

An abridged form of this segment, which describes additional aspects of The Inward Way found in Chapter Four of the Gospel of John, was presented to the congregation of the Creative Life Church in Hot Springs, AR, on Sunday, October 18, 2009. Your comments are welcome via email: creationspirit@gmail.com. Succeeding presentations regarding other aspects of The Inward Way will be made on the third Sunday of each month at the 10:30 AM service of the Creative Life Church, 229 Bayard Street, Hot Springs, AR. The public is invited. In addition, meetings of The Aristotle Group, formed for purposes of metaphysical exchange, are held on the third Saturday of each month from 10AM-noon at the same location. These meetings also are open to the public and participation is encouraged.

The Inward Way Ordering Life

When we are relatively inexperienced in any new endeavor, delving into it sometimes seems like it's just too much all at once. Surely, when we are dealing with the metaphorical and metaphysical translation of Scripture only once a month, this could seem to be the case. Yet, you will remember last month at the end of my presentation that I challenged you—I dared you, actually—to learn to see Life through metaphor as a means to greater spiritual awareness. This is the “walking through the eye of the needle,” and the “taking the straight path” attributed to Jesus in Scripture. Now I ask a rhetorical question: since our last meeting together, how many of us have taken the first step toward greater spiritual meaning by using metaphor to discern the intended teachings of the allegories found in Scripture? I'm not asking this question to embarrass anyone or to load you with guilt. I'm asking this question so you can discern for yourself whether or not you are serious about wanting to know the spiritual Truth about yourself and Life in general. If you are serious, I can assure you that you won't find what you seem to be seeking in the outer world. If you are not serious, it doesn't matter whether you commit to this or any other similar path to inner Truth. One day, you will be ready and then become aware of the inner teacher that has been awaiting your awareness all along.

Should you decide to practice the Inward Way, one spiritual path to Truth, your view of Life and its demonstration will change quite dramatically. But let's face it: dramatic change requires dramatic action. Staying mired in the comfort of familiarity simply won't do the trick. Actually, staying mired in the comfort of familiarity is *the* trick—the trick a commitment to ego consciousness—self importance—plays on us all—until we decide to move beyond the familiar and commonplace back into the spiritual essence we are, but have simply forgotten we are. One thing is for sure: just like we won't catch either rabbit when chasing both, neither can we master spiritual Life while abiding both spiritual and ego consciousness.

You can be sure of this: I'll continue to bring you this methodology, The Inward Way—Being inward with Truth—each month, through the metaphysical translation of the Gospel of John. All it will take on your part is to open your heart to the possibility that there is another way to live what we have come to call Life—a foolproof way that connects you in the most intimate way with the Truth of what you are, with your True character and real identity: divinity.

Just for clarity and reinforcement, the definition of metaphysics which I abide describes metaphysics as the nature of spiritual order, defining and abiding what it is that orders our lives from a spiritual perspective. Admittedly, this is a very narrow and straight path to follow but, as we will soon see, to contaminate our journey with a host of distractions is not to our spiritual advantage at all.

So, as yet another example of metaphysical Scriptural translation, today we'll exercise a metaphorical description of The Inward Way as contained in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John. We begin by referring to the symbolic meaning of place or location in these meditations. The metaphorical meaning of locations does indeed tell us of the mindset currently being dealt with in the text.

Beginning with location, then, we learn here that Jesus—representing the lifelong commitment to finding meaning inwardly, as the voice of the Christ, our highest self—leaves Judaea and goes back to Galilee, passing through Samaria. He lands momentarily at Jacob's well, the symbol for wanting to gain inspiration through intellect alone. As we continue, you will see—even if we only treat the locations metaphysically—that when we look at the meaning of locations that we obtain the entire story of how various dimensions of thought or consciousness work their way from one place to another. We don't even need the stories. Yet the stories lend color and serve to embellish the Truth of the matter, so that those who need or desire such richness of texture have it to deepen meaning for them.

To continue, it is said that Jesus is baptizing more disciples than John, although in fact it was the disciples who baptized, not Jesus. True, Jesus—the commitment to The Inward Way—converts more to Truth than does what John represents: abiding ego consciousness while being aware there is another way. Yet, just who are these disciples spoken about here? Remember, we're dealing with metaphysics, not physicality. Nor are we dealing with mortal beings, but rather with those deeper dimensions of meaning that shift understanding and cleanse the old as the new takes hold. The word "disciples" now takes on a new meaning for us. It comes to mean those cleansing, healing faculties, facets or dimensions of thought that shift us to deeper and deeper realms of comprehension.

The shift in spiritual perception is one of moving from the mental attitude that represents cutting off the illumined intellect (John) from the outer spiritual expression to the attitude in which praise identifies man with Christ consciousness (Judaea). You will recall from our last time together that praise isn't about words, song, or works, but rather about living True only to our inner Source. It—praise—comes to pass in Galilee, the consciousness of continual contact with God, the inner voice of Christ consciousness, the source of all Life. In a nutshell, the trip we're dealing with here represents moving out from the intellectual facets or approaches to deeper understanding and on to the heartfelt Truth, and operating only from Truth through devoted practice and demonstration. To get from one to the other we often go through, or revert to, a mixed state of consciousness, portrayed here by Samaria, like when we worship idols instead of Truth. Or when we chase the rabbit of Truth and the rabbit of ego consciousness at the same time. Confusion

also results when we feel caught between one way of thinking or behaving and another. When we have one foot in one place and our other foot in another, we are in neither, so we feel confused, befuddled.

In a sentence, then, it can be said that as we move from a lower form of consciousness to a higher, we sometimes pass yet again through old familiar territory. Either that or we are simply confused by the contrast between the two until we can fully abide the new as our real character. Here in the Scripture it is said that it was the sixth hour, symbolically meaning that things were coming to completion at higher and higher levels. But this is not yet to the highest level. The numeral twelve would connote absolute closure. The woman at the well in Samaria represents the ability to accept and acknowledge change. By acknowledging that she doesn't know this new way, she is demonstrating the height of humility, her innocent nature. Her declaration that Jews don't associate with Samaritans refers to the fact that the two contrasting views—spiritual consciousness and ego consciousness—don't mix. Yet the higher view, The Inward Way Jesus represents, does indeed address the lower, represented by the person of Samaria.

Here is the text of conversation found in this chapter:

‘If you only knew what God is offering
and who it is that is saying it to you,
give me something to drink,
you would have been the one to ask,
and he would have given you living water.’ (4:10)

And the second:

‘Whoever drinks this water
will be thirsty again;
but no one who drinks the water I shall give him
will ever be thirsty again:
the water that I shall give him
will become in him a spring of water, welling up for eternal Life.’ (4:13-14)

Once again we have Jesus teaching—actually, it is spiritual wisdom that is teaching—that the cleansing water we drink comes from within, not from the intellect or literal meaning. “If you only knew where it comes from you would also want it,” it is said, meaning symbolically, “if you knew it was the absolute Truth for you, you would of course want it.” Metaphysically speaking we can hear the explanation extended this way: “Know, too, that intellectual meaning will leave you thirsty, while spiritual meaning not only will quench your thirst but will quench your spiritual thirst or longing everlastingly. It does so everlastingly because spiritual Truth is always, eternally, with us, awaiting only our awareness.”

The next paragraph continues the story in metaphorical terms. By telling the woman that she should call her husband when he knows that she has none at all, Jesus is telling us

that, spiritually, she is married to no consciousness at all. When Jesus adds to that that she has had five others—you will recall that five symbolizes change—he is saying that she changes beliefs often, and that it is time for the one *real* change. The numeral five also represents the five senses. By referring to the five husbands it means that she was married to the senses, or the sensual, ego related, material meaning, but not to the spiritual meaning of Life. It is being conveyed that it is time for *real, spiritual*, change. It is time to marry Truth. This is the real marriage that will finally quench the thirst *for* Truth. The real search is not for Truth at all, however—the Truth is always present. The real journey is to awareness, which is found only through innocence, willing to being open *to* the Truth. By calling Jesus a prophet she is acknowledging the validity of the Truth found inwardly. She is saying that the Truth found only inward is a self-fulfilling prophecy when acknowledged and demonstrated.

As we proceed, worshipping on a mountain refers to a so-called high plane of conscious, which those of lower dimensions of understanding labeled intellectual spiritualism. Jerusalem, on the other hand, can be thought of as the redeemed state of man. Let's listen in on the storied conversation:

‘Believe me, woman, the hour is coming
when you will worship the Father
neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.
You worship what you do not know;
we worship what we do know;
for salvation comes from the Jews.
But the hour is coming—indeed is already here—
when true worshippers will worship the Father
in spirit and Truth:
that is the kind of worshipper
the Father seeks.
God is spirit,
and those who worship
must worship in spirit and Truth.’ (4:21-24)

Time and again throughout the Gospel of John we hear the same emphasis placed on the Truth heard inwardly, as the voice of the Holy Spirit, Christ consciousness. When it is said that the Father seeks worshippers who understand this distinction, this is not to be taken literally. As we know, Father refers to that which parents Truth in us—the voice of inspiration, Christ consciousness—that which saves us from ourselves. Thus those who worship or give faith to meaning that comes from their divinity have already arrived at Truth. So this reference is not about seeking worshippers but about coming to awareness of the Truth that inhabits us. This is worshipping the Truth through communion with Truth, or it is not worship at all. Failing to do so is using intellect as an idol to be worshipped.

Jesus, the symbol for abiding inward Truth, identifies himself as the Christ, thus validating the Christ Spirit as that which speaks inwardly as the Truth for all. The next

paragraph is hilarious, at least metaphysically. Here we see relative wisdom questioning why the Christ is dealing with the emblem of acceptance. Then, in a sentence the disciples give this very necessary act credence by showing their incomplete understanding of what is meant by having food to eat. In their still confused state—or is it simply a state of ignorance, simply being unaware, not stupid—they treat the spiritual food of which wisdom speaks as though it were material food. Spiritually, however, I know that we’re not actually speaking about physical beings in this case, but about the dimension of understanding each represents.

Here again, as in most all cases, a story is added for clarification and enrichment for those who might need it. For my money we could stop here and be finished with this session. However, just to be sure we’ve dealt with all of it let’s take a quick look at the text:

“My food
is to do the will of the one who sent me,
and to complete his work.
Do you not have a saying?”
Four months and then a harvest?
Well, I tell you,
look around you, look at the fields;
already they are white, ready for harvest!
Already the reaper is being paid his wages,
already he is bringing in the grain for eternal Life,
so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together.
For here the proverb holds true:
one sows, another reaps;
I sent you to reap
a harvest you have not labored for.
Others have laboured for it;
and you have come into the rewards of their labor.” (4:34-38)

Now, here’s the test: in just one sentence, what is this lengthy stanza telling us? Truth can only demonstrate what Truth is, and it is always this way, inseparable in time and purpose. Let’s see if that one sentence does it all for us, if it covers each notion in the text. For example, it takes care of the initial declaration of purpose just fine; declaring the purpose of Truth made aware is to demonstrate Truth. Likewise, it rings True with the imagery of the sower and the reaper, acknowledging them to be one and the same: what you sow is what you’ll reap. If ego consciousness is the nature of the seed you sow, it is ego consciousness you’ll get. If it is Truth you sow, Truth is the only crop, the only demonstration that can come of your awareness.

The reference to the four months is that the crop sown with ego consciousness will always be incomplete, and that the demonstration is not fully complete until we shift all the way from ego consciousness to spiritual consciousness as our way of Being. And the reference to the laborer and receiver are completely akin to the sower and the reaper. Often we’ll find several references to the same teaching in Scripture. This is to reinforce

the teaching, but also to accommodate the various ways in which different people need to hear the Truth in order to fully understand it.

Last, we now know that the Samaritans symbolize a confused state, yet affirming their willingness to entertain other possibilities by listening with an attitude of acceptance, as portrayed by the woman. They asked for two more days with this voice of Truth, and thus headed toward completing the first level of shift through the affirmation of the Word heard inwardly—on the third day, as it were. The natural outcome, then, is to head toward the next level, as exemplified by the movement to Galilee: meaning that which ensues when Truth penetrates the unconscious realm, bringing with it the fullness of meaning of the Christhood. Indeed, it is a time for celebration.

The second sign at Cana deals with the so-called cure of a royal official's son. First, let's recognize that we're back at Cana, the power center of consciousness, that from which comes only Truth: inwardly, in the sacred Temple each of us is. As the story has it, the court official's son is ill at Capernaum. Actually, he's said to be near death, and Jesus is called for. Jesus tells the father to go home, that his son will live. The father believes and the son is cured at the seventh hour, at exactly the time Jesus had told the father he would be cured. This is the second sign performed as Jesus returned to Galilee.

First of all, let's return to the spiritual meaning of locations. I want to take this opportunity to reinforce the inspirational nature of the Metaphysical Bible Dictionary. Here's what is attributed there to the metaphysical meaning of the location of Capernaum.

“Capernaum refers to the inner conviction of the abiding compassion and restoring the power of Being. When one enters this state of consciousness a healing virtue pours out of the soul and transforms all discord to harmony. It is this great soul compassion and yearning to help humanity out of its errors that makes the so-called ‘natural healer’...it indicates a cleansing of the mind, both conscious and unconscious. In this repentant attitude the individual is ready to change his mind. Such a man has lived in the outer realms of consciousness where materiality reigns, but now he has come to realize that there is another realm where he becomes acquainted with spiritual Truth.” (pg. 139) *This is entering the synagogue, the temple of our spiritual Being. (mine, added)*

We can gain from this translation of Capernaum, then, that this story is about cleansing our consciousness so as to serve the higher realm of being compassionate toward our real Self and others, and living True only to that.

Next, we have an official who thinks his son is ill and he wants him cured. When we learn to see Wisdom, inspiration, as the Father, as that which parents Truth into Being, what follows is the son or child of that Truth, only Truth. Truth is the only demonstration or child possible to come from Truth. Thus, there is no healing or curing necessary—or is that really the healing that's spoken to here? Note that the voice of Truth says to that erroneous declaration that unless you see signs and portents, omens or signs of something

to come, you will not believe. This refers to the view that when you want to see effect as the sign of Truth heard, you are not enlisting your conviction and spiritual perception in the proper vehicle. Knowing that the Truth can demonstrate only Truth, it is enough to know this is the foundation of spiritual Being, and we don't need "outer signs" to prove the demonstration of Truth to us any longer.

Here the so-called father declares his newfound inner sense of Life, and the son he thinks is dying—or his false perspective—is healed. The instant that his perspective changes, then the effect, the outcome or demonstration, is restored instantly to what the spiritual reality actually is—what God, Truth, is. All else is error. I'll finish this section by saying that the fever that left the son is a symbol for the burning away of the old image so the new can replace it. Indeed, the metaphysical meaning of Capernaum has been well served through this allegory.

It seems important to close our story by referring to: "the whole household believed." To me this says that the entire house—the entirety of our spiritual awareness came into harmony with Truth as the Way and Life. Thus death of the spiritual Way was averted. The infinite details of the stories aren't always all that important, but sometimes they give additional flavor and meaning.

And this: at the end of the session with the Samaritans, it is declared that Jesus is the Savior of the world. Is this not just another way of saying that the way of Truth that comes only inwardly through the Holy Spirit, Christ consciousness, is that which saves us in our day-to-day demonstration of what Life means to us?

I hope I have left you confused, or even highly conflicted. Why would I want to do such a thing to people I care so much about? Because I really *do* care about you, and I care about your spiritual welfare, that's why. Now that we have given five or six sessions to the metaphysical treatment of Scripture, I feel a need to let a shoe drop. No, I didn't say I'd throw one at you; that is a sign of disrespect. I only want to startle you. This dramatic declaration is to say that while all this "metaphysicianing" and "metaphorizing" can be helpful on one level, on the deepest level of Being, doing so doesn't help a whole lot. The real message from the spiritual translation of Scripture is this: Our *single* purpose is to become aware of the Truth heard inwardly and to be faithful to Truth's demonstration. All else is but a mistranslation. Are you ready to practice awareness and demonstration of your infinite source of Truth or are you not? Come to The Aristotle Group and we can practice together. Yet again, I dare you! I challenge you! And I am here for you!

