

Further Discussion of the Sermon on the Mount



140:4.1 (1572.1) The so-called "Sermon on the Mount" is not the gospel of Jesus. It does contain much helpful instruction, but it was Jesus' ordination charge to the twelve apostles. It was the Master's personal commission to those who were to go on preaching the gospel and aspiring to represent him in the world of men even as he was so eloquently and perfectly representative of his Father.

140:4.2 (1572.2) *"You are the salt of the earth, salt with a saving savor. But if this salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."*

140:4.3 (1572.3) In Jesus' time salt was precious. It was even used for money. The modern word "salary" is derived from salt. Salt not only flavors food, but it is also a preservative. It makes other things more tasty, and thus it serves by being spent.

140:4.4 (1572.4) *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and be led to glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

140:4.5 (1572.5) While light dispels darkness, it can also be so "blinding" as to confuse and frustrate. We are admonished to let our light so shine that our fellows will be guided into new and godly paths of enhanced living. Our light should so shine as not to attract attention to self. Even one's vocation can be utilized as an effective "reflector" for the dissemination of this light of life.

140:4.6 (1572.6) Strong characters are not derived from *not* doing wrong but rather from actually doing right. Unselfishness is the badge of human greatness. The highest levels of self-realization are attained by worship and service. The happy and effective person is motivated, not by fear of wrongdoing, but by love of right doing.

140:4.7 (1572.7) *"By their fruits you shall know them."* Personality is basically changeless; that which changes—grows—is the moral character. The major error of modern religions is negativism. The tree which bears no fruit is "hewn down and cast into the fire." Moral worth cannot be derived from mere repression—obeying the injunction "Thou shalt not." Fear and shame are unworthy motivations for religious living. Religion is valid only when it reveals the fatherhood of God and enhances the brotherhood of men.

140:4.8 (1572.8) An effective philosophy of living is formed by a combination of cosmic insight and the total of one's emotional reactions to the social and economic environment. Remember: While inherited urges cannot be fundamentally modified, emotional responses to such urges can be changed; therefore the moral nature can be modified, character can be improved.

In the strong character emotional responses are integrated and co-ordinated, and thus is produced a unified personality. Deficient unification weakens the moral nature and engenders unhappiness.

140:4.9 (1572.9) Without a worthy goal, life becomes aimless and unprofitable, and much unhappiness results. Jesus' discourse at the ordination of the twelve constitutes a master philosophy of life. Jesus exhorted his followers to exercise experiential faith. He admonished them not to depend on mere intellectual assent, credulity, and established authority.

140:4.10 (1573.1) Education should be a technique of learning (discovering) the better methods of gratifying our natural and inherited urges, and happiness is the resulting total of these enhanced techniques of emotional satisfactions. Happiness is little dependent on environment, though pleasing surroundings may greatly contribute thereto.

140:4.11 (1573.2) Every mortal really craves to be a complete person, to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect, and such attainment is possible because in the last analysis the "universe is truly fatherly."

5. Fatherly and Brotherly Love

140:5.1 (1573.3) From the Sermon on the Mount to the discourse of the Last Supper, Jesus taught his followers to manifest *fatherly* love rather than *brotherly* love. Brotherly love would love your neighbor as you love yourself, and that would be adequate fulfillment of the "golden rule." But fatherly affection would require that you should love your fellow mortals as Jesus loves you.

140:5.2 (1573.4) Jesus loves mankind with a dual affection. He lived on earth as a twofold personality—human and divine. As the Son of God he loves man with a fatherly love—he is man's Creator, his universe Father. As the Son of Man, Jesus loves mortals as a brother—he was truly a man among men.

140:5.3 (1573.5) Jesus did not expect his followers to achieve an impossible manifestation of brotherly love, but he did expect them to so strive to be like God—to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect—that they could begin to look upon man as God looks upon his creatures and therefore could begin to love men as God loves them—to show forth the beginnings of a fatherly affection. In the course of these exhortations to the twelve apostles, Jesus sought to reveal this new concept of *fatherly love* as it is related to certain emotional attitudes concerned in making numerous environmental social adjustments.

140:5.4 (1573.6) The Master introduced this momentous discourse by calling attention to four *faith* attitudes as the prelude to the subsequent portrayal of his four transcendent and supreme reactions of fatherly love in contrast to the limitations of mere brotherly love.

140:5.5 (1573.7) He first talked about those who were poor in spirit, hungered after righteousness, endured meekness, and who were pure in heart. Such spirit-discerning mortals could be expected to attain such levels of divine selflessness as to be able to attempt the amazing exercise of *fatherly* affection; that even as mourners they would be empowered to show mercy, promote peace, and endure persecutions, and throughout all of these trying situations to love even unlovely mankind with a fatherly love. A father's affection can attain levels of devotion that immeasurably transcend a brother's affection.

140:5.6 (1573.8) The faith and the love of these beatitudes strengthen moral character and create happiness. Fear and anger weaken character and destroy happiness. This momentous sermon started out upon the note of happiness.

140:5.7 (1573.9) 1. "*Happy are the poor in spirit—the humble.*" To a child, happiness is the satisfaction of immediate pleasure craving. The adult is willing to sow seeds of self-denial in order to reap subsequent harvests of augmented happiness. In

Jesus' times and since, happiness has all too often been associated with the idea of the possession of wealth. In the story of the Pharisee and the publican praying in the temple, the one felt rich in spirit—egotistical; the other felt “poor in spirit”—humble. One was self-sufficient; the other was teachable and truth-seeking. The poor in spirit seek for goals of spiritual wealth—for God. And such seekers after truth do not have to wait for rewards in a distant future; they are rewarded *now*. They find the kingdom of heaven within their own hearts, and they experience such happiness *now*.

140:5.8 (1574.1) 2. *“Happy are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”* Only those who feel poor in spirit will ever hunger for righteousness. Only the humble seek for divine strength and crave spiritual power. But it is most dangerous to knowingly engage in spiritual fasting in order to improve one's appetite for spiritual endowments. Physical fasting becomes dangerous after four or five days; one is apt to lose all desire for food. Prolonged fasting, either physical or spiritual, tends to destroy hunger.

140:5.9 (1574.2) Experiential righteousness is a pleasure, not a duty. Jesus' righteousness is a dynamic love—fatherly-brotherly affection. It is not the negative or thou-shalt-not type of righteousness. How could one ever hunger for something negative—something “not to do”?

140:5.10 (1574.3) It is not so easy to teach a child mind these first two of the beatitudes, but the mature mind should grasp their significance.

140:5.11 (1574.4) 3. *“Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”* Genuine meekness has no relation to fear. It is rather an attitude of man co-operating with God—“Your will be done.” It embraces patience and forbearance and is motivated by an unshakable faith in a lawful and friendly universe. It masters all temptations to rebel against the divine leading. Jesus was the ideal meek man of Urantia, and he inherited a

vast universe.

140:5.12 (1574.5) 4. *"Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* Spiritual purity is not a negative quality, except that it does lack suspicion and revenge. In discussing purity, Jesus did not intend to deal exclusively with human sex attitudes. He referred more to that faith which man should have in his fellow man; that faith which a parent has in his child, and which enables him to love his fellows even as a father would love them. A father's love need not pamper, and it does not condone evil, but it is always anticynical. Fatherly love has singleness of purpose, and it always looks for the best in man; that is the attitude of a true parent.

140:5.13 (1574.6) To see God—by faith—means to acquire true spiritual insight. And spiritual insight enhances Adjuster guidance, and these in the end augment God-consciousness. And when you know the Father, you are confirmed in the assurance of divine sonship, and you can increasingly love each of your brothers in the flesh, not only as a brother—with brotherly love—but also as a father—with fatherly affection.

140:5.14 (1574.7) It is easy to teach this admonition even to a child. Children are naturally trustful, and parents should see to it that they do not lose that simple faith. In dealing with children, avoid all deception and refrain from suggesting suspicion. Wisely help them to choose their heroes and select their lifework.

140:5.15 (1574.8) And then Jesus went on to instruct his followers in the realization of the chief purpose of all human struggling—perfection—even divine attainment. Always he admonished them: "Be you perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." He did not exhort the twelve to love their neighbors as they loved themselves. That would have been a worthy achievement; it would have indicated the achievement of brotherly love. He rather admonished his apostles to love men as he had loved them—to love with a *fatherly* as well as a

brotherly affection. And he illustrated this by pointing out four supreme reactions of fatherly love:

[Editors note: The first four beatitudes above illustrate the proper *attitudes* of the religious person toward the world and the last four (below) illustrate the proper *reactions* of the religious person to problems of the world.]

140:5.16 (1575.1) 1. *"Happy are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* So-called common sense or the best of logic would never suggest that happiness could be derived from mourning. But Jesus did not refer to outward or ostentatious mourning. He alluded to an emotional attitude of tenderheartedness. It is a great error to teach boys and young men that it is unmanly to show tenderness or otherwise to give evidence of emotional feeling or physical suffering. Sympathy is a worthy attribute of the male as well as the female. It is not necessary to be calloused in order to be manly. This is the wrong way to create courageous men. The world's great men have not been afraid to mourn. Moses, the mourner, was a greater man than either Samson or Goliath. Moses was a superb leader, but he was also a man of meekness. Being sensitive and responsive to human need creates genuine and lasting happiness, while such kindly attitudes safeguard the soul from the destructive influences of anger, hate, and suspicion.

140:5.17 (1575.2) 2. *"Happy are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."* Mercy here denotes the height and depth and breadth of the truest friendship—loving-kindness. Mercy sometimes may be passive, but here it is active and dynamic—supreme fatherliness. A loving parent experiences little difficulty in forgiving his child, even many times. And in an unspoiled child the urge to relieve suffering is natural. Children are normally kind and sympathetic when old enough to appreciate actual conditions.

140:5.18 (1575.3) 3. *"Happy are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."* Jesus' hearers were longing for

military deliverance, not for peacemakers. But Jesus' peace is not of the pacific and negative kind. In the face of trials and persecutions he said, "My peace I leave with you." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This is the peace that prevents ruinous conflicts. Personal peace integrates personality. Social peace prevents fear, greed, and anger. Political peace prevents race antagonisms, national suspicions, and war. Peacemaking is the cure of distrust and suspicion.

140:5.19 (1575.4) Children can easily be taught to function as peacemakers. They enjoy team activities; they like to play together. Said the Master at another time: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life shall find it."

140:5.20 (1575.5) 4. *"Happy are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven."*

140:5.21 (1575.6) So often persecution does follow peace. But young people and brave adults never shun difficulty or danger. "Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends." And a fatherly love can freely do all these things—things which brotherly love can hardly encompass. And progress has always been the final harvest of persecution.

140:5.22 (1575.7) Children always respond to the challenge of courage. Youth is ever willing to "take a dare." And every child should early learn to sacrifice.

140:5.23 (1575.8) And so it is revealed that the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount are based on faith and love and not on law—ethics and duty.

140:5.24 (1575.9) Fatherly love delights in returning good for evil—doing good in retaliation for injustice.