

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## Christian Initiatory Teachings

### *The Sermon on the Mount*

**T**HE Sermon on the Mount holds a place in the New Testament corresponding to that of the Ten Commandments in the Old. The Ten Commandments are external laws imposed by external authority which man was taught to obey under the whiplash of fear. The Sermon on the Mount contains the Law of Love which man must inscribe within his heart and write upon his forehead, to use the familiar phrase of Paul. The general theme of the sublime message is *Love*, and the thoughts which the Master expressed in it formed the groundwork of His teachings and His living. Humanity has not begun to live these spiritual precepts because it has not yet learned that *the greatest of all powers is love*. Christ Jesus, the Lord of Love, demonstrated this power in His every word and deed while upon the Earth. We can follow in His steps only as we, too, learn to live the life of love.

“Love thy neighbor as thyself”; “Seek ye first the kingdom of God”; “Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”; “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” All these admonitions require the cultivation of the transcendent “power of love” for their successful accomplishment. Christ explained to His Disciples that in order to attain unto this state of perfection they must learn to cultivate the active qualities of humility, sympathy, compassion, and purity, together with an intense desire for righteousness and courage even to suffer martyrdom. How well the Twelve chosen to be nearest Him followed the instruction given them on that Midsummer Day may be judged from the fact that, with the possible exception of John and Judas, each one went, after Him, to a

martyr’s death upon the cross. They learned the literal meaning of the words, “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

“Do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.” This is an injunction of the Christ that has been called impossible of fulfillment. It requires an utter renunciation of self, a complete self-mastery, and the awakening and functioning of the power of love as the dominant keynote of the life: a lofty ideal which only those wholly consecrated to the spiritual life are able to achieve. We call ourselves Christian; the degree to which we are entitled to be so designated may be determined by measuring our Christianity against the standard given us by the Christ.

“But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” Resist not evil; think not of the wrong suffered but of the course of action that will best help the wrongdoer. If punishment is necessary its motive must always be remedial and never tinged with revenge. Love must point the way and justice ever be tempered with mercy, else it ceases to be justice.

“And if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” This means helpfulness — the active expression of benevolence. “Give to him that asketh thee.” The gift need not necessarily be a material one; understanding, encouragement, or loving kindness may be the greater gift. Help a man to help himself. It has been said: “A beggar is a challenge to the highest that is within us.” It is for us to help the beggar to rise out of his beggary, and to teach him to find that divine power within himself with which to overcome poverty and all negative conditions that hamper the expression of the Spirit within. Such a

gift is of all the most priceless.

“Of him that taketh thy goods, ask them not again.” There can be no quarrel if only one person is belligerent. All difficulties are to be settled out of court if possible; this done, let there be no bitterness to act as new causation for a debt to be liquidated in this or future lives. Bitterness creates a tie that binds man with man in future entanglements.

“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.” This is the most precious of all the sayings in this sublime Sermon on the Mount; it sets the standard for living the Christ life. *We are true disciples of the Christ only when we really live the Golden Rule.*

“Give and it shall be given unto you.” If our consciousness radiates only truth, beauty, love, and harmony, only such qualities will return to us. The vibratory power of spiritual qualities is built into the archetype in the heaven worlds, and operates to give back to us again exactly what we put into it. “God is love, yet God is law.”

The Sermon on the Mount is found in its most complete form in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapters five to seven inclusive. These chapters might well be used for the daily study and meditation of every esoteric aspirant regardless of affiliation or belief.

There are many speculations regarding the second coming of Christ. Esotericism teaches that the Christ will return only when humanity has learned to put into practical demonstration in daily life the great spiritual truths expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. Only then shall we be ready to “meet Him in the air,” the place of attainment.

The raising of the daughter of Jairus, the healing of the demoniac boy, the stilling of the storm, and the multiplication of the loaves and fishes were among the most important works of the Master during the early part of His ministry. Aside from their interest as miracles, so-called, each one of these events

holds also an esoteric meaning pertaining to Initiation and to the awakening of a larger spiritual consciousness.

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## ESOTERIC SYMBOLISM

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Like the Angels in sacred art, human beings who have reached a certain development have a flame burning above the brow. It is the sign of the uplifted spinal spirit fire, also called the serpent fire, but it represents as well the Ego itself, which Max Heindel says is a Fire, with its throne in the head and its crown of rainbow light above the head, for this fiery presence is truly “God with Us”, the awakened Ego, who, like the Angels, wields a sword or scepter of spiritual force which emanates from the hands, or from the mouth as speech, or from the eyes in beams of light from the clear-seeing Intelligence within.

The wings of Hermes represent the mental sheath of the developed Ego who is able to rise out of the body consciously in Initiation; a power unfolded by mankind under the direction of the Mercurians (*Cosmo*, p. 274). Again, Max Heindel says (p. 275): “Mercury, now being in obscurity, is exercising very little influence on us, but *it is emerging from a planetary rest* and as time goes on its influence will be more and more in evidence . . . the coming race will have much help from the Mercurians and the people of still later Epochs and Revolutions will have even more.”

Note that Mercury *began* to emerge from its planetary rest in the Atlantean Epoch, about the time when the Mercurians first came to our planet to assist us in controlling the Luciferic influences. We read in *Questions and Answers*, Vol. 2, pages 385-386, that “During the first three and a half Revolutions of the Earth Period the influence of Mars had been paramount to galvanize

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