

The Mystical Teaching of St John

T153 The Inner Teachings 13th March 1945 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

No. 20 in the series and based upon the 18th chapter of the Gospel, which should be read together with this record.

Invocation:

O Thou who art the Most High, almighty and glorious Spirit, our Creator; Thou Who art the holy and blessed triune God, we surrender to Thee and earnestly pray that we may receive the kingdom of heaven. May the presence of Thy Son, the Christ Spirit of truth and love, be in our hearts.

Amen.

To comprehend the truths of spirit it is necessary to step outside the physical life. Man* cannot grasp spiritual truth through his intellect alone. He needs the simple and trusting love of a little child. As the Master taught his disciples, only a little child can enter the kingdom. At present there seem so many complexities to be considered and men and women look in vain to their spiritual leaders for an answer to their questions. Unless and until the teacher himself has entered the kingdom of truth he cannot answer the child of earth.

*[*For editorial policy around gender see the introduction.]*

Enfolding this little group are mighty beings, yet spiritual brethren of ours. They are encircling you. They also brood over the whole world, but mankind is so absorbed in the density of matter that it is unable to receive enlightenment about spiritual truth, about how to live and how to act according to the law of God. It is long since the Master spoke to his children, and men who remember his teachings of old still look into the heavens expecting their Lord to come again in all his glory, accompanied by angelic hierarchies. So materially-minded has man become that he would see with his physical eyesight the coming of the Lord. Man lies sleeping, but there are many ways that the almighty Spirit of God uses to arouse man from his deathlike sleep. Sometimes this quickening takes the form of personal loss, sorrow or suffering. God moves in a mysterious way to perform wonders in the material life – as you, beloved brethren, know through your own experience.

The miracles of the Master of Nazareth were not confined to his ministry on earth, but are still being performed. Many do not recognise this fact and do not know that what they suffer in sickness, sadness and sorrow or loss of position or material wealth comes to them as an act of God designed to quicken the spirit within. Only when the spirit within man is awakened, when his eyes are opened to the heavens, does he behold the coming of the Master in the silence of his innermost being. The Second Coming will not be an outward but an inner manifestation. Christ and the Christ Circle are around you waiting for your hour of quickening so that you may open your eyes and see His glory, and so that you may be aware of his power to rule life.

This preamble, you will find, is directly related to the 18th chapter of St. John, where it is clearly presented that the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of love and truth and that the

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ministry of the Master Jesus was destined to bring to mankind this vision of the true kingdom. For this purpose he taught his disciples to pray, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is being done in heaven'. When attempting to bring this teaching right through into the material life, one is confronted with an important problem. The Years of Fire* brought home the fact that the world has been offered a vast opportunity to follow the king of love. As usual many clever and astute arguments come forth from the materialist which people find themselves unable to answer. We recognise the difficulties that have to be faced in what are called practical politics. Many a deeply-read student knows truth even as Pilate knew truth, but when it comes to putting it into practice he lacks courage. We point these things out to show that the Master understood the difficulties and also humbly to suggest that you personally should endeavour as far as possible to put into practice the law of Christ.

*[*The 'year of fire' or 'years of fire' were predicted by the Polaire brethren whose example was so important in the founding of the White Eagle Lodge, and many times by White Eagle himself. They are sometimes taken as a reference to World War II, just ending as this teaching was given, but may be better seen more generally as the most difficult years of transition between the age of Pisces and that of Aquarius.]*

As an example, when Jesus was suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane he cried out to his Father: 'If Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.'* You are so accustomed to these words that you may fail to note how profound a truth they embody. There is no soul who does not at some time have to face this tremendous issue and either yield himself—or refuse to surrender himself—to the will of God. There are two aspects to this truth; some people will sit down under any test saying to themselves, 'It is God's will that all these terrible things should happen—therefore I accept them'. They make no effort to help themselves or to relieve pain and suffering in others. This is no act of surrender to the will of God, for by accepting ills as inevitable you are not accepting God's will, because God did not intend man to suffer. Instead God created a beautiful world and created, above all, His only begotten Son—which Son is the spirit of Christ which is born in humanity. God brought forth His son—man—to enjoy the beauties of life.

*[*Luke 22 : 42]*

Nevertheless, there are certain experiences—which we will call initiations—which the soul is called upon to undergo. Preparation of the soul for initiation is sometimes unpalatable; it may take the form of bereavement, of having to surrender a loved one or of a big change in life which the soul shrinks from simply because it would cling to a familiar condition and objects to going forward into the unknown. A struggle with itself follows which causes pain and suffering. If the soul once understands and recognises that it is faced with an initiation and then says, 'Not my will, O God, but Thy will be done,' that is a true act of surrender (not sacrifice, for sacrifice is something different), an act in accordance with the law of love. Jesus prayed, 'If Thou be willing, remove this cup from me.' When he knew that such a removal was not the will of God he said, 'Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.' Thereafter he went quietly forward to meet that which was appointed.

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Let us picture Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane with his disciples (including Judas). You will remember we likened the lower aspect of man's nature to the Judas aspect, the aspect which betrays us, the baser self of man. Judas it was who led the soldiers towards Jesus, who kissed him, who betrayed him. The disciples around Jesus, particularly Peter, were indignant that the soldiers dared to lay hands upon their pure and beloved Master. Peter did what was natural: acting according to his lower nature and raising the sword, he wounded the ear of a soldier. By that same act he broke the law of love. Jesus recognising this, said instantly 'Put up thy sword into the sheath'. Then by a supreme act of love Jesus healed the wound.

This brings up a very terrible problem by which many are confused today. We see manifold suffering brought about through war and often question how it could have been prevented. If we are at war we must fight, it seems. Do you remember how the Master answered when he said, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's?' People say, 'If we did not fight we should suffer and die; that cannot be right. Surely there is such a thing as righteous indignation, a righteous war?' We accept that attitude of mind, but what we are trying to point out is the meaning which this 18th chapter of St John points [out]—that Christ's kingdom is the kingdom of love and that throughout life, if you would live in Christ's kingdom and be His disciple, you must live in accord with this law. Love is the supreme power in the universe. God is love, and only when love is withdrawn from any situation can there ensue conflict, war, death. In the world today every effort is being made (though it is obscured) to return to the law of brotherhood. Love is gradually seeping in. The will to sheathe the sword is there; the wound is being healed; the kingdom of love is being restored.

We have heard it argued that in certain circumstances there is nothing to do except to fight. From a material point of view this may be right, but from a spiritual viewpoint it can never be right. To fight is always, always a violation of the law of Christ. There is only one way to receive love into human life, and that is—to give love forth. When there is violation of the law of love, suffering, conflict, pain will result.

Peter obviously had not understood the inner meaning of all the Master's teaching or he would never have raised his sword to defend the Master. Some will say at this, 'But you could not see an innocent man murdered without attempting to kill the murderer!' A difficult problem, is it not? Yet the power of love is supreme, and if this power be sent forth from the soul that power will be the stronger. We mean by this that if an innocent soul was being attacked, the power of a love flowing—shall we say—from a white brother or master of the Light could protect that soul. The world will not believe or accept this statement but we make it without reserve. We speak from truth, saying that if one country had been strong in Christ, the events of the world would have taken a different course. Throughout this conflict have been seen demonstrations of the power of the light and the power of truth. As we have said before, people lacked sufficient light to save the world from its present suffering. When we say this we can feel many thoughts crowding into your minds. What

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would have happened—supposing—supposing? That would have demonstrated had there been sufficient moral courage in the people to abide by the law of love.

When Peter broke the law of love he broke down the light and the protection which was gathered around the Master and the disciples; then the Master Jesus was arrested and the disciples scattered. Peter followed the crowd, went into the hall of justice and stood there warming himself by the fire. One of the maidservants standing by Peter spoke to him. 'Art thou also one of this man's disciples?' A direct challenge and opportunity to Peter to stand forth in the cause of truth.

Pilate questioned Jesus, asking him who he was. By the nature of his questions it can be seen that Pilate recognised truth in Jesus even while he accused him. Jesus, knowing that Peter was standing in the hall, answered Pilate by saying, 'Ask them that have heard me, what I spake unto them'. In other words he was calling to Peter to stand up and testify to the truth which he had heard.

Can't you see this same act happening today? Like many other people Peter denied any knowledge of Christ. There is no moral courage in the heart of men and women to speak and to testify to the spiritual truth that they have heard and seen. You will notice that it was the Master Jesus who gave Peter the opportunity, but Peter did not respond and so broke the law a second time. Love and truth are the life of the spirit, the life of Christ. When the law is broken the life is broken and the power is gone. With spiritual law it is necessary to be consistent and to work it out to its logical conclusion. It is no use bringing up a hypothetical case, saying 'If I had done so and so what would have happened?' It is impossible to know unless and until that course had been taken and the happening demonstrated.

(Verses 1 to 6 of the 18th chapter of the Gospel of St John were now read.)

Jesus said to the soldiers, 'Whom seek ye?' When they answered, knowing what was in their minds, he replied 'I am he'. Jesus was thus surrendering himself, submitting to the law, to the will. Yet notice that in accordance with the law of love the soldiers fell back—they could not lay hands upon him because he was acting within the law of love. By saying, 'I am he,' Jesus was fortifying, protecting himself, building around himself the protection of the White Light. What broke through that great White Light which encircled him? It was Peter's raising the sword against a fellow creature.

(Reading of verses 7 to 11)

'Shall I not drink it?' That was an act of surrender. Jesus did not want Peter or anyone to enter into conflict on his behalf. He accepted; his mission on earth was finished and it was time to go hence. Here is another lesson—to accept those things which come into your life and cannot be avoided, for it means that they are your karma. Such acceptance is another great test, another great mystery. Yet you will find that the wise and the initiated always bow to the will of the divine.

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(Reading of verses 12 to 34)

The wording suggests that Jesus was putting forth the idea that he was not only a Jew but a son of God, belonging to the universal kingdom and not claiming to be of any particular nationality. We think that is the meaning of those words. He was a brother to all men.

(Reading of verses 35 to 37)

Everyone who allows the truth within to rule, who allows truth to vibrate through his being, is a king of truth. Jesus is trying to teach a simple lesson to which we turn a deaf ear and a blind eye. The law of life is love. The law of the kingdom of heaven is love, and the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of truth. Those who enter into the kingdom of heaven must be kings of truth in themselves. As another master said: 'To thine own self be true.' Every master of spiritual law teaches us to be true to the law of spirit, to the law of God. Don't allow any tempter to deflect you from the path of truth, but have moral courage.

(Reading of verse 38 to end of chapter)

Beloved brethren, isn't that ever the way of the world? The materially-minded do not desire truth for themselves: they want to sacrifice truth to the robbers—the robbers of happiness, of true living, those who steal away all harmony and beauty from life. The materially-minded give full rein to those who are unworthy. They never choose the king of glory, the king of truth for their ruler. To us it seems there can be no compromise with truth, yet the world is continually making a compromise. People will say that you cannot be loving, forgiving. They cannot see with clear vision. The two paths are so clearly outlined by the writer of this chapter—the path of the spiritual man, the true disciple of Christ, and of the follower of the way of mammon, the way of materialism. Between the two there is no compromise. When the disciple is accepted, at all times and in every circumstance he surrenders to the king of truth. When we say 'surrender' we mean that when you are confronted with an unalterable condition in life, it is obviously your karma and you must not fight it. Don't kick against the pricks. Accept with calmness and tranquillity, knowing that it is the will of God and for the ultimate happiness and perfecting of the human soul.

Q.You spoke about the law of love. What about all those young men who have been compelled to go to fight when their hearts don't want to? They have done it in self-defence and to defend others.

A.The men who have gone to fight have done so believing they were doing right. According to their understanding they have made the supreme sacrifice. They will receive a corresponding blessing. Do not make any mistake. The ordinary man has risen to a height, but that does not alter the spiritual law of love and brotherhood. The soul can make a great sacrifice even if it is mistaken. Then it is given opportunity to have its eyes opened and to understand spiritual law. The law, however, remains; man must love his brother. Life has become chaotic because man in the first place descended from the heights and broke the law of love. Therefore he created for himself—speaking collectively—karma. All people face

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this karma at some time or other. As a result the world will learn and souls will be raised above the condition in which their path is to fight. In individual cases men and women have in a most unusual way been lifted out of the conflict. Although they themselves have been willing it didn't seem that they had to fight. That again is the result of karma of their past. There can be no injustice in the law; we of the spirit labour incessantly to heal the wounds, to bring our brothers and sisters peace, light and comfort.

Individually the souls of these men and women are all receiving recompense and blessing in accordance with the degree of their sacrifice. People will say: 'But Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends."' True, that is the law of love, and when man gives himself selflessly to what he thinks is the law of love, it is truly sacrificial and he receives the blessing. But Jesus did not mean merely a surrender of mortal life, but the supreme surrender of self so that others may receive good. These truths must be interpreted on the spiritual plane. The materialisation of spiritual truth is a mistake which is being made continually. Even the orthodox church brings everything down into a material concept. We must seek spiritual understanding so that we live from the spirit and recognise that life is based upon spiritual values before we can enter into the kingdom of happiness. Else man will not sit at the table prepared for him by the Lord God—at the spiritual feast which alone brings to him perfect life and supreme happiness.

Benediction:

O Father-Mother God, we earnestly pray that we may receive divine illumination, so that we can understand the complexity of life on earth. We pray that there may enter into every heart present a certain and glorious peace, and an urge to go forth into life to spread the gospel of divine love and brotherhood amongst men, so that all Thy children may be gathered in the fold of Thy love and henceforth enjoy the fruits of their labours. Peace be within.

Amen.

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:

Mystery, challenges, letting go, release, retribution, protection, viewpoint, perspective