

January 5 - Subject: Sacrament

DEAR FRIENDS: Mary Baker Eddy gave her students 26 subjects for weekly Bible Lessons, to be covered twice yearly. Flowing through the year in her order of the subjects, we hereby present fresh views of each one by outstanding Christian Scientists. In this way, we hope to partake with you of new unfoldments of her infinite revelation.

Our selection this week is from —THE GOSPEL OF JOHN — A verbatim report of John L. Morgan’s Colwyn Bay Summer School 1952. For a brief biography on our featured author, [click here](#).

JOHN CHAPTER 21

The authorities say that the Gospel properly ends with chapter 20, and that this chapter is a later addition; but I think that this chapter is spiritually right and it has to come here. For example, what does Mrs. Eddy do when she has raised thought up through Science and Health? Well, at the end of the book she puts the Fuitage chapter. She lifts thought right up, and then she says, “Well now, you tell me something lovely about it. What does it mean to you?” And so she incorporates a hundred pages of testimonials of healings achieved through the reading of the book alone. What does she say at the end of her chapter, The Apocalypse? She says that her present feeble sense of Christian Science closes with John’s vision, which is the acme of this Science as the Bible reveals it, and then she gives the 23rd Psalm, — she brings it right down. And so she says, in effect, “Look there it is; but what it **means** is Love.”

What did Mr. Doorly do? He gave us years of teaching of the most marvellous metaphysics, and then finally reduced it all to his explanation of Christian Science practice. *So always our highest vision is to be reduced into terms of where we are*, else there’s no coincidence, because divine Science includes Christian Science and is Christian enough to come to where we seem to be humanly.

So chapter 21 is the story of where we are, and it takes up the four great points that we have seen in Life and Soul, in Truth and Spirit, in Love and Mind, and in Principle, and it reproduces them in a little relative human symbol, which is the very substance of ordinary human life. That’s Science, isn’t it? John illustrates One Being being one.

Verses 1-3. There were seven of them fishing. That they were fishing was normal and natural for them, because they were fishermen. What else should they have done? They had to take what they had learned and work it out in their normal experience.

It is one’s “Simonhood” that leads along the way, —one’s own initiative. They caught nothing because it was night; they were doing it from the dark, from matter.

Verse 4. They “knew not” just as the Magdalene knew not, because they were looking down. But Jesus stood on the shore — the disappearing point of mortality.

Verses 5-8. Now I feel that that is the first part of this chapter (verses 1-8); we are busy doing what it is normal and right for us to do, humanly speaking, but it doesn't bring us much fruit because it is uninspired. Then the Christ speaks to us and says, "Get a resurrected sense of what you are doing: don't fish up towards God, but fish out from God."

Now, isn't that what the concept of Life and Soul tells us at the beginning of the Gospel? It bids us start with resurrected sense, to turn from things to thoughts, and find life to be the expression of Life. It is where we have to take our own resurrected sense into our normal human experience and begin to translate it; and then, — "Discerning Christ, Truth, anew on the shore of time, they were enabled to rise somewhat from mortal sensuousness, or burial of mind in matter, into newness of life as Spirit" (S & H 35:6-9)

The next tone is that of Truth and Spirit, translation, and I feel it lies in verses 9-14. If we will cast our net on the right side, if we'll start thinking from Life, Truth, and Love, it will translate the substance of what we already have into the substance of Spirit. It will translate the Son of man into the divine fact of the Son of God. As we resurrect thought where we are, it becomes to us the bread of Truth; it lifts up our human sense of substance and translates it into the divine fact. Remember that tone in the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus asked them what they had, and they said, "There's a lad here with five loaves and two small fishes," and he worked from that.

Verses 9, 10. "Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught" — Oh, why don't we do that? Why don't we bring our present highest sense of things and work outwards from there? It's only "the gardener" who wants to go on accumulating a little more before he feels he's a Scientist. Truth and Spirit, even humanly, is the substance of what you already have, so be prepared to translate the Son of man into the Son of God.

Verse 11. "an hundred and fifty and three" — I like what Mr. Sinton says of that figure, — that it was the number of the kinds of fish known to the ancient world. It is a symbol of generic quality, representing all that they knew. They gathered on each of all the facts that they knew, — wisdom, purity, friendship, home, and so on, — all their "great fishes," and drew them to land. The net was not broken because they were doing it divinely.

Verse 12. "Come and break your fast" — come to a feast of Soul and a famine of sense. When something bids us translate the Son of man into the Son of God, we know "it was the Lord," we know it isn't human.

Verses 13, 14. They could not come and breakfast with him until after they had left their nets; you and I can't translate the Son of man into the Son of God until we have ceased trying to get somewhere, by being resurrected. To be resurrected is the true net, — to work from the right side. But to build up and build up our sense of becoming something in the future, is not forsaking our nets. (See Misc. 90:28-1) So there are the first two tones, resurrection and translation.

Now we have the tone of Love and Mind in verses 15 to halfway through verse 19. The demand of Love and Mind is, “Do you love?” As we learn to say, “Yes,” we have to do something about it — we have to exemplify Love as ideas which will feed the world’s hunger. We are bidden to take the pasture of Love and lead human thought into it.

Verse 15. Jesus’ word “lovest” is *agapeō*, meaning, “Do you love the Christ idea?” And Peter answers, “Thou knowest that I am fond of thee” (*phileō*). Peter only saw it in the relative. Jesus “saith unto him, Feed my lambs” — give pasture to my lambs.

Verse 16. “he saith to him again the second time... lovest thou me?” (*agapeō*); and again Simon says, “Yes, thou knowest that I am fond of thee” (*phileō*). Jesus “saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” Feed, there, means be a shepherd; tend; supervise.

You see, Jesus asked him the question three times as Peter had to make good his three denials; so when Jesus says to him, “Feed my sheep, be a shepherd,” he was saying, “Don’t be a hireling who flees when the wolf comes, but be a real shepherd.”

Verses 17, 18. “He saith unto him the third time, ...lovest thou me?” and that time he uses Peter’s own relative word, *phileō*, because he saw that Peter couldn’t see the absolute. He could only have it at that time in a relative sense, and so Peter answered him in the same way. “Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” He knew that Peter hadn’t a very high sense of Love, and allowed him to use what he had got.

If we love the idea in some measure, and take it and feed human thought with it, it is using or reflecting and therefore is blessed. Now from the second half of verse 19 to the end we find the tone of Science, — of Principle.

Verse 19. “Follow me” — the demand of Science, isn’t it? Obedience to Principle; be Principle’s idea; One Being being one.

Verses 20-22. “follow thou me” — we only find that Principle’s idea is forever in accord with Principle by being in accord with Principle. We know that Science works only by letting it work. Let our basis be, “It does work,” and then it begins to prove itself; but we have to say, “Yes, I will follow it.”

“Is a musician made by his teacher? He makes himself a musician by practising what he was taught. The conscientious are successful. They follow faithfully; through evil or through good report, they work on to the achievement of good; by patience, they inherit the promise. Be active, and, however slow, thy success is sure: toil is triumph; and — thou hast been faithful over a few things” (Misc. 340:18-25). It doesn’t matter if your sense of things is very relative or very immature: the one essential in Science is, practise what you know; “be active.” So that is really what Jesus was saying to Peter.

Now the four quarters of that chapter are a microcosm of the whole Gospel; they define the point which you and I are always at, and from which we have to work. We have to learn to cast our net on the right side. We have to translate what we have already into the substance of Spirit, to find the Son of man as the Son of God. We then have to do our best to manifest what love we have, and to love more: to be a shepherd. And all the time we have to be active, to follow the divine One. As we do that, we find ourselves fulfilling this wonderful concept of One Being being one; we demonstrate coincidence; and Science is very near and very dear.

Mrs. Eddy's hymn, "Shepherd," summarizes perfectly this chapter, — indeed, the whole Gospel message, as it comes to us through the relative, through the living of it.

"Shepherd, show me how to go
O'er the hillside steep,"

Show me how to resurrect my apprehension from the left side to the right; how to exchange things for thoughts and sense for Soul; how to lift existence out of mortality.

"How to gather, how to sow, —"

How to gather first the fruits of the Spirit, to appreciate and utilize all that is lovely in the Son of man: and then I shall see that Son of man translated as the sowing of the Son of God; "that he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." As I fulfil all that is splendid and Christian in the Son of man, that will sow in me a recognition of the Son of God.

"How to feed Thy sheep;"

How to share the divine oneness; how to exemplify, how to reflect; how to prove it universally.

"I will listen for Thy voice,
Lest my footsteps stray;
I will follow and rejoice
All the rugged way."

(Misc. 397: 21-4)

Science is individual, and we succeed in it only as we follow, only as we live it.



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