

CHARLES FILLMORE
SUN. 11 A. M.
JULY 6, 1919

The lesson for our consideration this morning is the Life and Work of the Church. You doubtless know there are two churches, the church visible and the church invisible. Now the church that we desire above all to belong to is that church invisible, because it is established in the heart and the soul. It is established in those permanent realms of man's being, those realms that endure from everlasting to everlasting. Many people think that simply joining the church organization they are fulfilling the law. But those who have delved deep into the Mind of Being become one with it, know that the church, the real church, is the church invisible. Now we must join this church invisible as the offspring of the Infinite Mind, children of God, because only the sons of God may be its members. Let us this morning recognize this membership. Let us ask the great universal Spirit that it may receive us, make us members of this church. Now this church has its forms, its ceremonies, its underlying laws; and the first is a baptism, a washing away of the shortcomings, the so-called sins of man. And if we

would join this church we must ask that we be baptized, and then affirm that unity with the great universal church. So in our opening prayer let us take a word. Now in giving you a word I don't ask you to follow exactly the form of word that I give, but these are but a clue just of the way, pointing the way to that great universal Word, but this will be the word that we will hold in the Silence. "I ask the baptism of the Holy Spirit and full membership in the church of Christ." "I ask the baptism of the Holy Spirit and full membership in the church of Christ."

SILENCE

A study of the church of Christ, its life and work, is something too deep and wide for an ordinary discourse. We can only touch here and there some of the high peaks of this wonderful institution. We can only call your attention to the dominant factors that enter into the church. Now to begin with, the church is both visible and invisible. Because we as a metaphysical offspring of this church dwell so continuously upon the invisible church that people arrive at the conclusion that we ignore the visible. Now

that is not true. The truth is that the human race has up to the present time almost wholly ignored the church invisible. They have formed an institution and marked its steps of progress, its expansion, its growth, by their doctrines and creeds, and here the great church of Christ has met with many limitations. We, discerning the unlimited church, the great invisible church, would have it come into expression. We would carry out that oft repeated prayer that "thy kingdom come in the earth as it is in heaven." *** Now the the church invisible is an organized church . It has its officers, its ritualism, it has everything that the visible church has, but it is a real church. Now we might recount the history of the Christian church and say to you this is evidence of a Life, a Force, an Intelligence, a mighty Power back of the church of Jesus Christ, and what more do we want than this invisible church that has accomplished so many wonderful things in the life of men? Well that church hasn't accomplished all that its Founder prophycied. It is falling short in many respects, and that church is a progressive church. All institutions for the spiritual and the physical uplift of man are progressive; they grow. The church of Jesus Christ, you know, began with one man, and

then four men, and then twelve men, and then three thousand men, five thousand, and millions. Why, the growth of the church of Jesus Christ is the most wonderful thing in all the history of the race. Kingdoms have come; kingdoms have gone. There have been revolutions and counter revolutions. There have been changes in every part of the earth, and yet the church has never changed. Did you ever think why that was? Why, with all the changes that have taken place in the last four years the church hasn't changed. It sits calmly on its throne and witnesses all these phenomenal transformations of men, nations, races in every way, and there is no change in the church now. The reason of that is that primarily the church is not an earthly institution. The church was organized upon a spiritual foundation, although men have tried in every way to make it a temporal organization. They have said the church is founded upon Peter and there are successors to Peter, and only those who recognize that succession have the real church. Now Jesus Christ was a metaphysician. He taught in parables; he taught in symbols, and he taught above all things about the kingdom of God. When he discerned

that the great spiritual truth that he was the Son of God, then he said "upon this rock will I build my church." ("upon this rock I will build my church." Mat. 16:18, Am. Rev.) Now I examined the Scripture in its original Greek, not that I am a Greek scholar, but I have a book that gives the original Greek and a word for word translation of that, and here is the translation of that statement that Jesus Christ made to Peter, using him as a symbol. I seem to have lost that, but the statement was, "thou art"—Now "church" is defined in the Greek, "the Lord's house," and Jesus said to Peter, "I say unto thee that thou art Petros which means rock and upon this petra, (which is the Greek for rock) I will build my ekklesia (which is translated 'church'); and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Now we understand that this church invisible, which Jesus Christ established, is a real organization, that it is organized in what might be termed the superior realms of the mind. We look at man as a physical and mental and spiritual being. He organizes society from the physical viewpoint. He organizes his morals from the mental and the true spiritual organization as they are

established in Divine Mind, in the Christ Mind. In other words, there is a perfect man mind, and this perfect man mind in its organization includes every possibility that can come to the mortal so-called man. In other words, we are children coming into the great church of Christ. Now you might call that a church, or you could call it a great school, a school in which man is to learn the various departments of his being, visible and invisible, because it includes the body. Swedenborg touched upon this church invisible when he described the grand man of the universe. He said that there was a man who was as large as the universe and that the planets, the stars, and the sun were but cells in that grand man's body. Now we find in the metaphysical literature it often refers to the cosmic man. That is explained as the soul man. Then there is another reference which is used spiritually in its highest sense, and that is the Christ man, but when that name Christ is mentioned or spoken, why, we look back two thousand years and think almost universally of Jesus of Nazareth, but he but represented in a measure this cosmic man, this universal man, this grand man of the

universe. Now the life of that universal man flows in and out of the spiritual man in every one of us if we open ourselves to it. Now upon this rock foundation of spiritual understanding or opening of the higher realms of mind is founded the church of Jesus Christ. Now those higher realms of the mind are in the interior lobes of the brain. This, you see, is getting down to practical everyday affairs, something that we can comprehend. You know that with every new state of consciousness that you have you open some new lobe in your brain, and as that consciousness deepens in you and you begin to feel the thrill of a new life, why, it is the life of the church coming into your very nerve centers and controlled by a scientific law, a law established from the very foundation of the world. Now how shall we understand more fully this supreme organization? How, in other words, shall we understand ourselves better, for that is the sum total of this unity with the church of Christ. When you join this church invisible you become a life member. And how long is your life? Some people say until you die. No, if you join the church and become a life member your life is from age to age, from to In other words, you become immortal. Now that is the teaching of Jesus Christ. That

will be the ultimate of all those who join. Now it has been demonstrated by one member. Jesus Christ of Nazareth became a member of the church of Christ, and he is our leader. But is he the only leader? Did he fulfill all of the law? Why he said not. He said that he must go away in order that the Holy Spirit might come and lead us into all truth. Now the history of the church is that, I mean the church visible, that it is followed by men and women who believe in some leader, some one who has had a revelation, and a new concept of what? Why the church invisible. But that is accounted a great discovery, or they have been made saints and their revelation has been promised the guide for me, but this is always limitation. We won't despise the revelation of any man. We have profited by the revelation of Jesus of Nazareth, but is that the fulfillment of our destinies as members of his church? No, indeed. We must become members of the church invisible. We must become members of this rock foundation, this faith in spiritual man. That is the faith upon which the church is built. Jesus said again and again, "O believe, believe, believe, only believe." Now that word "believe" is the original ^{is have} of faith, have faith,

have faith. You know the meaning in the old English of "belief" and "faith" was synonymous, and in reading this Scripture we have to be careful to read in the Spirit to get at the real faith spirit, to know that it is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing. Now Jesus Christ said that this church that he founded on faith, on that spiritual discerning faith which, as I say, lies dormant in the brain lobes of every one of us, waiting our word to have expression into manifestation, that faith is now become more and more active in the minds of men, but there are laws under which that faith is developed in every one of us and under which we come into a fuller consciousness of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now he said to Peter, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now what does that mean? The gates of Hades, that is the original. We give a hard rendition to that Greek word when we say "hell." "Hell," it simply means that state where there is disorganization, for disruptive forces of the mind to represent hell or Hades, and we know that you don't have to go ^{to} some place to find that. And when Jesus Christ said that the gates of Hades should not prevail against his church

he meant that there should be such a firm, positive organization of the factors of the thoughts and words of the great power that entered into the church which he was bringing into expression that that infinite, omnipresent, perfect Man which was the type of every man, he meant that that should come into the consciousness of the members of this church invisible until there would be no opening of the gates of the mind to this outer discord, this Hades, this mind revolution that is constantly going on in the mind of the race. Now, then, if you would be established in the peace and the power and the mastery and the life which is in God and manifest through us as ^{the} perfect man idea, join the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And, having joined that church, be baptized by the Spirit, you shall reap the reward of that church; you shall have everything that is promised by Jesus Christ to his followers. And you ask, "Why don't we have all these things?" "Why don't we fulfill the law?" "Ask whatsoever ye will in my name and it shall be done." ("Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Jno. 15:7, Am. Rev.)

Why? Because we haven't opened ourselves to all the possibilities of this church invisible. We are members of two churches. We have the organization in a way. We have

the teachers and leaders and our minds are divided between this church invisible, the real church, and this outer organization, and when we have the outer organization taken away entirely, yes, as a guiding factor in our lives, if you give way to the organization, if you look toward the teacher or the books as your guides, why, you are not full members of the church of Jesus Christ. You are but a beginner; you have not laid the rock foundation of spiritual understanding which Jesus said would be one of the tests of his members. Now we would have you so fortified against the inflow, the open gate of this mortal world about you that you would stand steadfast amidst the storm, the waves of every adverse thought so they wouldn't mow you down if you really were a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, why don't you become a member? Well, you say, "I am trying with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my strength to be a member of the Lord Jesus Christ." If you are trying with all these factors of your mind and your soul I assure you that the Lord is more and more giving you the ascension of his church. If you go on in this unfoldment of ^{the} mind of the Lord Jesus Christ in you

because you have that Mind you will become a full member. We are every one, if we are headed right, for our minds are looking toward the mount, we are every one becoming more and more intensified into that membership into this spiritual church. Now this is what we ask and pray for. This should be our aspiration, our ambition, and our only desire that we may become more and more fuller members of that body of Christ. Every one of us have a place in that body of Christ, and as we unfold our own souls, as we open up this fount of Wisdom within us, we will find that it is linked with this great universal man, this cosmic man, this Christ man, and that is the Lord. That is the Lord of David which Jesus of Nazareth called attention to. He said that the Lord was the Lord of man's mind, and that the Lord existed before he. That Lord was from the beginning, and that Lord is in his temple. You know that the church means God's body. That is what the church is. It isn't a man-made temple, but it is the body of man, that is, the church of God. Now instead of looking out to some institution for your church, look within, look within your own body, and say, "Why this is the temple of the living God."

"Your body," said Paul, "is the temple of the living God." ("Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" 1 Cor. 6:19, Am. Rev. Now your body may go through crucifixions; it may go through the opening of these gates of hell if you have suffered the inflow, the influx of a world stream, a thought stream coming way down, well say, from your ancestors, those that believe in old age and all those things that make the body different from what it is in the sight of the Lord Jesus, the Christ. And how shall we overcome this? Close the gates of hell against it; don't believe in ancestry. Your only ancestry is God. Remember that ^{when} you make that affirmation, and you will open a new lobe somewhere in your brain, in your body. Say to yourselves again and again every day, "This body is the temple of the living God, and I will treat it as God's temple. I, the soul, go in and out of this temple of God and I worship in this temple as I have heretofore worshipped in these temples made by man." Now you know that you can feel as you go into a holy place where men have sent forth their thoughts of Spirit you feel a peace, you feel a spiritual quality. Can't you feel that same spiritual

peace, that same spiritual quality as you go into this real temple, this temple of the living God? Certainly you can. And that feeling, that great peace as we go into the Silence is the beginning of the spiritual baptism. It is the first initiation that you can get into your membership with this great cosmic man, this true man, that man who flows in and out and about the real members of the church of Jesus Christ, and this life and this work of his church is going on today as it never has before. There is a new inflow, a new influx of this spiritual consciousness, and the opportunities now are greater than ever to become rich in spiritual reality, to become a rich member of this church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we ask you as an intelligent people, as a thinking people, to become more and more identified with this spiritual church, that you may reap the reward of these promises. We ask you to close all the gates, all those open avenues into your mind that come from the negative side of thought and be positive in the spiritual desire, because we shall all be lifted up together if we are true to Truth, because in this wonderful Book taught in that more wonderful Book, the Spirit in you, the Spirit in

you, and I ask you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I ask you in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, who demonstrated the perfect man, to become members of this church, that you become perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

BLESSING OF THE OFFERING

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a very rich church. The Lord holds in the hollow of his hand all the riches of the world. Now we, as the offspring of this rich church, hold in the hollow of our hand, in Spirit and in Truth, all the riches of the universe. We can pass it out through our word until everybody receives it. This must come through an appreciation, a realization that the church and the riches of the church are spiritual.

Now we thank the great Giver of all good for this understanding of the law, and we ask that we may put it more and more into expression in our lives, that we may realize that this which we have so freely offered is but a symbol of that invisible Substance which grows larger and larger and more and more abundant as we affirm our unity with it. We thank thee for this unity; we thank thee for this fulness. Amen.