of self-surrender and went forth from Gethsemane fully prepared to demonstrate the capacity of the divine nature to overcome the world. In "Unity of Good" ([p. 58](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=The+Master%27s+sublime+triumph+over+all+mortal+mentality+was+immortality%27s+goal.+He+was+too+wise+not+to+be+willing+to+test+the+full+compass+of+human+woe%2C+being+%27in+all+points+tempted+like+as+we+are%2C+yet+without+sin.%27&book=tfccs.main.pw.un" \t "_blank)) Mary Baker Eddy writes: "The Master's sublime triumph over all mortal mentality was immortality's goal. He was too wise not to be willing to test the full compass of human woe, being 'in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.'"

Equipped with the power of Spirit, gained through total self-renunciation, the Master went directly to where the treacherous Judas and the soldiers were searching for him with lanterns, torches, and weapons, and revealed to them who he was, saying simply, "I am he." So powerful was the spiritual impact of Truth upon error that when Jesus thus met his foes, who were seeking to arrest him, we are told "they went backward, and fell to the ground." All the elements of human nature which the human mind of itself cannot overcome—the self-will, envy, and treachery that lie, cheat, and kill—were thrown backward to the ground. Animal magnetism had found nothing in Jesus to respond to it or to which it could attach itself. But, had he not first surrendered everything in Gethsemane that could be crucified or killed, think you that this great demonstrator of Love could have been victorious over the cross or could have risen from the tomb? No.

To those whose vision is limited, this method of handling animal magnetism, through self-surrender, might seem negative, an acquiescence in error. Struck at, mocked, and a crown of thorns placed upon his head, Christ Jesus opened not his mouth in self-defense. Yet, instead of this attitude indicating blind submission to error, it denoted a divinely radical, positive attitude, radiant with the divine nature, and magnificent in its serenity, power, and wisdom. No wonder that Jesus could instantly restore the ear of the soldier which the resentment and impetuosity of Peter had cut off. Manifestly, the handling of error, through surrender to the divine nature of the Christ, was proved to be supreme. Had Jesus not surrendered to the will of God, what would have happened? There would have been no Christianity as it is today, no trail blazed that leads out of the gloom of mortality into the glory of resurrection.

Gethsemane is defined in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mrs. Eddy thus ([p. 586](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Patient+woe%3B+the+human+yielding+to+the+divine%3B+love+meeting+no+response%2C+but+still+remaining+love.&book=tfccs.main.sh" \t "_blank)): "Patient woe; the human yielding to the divine; love meeting no response, but still remaining love." Thus Gethsemane is a self-surrendering realm of consciousness where the depths of human woe are sounded and the basic elements of human nature are laid off in order to make way for the divine.

It is this letting go and laying down of material sense that demonstrates the way out of the human into the divine. Yet, because it is an instinctive characteristic of human nature to preserve itself, it is anguish for it to surrender itself. Gethsemane, therefore, is a garden where, through holy struggles, our spiritual sense of being is born; where the sweet fragrance of forgiveness will not let earth's woes embitter the heart; where theory and letter are translated into the realization and reflection of spiritual reality. Not human honors and success, but the mellowing qualities of the divine nature are the blessings gained in Gethsemane.

Yet, how we strive to avoid this garden of self-renunciation and spiritual transcendency! How we cling to the human rather than yield to the divine! How we strive to live our own lives without so much as a thought of surrendering them to the divine will! Human nature faces injustice, abuse, and enmity with intense reactions of indignation and self-justification. Pleading for itself, personal good rebels against the demands of the divine nature, crying out before some terrifying experience: "Take this cup away from me; why should I have to suffer? I have done no wrong. Why should not one stand up for his rights and strike off the soldier's ear, as did Peter?" No wonder three ascending steps are required before the peak of self-surrender is reached! In "Miscellaneous Writings" by Mary Baker Eddy we read ([p. 107](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Mortals%27+false+senses+pass+through+three+states+and+stages+of+human+consciousness+before+yielding+error.&book=tfccs.main.pw.misc" \t "_blank)), "Mortals' false senses pass through three states and stages of human consciousness before yielding error."

Gradually, through mighty wrestlings in Gethsemane, elements of human nature begin to dissolve: willfulness diminishes, human yearnings are gradually relinquished, and personal reactions to error lessen. Then we come to the second stage of self-surrender, where mercy, tolerance, and humility are assimilated. Tears of self-pity give place to baptismal joy, and God's will is more intelligently understood and demonstrated. Now we have a new outlook. We can walk through indignities, slights, and injuries without hurt feelings. The strain and stress of daily demands let go their rasping hold. Finally, we rise to the third stage, where we willingly lay all upon the altar. The lower nature of the mortal has surrendered to the higher nature of man. Consciousness has become transparent, and lo, there is experienced a holy inrush of tender, wordless, healing love! The mechanism of material thinking has yielded to spiritual vision, reflection, and realization. In referring to the illumination of spiritual understanding, Mrs. Eddy writes in Science and Health ([p. 85](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=This+Soul-sense+comes+to+the+human+mind+when+the+latter+yields+to+the+divine+Mind.&book=tfccs.main.sh" \t "_blank)), "This Soul-sense comes to the human mind when the latter yields to the divine Mind."

No wonder that self-surrender is a mighty, dynamic factor in the demonstration of divine power. So natively is thought adjusted to the workings of Spirit and the healing elements of the divine nature, through self-surrender, that marvelous achievements unfold. Indeed, the test of demonstration converges at the point of whether or not surrender of materiality is only partial or complete. When one can do nothing of himself and is forced to let go of all reliance upon the human mind or material means, turning in desperation to God, the situation is prepared for demonstration. If there is yielding to God's will of health and harmony, when physical distress seems to frighten, the possibilities of instantaneous healing are demonstrated. While few of us may feel we can maintain the high peak of self-surrender at all times, yet it is at this point where we rise to spiritual authority and dominion.

Out on the battlefront the blazing splendor of self-surrender shines forth magnificently. Separated from their families and facing the supreme sacrifice, men and women of the armed forces, in their heroism and selflessness, often rise above the fear of personal safety, and, in experiencing the presence of God, are marvelously protected and saved. Those at home, if they go into Gethsemane, do not surrender their loved ones to danger, but to divine Life, and thereby place them in Christly security. Indeed, true preservation is demonstrated through self-renunciation. Such surrender is a most powerful antidote to every phase of mental malpractice. Indeed, total surrender to God means total surrender of evil, surrender of everything in oneself that reacts to error. As a willow tree gracefully bends low before the storm, only to rise unbroken when the storm is over, so we, bending low before the mental storms of error, through divine protection rise unharmed.

Thus, if you have been slandered, deserted, and betrayed; if you have been deceived by honeyed sweetness in the guise of friendship, as exemplified by Judas with a kiss of betrayal; if error has woven a set of tragic circumstances that seem insurmountable, then quickly go into the garden of Gethsemane and surrender all your belief in evil. When adverse human experiences have drained the last drop of sorrow from disappointed hopes, when utter despair leaves you in its darkest oblivion, then without regret you can turn from the empty deceptions of material concepts to the grand realities of divine being, and find sweet surcease, and rich compensation for every earthly woe, through surrendering to the triumphant spirit of the Christ.

Behold, therefore, the grandeur and wonder of self-surrender, as gained in the garden of Gethsemane! Divine Science, the holy Comforter, which reveals that there is in reality nothing to give up or surrender, becomes mightily, tenderly real. In surrendering all that has the capacity to suffer, we rise above fleshly suffering. Beyond self-preservation and "the survival of the fittest," beyond human ancestry and history, beyond even human goodness, lie the eternal facts of divine being, the greatness of true manhood and supernal freedom. Here, inner joy and light become inextinguishable, immortality and holiness are tasted. Soul-sense has gained the first place in one's life, and one comes forth into spiritual calm and dominion.

As we yield our lives to the Science of being through holy submission to the law of God, spiritual purposes and fulfillments of divine destiny appear. Thus, instead of letting the pigmy ways of personal sense, temperament, and talent dominate our lives, why not go into Gethsemane and wrestle it out there, until the majesty and might of divine individuality is demonstrated in our lives? Why not experience the glorious exaltation of surrendering the belief of life and intelligence in matter to the truth of being? What if it does mean, as in the case of the Master, anguish, sweat, and blood? One cannot die out of mortality, and so the only way out is to surrender the belief in mortality, and thus gain the present consciousness of immortality.

Today, the whole world is at the threshold of a universal Gethsemane. Through its gigantic struggles, human consciousness is being prepared to surrender age-long beliefs for more enlightened ideas of Truth. Racial beliefs, treachery, betrayal, torture, are being exposed as enemies of all mankind. They are being forced to bow with unconditional surrender to the Christly qualities of the brotherhood of man. Yea, the woes and agony of the present hour are forcing humanity out of the deceptions of mortality and arousing universal thought to a growing willingness to strive for a united Christian world, which does not make terms with error, and where ruthless leadership submits to the leadership of divine righteousness.

The same Mind that empowered Christ Jesus to win spiritual victory is here today empowering the universal spirit of mankind to gain the triumph of millennial glory. In "Unity of Good" ([p. 57](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Mortal+throes+of+anguish+forward+the+birth+of+immortal+being%3B+but+divine+Science+wipes+away+all+tears.&book=tfccs.main.pw.un" \t "_blank)) we read, "Mortal throes of anguish forward the birth of immortal being; but divine Science wipes away all tears." From the garden of Eden, through the garden of Gethsemane, out into the Science of being, humanity will come forth from the gloom of mortality into the glory of divine reality.