

Contemporary Mystic Christianity **Bible Self-Study Supplement**

The Sermon On The Mount

The Initiatory Key

The 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 teaching 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 a man 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 and our nation 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 unto 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 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 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.

The Mystery of the Summer Solstice

There is a planetary entity which is built by the thoughts and deeds of humanity. As man finds the path of redemption through chastity, the body of earth is correspondingly purified and refined. The earth's ultimate destiny is to become a ball of light floating in a sea of golden ether. The "redemption" of the earth, its future status, position and function, constitutes part of the work belonging to the exalted ninth degree of the Lesser Mysteries. This degree is celebrated on Midwinter and Midsummer, nights; in fact, it is not possible to observe the celebration at any other time. The solstices mark the time when the earth's vibration is highest and when the cosmic rays of the Christ life are either entering or being withdrawn from it — the former occurring at the Winter Solstice and the latter at the Summer Solstice.

Christ, the Grand Hierophant of these Mysteries, after having called the Twelve, gave His Mysteries on Midsummer Day as the foundation work of the New Age religion, the

fragments of which were gathered together in the Sermon on the Mount. The Great Work was permeated with the spirit of love, unity and harmony which emanates from the home world of the Christ. Consequently, to such as have not touched the Christ world of unified consciousness the Sermon on the Mount seems illogical, sentimental and impractical. But to such as have contacted the Christ realm it strikes the very keynote of the true Christian dispensation.

Matthew 5:1-2

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them.

"He went up into a mountain." This was the mountain of spiritual consciousness, the inner planes where are located all true Mystery Temples. Churches, schools, study groups — organizations of any kind on the physical plane — are but preparatory agencies which aim to fit disciples for entry into the deeper spiritual work. The spiritual work itself, however, lies beyond their scope. No man becomes an Initiate by merely joining this or that body; but when he has prepared himself properly an esoteric teacher or emissary from a Mystery Temple approaches him. At this point he may be said to have "graduated" from the preparatory agency with its exoteric teachers and instruction although he may, in a

spirit of humility, continue work with that group in order to serve those less advanced than himself.

He is not yet an Initiate though he has been called out by his esoteric Teacher; he has, so to speak, matriculated in the University of Spirit where the course of work occupies thousands of years and uncounted lifetimes. Through continued work he eventually qualifies for Initiation.

In the Christ story this is the time when the disciple follows the Master up into the mountain. The body is no longer a prison house. He is free to work with the Christ on the inner planes, as a younger brother may work with an elder one who instructs him and supervises his labors.

Such inner-plane work given to pioneers of one age becomes the established religion for the masses of the succeeding age. Thus, through spiritual evolution or progression, God is constantly revealing wider and larger vistas of His plan for the ultimate destiny of man.

Only those who were able to follow the Master into the high place received the great revelation on this holy Midsummer Day when the very desire currents of the earth were stilled beneath the great outflooding of the White Light of the Christ life.

All of the most important works of the Master bear both an inner and an outer significance. The masses were not ready for the inner meanings of the Sermon on the Mount; they are not even now able to receive it with the heart. Only intellectually does the twentieth century man accede to its precepts. The Gospel of Matthew makes it plain that this teaching was not for the multitudes, as the following passages also indicate:

Matthew 7:28-29, 8:1

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

"He taught as one having authority, not as the scribes." That is, He taught from experience, not from note, as do those who can merely repeat what others have said.

— ***Corinne Heline***