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To bring in the kingdom, right at hand, yet so far from the unrepentant heart, Jesus knew he must have helpers. And he began to gather to him disciples. He, "walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matt. 4: 18-20). What power of Spirit must Jesus have radiated to produce so prompt and profound a change in the lives of these men! Later the great Leader of the Christian Science movement, Mary Baker Eddy, was to affect men's thought and conduct deeply and radically. As one of the early Christian Scientists put it: "I came from my first interview with Mrs. Eddy and told myself 'I am her man.'" And he was her man from that time, for he left his occupation as professor in a large university and for fifty years followed her in the way of the Christ, which she taught.

Ringling down the centuries, even to us today, hear the Master's compelling words: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Can we do better than give earnest heed to this insistent call? For surely the catch of mankind is still great in all waters, and the fishers still few, so lamentably few! Can we doubt that upon every Christian falls the same commission Jesus gave those fishermen on the shores of Galilee?

Is it not plain that in human consciousness is the entire need of and occasion for salvation? Right there in human consciousness we are to fish for men—individuals, to be saved from false association with wrong concepts and conduct. Right there "down among the poor and lowly" in human consciousness, our Christian work must be done. The centuries have not dimmed that glad voice which called out, "Children, have ye any meat?... Come and dine" (John 21:5, 12). The divine influence is present in some measure in every individual human consciousness. Hence, the hope, the ultimate certainty of salvation from the ills to which flesh is heir.

This divine influence brings deliverance to the captives of material sense and constitutes the freedom of men, the health of men, the wealth of men, the holiness of men. This divine influence, this spiritual, this Soul-sense, is the Christ, the all-in-all of God expressed.

If fishing we would go, naturally attention must be paid to equipping ourselves in all necessary ways. We shall need gear and bait, thorough establishment in every good word and work. The disciples followed Jesus obediently and gladly, and he taught them, furnishing them with precept and example. How favored are we in these latter days, for we have not only in the Bible the Master's instruction in the deep things of God and man, but also in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" the teaching of our Leader, who brought the promised Comforter, the spirit of Truth, guiding into all truth! Jesus was thirty years in preparation and but three years in practice. It was his perfect preparation and equipment that made his mission and program possible of achievement in three short years.

Mrs. Eddy was nearly half a century in preparation for the mighty work she did. When preparation and equipment are adequate the actual work is incidental. Those who have named the name of Christ in Christian Science, who have called themselves not only Christians but Christian Scientists, shall they then not be Christian and Christian Scientists? The requirement in preparation for fishing for men in Christ's way is obedience. Said Jesus, "Follow me," and they straightway followed him.

Centuries before, Jonah failed to follow God's command straightway, but he did follow. Think how much better it would have been had Jonah leaped at the idea of preaching against Nineveh! As one learns the unity of being in which Mind and idea, though distinct, are one, he will question not at all God's commands but will act simultaneously with the order. The simultaneity of consciousness and action accounts for the fertility of the mind that is "stayed on thee." Such an individual knows how to fish, knows the place to fish, and catches fish! Such an individual suits conduct to knowledge. To him, resolve is not "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" and loses not "the name of action."

Let us marvel at the simplicity of that scene by the sea. Christ Jesus, in the great power and wisdom of his victory in the wilderness, walked quietly in search of helpers. He was preaching the gospel of the kingdom, calling for repentance and reformation. He knew the work was a stupendous one, for it had to reach the individual and eventually every individual. He entered into

no explanations; he merely said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." The simple, direct commission of the Christ! And the equally simple and direct response. Straightway they left their nets and followed him. Then he, as simply, called others, and they followed him also.

The simplicity in Christ is the shortest line between two points; it is the directness of thought and action, always to be found in genuine Christian Scientists, in sharp contrast to the obliquity of mortal mind and error. The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years because they would not face the issue of a straight course from the Red Sea to the promised land, from sense to Soul. Indirection is always deterrent to progress. The simplicity in Christ walks a direct path to Truth and Love.

Do you say, "But those fishermen were simple folk"? They were indeed, and so was Jesus, and so was Mrs. Eddy, and so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. And where talents abound, contrition and humility should much more abound. It was so with our Saviour. It was so with our Leader. It will be so increasingly with each of us, as we furnish

"...Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart."

May we again view that scene on the shores of Galilee. Consider the calmness and serenity of Jesus and the two fishermen. All were facing momentous decisions. Jesus was choosing his helpers, his intimates from there on in his program for the salvation of the world. They were choosing between their sheltered lives and not uncongenial work and the consequences dependent upon the introduction of a more spiritual religion. These men faced the challenge of becoming standard-bearers for Truth. Yet all three were composed and poised. Calmly Jesus issued the command, calmly the fishermen accepted the commission and entered upon their new role.

Our Leader speaks of the equipoise of thought force. An equipoise is a perfect balance. And balance is an inescapable result of Christ's coming. The effect of the idea of Truth is to put all thoughts in plumb and so to stay them. So you and I can face issues of great moment, yet serenely. This equipoise is essential equipment in fishing for men. Jesus displayed it at all times, regardless of stress. His disciples faltered often and went off balance. But they eventually acquired something of the poise of Christ. We have the example of the Master and of his follower, our Leader. And we may take courage in the fact that the first disciples had their uneasy moments

at times when, for instance, to a man, they left off following Jesus and tried to get their balance in the old ways of mortal mind. But they came back and again caught and held their equilibrium, and they grew stronger with each experience.

To be fully equipped as fishers of men we must have unflinching faith in God and His goodness. Any inability to stand before error's insidiousness, or assault, the deceivableness of unrighteousness, or the hideousness of its bared fangs must be attributed either to ignorance or to ignoring what should not be ignored. Spiritual faith is unflinching, for it both knows good and stands against evil in all confidence and trustworthiness. Man is the individual consciousness only of good, since error cannot really be known. Unflinching faith in God illustrates the coincidence of the heart's appeal to the heavenly Father-Mother and the self-reliance and self-sufficiency of "man," who, our Leader says (*Science and Health*, p. 470), "is the expression of God's being."

Jesus fished for men, but always he fished as an individual for individuals. He knew his oneness with the one Mind. He knew that no system is good which does not glorify and protect and serve the individual and relate him rightly to Principle.

Closely akin to equipoise is timing or coordination. Jesus expressed perfect coordination, and it made him a great fisherman. With the Master every move was perfect continuity in the unfoldment of dramatic verities in every phase of the stage of life. He knew that, to quote *Science and Health* (p. 544), "Matter cannot change the eternal fact that man exists because God exists." And he knew that man exists as God's reflection, as eternal, as perfect, as well, as powerful, as wise, as holy, as infinitely various, as normal, as wealthy, as lovely, loving, lovable.

Would it be a sign of greatness that men follow you? How far greater that men, seeing your deeds, follow Christ. Jesus himself and our great Leader followed Christ. Only a follower of Christ can be a great man and a great leader. The ways of peace, health, salvation, world weal, are not political, not medical, nor organizational. They are spiritual. Jesus knew it and pointed out the way. Paul knew it. The Bible contains it. Mrs. Eddy knew it. True Christian Scientists pursue the spiritual way! "To be spiritually minded is life and peace" (*Rom. 8:6*).

To fish in the spiritual way is to be "the compleat angler." It is pure joy to be fishers of men. And the rewards? A draught of fishes so great the very nets are like to break. To have the joy of the Lord, one has only to maintain a right sense of himself as an original and peculiar image and likeness of God.

Only such as have this understanding can fish all waters, yet never go down to the sea; can with Paul be "sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing" (II Cor. 6:10). "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" is the injunction and the promise of our Master. To the obedient and faithful one that promise is fulfilled, and for himself he gains the glory, immortality, power, and prestige which belong to man.

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