

The Greatest of These

A129 Sunday Address 5th March 1944 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday Service

The date of this address is conjectural (see below), while the text is as issued in the magazine Angelus after it was given, apart from correction of errors

Text: from Angelus, April 1944

Context: no date in the printed copy; the ascription to 5th March is simply based on that being the obvious normal date for a teaching in the April magazine. It is also clear from the tenth paragraph that this is a wartime teaching given at the end of winter. 'When loves comes into the heart, it causes an illumination' is one of White Eagle's well-known sayings, to be found, for instance, in the book GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS.

General Notes: the teaching is based on the famous words of St Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 : 13 about the three virtues, faith, hope and love (or charity). There is an interesting definition of materialism in the fifth paragraph.

References: see also General Notes. 'If I be raised up, I will raise all men' is John 12 : 32. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...' is Matthew 22 : 37 (Luke 10 : 27 also). 'This is my beloved Son. Hear him' is Luke 9 : 35 and Matthew 17 : 5. John 1 has a slightly different version. 'The Father and I are one' is John 10 : 30 and 'He doeth the works' is John 14 : 10. 'Love one another' is the so-called 'new commandment' of John 13 : 34.

White Eagle's Address:

'Faith, hope and love – and the greatest of these is love.' These words are very familiar to all Christians – perhaps so familiar that people have become disinterested in them. Nevertheless we are going to talk about them.

First of all, faith. A great deal is heard about faith. 'You must have faith', says orthodox religion; 'you must believe; if not, all is lost'. What is faith? Many people are aware of another life beyond the physical and material life. Some are aware within the Spirit. Others have had what is called *proof* of the life beyond. Some of these men and women are called 'sensitives', a few are known as initiates and fewer still are called adepts. Such people as these can function consciously in the world of spirit even while still in possession of a physical body; can rise in consciousness into the higher realms and undertake work for the blessing and the upliftment of humanity.

You who listen may be aware of the presence of invisible friends and even of angels; in this service you may be feeling their presence. You may be so aware of your teacher that you receive daily instruction. Yet there are other men, utterly unconscious, who declare they know nothing about the spirit world or the spirit beings. Nevertheless, some of these people will assert their faith in a life after death. No, they have no proof, but believe.

What is this faith? The Christian religion is build upon faith. If you are bereaved and go to a priest, you will be told to have faith that your loved one lives on. Nothing more; you must hold fast to faith; you must also have faith that Jesus has crucified to save you from sin. If you believe, all is well and you are saved. But what does this mean? from the esoteric aspect, faith means that something within you is assuring you that the salvation for every soul can be found by way of Christ's teaching. These teachings are summed up in three words: *Love one*

The Greatest of These

A129 Sunday Address 5th March 1944 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday Service

another. We then – you and I – understand that the living and practice of love and goodwill and brotherhood ensures the soul entering upon a state of beauty and light and happiness, not only after death, but here and now.

To return to faith. Faith is an inner and subconscious knowledge of truth. Every soul living has a long, long life behind it, even the very simplest and apparently most unevolved person. This is logical, if you are an eternal being; because nature only changes its form and does not destroy – therefore man necessarily hopes, looks forward to, expects eternity. But there is something more: if man is an eternal being and looks forward, so also he can look back into a past. If you believe in a future, you must accept, logically, a past. Therefore, the soul having in the past learnt certain truth must still contain such truths within itself. The reason why these truths are today rejected is because man has fallen into materialism. Materialism means that the soul is so heavily burdened with matter that it cannot express itself, its innermost. Faith is unconscious knowledge of a truth which lies within the heart – not the brain – deep in the life-consciousness.

When man opens the heart and is aware of the inner voice, then this ancient knowledge expresses itself through the mind.

So faith, we find, is an unconscious knowing.... Those people who believe in an afterlife have faith in reincarnation, faith in the law of cause and effect, or karma – have faith because of this inner awareness. Many have said to us, ‘I have no proof of life after death, but I do not need proof; I know’. Many have said to us, ‘I know there is much controversy about reincarnation, but I know’. Others say, ‘I do not know how I get these things; there comes to me an inner feeling ... then I know’.

My friends, this inner knowing is what all mankind is uncovering. It is impossible to prove any truth to any soul unless that soul is ready to become aware of truth. You may convince some people for a certain time with psychic signs and wonders, with wonderful manifestations of material nature. Then the man will say, ‘Yes, I have proof’. But watch him. Unless that man has inner knowledge and awareness, he will soon disbelieve again. There must come an opening of the heart centre, a definite and certain knowledge and not merely a mental conviction.

From faith comes naturally hope. Hope must accompany faith.

What a time is this for hope! What do you hope for? All kinds of things. You are hoping that mankind will awaken from its nightmare and see the true purpose of living. You are hoping that very soon the bright days of spring will come along. That soon the buds will break and the green leaves open. Why do you hope? because you have confidence in nature. Why do you hope mankind will awake from its nightmare and seek to establish brotherhood and goodwill on earth? Because you know that in man is a divine spark.

Hope is confidence in the invisible power and confidence in God.

The Greatest of These

A129 Sunday Address 5th March 1944 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday Service

In the autumn you were able to see little brown swellings on every twig. Now they are bursting, and show little green shoots. This gives you hope for longer days, bloom on the tress and fruit; hope for a harvest before next winter. You have confidence in a God who thus brings His life-force through into physical manifestation, even as He brought forth into physical manifestation the Son of God. You can see this very simply expressed in men and women who may tell you they have neither faith nor hope. Yet they are kind to one another; such kindness is the expression of Christ. This gives us all hope that this shining, this eternal Presence will become manifest on earth.

Is this the Second Coming of Christ? Do we see the little buds, the green shoots of kindness breaking forth in mankind now, so that we may hope the world will be raised up to Christ? Did He not say, 'If I be raised up, I will raise all men'? He came to teach the one supreme truth (which the world still has to learn) of brotherhood and love. We are always talking about these things. Probably you grow a little weary of hearing us. But my friends, only love can bring to you, individually, happiness. And God intends His children to realise happiness. All men are struggling and suffering great sorrow, enduring many trials and difficulties. All the problems of sickness and want and poverty (and even the problems of wealth) can be solved, if only mankind will give themselves to studying, to endeavouring to understand the Law of Love.

Jesus said that upon the law everything depended. 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself'. What did He mean by this? Did He mean some God hidden beyond the clouds, sitting on a far away throne, who only came to man to judge and punish? Or did He mean the God hidden within your own heart, that essence in man which is true and just and pure – that something which can raise you to an illumined state of consciousness in which you can only cry, 'O my God, how I love!' You are then caught up into the power and truth and glory which raises you above the bondage of flesh, selfishness and desire.

Is this what Jesus meant, that the inner self, which alone is pure and true and beautiful, should be man's guide on life's way?

Loving God with all thy heart, loving all that is pure and beautiful and true, following the way of kindness, one must of necessity take on the sufferings of one's brethren. When one learns to love the Lord God, that voice guides us into the way of peace and dispels all the illusions and the fog which clog the mortal mind.

When an illumined spirit comes back to this earth it sees people living as in a dense fog. In a dense fog you cannot see, you can't even hear properly. It is an eerie experience. This is exactly how the majority of mankind lives, so immersed in its own interests that it does not see the necessities of his fellow.

The Greatest of These

A129 Sunday Address 5th March 1944 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday Service

When love comes into the heart, it causes an illumination; this can actually be seen by spirit helpers as a light; where love has entered the man or woman looks like a little torch. Love brings illumination and light. When love comes in entirety into the human family, there will be so many lights that the fog will disappear. Then we shall see each other, not as through a glass darkly (as through a fog darkly), but face to face; and we shall know as we are known.

We suggest that one of the greatest mistakes man makes is to look forward to a better life in the spirit world. These glories should be brought through into physical manifestation as God intended. Therefore, strive to bring that light *now* into life, and then you will see your brother and sister face to face and find them beautiful.

What does this love do? It completely destroys illusion and separateness from our fellow. Where there is love, there is no separation.

My friends, on the inner planes is a ceremony which takes place at certain periods in the soul's development: it is called the Ceremony of Love. Love on earth is mistaken for desire, for wanting to get something for oneself: 'I love you', really meaning, 'I want to possess you'. If possession is denied, what they call love often turns to hate. But there are some people who can say, 'I love you', and mean, 'I would give you all happiness. I want nothing for myself'. That is love. Love gives, with no thought of reward. Love, in spirit, means that the soul absorbs the sorrows and the feelings and understands the needs of its fellow. Love is not something which takes. Love gives and gives and gives. You see, therefore, that he who truly loves enters into a complete union with life. The fog and the mists have gone and one grand and glorious sun shines over life. Such sunshine is what man calls Christ.

Can Christ manifest through human form? Most certainly, even as Christ manifested through Jesus of Nazareth.

You will remember that when Jesus of Nazareth was baptized by John the Baptist, the heavens opened and a white dove descended. The white dove is symbolic of a disciple who has been initiated into the perfect love brotherhood. The white dove meant that Jesus the Master was an initiated disciple of the Great White Brotherhood, the Brotherhood of Love. White magic is the magic brought about through love – through nothing else but through the pure fires of love.

The Voice said, 'This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him'. The initiated brother loses himself in the whole; and as Christ said, through Jesus of Nazareth, 'The Father and I are one. All the works that I do, I do not of Myself; but the Father which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works'. The supreme Light, the divine Love, is the only power which the disciple, the initiate, the adept recognises. Of myself I can do nothing; I am an instrument only. This is what it means to be initiated into the Christ Circle, the divine Love-brotherhood. The personality is subdued, the divine love worketh its will. 'Not of myself, but of my Father, the divine Light.'

Faith, then is an unconscious knowledge of God.

The Greatest of These

A129 Sunday Address 5th March 1944 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday Service

Hope is confidence in the divine invisible power.

And love, the greatest of all... is the supreme attribute; *love is the fulfilling of the law on every plane of man's being*. Love one another; and ye shall enter into the courts of heaven and know ... peace.

The search matches with either words and phrases, which appear in the text, or the following 'key' words and phrases, which are similar in meaning to those in the document:

belief, trust, world of light, heaven world, life after death, rebirth, spiritual contact, intuition, springtime, new life, christening, initiation

