

ARE "PSYCHIC" POWERS DESIRABLE?

^{25:1} The answer to this question is much like the preceding one. There are, of course, no "unnatural" powers, and it is obviously merely an appeal to magic to make up a power that does not exist. It is equally obvious, however, that each individual has many abilities of which he is unaware. As his awareness increases, he may well develop abilities that seem quite startling to him. Yet nothing he can do can compare even in the slightest with the glorious surprise of remembering Who he is. Let all his learning and all his efforts be directed toward this one great final surprise, and he will not be content to be delayed by the little ones that may come to him on the way.

² Certainly there are many "psychic" powers that are clearly in line with this course. Communication is not limited to the small range of channels the world recognizes. If it were, there would be little point in trying to teach salvation. It would be impossible to do so. The limits the world places on communication are the chief barriers to direct experience of the Holy Spirit, Whose Presence is always there and Whose Voice is available but for the hearing. These limits are placed out of fear, for without them the walls that surround all the separate places of the world would fall at the holy sound of His Voice. Who transcends these limits in any way is merely becoming more natural. He is doing nothing special, and there is no magic in his accomplishments.

³ The seemingly new abilities that may be gathered on the way can be very helpful. Given to the Holy Spirit, and used under His direction, they are valuable teaching aids. To this, the question of how they arise is irrelevant. The only important consideration is how they are used. Taking them as ends in themselves, no matter how this is done, will delay progress. Nor does their value lie in proving anything; achievements from the past, unusual attunement with the "unseen," or "special" favors from God. God gives no special favors, and no one has any powers that are not available to everyone. Only by tricks of magic are special powers "demonstrated."

⁴ Nothing that is genuine is used to deceive. The Holy Spirit is incapable of deception, and He can use only genuine abilities. What is used for magic is useless to Him. But what He uses cannot be used for magic. There is, however, a particular appeal in unusual abilities that can be curiously tempting. Here are strengths which the Holy Spirit wants and needs. Yet the ego sees in these same strengths an opportunity to glorify itself. Strengths turned to weakness are tragedy indeed. Yet what is not given to the Holy Spirit must be given to weakness, for what is withheld from love is given to fear, and will be fearful in consequence.

⁵ Even those who no longer value the material things of the world may still be deceived by "psychic" powers. As investment has been withdrawn from the world's material gifts, the ego has been seriously threatened. It may still be strong enough to rally under this new temptation to win back strength by guile. Many have not seen through the ego's defenses here, although they are not particularly subtle.

Yet, given a remaining wish to be deceived, deception is made easy. Now the "power" is no longer a genuine ability, and cannot be used dependably. It is almost inevitable that, unless the individual changes his mind about its purpose, he will bolster his "power's" uncertainties with increasing deception.

⁶ Any ability that anyone develops has the potentiality for good. To this there is no exception. And the more unusual and unexpected the power, the greater its potential usefulness. Salvation has need of all abilities, for what the world would destroy the Holy Spirit would restore. "Psychic" abilities have been used to call upon the devil, which merely means to strengthen the ego. Yet here is also a great channel of hope and healing in the Holy Spirit's service. Those who have developed "psychic" powers have simply let some of the limitations they laid upon their minds be lifted. It can be but further limitations they lay upon themselves if they utilize their increased freedom for greater imprisonment. The Holy Spirit needs these gifts, and those who offer them to Him and Him alone go with Christ's gratitude upon their hearts, and His holy sight not far behind.