

Annual Meeting 1973  
Tuesday, June 5

"LET YOUR COMMUNICATION BE IN HEAVEN"

Charles W. Ferris

We've been talking this afternoon about communication. How we can make it more effective, both in content and in method. As we've just heard, we need to meet the human need at the point of that need. I've found a very helpful guide in genuinely meeting this need is: Let your communication be in heaven.

In other words, convey to the other person, in terms that are meaningful to him, the sense that in reality, God bases everything, every idea, every act, every feeling. For instance, when I'm answering questions after a college Org. lecture, I may get challenged on the Christian Science approach to theology, or healing, or morals. But as I in my thoughts keep the basis of my reply heavenly -- that is, remain mentally aware of God's support of His entire creation -- this will guide my choice of words, and the other person's going to feel this support. He's going to feel we're all on the same side. We're all on God's side. He may deny the words, but he can't deny the love. The message of God's care is the truth; it can be amplified logically, emotionally, spiritually. The message is going to be felt.

How can we make this heavenly communication more effective? Quite a few years ago, I faced a situation where I had to communicate some absolute truths to a group of people who seemed unreceptive. I prayed about it, very deeply. And it came to me that in reality, they were already aware of this absolute truth. I was aware of this absolute truth. And what we would be doing humanly would be to demonstrate a mutual awareness of what already exists. The occasion turned out very well. And I came up with a definition of communication then which I've used ever since, lecturing, writing, praying for a healing. The definition is this: "True communication is a mutual awareness of what God has already imparted."

Well, then, if you're aware of what I have to say, and I'm aware of what you have to say, why is there need for speech at all? In the absolute, there isn't. But our present concept of communication is a relative one. We see man as divided into separate minds, largely needing visual and audible symbols to communicate. As our concept is spiritualized, though, we see man as the full manifestation of divine Mind, already including every right idea.

What we're trying to do on the human scene, then, is to verify what exists absolutely. When you speak to me and I understand what you say, the idea you've expressed is known to both of us. We're mutually aware of it. Doesn't this hint at true communication: total, mutual awareness of all reality. As we see more clearly that each idea we want to communicate

emanates from God and is already known by the other person, we'll approach this level of heavenly communication, complete and perfect mutual understanding now.

Sometimes it's quite a challenge to keep one's communication in heaven both in content and in realizing the other person's awareness of God's ideas. A couple years ago, I'd scheduled a college lecture to be held outside on a quadrangle. It was a beautifully sunny Sunday afternoon. When we arrived, I noticed a young man sitting on a stone bench practicing his banjo. We set up our sound equipment about fifty yards from where he was playing. I figured when he saw the lecture being given, he'd stop his playing. I was wrong. The introducer began. The banjo player was undeterred. I launched into *the* lecture, still accompanied by this excellent but persistent banjo music playing in the background. A dog walked into the crowd. Two groups of friends coming from opposite directions met each other precisely behind me, maybe six feet. They greeted each other, "Oh, hello, there. How are you?" Completely oblivious of the lecture and the 150 people sitting there on the grass listening to it. Every once in a while, the banjo player would lift his voice in song.

Now when you agree to a speaking situation like this, you decide at the outside that nothing, but nothing, is going to distract you. Believe me, you do keep your communication in heaven. I think the only time I was thrown off was when the banjo player stopped for a moment; but then he was at it again, more vigorous than ever.

All in all, the lecture seemed to go well; people were attentive, happy, a really good rapport. Afterward, as we were leaving, I saw the banjo player still sitting on this stone bench playing his banjo, and I decided the loving thing would be to go over, introduce myself, and compliment him on his banjo playing. He really was good. And this is what I did. He was a little on the indifferent side. That was that.

I received some good reports about this lecture. But the one that touched me most came the next fall when I learned that the banjo player, who had had some slight contact with Christian Science as a child, had revived his interest and was now an active working member of that college Organization. The banjo player and I had been communicating during that lecture. I felt a love toward him that refused to let him or anyone else be deprived of a spiritual message of truth.

Our Leader communicated. She faced obstacles larger than any of us face here. She kept her communication in heaven through it all. She knew the source and basis for effective communication to be God. As she puts it: "The intercommunication is always from God to His idea, man." (S&H 284:31)

We can be mutually aware of what God has imparted to each of us. Then our communication will indeed be in heaven. Then both our written and our spoken words will be ruled by the Word of God.