

## Do Not Your Alms Before Men

*To aid those interested in a deeper understanding of the scriptures, we offer a correspondence course of 28 lessons compiled from Max Heindel's writings. These lessons reveal the basic harmony of religion and science, and offer logical explanations for many misunderstood basic doctrines of the Church.*

*They are given out on a free will offering basis.*

*Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*

*Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.*

*But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:*

*That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.*

—Matthew 6:1-4

Here again we find the distinction made between the "outer" and the "inner"—between the form side of human conduct and the reality of spiritual consciousness.

The trait of wanting "to be seen" of men is one of the most common among human beings, but since it belongs essentially to the personality and the old regime of separateness and outer compliance to the law, it is to be discarded entirely under the unifying religion of the Christ. Selflessness is the keynote of the new order of things, and all reward for our service to God through serving our fellowmen is to be only the inner spiritual growth which is not seen of men.

Hypocrisy, the false assumption of virtue, was dealt with in no uncertain terms by our Great Teacher, who could read the heart and know immediately whether a man was sincere. To the hypocrites He said: "Ye devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation....ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone....ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess....ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." (*Matthew 23*)

Fortunately, the Spirit itself is sincere and unselfish, and as it gains dominion over the personality, can give to others with love and with no thought of thanks or recognition. The individualized Spark of God realizes that it is a part of the Whole, and that the idea of separateness is an illusion gained during our sojourn through materiality. When by love and service to others we keep the inner fires burning brightly and thus *feel* the urge to share what we have with others, with no thought for outer appearance, we reap the intangible reward of food for the evolving consciousness.

In *The Vision of Sir Launfal* we find

the Christ Ideal expressed in the words of the leper:

*'Better to me the poor man's crust,  
Better the blessing of the poor,  
Though I turn empty from his door.  
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;  
He gives only the worthless gold  
Who gives from a sense of duty;  
But he who gives from a slender mite,  
And gives to that which is out of sight—  
That thread of all-sustaining beauty  
Which runs through all and doth all unite—  
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,  
The heart outstretches its eager palms,  
For a god goes with it and makes it store  
to the soul that was starving in darkness before.'*

### RISING ABOVE THE LAW

*Ye have heard that it hath been said,  
An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:*

*But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

*And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.*

*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.*

*Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

*Ye have heard that it hath been said,  
Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.*

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

*That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the*

*good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

*And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

—Matthew 5:38-48

There is perhaps no passage in the Bible which indicates more clearly than the above the essential difference between the Christian religion and the race religions which preceded it. Only a few were able to accept such a high standard of unselfish conduct at the time of the coming of Christ, and now, two thousand years hence, there are still many who have not progressed to this state of consciousness. However, progress has been made, and will be made increasingly in the years to come, as His benevolent radiations continue to permeate the Earth and its inhabitants.

Anyone who has attained spiritually to the height where he can "resist not evil," where he can "turn the other cheek," in humility and love, emanates such a high rate of spiritual force that its power is felt by the persecutor. This subtle, but extremely puissant force reaches out and often transforms the "sinner"—gives such reinforcement to his Higher Self or indwelling Spirit that it is able to assert itself and act in accordance with its dictates.

There is, in fact, a magical potency in the ability to bless unreservedly them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us. Spiritual students have demonstrated countless times the efficiency of this procedure, knowing that in reality it is an exact formula based upon immutable law.

A high ideal, indeed to "be....perfect,

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in the development of exchange consciousness.

The quick-witted ♀ in ♀ sextiles the enthusiastic ♂ in ♀ from Nov. 6 to Nov. 17, providing lightning-fast mental and verbal responses and an energetic debating prowess favoring careers in law, teaching, writing, public relations, politics, and news reporting. However, a desire to unearth the secrets of others while simultaneously evoking a sense of unease in them, due to one's own secrecy, may tarnish the reputation of an essentially honest and responsible child. Parents are urged to polish off the rough edges of a biting, sarcastic wit, thereby producing a more diplomatic turn of the tongue in later life.

The impulsive ♂ squares the chaotic ♀ from Nov. 4 to the end of the solar month, ultimately teaching these children the necessity of detachment in service to our fellow beings. This aspect tends to produce an inordinate sense of discouragement due to the normal exigencies and vicissitudes of life. This discouragement in early life may lead to a permanent sense of unworthiness, manifesting in antisocial behavior such as backbiting and indiscriminate allegiances to spiritual leaders and groups of questionable worthiness. Blessed are the astrologically informed parents of these children if they seize their opportunity to allay, in these progeny, unwarranted feelings of guilt that may result from even normally assertive behavior patterns.

From Nov. 11 to Nov. 22, the harmonious ♀ in ♀ sextiles the ingenious ♀ in ♀, giving a love nature that is as unique as it is non-possessive. Here these children need to be encouraged to be themselves when soliciting friendship. Parents may be tested to the limits of their tolerance by the seemingly off-beat tastes of their child in his or her decoration and clothing style choices. However, as these ♀\*♂ children are respectful of the tastes of others, their iconoclasm causes a minimum of social friction. As this aspect

may inculcate a heightened sense of drama, these children may become dynamic teachers of the arts later in life.

The self-expressive ♀ conjuncts the intuitive ♀ from Nov. 16 to the end of the solar month, giving the mind a futuristic attitude. The minds of these children are always ready to grasp new ideas, and many new projects are started thereby; however, these projects may not be completed when the thrill of the new experience wears off. Parents are therefore advised to inculcate the importance of completing prolonged tasks once begun, and of the focusing of one's intellectual resources. These children are likely to pursue some off-beat field of study, including the fringe areas of science, philosophy, and psychology. □

—Robert Jacobs

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## RISING ABOVE THE LAW

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even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," and not easily attained. However, since we are taught that we can rise no higher than our ideals, it behooves us to embrace the highest. Actually, we are Gods-in-the-making, and the teachings of Christ have been given to humanity at this period in their evolution as a scientific formula for unfolding our God-powers and thus leading us on the upward Way to Godhood.

When we reach the stage of consciousness where we can follow willingly the commandments of the Christ, we are no longer subject to the law based upon separateness. We have the law written upon our hearts and have therefore risen above it. □

