

Address by Mr. Charles Fillmore,
In Unity Auditorium, May 1st, 1910.--

Subject: WHICH WAS FIRST, MAN OR THE LAW.

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This question is easily asked and one would, without hesitation probably say that man was first. And yet all about us we see law. The law was here when we came. Then again we are constrained by this observation to say that the law was first. This whole question might be compared to a chicken arguing "who was first, I or the egg". Did you ever settle that question?

You can see that it is necessary to do away with that comparison. In order to settle the question we must get to the absolute, and in the absolute only, wherein we find the principle. And when one gets to the principle, he sees that the I AM preceeds all; that the I AM is the beginning and the end of all things. Consequently this must settle the ~~xxx~~ question as to the superiority, because that is what we are considering. Which has the supreme power, the law or the I AM? It will not take you long to decide that.

Blackstone, the great authority of our legal fraternities tells us that law is a rule of action. That covers all law. And who is it that acts? The I am. When you think about yourself, think about

I AM, and you will always locate yourself, while if you try to get the perfection of man from observation, from the secondary movements of that I AM, you fall short. This law is a rule of action for the "I AM.

You ask, does the I AM have to have a rule of action? It does not; that is where we sin. We thought we had to have a rule of action, and having set up that kind of a rule of action we are involved in a set of rules and we are bound by a thousand laws. We are surrounded by laws, and like the great giant among the *Gilliputians* we are tied hand and foot, by these movements of mind, these rules of action. And where did the rules of action start? From the I AM. And hasn't law a standard? Yes, everything has a rule of action. It must ~~have~~ be founded on a standard or on some assumption.

We are told that every problem must include all of its units. If I say ninety and nine are one hundred, I have not made a correct statement, because I have left out one of the units. Now in the physical science this rule is found to be true; that nothing can be destroyed, that not one single atom of this universe could be destroyed. If so it would all go to pieces, it would not be complete; it would not be a whole. But you say things are destroyed; I see things destroyed every day. No nothing is destroyed. What you see is simply a change. The water is changed to ice, the ice back to water or vaporized, but all the elements are there.

and the change is only in the relation of things.

~~Now~~ carrying this right back into the realm of mind, because that is where all things originate, we find that in order to comprehend the fundamental law of being we must include all of the units. Nothing can be cast out. We cannot exclude anything from our body. If we would do that, the law is not fulfilled. Here you can see we have the key to what we call personality.

If we make a law for part of the world and leave out the balance of the world and we fall short. We are making a statement of man and eliminate from man a large portion of the units, consequently we fall short. The only statement that will prove true, that will carry us to a full comprehension of being and all that it includes is to take the whole of humanity, everything into our statements; to know that there is one universal God and that that God includes all, and that that God has numbered the very hairs of your head. You cannot exclude a single thing. Then this does away with damnation and ~~eternal~~ punishment or the destruction of a single soul. It cannot be true. Here you observe how a right understanding of the very law of being settles every question. It does not make any difference what the scriptural authorities may be and you will find if you study them in their original meaning they

will always conform to law, and prove the unity of all things; and this unity is the standard. So let us use it as the standard of our daily lives. Use it as one uses a measure or a rule, because it is a rule. We must have rules of action, and if we know that these rules of action originate in the "I AM, and if we also know that there is a standard for every rule of action in spirit, we shall easily solve the most complex problems. Everything will come under these simple rules.

It is not hard or difficult to know the law of life if you get at the fundamentals. Now the law of man is that he shall have liberty. That should be the starting point of every proposition, because if I allow myself in any way to be bound, before I know it I will be fettering myself with my own statements of the law, and the fact is that we are not bound by anything but our own statements. If we know ourselves, and the larger acquaintance we have with the powers of the mind, the more we are apt, if we do not know this law of liberty, to bind ourselves, to put ourselves in prison. Now the way to get out is to again declare that law of liberty; and the highest declaration of that law is that there is liberty. We are striving, many of us in this day, to free ourselves from the bondage of the law, political in a larger degree than any other, by individual effort, by making other laws

that are going to set us free. But the true freedom comes from the declaration of "~~Where~~ Christ is", or where the individual man is "there is liberty". It comes from cutting loose from all bondage--not a few, but ALL.

We do not expect to get the liberty of the law of Divine health from a political change. We must have the law in all of its aspects, and the law has bound man in so many directions. He is surrounded with the results of his own law making that he must overcome, he must get into the Christ before he is free. We better start right; start at the very foundation; start with the foundation of the knowledge of truth that man is the law maker; that man is above the law and that all these so-called laws, ~~of~~ the environments are like cob-webs. The I AM can brush them aside if it has the courage and understanding. Jesus Christ was the example for us in this, and you will find if you study his life carefully that he began at the beginning of things. He did not transgress the laws of the land. He said render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. He recognized these laws and that it was alright in an external degree, but when it came to the spiritual man, when man laid down laws that would govern the I AM, then he rebelled. In this matter of the Sabbath he made a very definite declaration right along this line and that was when he was

accused of working on the sabbath, and He said that "Man was not made for the Sabbath, but that the Sabbath was made for man". In other words, I AM is before any religious law, and if it is not for the convenience of man, he should not bow to the law. It does not make any difference how long it has been observed, how great the authorities are, the simple proposition that the observation of this law is not for my good, do away with it.

The old Pharisees had laid down laws of the Sabbath; what man should do on the Sabbath until it was hard to even take a step out of doors. If you raised a hand you were in some way under a Pharisaical law, and it was laid down in some of the scriptures just exactly what you should do. The house-wife was commanded not to set bread so that the yeast would work on the Sabbath day. They must refrain from all kinds of work. We are told that this very thing that Jesus did, going into the field and plucking the ears of wheat and eating the grain, was an open violation of the law. They were told that they must not even hunt fleas on the Sabbath day because that was a form of hunting; ~~show~~ showing to what extreme they had made laws and then put themselves in bondage to them. We smile at that and say we are a free people; we haven't made any laws that govern us like that in religious America. Do not fool yourself. Look about a little and just

observe some of the laws under which you are now laboring. Some of the laws that are unnecessary in the man-made religion. We have freed ourselves largely from the creed and the doctrines of ~~orthodox~~ theology, but in some other respects men have made laws and we have given ourselves up to them, that are just as ridiculous or full of inconsistency as these laws that the Jews made. We have given ourselves up to certain ideas about the laws of nature. We have said religiously we are a free people, but there are laws of nature and you cannot get around those laws. One who has given himself up to these ideas, that certain laws of nature are just as deeply in bondage as those old Pharisees were. He is a worshiper of an idol, or set of idols. The fact is that there are no laws that are fixed. There are standards of laws, but there is a difference between the standard and the law. The standard is that inherent something that always is. It has an application, but its rule of action may be changed, and the sooner a man comes to the consciousness of this fact, the more he masters the rule of action. And these rules of action are on every side.

It is well for us to first know that I AM before the law. That is the stand that Jesus Christ took and that in the expression of the good, I am free. Right there is the point that Jesus brought out permanently "Can a man do good on the Sabbath day?"

If he had said that day, I can do what I want to do on your Sabbath day, they probably would have criticized him right there, but instead he told them that if one of their animals had fallen into the ditch on the Sabbath day, they would pull it out, or if they had lost a sheep on the Sabbath, they would search for it. He then said is it not good for me to heal the sick on the Sabbath, is it not good for me to say to this one who is paralyzed, rise up and walk? So if we follow the spiritual man, we can be absolutely free in the application of the "I am" in its law-giving power. If we hold the thought "I am free to do good" there is no law can bind me in my freedom. I can do good, and there is always a law of the good. And is there no law of the evil? No. That is where people become confused. They think there is a law of error, disease, sin, sickness and death. There is no law whatever. But says the doctor, is there not a law of disease. Doesn't disease have its stages; don't the different diseases have their days in which they proceed from the beginning to the end; can't we tell all about it? No that is mere assumption. They ask Have you studied disease? No, I do not want to know anything about the laws of disease, because I know that the error cannot ever resist a law based upon the truth. It is a secondary movement, but I can come into my understanding of the health and

deatroy all the laws ~~existing~~ pertaining to disease. I know of a case where a patient had typhoid fever and the doctor said it would proceed for several days, and then told of what would happen, and so on. A metaphysician was called the fever was entirely broken up. When the doctor came back he could not understand the condition at all. It was because the law of health had been brought into expression. We can apply this in every one of our rules of action. It is the standard and the error has no law whatever, only man-made. only made by the error side of the proposition, and all laws are of spirit. The laws that are true and lasting are good, and the good is always the standard, and not the error. When we take this as the standard, the I AM is always safe. It can proceed in any locality to express the supreme law, because I am founded in good, in law, in God, and I can express myself in that good with perfect liberty in every direction. God has put no limits on me whatever. I am the offspring of the Infinite. God does not give the law, but is the law. I am the offspring of an infinitely good standard, and when I take that as a standard, I will always lay down a good rule which will give me perfect freedom. I can never be bound or limited in any way. I am that perfect expression of life.

You will probably find that you are now in

bondage to a thousand different elements in life and law and ~~we~~ are limiting ourselves with statements or thought.

Has that anything to do with the rule of action? It has all to do with it. Then be careful of what kind of laws you make for right there you will find yourself making rules of action, laying down laws for yourself that are not according to the standard, that do not have their origin in your own consciousness, your very being, that standard of life. The standard of life is spirit and every law and every expression of law should be spiritual. All is good. Study the good, health, life; find out the law of health, think about health if you want to be healthy. Give no thought or study to the disease side of the ~~principle~~ proposition for there you are wasting your time. The principle does not know anything about the illhealth, it only knows supreme perfection. So in the matter of life, in all of its aspects, study the positive, the true, the definite standard of life and you have harmonious life. In all of your study remember to study that which is spiritual and you will not be bound by any law, man-made or otherwise.

We have the law of nature, and we have figured it out as the law of God. Look a little further, go a little deeper and your laws of nature will probably resolve themselves into something very much

higher, broader and freer.

We look upon the works of Jesus Christ, the increasing of the loaves as in some way very miraculous. It is no more miraculous than producing that same loaf through the process of nature. The changes that it goes through are unknown to us. How do you know but what you can shorten up the process. We are all in the habit of waiting for things to take their course. Do you have to wait? No. Set the law in motion. How do we do it? Hold to those truths and let them filter down into your life and you will find out. You will do away with the materiality. Those things do not exist for me. ~~They~~ I am not bound by material conditions of any kind. I am spirit.

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