

**July 25, 2005 – Subject: Love.**

**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 – John Morgan’s TALK ON THE GOSPEL of LUKE.

**TALK NINE - SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th.**

Now let’s remember on these occasions, and indeed on every occasion, that it is never a question of persons; what we have been seeing together this week has been far removed from the conception of a person talking to persons. All that takes place in the realm of Christianity is Principle unfolding its own nature to it self, and through the story of Luke Christianity has been talking to Christians. I’ve felt such a deep sense of gratitude that what we’ve been able to see together this week has been because we are all trying to be Christians; that is what has made the birth easy and what enables us to speak frankly and honestly about the deep things which the human mind needs to face.

I feel too, at times like these, an even deeper sense of gratitude for those people who, by human standards, have been Christians for longer than some of us, because the older person has a richness of experience which they carry very quietly and very simply, and they convey a great sense of stability which the younger generation values enormously, even though it doesn’t often say so. It may be true that the older folk get a new vision from the younger, and perhaps that is as it should be; but none the less it is very true that the younger people derive great comfort and encouragement to go forward simply from the fact that the older people have stood. So Christianity talks to Christians of all degrees of maturity and achievement.

Now to continue with Luke: The whole tone of Love is how the divine motherhood demonstrates conception unconfined, and thus brings about the birth of man.

We saw that Love as Mind is Love wedded to its own spiritual idea, and how it requires of a Christian a love of the idea above all else; David loved the spiritual, and the widow threw her all into the treasury. In Love as Spirit we saw the foretelling of the end of the world and the second coming of the Son of man. Love's universal salvation comes through spiritualization, and as the motherhood of Love weans man away from a material sense of things the end of his matter world comes, and that enables him to be born anew. The Son of man comes again, because the mother Love cannot be weaned from its child. We notice that in this tone the weaning comes before the birth, which is divinely correct in Christianity: you are already man, and you are born to know it in the degree that you allow Love as Spirit to wean you from your false loves.

### **LOVE as SOUL (Ch. 22:1-65)**

The demonstration of motherhood resolves conflicting interests and translates betrayal into loyalty to Love's purpose.

This section comprises the Passover; Judas' conspiracy to betray Jesus; the last supper, where the disciples argue as to who shall begreatest; Jesus foretells Peter's denial and he bids them all now use a sword. Finally there is the picture of Jesus in Gethsemane Judas' betrayal and Peter's remorse at his own faithlessness. The spiritual tone of Love as Soul is the absolute loyalty of the Mother-Love towards its own ideal, and conversely, the loyalty of the Christian to Love's divine purpose.

V1. As you all know, that feast of the Passover is a profound symbol throughout the Bible. It represents the great point, the climax in the journey out of Egypt and into the wilderness and as the Christian in us develops and unfolds, the Passover involves different kinds of sacrifices.

Here Luke is telling us about the compound idea, and in order to see how it fulfils the design of Love we must pass over from self to Soul, – not from sense to Soul, because that is a Word phrase – but from self to Soul. Moreover, as we've seen all through Luke, what would break up the compound idea is self-interest; and so the Passover in Luke's Gospel represents the passing over from

self-interest to the one compound interest of Soul, and that is what demonstrates universal Love. This Passover was, of course, a Jewish feast which was celebrated in a pagan way and Jesus took it upon himself and in his own personal experience embodied the truth about, it which is self-renunciation and self-sacrifice; and through this feast of Soul and, correspondingly, famine of self, he demonstrated loyalty to Love's plan of salvation.

We too can see that demand, and then there is a "but," because of our unwillingness to be loyal to this demand of Love as Soul.

Jesus was loyal to it, and therefore triumphed. He identified himself with the purpose of motherhood, and served the divine interests; that was his loyalty. When he prayed in Gethsemane he prayed that he might be loyal to the great purpose of Love in him; and conversely, we see there the so-called betrayal. Judas covenanted to betray Jesus; at the supper table the disciples wrangled amongst themselves as to who should be greatest, and that was a betrayal of the compound idea; Jesus foretells Peter's denial, – the betrayal of the Christ. Do you see that? The fact as Love as Soul demonstrates loyalty and causes all "betrayal" to serve the divine purposes.

Now the beauty of this story is that Christianity is not a matter of a poor struggling human using a spiritual idea to have a battle within himself over the evil nature of man; what we are seeing is that divine motherhood resolves the conflict within oneself, changing betrayal of the idea into loyalty to Love's purpose. You see that illustrated in Peter. Jesus could see that Peter could only betray the idea because he hadn't lived to the point where he could be loyal to it; it was just inevitable; but at the same time he said, Although you will betray me at first, when you are converted, strengthen your brethren. So he knew that Peter would win through, and would exchange his betrayal for a deeper loyalty.

Vv. 2,3. Luke shows that it wasn't Judas but the carnal mind; Christianity never personalizes good or evil.

Vv. 4-6. Judas wanted to exchange the divine idea for money; that was a lack of loyalty to the spiritual ideal.

Vv. 7,8. This preparation for the Passover is a lovely story, “prepare us”! Us, that we may eat! The family tone, the compound idea of Soul. He sent Peter and John; as you know from your symbols, Peter represents Life because of his initiative and John represents Love because of his motherhood.

V 9. Where in human experience can we prepare to celebrate the Passover? In a pure consciousness; in a state of mind that is entertaining the elements of thought and which is capable of conceiving man as the image of God. We find this type of thought in the next verse.

V. 10. A man bearing a pitcher of water was a very rare sight in the East because it was a woman’s job, and so there we see at once a man who has begun to layoff his mortal manhood and to put on womanhood. In that pitcher of water, – not empty, but filled with the elements of thought, – he has a consciousness of the whole range of Mind’s ideas; he is uplifting the idea of conception unconfined. Follow that man, for he knows the true value of idea.

You meet some people in the world today who are carrying a pitcher of water, and at once you find a point of exchange with them: they are full of ideas, bubbling over, and you can prepare your Passover with them quite happily because they are not thinking about self, they are conceiving the idea of man. And then you meet others, who are not carrying a pitcher, and so have nothing to say, and there’s no communion. Mrs. Eddy says that in this age the earth will help the woman and wherever manhood is becoming womanhood the great Passover has begun.

What brings people like you and me into this sense of Christian Science? It is because we have been men carrying pitchers of water. For one reason or another we have begun to think about God, and we’ve done our best in our funny little human way to fill up that pitcher and carried it in order to give water to the thirsty, and then the Christ has come and said, “I can use you!” and so the Passover is celebrated within our consciousness. Thank God for that!

Vv. 11,12. A large upper room furnished: Love’s plan is always an exalted conception, and is furnished and complete in every

detail. No matter what human experience lies before you, if you go towards it with the expectancy of being led to a large upper room furnished, the chambers of consciousness will be enlarged and prepared, and that business meeting or whatever it may be will prove a holy communion.

Vv. 13-15. Jesus knew very well that once he'd got the disciples over that Jordan state of thought of drinking the cup, they were, all right, they were "made" for all eternity. That's why he yearned to develop them to the point where they could eat that Passover with him and be willing to lay down self for Soul. His supreme desire was to get his handful of people to see what his life work meant, and then he could leave. And once we've eaten that Passover and tasted that cup and found it not so bitter, our way forward is clear, too.

Vv. 16,17. He gave thanks for that cup. if we get into, the divine habit of giving thanks for every cup of "sorrowful" effort that we are required to drink, it won't be so sorrowful; Love as Soul is only benediction, and translates cursing into blessing. "Take this, and divide it among yourselves:" each one has to taste of it; we each have our individual effort to make.

V. 18. He was saying that the fruits of Love come when you have, made the final demonstration and have completely renounced self for Soul. He was no longer going to drink the bitter sense of it, only the inspired sense.

Experience has shown us all that as we drink that cup with joy, Love translates the bitterness into a blessing. The laying down of the mortal looks like an awful stile that has to be crossed, and it's "bitter" because someone tells us we have to cross it; but when from within our own consciousness we are convinced, that that is the only way our birth comes about, then we think, Oh, how worthwhile, how wonderful! And so it is no longer a cup of bitterness, but becomes now the inspiration of Love.

If something tells us that our cup is a bitter one that is simply because we are listening to the carnal mind. Love never knows a bitter cup; Love's cup is one hundred per cent inspiration, and the bitterness is simply our hanging onto the dregs of mortality.

We all do it, but we don't have to.

My. 161: 16:"18 "Mortals must drink sufficiently of the cup of their Lord and Master to unself mortality and to destroy its erroneous claims." Sufficiently to unself mortality that's all; only a sip may be necessary to start us on the way.

V. 19. That giving of thanks is the gratitude with which the Gospel started, where Zacharias sent his incense of praise back to Principle. Here the thanks seem to be gratitude for Love's great purpose fulfilling itself in man; Jesus was showing his disciples that fulfilling the design of Love renders self-sacrifice no sacrifice, – and that's true for all of us.

The bread here signifies the bread of Truth, which is the body or substance of the ideal man. Through explaining the nature of Truth to them, he enabled them to partake of the compound idea man. Every time we take the bread and discern some quality of Truth in the body of man, we are doing it in remembrance of the "me", of the divine ideal. That communion is the realization that all men's interests are one in the one divinity.

The things that Old theology says about this last supper just don't bear thinking about. Read enough of the Bible Commentaries, and you'll go back to Science and Health and say with all your heart, "Thank God for Christian Science."

V. 20. The New Testament. This is the second time the cup is mentioned. At first it was the belief that it is bitter, but here it is "my blood," which Mrs. Eddy defines as "the cup red with loving restitution, redemption, and inspiration..." (My. 131;10,11). Restitution is restoring, – "He restoreth my Soul," and through the second, inspired sense, of cup, the bitterness is gone; and we then realize that it is through that blood, through the beauty and the magnitude of what Jesus did in obliterating the mortal concept, that man has his true manhood restored to him.

The orthodox churches say that the bread and the wine are the very body and blood of Jesus, and the Roman church has the doctrine of transubstantiation, which holds that the physical substance of bread and wine becomes transmuted into the actual body and blood of Jesus at the moment of the Elevation. The

other orthodox churches have the same theory, although they water it down a bit and wouldn't go quite so far. Moreover, all material religions are based on the cooperation of matter and Spirit, which is flatly contradictory to what Christianity tells us. You cannot make matter into Spirit, but in the measure that you dissolve matter, then you have Spirit, and that is quite a different story.

We celebrate the sacrament through reflection. When we embody the divine attributes and so become at one with the divine, we identify ourselves with Jesus' sacrifice and mission. Mess.01:22-5 "As Christian Scientists you seek to define God to your own consciousness by feeling and applying the nature and practical possibilities of divine Love: to gain the absolute and supreme certainty that Christianity is now what Christ Jesus taught and demonstrated – health, holiness, immortality. The highest spiritual Christianity in individual lives is indispensable to the acquiring of greater power in the perfected Science of healing all manner of diseases." The highest spiritual Christianity in individual lives is indispensable: that is the sacrament and our communion, and it was his loyalty. Now, because the nature of Christianity is always twofold, he shows how that loyalty deals with betrayal.

### **The Judas**

Vv. 21-23. Of course, Love can never betray its own idea, nor permit it to be betrayed. Sometimes we put our trust in false gods or our affection onto persons and things, which don't come up to our expectations, and we think we've been betrayed, but Love knows no betrayal. All the same, Jesus is showing that in human experience it is the sin which one has made one's bosom companion that delivers up the Son of man in us. He who was without sin had to show mortals through the symbol of Judas what it is that betrays the divine ideal.

Let us not think of Judas as a man: he is a symbol, different in each Gospel, of the particular error of sense which would betray the Christ idea. Now, in the Word what is being demonstrated is the power of God, and therefore Judas in Matthew represents a love for material power, because that is what betrays spiritual power for you temporarily. It is the attitude of doing, rather than of "Let there be." Then in the Christ, Mark's Gospel, what is being

demonstrated is spirituality itself, as the only factor of existence, and what betrays that spirituality for us for awhile is the Judas, state – sensuality in one form or another. It is the belief in polarity, real good and real evil. In Christianity what is being demonstrated is man, the compound idea, and what betrays that compound idea for a while is the Judas of self-interest. And in the Science Gospel, John, what is being demonstrated is the one Principle as the one system, and what would betray that demonstration is personal sense.

So the Judas in you and me represents the different things, which at various points in our experience would torpedo our demonstration of the divine man. A torpedo comes under the waterline and we don't see it, but Jesus saw it. Through the penetration of Soul he could detect what was undermining the compound idea, in this case self-interest, which is betrayal instead of loyalty.

V. 24. What a thing to be doing at this point! But you can just see how the height of Jesus' demonstration put an unusual strain upon those disciples, so that all that was personal in them bubbled up to the top, as often happens at a moment of great spiritual unfoldment; all the beast in us comes up, but it does so to pass away.

Vv. 25,26. In Love as Soul the purpose of Christianity is identified as service of the compound idea. The only precedence is to put Principle first, and in that way we can see mankind's needs and supply them.

V. 27. And in John's Gospel he got down and washed their feet to make the lesson plain. This little incident is divine service, – though orthodox Christianity has debased the meaning of the phrase into mere ritualism. The true tone of it is, "Love more and serve better." You take the bread and share in the wonderful elements of the body of man; you drink the cup of loving restitution: that is, through self-immolation you restore in your own consciousness man's unfallen status. And then you have to do something about it, and that is your divine service wherein you become "as he that serveth." Mrs. Eddy says that "the only true ambition is to serve God and to help the race" (Mess. '02. 3:27,28).

Vv. 28-30. The rule of Soul becomes service of the universal idea, recognizing that everyone is self-governed because they reflect the government of God. (Un. 6:4-9.)

Vv. 31-34. Simon was his first name, his human classification, and it means hearing: it is simply one's ardent human desire to follow the Christ. Jesus saw that although it was very wonderful it couldn't demonstrate loyalty to Love's purpose because of its basis of human impulsiveness. Then he goes on to call him Peter, and in conferring upon him his true rocklike identity, he was giving him loving restitution. He enabled Peter, soon after, to be that rocklike center for all the disciples.

Just like us, Peter had loyalty to a person; and later they all gained loyalty to the Holy Ghost. Perhaps we start out with loyalty to a beautiful system called Christian Science, but that has to be converted into loyalty to an understood Principle within our own consciousness, into a spiritual conviction of the universal Christ idea. That verse 32 is clearer in the Revised Version: "when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren." And Moffatt has, "And you in turn must prove a strength to your brothers." It is a wonderful sense of the conversion of Soul wherein one's love of the spiritual becomes divine reliability. Now, don't let's blame Peter; we all make great claims for Christian Science which we can't possibly substantiate yet simply because life has not so far given us the experiences by which we grow; and in the next few verses Jesus shows them how they can work out this Christ-Principle in life-practice.

Vv. 35-38. It's as if he knew that Peter would deny him simply for lack of those experiences which would equip him and enable him to stand firm; so Jesus said to them all, All right, I can see that, but now you must go and take all those things in human experience which hitherto you have learnt to *do* without (because you were on the basis of demonstration) and now equip yourselves in such a way that you learn your way out of mortality, and not just jump out of it by saying, God is good and there is no evil. He was saying, Now go and take that sword of the Spirit and work it out, and then you will learn a deeper loyalty, and you will be based upon practice. Love equips man with the means to meet

every new experience, and furnishes the opportunities and the means whereby we grow in Christianity. (S. & H. 238:12-19.)

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