CHARLES FILLMORE, SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 1925.

MAKE YOUR RELIGION PRACTICAL

James 1:19-27

The subject of our lesson this morning is "Make Your Religion Practical." It is founded on the first chapter of the Epistle of James.

James was a follower of Jesus and it is supposed that he was the apostle James.

There are three James mentioned in the New Testament and there is some dispute as to which of these the author of this epistle is. However, that does not make any great difference with the lesson. We know that he was a follower of Jesus, therefore a Christian, and we think that the religion he advocated was Christianity, so that the subject of this lesson is "Make Your Religion (that is, your Christianity) practical."

Now to make Christianity practical is to practice Christianity.

And the practice of Christianity is far more than one from a cursory examination
realizes. The practice of Christianity goes beyond the regulation of the moral nature. That is a question that is frequently broached to us, this question of the being, well, what is called a good man or good woman, is he not fulfilling the law laid down by Jesus Christ? And we say no. You can be a good man or a good woman, living a moral life, be upright, honest and virtuous, true in every way, and not be a Christian. Well, what is a Christian?

A Christian is upright, honest, true and in very way conforms to the ethical law, but he is something more than that. Now we hear a great deal about evolution and the difference between evolution and the direct creation by the word of God, and the question naturally comes up: Does a Christian evolve? Certainly. We all evolve, and evolution of man from the moral standard into the spiritual state is the greatest evolution he can attain, and the good moral people, honest people, true people,
are getting ready to evolve to spiritual people. A man might be a good man, a very good man but he is not really awakening that inner spiritual principle which is implanted in him. James speaks of the Word implanted in you. What did he mean? He means there is a spiritual idea direct from the infinite mind implanted as a seed in every man and every woman, and that that implanted Word or that implanted idea is to be quickened and brought in to expression and that is the work of the Christian, the follower of Jesus Christ. That is just what he did. He demonstrated the spiritual side of man's being and he went way beyond any achievement in power of the intellectual man, the good man. He was a good deal more than good. He was powerful, he understood the law of Spirit mind that the ordinary good man does not know anything about, does not think necessary. He takes it for granted because he is good he will be saved, taken care of. That is a good
standard but it is not the Christian standard. Now Jesus Christ was a very powerful man. I might say, intellectually, because he undoubtedly had achieved all intellectual accomplishments. He went farther than that. His greatness extended into a realm where he controlled the elements. We would like to have control of the elements, make it rain when we wanted it to or stop when we had enough, or when it was too cool make it warmer, or cool when it was too warm.

Now Jesus Christ had that power. That is part of the spiritual man, and that is what God Almighty has implanted in every one of us—it is control. Jesus Christ said: "To him that overcometh shall I give to him to sit on my throne." Overcome what? Why these limitations of the natural man, the man who lives in a material world. Now you can rise out of that material limitation but you can't do it by being merely good, by being merely honest. You
have got to follow something. That is where the real evolution begins. Man in his natural state is merely preparing for a larger man. We are children in kindergarten, not doing anything really that we ought to do because we are too much engrossed in the little, well, blocks and scissors and things. We say the whole object in life is to make a living, to get a long, make money, get rich. That is silliness to the man who develops his real spiritual character. To that man we are a lot of little animals, like ants, building houses and tearing them down, carrying food in our mouths. That is what the natural man is to the highly developed spiritual man. That is the man we are all really idealizing. But we think it is so far away, so beyond us. But it is not. That is really the teaching of Jesus Christ, that we have implanted in us this divine seed, this divine capacity, that if we only give attention to the Source of it, Jehovah, the one infinite mind
right here all the time, why, we would evolve into it and become the sons of God, as we potentially are now. We are potentially the sons of God and the realization of that will make us practical Christians. We should be about our Father's business.

What is that business? To bring forth spiritual men and spiritual women of power who will sit on the right hand of Jesus Christ. That means the right hand of power. Jesus Christ laid down some of the laws by which we might know we are his followers. And what were those? Well, that we should heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, preach the Gospel. Those are some of the things that we evolve into, this capacity to do what are considered great works. Those are the signs of Christians. You will find in Mark: "And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing,
it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This sounds like necromancy and if you talk in orthodox churches about picking up deadly things and they won't hurt you they would say, "That is superstition, we don't teach that these days." Jesus Christ taught it.

He said: "These signs shall follow them that believe in my name." In the name of Jesus Christ you shall cast out demons, pick up serpents, heal the sick. Shall you out to a circus and pick up the snakes, or drink poisonous drinks? It does not mean that. That would not be a sign of Christianity. Why? We should have this spiritual understanding that goes into the inner, the Source of these outer symbols. Jesus was talking in spiritual terms. Casting out demons—

he cast out demons from a whole lot of people, yet we do not hear about this in the church. Why? They don't understand the spiritual side of Jesus' talks, they
have not quickened their spiritual nature and we are in the same boat so far as our evolution is concerned. If we are not doing these things we are not Christians, we are simply getting a living out of Christianity. People say to me "There are a whole lot of people in your Unity cult who are not doing the works of Jesus Christ." There are some people who are Christians and some who are making a living out of Christianity, and you will find that this is true in every cult. 

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every religion. But the real Christians, the ones who are following Jesus Christ, the greatest example, why they are doing the works, and if you want to be a Christian, why study the spiritual side of Jesus Christ's teachings and find out how to cast out demons, find out how to drink deadly poisons, lay hands on the sick and heal them. That is your work as Christians. Every one of you casting out demons is not only casting them out of yourselves but other people.
These demons that possess us, the demons of error, anger. James refers to this when he tells us that we must put out of our minds all tendency to anger.

That is one of the tests of a Christian, anger, malice, jealousy, all these become, if you allow them to work in your consciousness, demons that take possession of you. Our insane asylums are full of people who are full of these demons, these evils that have grown through accretion, through constant thinking, into an ego, and that ego becomes greater, stronger than the I Am in man and he becomes possessed these demons must be handled by the Christian, one who knows how to dissolve those states of consciousness through the evolving, the activity, the quickening of this implanted word, the Christ Word. Every insane person, every person that is controlled by a demon of negation may be handled, healed, the demon cast out, by quickening the Christ implanted Word. We find in our practical prayer.
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that minister, thought he was the greatest man in the whole world. One day he
was sent by his father to take a contribution and while waiting in the kitchen
of the minister's house he heard the minister dressing down somebody in a very angry
tone, and the boy's ideal was shattered. The minister was never the same to him
again. Why? Because that man had not put the demons out of his consciousness,
had not called out that demon of anger, was not a Christian to that extent. But

was that man headed to hell? Not necessarily. We are all on the way to
heaven but a man who is striving, who is praying, who is in one direction
alone, even, exalting the Christ, is a good deal better than a man so well
satisfied with himself that he never exults, never evolves. So never condemn
anybody not rounded out in full as Christ was. He was one man who realized
and demonstrated that standard. We are on the way and getting there. We should
all be encouraged in our efforts. That taking up of serpents, people think it is necromancy but it has an inner meaning. The serpent is that tendency in every one of us to listen to sense, to be drawn from the spiritual standards into the sensations of the flesh. That serpent, you remember, is the great tempter in the Garden who told Adam and Eve: "You can eat of the tree in the garden. It won't hurt you." We hear of people today who are dead and go to heaven. There is not anything like that taught in Christianity. Not at all. The death of the body is to be overcome and the real cause of physical death is that we do not know how to handle these serpents of sense as Jesus Christ did. He said this natural man we are evolving into a spiritual man must be lifted up. There is the teaching of evolution. You must lift up this thought, this son of man as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. We are in the wilderness of sense.
Lift up this serpent. When the serpent tempted Jesus he did not give up to his sensations. That is one of the signs of a Christian. You will find in every one of these symbols Jesus Christ gives, there is spiritual truth. "You shall drink of any deadly thing and it shall not hurt you." Does that mean you shall drink deadly drugs? If some one should come to me and say: "Here, let me give you a dose of arsenic," should I take it to show that it would not hurt me? No,
claim people have been killed through false ideas. We are all more or less drugged from the falsities we have imbibed from error teaching, wrong ideas.

You can fill your mind with dead thoughts and they will kill you sooner or later.

What should we do in cases like that? Why, know the Truth and put out of our minds those deadly things, those thoughts we have to conform to, the natural law—we have to do this or that way because it has been the custom of the race.

custom of men. I tell you a Christian has control over all laws, everything is under the dominion of one who understands the divine law. You have to begin with yourself, your own consciousness. There is something more in Christianity than even James saw. He summed it up in this lesson: "visit the fatherless and widows in thier affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

That is good—unspotted from the world—but visiting the fatherless and the
widows in their affliction should not be idealized by true Christians. That is taking the effect and not getting at the cause and is the trouble with all our medical science today. They are treating with the effect and not the causes. If all were practicing Christianity there would not be any widows or any tears. We are told that all tears will be wiped away and if we had all our sorrow and sickness wiped away would we need any charitable institutions for any widows or orphans. Why, certainly not. That is exactly what Christianity teaches. That is what we are to accept, that is the goal of every Christian. That is Christianity and Christianity is one of the highest ideals that has ever been put before the human race. Jesus Christ taught absolute perfection. He said: "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect. That is an ideal very very few of us even dare to think about as a reality. That we shall
be as perfect as God is, and if I should ask a minister that, he would say there is something wrong about that. He did not mean that exactly. But he did mean it. God is Spirit and man is his image and likeness. Jesus was like his Father and if you will realize your own real being, see yourself as you really are, you don't have to look into the looking glass to see yourself. You would not see yourself if you did, you would only see the Adam expression of what you have thought about yourself in your ignorance. Look at yourself as you are in Christ, look at your divine perfection because looking at it, I assure you, you will begin to feel it, you will know it. See yourself as you are in Spirit, absolutely perfect, and that perfection will manifest in your life just to the extent you concentrate yourself on your perfection. So it is not sacrilegious or disloyal to God or Christ for man to live himself into that high ideal.
that implanted Word manifest until it covers your entire consciousness.

We might go into detail, show how we should do this or that, lay hands on
the sick, but does that mean your physical hand? No. That should be taken
spiritual in a measure, just like the other symbols, the picking up of serpents
and drinking deadly poisons. The laying on of the hand is putting the power of
the Word to those who believe in sickness, who believe in the ills of the flesh

possessing them. Those are demons also. There is a demon of sickness, a
demon of death and all these possess people and they do not know it. Now the
Christian takes that all out of the world, dissolves it, comes into a place
where there is eternal life, joy, satisfaction, no sickness nor sorrow. Jesus
Christ realized this. Some people think to be a Christian they should be more
or less sad, that a Christian's life has its deep sorrows, that they have to
be grief stricken as Jesus Christ was. But did he not overcome all these things?
And what for? For us, for our edification and joy. "That my joy may be in you."
Let us realize that, that the man Jesus did demonstrate the Christ in man. He found it great joy, the mastery, the power, the goodness of the implanted Word,
that image and likeness of God which we are every one of us bringing forth
if we are true Christians. Let us be true Christians.