

## A MODERN SIMON TALKS WITH GOD

CLED E. WALLACE

He says he did, "actually and literally." Who? Dr. Frank B. Robinson of Moscow, Idaho. He is the founder and operator of "Psychiana" a religious movement of "twelve years standing." This new religion was born in a personal experience alleged to have happened to its founder. He admits that the thing he claims is "strange, almost unbelievable" and he is the sole witness. "This experience may sound unbelievable, but it's true or I wouldn't tell you it was." He expects us to believe as tall a tale as a fanatic ever told about a transcendent experience with Jehovah on his **unsupported word**. Prophet Joseph Smith of Mormon fame had nothing on this Idahoan when it comes to modesty—the absence of it! He does not propose to blush unseen, nor unheard, and waste his fragrance on the desert air. He is advertising himself as "that power of God which is called Great" in expensive insertions in large daily newspapers throughout the nation. He has incorporated and copyrighted his religion and "operates entirely by mail." Here is a sample of his claims to unique intimacy with God.

"Well, I own control of the largest afternoon daily newspaper in North Idaho. I own the largest office building in my City. I drive two beautiful cars, I own my own home which has a lovely pipe-organ in it, and my family are abundantly provided for after I'm gone. And all this has been made possible because, one day, about twelve years ago, I actually and literally talked with God."

It is a lot easier to believe that this whole "Psychiana" set-up is a pious fraud to make money than it is to believe that a conversation with the Lord put a forty-two year old "horrible, dismal, sickening failure" on easy street in Moscow. This is a personal description of himself before he talked with God. P. T. Barnum hood-winked the American people out of a lot of money and made them like it, but he did not humbug them in the name of Jehovah, nor did he claim to get rich by talking with God. Had he done so, he would have descended to the plane of an irreverent blatherskite.

"Psychiana, incorporated **operating only by mail**" is an appeal to human cupidity and makes a long reach for the pocket-book. "I talked with God" and **made money**. Pay me for the secret and you can talk with God and **make money**. This is the appeal of "Psychiana." "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." Simon Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ said: "Silver and gold have I none but what I have, that give I thee." I do not believe that the apostle of this new religion pays for his nation-wide advertising, or that he got his cars, pipe-organ, office building, or newspaper by carrying on a conversation with heaven. It sounds like a racket to fleece gullible people out of their money, organized and operated on a pretense of conversational intimacy with the Almighty. There is still enough ignorance and superstition in our land to make religious quackery a paying business. The price for his courses used to be about twenty dollars down, for the **promise** of tuning some Simple Simon in on God. "What I have, that give I thee" but first, **twenty dollars please!** "All preliminary and explanatory information is free" but that only rings Central at Moscow, Idaho. It does not establish connection with heaven until satisfactory financial arrangements are made. Dr. Frank B. Robinson is the only "Hello Girl" extant who can plug you in so you can exchange messages with Glory. Anybody who sends him money to get tuned in is certain to find out that he has the wrong connection. If you have an insatiable appetite for holding the sack on a snipe-hunt, you could possibly save money and have more fun by consulting a colorful Spiritualist Medium.

One should really go back to the city of Samaria about the time Philip established the church there, to find a model for this modern "psychiana" wonder. Old Simon really might have gone places if he could have used some big dailies and the people could have read them. As it was he put on a pretty good show and amazed a lot of ignoramuses with his tricks until he was shown up for the windy that he was. His claims were fraudulent and he was operating for profit.

"But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who beforetime in the city used Sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries." (Acts 8).

The most amazing thing about Psychiana Simon of Moscow, Idaho is the incredible nature of his claims which he admits to be "strange, almost unbelievable," and the fact that there are people empty-headed enough to allow him to reach into their pocket-books "entirely by mail." You cannot talk with God unless you "learn the secret," and this Moscow wizard appears to be the sole custodian of it. He proposes to sell you this gift of God for money. Ancient Simon proposed "to obtain the gift of God with money" from an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. He got a heavy jolt for his presumption. "But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money." Modern Simon comes to town, claims that he has contacted God and proposes to sell the gift of God for money. In the light of the scriptures both he and the dupes who try to buy it from him are "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." It is "strange, almost unbelievable" that anybody could for a moment entertain the thought that God Almighty endorses the quackery that this religious opportunist constantly quacks about through the advertising mediums of the nation.

He may have all that he claims to "control" but in view of "the strange, almost unbelievable" reason he advances for having it, I would not take it as collateral on a loan without further investigation. I agree with him that he "sounds unbelievable." If he owned all of Moscow, Idaho it would be no evidence that he has "talked with God." F. W. Woolworth owns a higher building in New York City than Frank Robinson does in Moscow, Idaho and he did not get it by talking with God. Thousands drive pretty cars and own lovely pipe-organs and even know how to play on them who never heard of "psychiana" or its founder. Wm. Wrigley owns a better house in California than Modern Simon does in Moscow and he built his from chewing gun instead of "Psychiana, incorporated"—**operated only by mail!** And I have heard of at least one "certain rich man" who probably had more than this Moscow Wonder boasts of, who never even thought about talking with God until he died and went to hell, and then it was too late.

This special pet of Jehvovah, who supposes that he has somewhat of a corner on divine communication, is reputed to be a bear-cat for temper. Criticism seems to stir up "that strange mystical Power" within him which is not usually thought of in connection with God. It has been circulated around a bit that he threatened legal action against a religious publication a few years ago for a milder attack than this. Possibly when he reads this, he will forget about talking with God long enough to consult his lawyer. We advise him in advance that "operating entirely by mail" may prove more profitable to him as we are about as short on cash as Simon Peter was at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. But we are not as short on brains as the nincompoop who thinks he has to have an operation from Moscow, Idaho "entirely by mail" to enable him to establish a connection with heaven.