

Contemporary Mystic Christianity

Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Mystical Christ

Let the Christ be formed in you. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

— *St. Paul*

Jesus, the Syrian Avatara . . . told his followers how and what they might achieve by following this Pathway, so that ultimately they can become such as He was—such as He was so far as wisdom and power went; for in the heart of every human being there is a divinity, his own inner god, which the Christians of a mystical turn of mind call the immanent Christ.

Our doctrines tell us of a long line of such Teachers, each of whom became one with his inner divinity, with the god within, the immanent Christos, the inner Buddha; and having become so at one with inner divinity, they knew all necessary knowledge because they saw it, and therefore could they teach the truth.

— *Dr. G. de Purucker in The Story of Jesus*

*God's spirit falls on me, as dewdrops on a rose,
If I but, like a rose, my heart to Him unclose;
The soul wherein God dwells, — what church could*

holier be? —

Becomes a walking tent of heavenly majesty.

In all eternity no tone could be so sweet,

As where man's heart with God in unison doth beat.

Hold, there! Where runnest thou? Know heaven is in thee;

Look thou for God elsewhere, His face thou'llt never see.

Lo! in the silent night a child to God is born, And all is

brought again that e'er was lost or lorn.

Could but thy soul, O man, become a silent night

God would be born in thee and set all things aright.

Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born

And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.

The cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain

Unless within thyself it be set up again.

— Angelus Silesius

The Christ Mystery is fourfold. First, there is the Christ in the Sun who has been the Lord and Director of all great world religions. Second, there is the Christ who incarnated on earth at the time of Jesus' Baptism and who, on the momentous day of His sacrifice on Golgotha, became its indwelling Planetary Spirit. Third, there is the Christ to be born in man himself. Then there is the historical Christ. It

was to this fourfold Christ Mystery that Paul referred when he said, "Behold, I show you a mystery."

This fourfold Mystery is under the guidance of the Holy Trinity. The Christ in the Sun is under the supervision of the Lord God. The Christ that took embodiment at the Baptism is under the direction of the Son, the Cosmic Christ. The Christ to be born in man is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has always been the great mystery of the Trinity. Humanity in the coming New Age will understand increasingly something of the scope of its nature and work.

The next important step in human evolution is the birth of Christ in man. The travail attendant upon the birth is causing much of the current inharmony, unrest and turmoil. No man can be a pioneer of the new race until the Christ has been born within himself. The call set forth by the Holy Spirit to all who are ready and willing to listen is for complete dedication in the service of the Lord Christ. It is the mission of the Holy Spirit relative to the Christian of the new race which led the Lord to declare, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you . . . and he will shew you things to come."

When the Holy Spirit activated the Christ principle within the Disciples they thought only Christed thoughts, they

spoke only Christed words, they performed only Christed deeds. These men, who had been timid and fearful, now stepped forth unafraid. Thomas was no longer doubtful; Peter was no longer fearful; John no longer followed from afar off. No threats of persecution, imprisonment or even death could deter them. Their sole objective in life was to serve the Lord Christ and to walk in His ways.

One day, as Peter and John repaired to the Temple for prayer, at the "Beautiful gate" they came upon a man who had been lame from birth. Peter said to him, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give thee." Immediately strength returned to the man's ankles and feet and, arising, he entered with them into the Temple, greatly rejoicing. Peter and John recalled the words of Christ during their final days together when He declared of the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." — John 16:14

The glory of the awakened Christ within them shone about their heads as a halo of golden light. In the high state of the consciousness which was now theirs there were no differences, no inharmonies, for they abode in the realization of everlasting oneness. Hence they understood all languages and could speak in every tongue. Also, they understood the deeper meaning of the Christ's words to them: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide

you into all truth." — John 16:13 The Disciples had become literally supermen or God-men.

Such is the meaning of the Mystical Christ within, that high attainment envisioned by St. Paul as he wrote to the Galatians "of whom I travail in birth again until the Christ be formed in you." This Mystical Christ is the divinity that is latent in every human being. The Word, the Cosmic Christ, became flesh and dwells within all creation. This realization of the oneness of all life gives new meaning to the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The well known American author and poet, Henry Van Dyke, expressed the reality of Christ's immanence in these beautiful lines:

*Never more thou needst seek Me —
I am with thee everywhere;*

*Raise the stone and thou shalt find Me,
Cleave the wood and I am there.*

This immanence of Christ will be the fundamental teaching of the New Age. It is significant to note that liberal churches and universal truth groups, keyed to the New Age, stress above all else the awakening of the Christ principle within each individual. How is this to be accomplished?

The perfection of the physical body is based upon the survival of the fittest. The growth of the soul body is based upon the law of sacrifice. In bygone days men were taught to sacrifice their material possessions. There is instruction after instruction throughout the Old Testament for bringing the firstlings of the flocks and laying them upon the altar of sacrifice. And today many churches teach their parishioners the law of tithing. However, mystic Christians understand that this law must be carried further; they must learn to place themselves at the altar as a sacrificial offering.

The awakening of Christ within oneself, like all processes of birth, is slow and gradual. First, the aspirant must make his dedication to the Christ ideal. If he is earnest and sincere in this dedication he will find himself coming into closer attunement with this ideal. It will be easier for him to think Christed thoughts, to speak words and perform deeds in accord with a Christed life. He will be conscious of a sense of well-being he has never before known — the same sense reached by the early Christians even while living in the gloomy Catacombs and when faced with forbidding forms of persecution and death. However, awakening the Christ within has compensation that no worldly circumstance or condition can destroy. Nor can they be over-balanced by material possessions.

In preparation for His second coming, the Lord Christ is drawing closer and closer to earth. At certain times he is in etheric realms just above the physical plane, and many advanced souls are becoming conscious of the benediction shed by His nearness. Some there are who have been caught up to kneel in adoration and homage before Him and to hear the intoning of His blessed voice. This sometimes happens during hours when the physical body is in repose or asleep. Again, a person may be caught up in an exaltation of consciousness during the hours of a busy day. It may be to strengthen him for meeting a crisis, or to mitigate some deep and agonizing sorrow. Whatever the reason, and whenever it may occur, one's life can never be quite the same after a moment in His sublime presence. Whatever he does, he will bear the impress of divinity and be motivated by a desire for increased opportunities to serve "in His name."

The activities of such a fortunate person will continue until death completely loses its sting in the realization that it is merely a transition from the physical to the etheric plane. He will discover that while dwelling in the physical realm he is free to serve in the higher realm and that after passing through the change called death, he will abide in the etheric yet be free to serve in the physical world. He learns that this life and the life "beyond" are two aspects of

a grand and glorious whole, whereof the Lord Christ is both the center and the circumference.

The gate of another age flies open — the age of soul; the kingdom of God in man.

— Aquarian Gospel

The way of search leads from that which lies without to that which dwells within. It reveals step by step the hidden life which every form and symbol veils. It assigns to the aspirant certain tasks which lead to his understanding and produce a wisdom that meets his deep need.

— Alice Bailey

Throughout the pages of New Age Bible Interpretation frequent mention is made of the Path of Initiation as outlining the principal events in the life of the Lord Christ from His birth to His Resurrection and Ascension. The same interpretation has been used extensively in this volume relative to the four Christ aspects: the Cosmic, the Planetary, the Historical and the Mystical. The latter is the most important in regard to human development as it relates to the Christ within.

The Holy Birth refers to the Christ principle awakened within man. When this new birth takes place in an individual, a tremendous new power emanates from his mind and a greater love radiates from his heart. Human

values are largely reversed. Interests of the average person are centered in the objective side of life. Upon awakening the Christ within, interests become focused primarily in the subjective side. Then one better understands the true significance of Paul's words: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Upon a neophyte's Presentation in the Temple, an occasion of dedication and consecration, the Christ force within him is vivified, strengthened and augmented. This attainment is followed by a Flight into Egypt, for the Path of Discipleship is always checkered by alternate sunshine and clouds. As Longfellow, the beloved American poet, so aptly expresses the idea:

*Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.*

It is thus that man is able to meet sorrow with as much fortitude as he faces joy; and he learns the lesson St. Paul had mastered, as indicated by his statement that "None of these things move me." If a person is honest and sincere in his self-examination and self-analysis, he will admit that his most valuable lessons have been learned in life's shadow rather than in its sunshine.

Once the tests in Egypt have been passed, the next step is the Return to Nazareth. The aspirant, accompanied by

Angels, is brought up into Nazareth to grow in strength and understanding.

Through the Teaching in the Temple the Christ within becomes the dominant power of his life. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Then his paramount desire is to share his priceless inner realization with all who are willing to receive it. As soon as he has proven himself worthy, opportunities and ability to communicate his spiritual knowledge will be available.

By the Rite of Baptism the spiritualized force of mind and the radiant love of heart are united in divine at-one-ment. Birth of the Christ within is now complete, and the aspirant comes forth a Christed individual. Baptism heralds the beginning of a new life, a life in which the personality is secondary because the Christ consciousness reigns supreme. The head of the now illumined One is crowned by a halo of light as the white dove of Holy Spirit rests thereon in blessing, and the Voice of God declares, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." St. Paul, who followed this path, came to know that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." Whoever analyzes its steps is well aware that this is true.

After the Holy Birth and the Presentation in the Temple comes a testing by the Flight into Egypt. Then follows the Return to Nazareth which, in turn, leads to the more

advanced steps of the Teaching in the Temple and the Rite of Baptism. The greater the attainment, the more subtle the temptation. The narrower the Path, the steeper the ascent. The Rite of Baptism is succeeded by the most difficult test yet encountered, a test known as the Great Temptation.

When the energies of head and heart are united in harmonious blending, a dynamic force of attraction is released in the aspirant. This force is operative on the physical, mental and spiritual planes, and he is made fully aware of the meaning of Christ's promise that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." Recognizing that this power is now his, he is faced by an alternative fraught with dire possibilities: shall he use it to attract to himself the pleasures and comforts, the affluence, adulation and prominence that it places within his reach; or shall he turn his back upon these allurements and abide by his dedication to a selfless life, using his power for the redemption of man and the perfection of God's kingdom on earth? It is at this point that the Path narrows exceedingly. Unfortunately, many who have tried seriously to ascend thereon turn back and walk no more with Christ. Even those brave souls who are victorious are compelled to repeat over and over again — as did the Christ — "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Having demonstrated courage sufficient to overcome the Great Temptation, the aspirant is now ready for a Rite referred to as The Transfiguration, an attainment followed by the high exaltation of the Love Feast. Through this Rite he passes into life eternal. His mind is so spiritualized and his heart so illumined that he literally thinks with his heart and loves with his mind. He is thus worthy to partake of the Love Feast. The essences of his exalted mind and heart, the bread and wine of the Feast, transcend time and space; they may be sent to the farthest ends of earth for the purpose of blessing and healing. Through these essences developed within themselves, the Disciples were taught by the Lord Christ to so spiritualize and consecrate these elements that they could be used to uplift their fellow man. This makes clear the significance of His saying "I am the bread of life" "my blood is the water of eternal life," or words to that effect.

By passing through the experience of The Transfiguration an aspirant approaches the summit of human attainment. He can now radiate the dynamic spiritual power engendered within himself as a great light, whether he be working in the physical, mental or spiritual realm. His light is no longer "hidden under a bushel." Having reached this high degree of unfoldment, he is — or should be — prepared for the formidable test of Gethsemane.

Certain it is that the Path of Discipleship is long and arduous. Many years, even many earth lives are required to reach its ultimate goal. This done, all has to be renounced. Any fame, prestige, adulation of power that a disciple has acquired must be put behind him. He must be willing to descend into obscurity and declare with the Christ, "I can of myself do nothing." When the Lord permitted Himself to be taken at Gethsemane and, later, to be nailed upon the cross, both He and His mission were failures in the estimation of worldly men. In fact, they were so considered among His intimate followers. Comparatively few individuals are called upon to meet such a test, for few ever reach the place on the Path where it is necessary. Abraham's Gethsemane was the demand that he sacrifice his son Isaac. Not until he was willing to make this supreme renunciation was he able to walk and talk consciously with angelic Beings.

Complete renunciation and entire selflessness are inevitably demanded of those traveling the Path of Discipleship, whether in ancient or modern times. Frequently during the ordeals experienced thereon does a disciple repeat the prayer of the Christ: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." If he is victorious he will add, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

After Gethsemane come The Crucifixion. While this is a Rite of pain and sorrow, it is also a Rite of glorification. The disciple who has renounced all finds that he has gained all. The powers of heaven and earth do his bidding. A fundamental law of occult unfoldment, a law that the Christ taught to His Disciples, is expressed in His statement: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given . . . but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

The Resurrection and the Ascension are final steps in ascending into the Great Light. One who qualifies for them is Christed indeed. He will meet the Lord in the ethers at the time of His second coming, and serve with Him to the end of the age in an exalted state of conscious immortality.

Spirit of undying Beauty, Sun of unfading love, teach this humanity to know Thee in Thy worlds, and knowing Thee to see Thy handiwork in flower-petal, scented bough, and singing voice, and in the marking intricate and delicate, of beetle, serpent, bird; to find Thee finally within himself, transcendent glory of the man, made God.

— Mary Gary

New Age Bible Interpretation is centered in the fundamental teaching that the Lord Christ came to earth as the Supreme Wayshower for all mankind. His purpose was to teach man how to awaken the Christ divinity within himself; for, as St. Paul asserts, we are all Christs in the

making. The principal events during the Lord's earthly sojourn outline the important soul-lessons each individual must learn in order to awaken this latent divinity. It was not necessary that Christ Himself pass through all these experiences; but He chose so to do that He might demonstrate how man could meet and rise victorious over the various trials. The perfect pattern has been given us. Paul said of the Lord, "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

The Path of Discipleship is rough and precipitous. However, when an awakening seeker becomes conscious of the Christ within himself, nothing in this life that is not connected with his quest retains any value. Once he has partaken of celestial food, all the delicacies of the world heaped together are utterly tasteless, for he at last comprehends the full meaning of the words spoken by our Blessed Lord: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of" and "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

St. John, the highest Initiate of the New Testament Dispensation, also referred to such Christed attainment.

Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

— I John 3:2

The Lord Christ has dedicated Himself to the transcendent service of guiding humanity to this supernal estate. Hence, mystic Christians read a deep meaning into the most comforting of His promises:

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

— ***Corinne Heline***