

MYSTIC LIGHT

Assessing Our Progress

SEE AND BEHOLD. Behold who you are, for you see but what you know, because knowledge precedes and directs seeing, locates the proof and instance of its understanding.

What is not understood can not be identified. Likewise, there is truth which cannot directly manifest on the physical plane. It would not be entirely correct to say that Christ manifested Himself to His contemporaries, for to manifest is to make outward and evident. The Regent of the Sun was eclipsed in the body of Jesus. Such an occlusion, such a possibility, defies our present comprehension. Yet it was so.

Precisely for this reason did Christ have to ask His disciples not only who others thought He was, but who they, His closest associates, thought or knew Him to be. Such a question, of itself, highlights the distinction between what is manifest and what is hidden and must be construed or surmised. Peter's correct response to Christ Jesus' question shows that he possessed a degree of clear seeing (clairvoyance) sufficient to perceive the higher instruments informing the Jesus body. Flesh and blood did not declare this knowledge to him.

Christ was repeatedly called upon to prove He was the Messiah. Wouldn't you expect the world's saviour to be extraordinary, to jolt you out of your normality with the laser of His look, to escalate your awareness with but the sound of His voice? Perhaps such notions are childish. After all, the omnipresent God is unobtrusive, to say the least. Lacking direct access to their Master only because of their spiritual ignorance, Christ Jesus' contemporaries required signs. The signs performed by



Julius Schnorr von Karolsfeld

"There standeth one among you whom ye know not."—John 1:26

the resurrected Christ enabled His disciples to know it was He; that, as John the Beloved writes, Jesus is the Christ (20:31).

For most, seeing is believing and believing requires seeing. Blessed are they who see not, yet believe, for their belief is an inner seeing. Spirit sees spirit. Flesh sees flesh. Ever Christ Jesus' words and deeds were directed toward removing spiritual cataract, and He deliberately eschewed sensational displays, He sought not to raise Himself in the eyes of others but to raise them so they could confirm the truth first-hand. God in Christ became a man so that man might become as God. But those to whom He came preferred the letter of the word to the Word incarnate. They preferred the rigid formal outlines of worldly objects to the life that organizes and gives those objects

their very form. The spirit giveth life, but the life-giving Christ Spirit is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, which none can tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. One born of spirit is like this wind. So initiation proves.

The spirit of each person comes into the world of material forms and forgets its origin and identity, loses itself, becomes as swine feeding on the husks of merely physical things. As Wordsworth describes this sense of loss in *Intimations of Immortality*:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
Our soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

As spirits, we help form the physical body which shall be our earthly habitation. But upon assuming that body, its creative spirit, its father, becomes a stranger, an unknown. Even so, the Christ came into the world, the world that was made by Him; He came unto His own, who had received of His creative essence, and the world knew Him not. The Light of the world was no light to those whose minds remained closed, and their material darkness comprehended It not.

Even John the Baptist was unable to identify the Christ except through the descent of the Holy Spirit as a dove upon the Jesus body stripped of its higher vehicles (Ego and desire body). The Jewish priests, elders, and bailiffs required another kind of sign to designate Christ Jesus—a kiss. That they could perceive the Christ was out of the question. Their problem was in identifying the physical body of Jesus. How was this? The energy and vital communal spirit that emanated from Christ and invested his close disciples with power, authority, and wisdom, also conditioned their very physical aspect, so that when they were assembled it was difficult for an observer to point with certainty to the one who was Jesus. When under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they assumed similar appearances.

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with magnificence, but to strengthen in each Ego the consciousness of its own self-same divinity. He repudiated attention drawn to His outward person, directing the minds of others to the significance of His words and deeds.

Belief was pivotal to the effectiveness of Christ Jesus' role as both teacher and healer, for skepticism kills belief and precludes spiritual understanding even as frost blights a flower. Negativity blocks the flow of healing energy in one who is sick. As creative visualization and the placebo effect demonstrate, the believing, assenting mind plays a powerful, indeed the principal, role in activating the healing response. Were Christ to have asserted His divinity, as a king does his authority, a counterproductive effect would have been created in those he sought to awake to their own healing capability. They would have been drubbed into increased passivity and impotence. As both the parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the talents remind us, we have a divine endowment which is to be used, nurtured, put out to usury. A sovereign gift has been given each by our heavenly Sovereign, and neither priest nor king, magician nor medicine man can take it from us or prevent our using it and identifying with it as our Christ-instilled Self.

Ever opposing Christ's call to active faith and loving service is a recidivist, minimalist, or negativist element in humans, which is fanned by hosts of spirits pursuing their own agendas inimical to our welfare. Thus, we would reduce our neighbors



Eugene Girardet (1853-1907)

The Walk to Emmaus

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to mere physical bodies. We would attribute to them petty or perverse motives. We would deny any proposition material science could not confirm. We would value gold above good will. We would persist in waiting for a moot God to prove His existence, and until then, carry on with our restless, fearful, insecure and confused lives.

How strong is pride! How rare is God-blessed and God-revealing humility. Humility implies awareness of that which is greater than mortal man. Humility engenders eyes to see divinity. Humility opens the door to the world of spirit. But where there is proud reductionist disbelief, there the spirit of goodness and mercy and revelation is barred. Angels are strangers there, nor will the healing spirit make their abode where they are unwelcome, nor will words of wisdom be heard.

As William Blake reminds us, Christ drew Himself unto humans that they might wake to their transcendent Selves and meet their Maker face to face. This prospect entails a major energy displacement and redirection so that we may live more inwardly, graciously, generously, and freely. For to live exclusively within the confines of the material world is truly to frustrate, darken and sadden the spirit in us.

So we must ask ourselves, were Christ to be among us in physical form today, how would we meet Him? What would we make of Him? Has our Christ spirit evolved to the extent that we would not prefer Barabbas to this One, Who outrages our complacencies; makes difficult, unrealistic demands of us; shows little respect for vested interests; challenges our rigid authoritarianism; decries our preoccupation with getting and spending; calls idolatrous our puerile obeisance to the magic of chemical pseudo-cures, and soulless our fascination with a high technology that promises utopian benefits?

How do we respond to this Individual? We're more tolerant these days. The First Amendment to the Constitution would grant certain immunities to this potential troublemaker. He could hold forth and create a permissible degree of commotion, just as long as civil order were maintained. No doubt His message would be diluted. After all, today nearly everyone is a messenger—over Internet, by bulk mail, or through fax and phone solicitation. And most everyone is a self-appointed authority. Would He simply be dismissed as a gifted nuisance?

The real issue is, how far have we come since Golgotha? Do we live in this world trying to make

it the sufficient and only dimension? Who are our mother and brothers and sisters? Can we give mother's due to all mothers, including the childless? Can we give Christ's due to all whom He has given the all of Himself? Can we meet and be to each not as flesh and blood dictate but as the Holy Spirit and impersonal love direct? Does the letter of the law take precedence over the spirit that gives rise to it and so cancel out its very originating impulse? Do religious doctrines block potential believers and pit group against group in offense to the one God they commonly seek?

Again we ask, how are we to know Him, that we may act accordingly? We have already been told: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We don't have to guess, or wait until royalty sweeps by before we rally our virtue and stand forth to exceed ourselves in compliance and readiness to serve. We don't have to wait until He comes before we pull out all the stops. In fact, He has not left. For "lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." As in so many matters pertaining to the life of our soul and spirit, St. Paul has it right: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:8).

The spirit is the leaven of matter and the life of form. By it is forgiveness made possible and plausible. The ultimate incentive for action, spirit puts the lie to death and brings light to the darkest hour. It ennobles the most unprepossessing exterior and by its very being ever issues the summons to get on with the business of self-overcoming. To affirm the reality of Christ is to personalize or substantiate that Reality, that Person, to locate Him in others and to testify to His influence in events. Temporary setbacks, the enormity of the prospect, the sublimity of the Ideal, the contrariness of our resistance and reluctance—all are of no major consequence as deterrents. Knowing what we know, we must do what we are called to do that we may be whom God intends us to be, for having fathered us as spiritual beings, we are even now His sons and daughters and, along with our Elder Brother Christ, heirs to the heavenly Kingdom. □

— C.W.

JESUS CHRIST—AND WE

Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongues
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side.

We are the only Bible
The careless world will read;
We are the sinner's Gospel,
We are the scoffer's creed;
We are the Lord's last message
Written in deed and word—
What if the line is crooked ?
What if the type is blurred?

What if our hands are busy
With other work than His?
What if our feet are walking
Where sin's allurements is?
What if our tongues are speaking
Of things His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him
Unless from Him we learn?

—Annie Johnson Flint

MAN MAKING

We are all blind until we see
That in the human plan
Nothing is worth the making if
It does not make the man.

Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilt goes?
In vain we build the work, unless
The builder grows.

—Edwin Markham