

**July 18, 2005 – Subject: Truth**

**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 – A TALK ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK by John Morgan.

**TRUTH (Chapters 4:1 - 9:1)**

The ideal fully revealed, as the Christ character.

What does Truth in the Christ say to us? What do we know about it? You know, before reading these Gospels it is wise not to go digging into the details of the text before we have done some thinking. We know that these four Gospels follow the pattern of the synonyms in the orders of respectively, the Word, the Christ, Christianity and Science. I have found it fruitful to ask myself, What does Principle, Life, Truth, Love, Soul, Spirit, Mind mean to me? How does it individualize itself in my consciousness? When thoroughly familiar with that flow of thought, I can then look at the text and am not beguiled by its incidental verses, because one starts with the coherency of the larger story. Naturally, this method is not to be recommended for unfamiliar territory or one is in danger of making the text fit a preconceived pattern; I am speaking only of the Gospels.

Truth, then, tells us about the divine ideal; it unfolds the nature of the Son of God; it reveals the structure of Truth, and by structure I mean the anatomy and physiology of the divine ideal, its facts and functions. Truth reveals the nature and character of man in Christ; the stature of man in Christ. It shows not only the ideal but also the ideal being revealed and what it demands of the human student. In other words, just as we saw with Principle, the same impulsion that voices the divine message is also that which makes it possible for us to receive it. The Christ and the Word are one continuous being: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." So

Truth gives us both the structure and nature of the divine ideal, and also what is involved in living the Christ character at this point.

Let us run through the seven sub-sections here and gain a comprehensive view of Mark's presentation of the ideal. Truth as Mind is the parable of the sower, where man is endowed with spiritually mental abilities. Our caption "for this part is, the divine stature of man in Christ revealed as spiritual-mindedness. Then Truth as Spirit follows with the interpretation of the parable, for Spirit unfolds or elucidates the implanted idea of Mind. We headed this section, The divine stature of man in Christ revealed as conscious spiritual reasoning.

Truth as Soul, still concerned with the seed, presents a riper sense of man; – he is not embryonic, nor concerned with generation through sex, but is divinely self-complete and is delivered from belief in the male and female of mortality. The text here tells us about Jesus calming the storm at sea, – "the dark ebbing and flowing tides of human fear," – and the healings of the wild male and the suffering female, in the form of the madman in the tombs on the one hand, and of Jairus' daughter and the middle-aged woman on the other. We entitled this section, The divine stature of man in Christ revealed as conscious self-completeness.

After that deliverance from corporeality, Truth reveals further the impersonality of man. Truth as Principle deals with Jesus rejected by his own countrymen because of personal sense, and shows how he sends forth the twelve on an impersonal basis of pure demonstration, making no human provision for their journey. Our caption there is, The divine stature of man in Christ revealed as that, which is Principled. Next, in Truth as Life, comes man's exaltation and freedom from the malicious intent of mortality, for that which is Principled cannot be touched by what has no divine Principle. Here we read about John the Baptist's death at the hands of Herod and Herodias, and Jesus' feeding of the five thousand with the bread of Life. As a heading we have, the divine stature of man in Christ revealed as God-sustained and lifted above mortality.

Then Truth as Truth is a long section, which illustrates that the form and character of the Christ man is "every whit whole;" and

that this wholeness is not conditional upon outside factors, but is from within. The text brings this out by showing that neither external cleansing nor defilement affect man, but that what proceeds from the heart and comes out of the mouth either makes or mars.

The outcome of this teaching is that a deaf and dumb man is healed; and then through the feeding of the four thousand and the warning over the leaven of the Pharisees, Jesus shows them that a true Christly calculation of man is real substance, for it reveals the things which are not seen. At once, the blind man is healed, and Peter can declare, Thou art the Christ. The caption we have here is, The divine stature of man in Christ revealed as consciousness.

### **Christ-consciousness.**

Finally, Truth as Love takes up Peter's inspired declaration and adds: to it the seal of Love. As Love can tolerate only perfection, anything less than pure spirituality has to pass away, and so the text has Jesus' admonition about, Let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Our choice for a heading there is, The divine stature of man in Christ reveals the reality of Truth as wholly divine, and involves the nothingness of the mortal concept.

Now let's have a "quickie" and see all that at a glance. The overtone throughout is, the divine ideal fully revealed; humanly we could say that man is a transparency for the Christ.

Truth as Mind: the divine man is spiritually mental and reads from Mind, not from matter.

Truth as Spirit: the divine man is a spiritual reasoner, and so his real nature and substance are brought to birth.

Truth as Soul: the divine man is born of Soul not of sex, and is balanced, entire, and fruitful from within.

Truth as Principle: the divine man is that which is Principled, and he is divinely authorized.

Truth as Life: the divine man is lifted above the viciousness of mortality and is fed by the bread of Life.

Truth as Truth: the divine man is whole from within, and expresses the complete Christ consciousness.

Truth as Love: the divine man is fulfilled in Love and is translated right out of mortality.

Running all through is that theme that man is not allowed to repudiate his divine sonship, but is forced to dissociate himself from "the son of perdition." The following references set the key tone for the whole piece.

S. & H. 207:27-31 the spiritual reality is the scientific fact in all things. The spiritual fact, repeated in the action of man and the whole universe is harmonious and is the ideal of Truth. Spiritual facts are not inverted; the opposite discord, which bears no resemblance to spirituality, is not real." Notice that the statement is twofold in nature, giving what is and what is not, -the characteristic, which renders Truth the Saviour. This next reference is more relative, and traces the effect in human life of the workings of the divine ideal.

Ephes. 4:13-15 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we...be no more children, tossed to and fro, but speaking the truth in love, may grow *up* into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

### **TRUTH as MIND**

(Ch. 4:1-12)

The divine stature of man in Christ revealed as spiritual-mindedness.

Ch. 4:1,2. And he began again to teach by the seaside: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, as we have seen before, the significance of Jesus teaching from the sea is that from the infinite elements of the one Mind proceed all wisdom and all truths.

Why did he teach them by parables and not overtly? Well, the whole purpose of a parable is that its meaning is gained only

through some mental exercise. It requires a process of translation from the literal to the figurative; it also demonstrates that reading from matter or the surface of things does not yield the true import. So Jesus' purpose was to show that manhood begins mentally, that man is a thinker. Our ordinary life speaks to us of the things of God in parables: do we interpret them aright, or do we try to reach conclusions from the mere appearances? Jesus "plunged beneath the material surface of things, and found the spiritual cause" (S. & H. 313), and here he was teaching the people to do the same. The Christ translates the divine ideal to the point where idea replaces illusion.

Vv. 3-8. "Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it, was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred." The parable depicts four types of thought: the indifferent, the shallow, the able but lazy, and the spiritually alert.

In verse 4 the seed first falls "by the wayside", the term means that the earth is so hard-packed by much coming and going that it offers no entry for the seed. This is the thought that is, densely material, and is consequently forever having to be doing things for fear of being left alone to face its own awful emptiness. The uncultured mind is terrified of being left alone with its own thoughts, so the first flighty idea that comes along is sufficient to set it off on another tack. Let's bear in mind, however, that this sort of analysis is of no service to us except it shows us the universal claim of the carnal mind to hold man in bondage.

The second type, the stony ground that offered no real depth, is, of course, the shallow class of thought. While it may readily accept a new idea, there is little real discernment, and the result is a mentality full of half-digested information, opinions and theories. But not one of them has gone deep and become one's first love,

so there is insufficient subjective grasp to withstand the test of antagonism. We might say that while the fault of the first category is that there is no openness or receptivity, the fault of the second is that it is too open! It may often be better to make haste slowly with a new idea than to swallow it wholesale, for the digestive process gives one a chance to think all around the issue and savour its full implications.

The third kind was where the seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked it. Other considerations weighed more than Truth. There was no fault with the soil here, but with the husbandry. Perhaps this is the commonest one, and comes nearest home. The Commentaries say that these “thorns” of Syria closely resemble wheat when young, - perhaps rather as self-interest can look very like a kindness. This class of thought is not using what it knows of Truth to lay down the mortal.

The fourth type was the good ground, which brought forth abundantly, this was because it wasn't thinking about God, it wasn't “interested in” God, it wasn't theorizing emotionally about God: it understood. Of all the words we use in connection with mental processes, understanding is the only one that leaps over from the merely mental to the spiritual. An understanding of any subject is always fruitful, and to understand God through the Mind of Christ really renders us man.

The three fruitless types of thought, then, we could illustrate (a trifle wickedly, perhaps) as that which has the radio on perpetually, the TV mentality of look-see, and that which is always on the gad-about. However that may be, it is clear that the first is a negative sense of the Word, indifference. The second is a negative sense of the Christ, no depth of spiritual feeling. The third is the opposite of Christianity, as it will not subdue sin in itself; while the fourth is positive and depicts Science, wherein man is Godlike.

It seems that Jesus was emphasizing the point that before Truth itself can be gained, the individual needs to be honest with himself and learn the ethics and integrity requisite in the more relative forms of truth. Through mental discipline we are already exercising the Mind of Christ, in a degree, and this proper ordering and evaluation of thought opens the way for spiritual understanding to

germinate. Mrs. Eddy makes this quite plain.

S. & H. 272:3-27 "The spiritual sense of truth must be gained before Truth can be understood. This sense is assimilated only as we are honest, unselfish, loving, and meek. In the soil of an "honest and good heart" the seed must be sown; else it beareth not much fruit, for the swinish element in human nature uproots it..." There is our point, that the spiritual sense of truth must be gained before Truth can be understood. It is brought out again and again. For instance, here is another one.

Ret. 28:9-12 "I had learned that thought must be spiritualized, in order to apprehend Spirit. It must become honest, unselfish and pure, in order to have the least understanding of God in divine Science."

Vv. 9-12. "And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." Hearing is what we receive, but seeing is what we make of it.

As Jesus pointed out, to them that are without, these things are done in parables. This carries on from the last tone, Life as Love, where his relatives stood without. Here he is indicating that the disciples of Truth must grow into that stature of manhood in Christ Jesus, which enables them to understand his meaning. (S. & H. 350:6-23) The quotation from Isaiah in verse 12 which sounds so caustic is only gentle irony. The claim he is uncovering is that a mortal would rather die than give up his pet sin, – and often does. Egotism, self-righteousness, vicious criticism, and so on, are dear to mortal mind: let us see that these things are not dear to us.

Seeing and hearing without understanding are simply reading from matter, which is not intelligent and cannot lead to Truth. We read on Misc. 103:21-23, "Any inference of the divine derived from

the human, either as mind or body, hides the actual power, presence, and individuality of God.” Jesus’ wording was chosen to make people think, and in the effort of unraveling it, mental activity leads to reasoning. The Christ comes to the point of Mind, – to intelligence, not imbecility.

We will leave Truth as Mind there. Truth, the ideal, is taught through mental imagery. But the meaning and substance of the teaching is spiritual, so the explanation comes in Truth as Spirit.

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