

## **BIBLE LESSON XXIII.**

John 21:1

### **RISEN WITH CHRIST**

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,” is the golden text of this lesson.

To be risen with Christ is to suddenly discover that you know a great truth about your own life as related to the God life. The instant we know such a truth we are changed in our bodies and in our minds.

There are statements of truth, glory beyond glory, and so there is no realization of what is true that has not a still higher realization in itself for us. Whenever Jesus Christ was with His disciples on the sea of Galilee or Tiberias, you will notice how they are always closing out an old dispensation and beginning a new one, as in this case.

We all have our closing out of our old ways of thinking about Christ, as the church at large is always having its close of dispensations. There is a time when we must live on a higher plane from what we have hitherto been living on, or we shall deteriorate in every way. We are risen with Christ when we realize that there is a higher plane to think and live on than that we have been thinking and living on. We shall demonstrate new powers if we commence to live there the

moment we see how it is. We are never where we do not come to such places. The Christian scientists have taken the highest statements concerning Christ that were ever taken, but they also find their times when they must rise to still higher statements of the same Christ. To refuse these risings with Christ is to deteriorate – to stop our prosperity.

A whole body of people may stop its prosperity along some line by not rising with Christ when somebody tempts them, or their pride or conservatism tempts them to take a lower view of life from what they see (dimly in the early morning, as the disciples of Jesus on Galilee) might be taken. Here the seven affirmations or two words embodied took the higher statements concerning Jesus Christ, viz., that He is not above doing the commonest favor for those who rise to accept His teachings.

Everything in this lesson has its exquisitely spiritual significance. It shows also how it is a sign of the acceptance of Christ from a higher plane when we can be fed and clothed and prospered by Him without feeling that it is demeaning Him any more than those people did who let Him help them at the time of this lesson.

Jesus Christ was Jesus of Nazareth, so full of understanding that there was nothing to Him, in Him, or of Him, except Christ or Truth. Whoever will be filled to overflowing with Truth, as Jesus was, will do as wonderfully as He, and be as much Christ as He. “Where I am, there ye may be also.”

He never told people to do anything but what He Himself could do and did do. He said, "Preach the gospel," and then preached so entrancingly that the very soldiers forgot to arrest Him, even when they might be executed for such neglect. Ambition, that subtlest and strongest passion of man, was forgotten under the spell of His voice. "Man, proud man, drest in a little brief authority" - glad to "play such fantastic tricks before High Heaven as make the angels weep," was tamed at the very moment when it was his chance to show his authority.

He told them to heal the sick and palsied hands, and leprous scales shone forth as wholesome flesh. "Multitudes came unto Him and He healed them every one" as easily as you would set a chair into its right place in your parlor or hang a picture straight on your walls.

He said, "Cast out demons," and took Mary Magdalene and cast seven out of her, leaving her one of the noblest characters of history - last at His cross, most efficient at His embalming, weeping at His burial, first at His rising. The sin of the woman in adultery was erased. The man's heinous offenses were made nothing. The demoniac boy was set free.

He said, "Raise the dead," and the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, Lazarus and others came forth at His call to show that homes were never made to be decimated by death and we may unite all our families again if we will follow His teachings, rising to the acceptance of every new truth we hear which

puts us farther away from the teeth of material laws and earthly experiences.

Last of all, He raised Himself, to show that we may never be so dead in any way, but that the Truth He told us will give us strength to rise full of quickened life as the solid dough rises with the quickening leaven.

He said that if we had His words in our mind, though we were dead yet should we live again. He said that if we should have His words already quickened within us we should never die - never even see death. Every single one of His works has been accomplished by some one or more of His disciples, except the self-raising. Not one has come forth into our sight after having been buried, and not one has proved his ability to live on and on indefinitely right here among us.

We must take into consideration how all truth has been received when spoken, to appreciate why no Christian has demonstrated protracted appearance among us. All of them had but newly come up out of the Egypt of materiality, and the smell of the smoke of the old ways was upon their garments while they were trying to tell how spiritual thoughts were capable of helping them out of all evil. Now and then they drooped and faded and fell from the reception their doctrine met. At the least sign of failure their neighbors and their families sneered. So they gladly, as Paul said, "preferred death rather than life," with such scorn at every step. Young in spiritual life is every Christian scientist. At their failures do not sneer.

It is better to have tried and failed  
Than never to have tried at all.  
We are the work of Providence,  
And more the battle's loss may profit those  
who lose

Than victory advantage those who win.

Here Jesus comes forth smiling and loving  
and healing as ever. For the third time He  
comes in substantial presence with  
substantial help. Christ is substance. Christ  
is substantial help. Believe this. You may  
have your shoes provided by Christ if you will  
rise to believe it. When a woman tells me she  
feels the power of the Spirit so strongly that  
the very cyclone stops when she speaks, I  
believe her and rejoice that she is risen into  
Christ of Truth. Why is she afraid to tell you  
this? When a woman or man tells me that she  
or he has received some financial assistance  
direct from God without a bit of intervention  
from human beings, why does my heart burn  
with delight as if I had conversed with one who  
had lately come from Jesus Christ on the  
banks of Galilee, while they would tremble at  
your peculiar smile or turning aside?

I suppose it is because I believe in the  
substantial, everyday friendship of Jesus  
Christ, and do not care at all about the harps  
and crowns and feathers of a faraway heaven.

Christ dwelleth not afar,

The King of some remoter star,  
to the disciple who has been fed and warmed  
under the shadow of the tender hills of Galilee.

Notice that He appeared to seven. Those  
seven are all named except two. You will often

notice that two have no names when the risen Christ is near. Those of you who read the twelve lessons of Christian science will remember that there are five affirmations every mind on the planet ought to make, and then that each human being has two affirmations that belong to himself alone.

On the way to *Emaus* (or to the knowledge that "they shall prosper that love God") two nameless disciples had Jesus with them. You will get Jesus Christ to warm your life with delight when you discover your own two. Please do not disapprove of your neighbor's two if he tells you them as very different from yours. You remember that to be a critic was formerly considered to be very smart, but that old dispensation has closed with the knowledge that criticism makes heart disease and sharp twinges of rheumatism. You have risen with Christ if you stop criticizing when you know the law.

Suppose your neighbor feels the God-power speaking so forcefully through him, that like Jeremiah, he says, "I am God and I make my world," all the time meaning the Spirit of himself and not the mortal at all. Will you let him use these two affirmations, even if your neighbor says he has not business with them, for his affirmations are, "I am Spirit and all my world is Spirit?"

These two affirmations not printed in the books have helped many. Try them: 1. "I am the friend of everybody and everything." 2. "I forgive everybody and everything." You will find you are a reservoir of kindness that can

warm the whole world. You can make everything lovely and blessed where you walk. You are bursting, overflowing with forgiving balms. You can pour oils over the troubled thoughts of the world. There is no limit to the conserved good within you that begins to demonstrate very soon after you start these two affirmations.

Here is a lesson of how sure Jesus Christ is to come to those who have just about got discouraged after trying very hard to believe that He is their helper and not seeing Him. Peter and Nathaniel and five others, finding they were objects of derision since their truth had met with what seemed ignominious defeat, made up their minds they would go back to their old business of fishing.

Often the very most spiritually-minded minister of God gets to feeling that maybe he has mistaken his calling because, in spite of his higher efforts, he has failed, and so concludes to go back to his old business. Here Jesus Christ gives him every bit of success that comes to him. At first he will toil unavailingly. Then when he has got discouraged in this also, and feels that it is a mystery whatever he was born for anyway, or why he is here, he makes a little lucky turn.

This is the Jesus Christ within him that has just got ready to act. This lucky turn is the casting of his net on the right side. Remember that there is not a single situation in which you can be placed that has not one little turn for you to make with it to make you absolutely successful.

This is the fourth dimension in space – or the Jesus Christ of you. All success shows the action of Jesus Christ. No matter on what plane you achieve success you are successful by the rising of the Jesus Christ within you.

Simon Peter drew in the net for them full to overflowing and yet the net did not break. Once before they had drawn in such a large netful that the net had broken. And this lake is the very place where Jesus found them on the very material plane of catching fish for their living in the first place. You see they were at the end of the material dispensation when Jesus called them first, and promised they should be fishers of men. And they were told by the second haul of fish, where their nets broke, that the first church that should come by their preaching should last a certain period, and should catch a very motley crowd and class of people, so that it would seem as if the Christian Church must break up and end by reason of such people as it would enroll upon its lists.

Under sanction of the church roll, men in high office might grind down the faces of the poor, and without censure prove unfaithful to the home. Under this dispensation men should believe in two powers – good and evil. They should believe in two beings – God and devil. They should believe in two personal characters, interceding and interfering with man – Jesus and Satan. Men should have their eyes so blinded as to which personality was dealing with them that they could not tell whether their actions were dangerous or safe,

their thoughts powerful or weak. Just at the close of this dispensation they would not be able to turn to anybody or anything for help in health or happiness till they had cast their net on the right side – till they had done one little turn to help themselves.

Let me illustrate. In the streetcar the other day I saw a capitalist belonging to a church of the old dispensation shut the door crossly in the face of a little street-singer. Now that little face looking up was Jesus Christ. Some day that church member cannot recover the money he will lose till he has made his peace with Jesus Christ by doing something for the sake of that child. To do this would be casting his net for success in health and everything else, though it were at the eleventh hour.

Once a man told a good little Christian woman that if she would cure his boy he would give her a thousand dollars, but though the boy was cured he never paid anything to the laborer whose labor he had employed. He has lost \$10,000. He will never recover the amount until he makes good his promise. Swedenborg saw that health comes to a time when the moral law must be observed in the heart and extend way into the actions or the body must lie down in a grave to begin the work over again. The old dispensation is closing when this law is heard of.

Then for those who have received that and come to an end of it, or lived it, there is the constant knowledge of only good – only God – only Jesus Christ, so that they have nothing to do but sit down and take the bread and fish

Jesus Christ provides without questioning – just knowing “It is the Lord.”

Sometimes people say of those who are determined to face the material world and the church of the old dispensation with the statement that there is but one Principle, one Presence, that if they should have pain or sickness or death or poverty in their home then they would find a principle of evil pretty real.

No. If they have these things they show that they believe now that evil is real and God owns a devil. “According to thy faith be it unto thee.” They are under the old dispensation. This is the dispensation of supposition. The new dispensation supposes nothing. It knows in whom it believes, and its net never breaks. Its friends stand true to each other forever. Its families trust each other with a reason for the trust that is in them.

“Aunt Nancy you should be laying up some money for a rainy day,” says a member of the old dispensation to the member of the new. “Suppose your employer should die, suppose you should have rheumatism; suppose” –

“Stop!” says the colored believer in the new dispensation. “I neber s’pose nuffin’. De Lawd is my Shepherd, ‘an I shall not want. And honey, it’s all yo’ sposin’ as is makin’ yo’ so mis’able.”

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, under the last dispensation of the church where Jesus Christ is the daily provider acknowledged. “There shall be no more pain” when you have stepped out from

under the yoke of the belief in sin and death into the freedom of the gospel that these things are all the results of supposing things that never could be true.

"The inhabitants shall not say, 'I am sick,' anymore," in all the earth where men hear the voice of Jesus on the shore at the close of their old ways of living, and make right restitution for the past and receive the gospel as it is in Truth.

You who are in trouble, failure, sickness, the old dispensation cries, Halt! The new dispensation says, "Come, eat with Me." God is Good omnipotent, Love omnipotent, Spirit omniscient. There is only God. Thus there is only Good. There is only Love. There is only Spirit. Do you believe there is any opposite of God in the field of omnipresence? Careful now. "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

Do you not feel the circuit of the old faith closing and hear the voice of the new calling? Be risen with Truth! "In that day there shall be one Lord and His name One." "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" "Is there any beside me? Nay, I know not any."

*December 20th, 1891.*

