INTRODUCTION TO
UNITY OUTLINES:
LESSON 12: THE
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
"INTRODUCTION TO UNITY"

A synoptic study of the teachings of Unity in twenty-four lessons

LESSON 12--THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

OBJECTIVE: To study the kingdom of heaven, its location, availability, beauty, and power--the "place" where man's true life is, the realm of all good that prospers the world.


POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. "THE KINGDOM COMETH NOT WITH OBSERVATION." Jesus' references to the kingdom of God and of heaven have been greatly misunderstood. If Jesus had had in mind a place where we go when we die, He could have located it, but He did not do so.

2. THERE ARE TWO SIDES OF LIFE: THE INNER AND THE OUTER. Man cannot understand himself or the world about him in terms of flesh and blood, or by "judging according to appearances." The kingdom of heaven is man's inner consciousness of life which withstands all appearances.

3. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN MAN, within his realization of the omnipresence of God and in his awareness and acceptance of his infinite capabilities as a child of God.

4. "WHEN THE WITHOUT BECOMES AS THE WITHIN." Man tends to become centered in outer things which inhibit the flow of divine life and substance through him. Jesus said, "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." Seek first the realization of omnipotent life and substance; recognize it, claim it, accept it, and become a channel for its expression. "As in heaven so on earth."

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the kingdom of heaven mean to you?
2. What is a parable and why did Jesus teach in parables?
3. Explain why the kingdom "cometh not with observation."
4. How can we attain the "things" that we desire?
5. If the kingdom of God is now with us, why do we express thoughts of sickness, lack, or anything but perfect good?

NEXT WEEK: UNITY AND THE BIBLE

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Chapter 11, TALKS ON TRUTH (Fillmore)
Chapter 7, ATOM-SMASHING POWER OF MIND (Fillmore)
Page 176, KEEP A TRUE LENT (Fillmore)
Chapter 6, PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR YOU (Sweaney)
LESSON 12 — "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

OBJECTIVE: A study of the Kingdom of Heaven, its location, availability, beauty, and power — the "place" where man's true life is, the realm of all good that comes into the world.

UNITY TEXT SOURCES: Chapter 11, "TALKS ON TRUTH" (Fillmore)
Page 176, "KEEP A TRUE LENT" (Fillmore)
Chapter 7, "ATOM SMASHING POWER OF MIND" (Fillmore)
Chapter 6, "PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR YOU" (Sweeney)


POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED:
1. "THE KINGDOM COMETH NOT WITH OBSERVATION." Jesus makes 113 references to the Kingdom of God and of Heaven, but Jesus' teaching has been greatly misunderstood in this. If Jesus had had in mind a place where we go when we die he could have located it, but he did not do so.

2. THERE ARE TWO SIDES OF LIFE: THE INNER AND THE OUTER. Man cannot understand himself or the world about him in terms of flesh and blood, or by "judging according to appearances." The Kingdom of Heaven is the inner side of life, that which stands under all that which appears.

3. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN MAN, within his conscious realization of the presence and the allness of God, in his awareness and his acceptance of his infinite possibilities as a Child of God.

4. "WHEN THE WITHOUT BECOMES AS THE WITHIN." Man tends to become centered in things - in the outer - which inhibits the flow of divine life and substance through us. Jesus said, "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness," and all these things will be added unto you." Seek first the realization of omnipresent life and substance - recognize it, claim it, accept it, become a channel for its expression, and all these things will come forth. "As in heaven so on earth."

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK:
1. What does the Kingdom of heaven mean to you?
2. What is a parable and why did Jesus teach in parables?
3. Explain why the kingdom "cometh not with observation?"
4. How can we attain the "things" that we desire?
5. If the Kingdom of God is really right here with us, how can we express sickness or lack or anything but perfect good?

NEXT WEEK: "UNITY AND THE BIBLE"

SUGGESTED READING REFERENCES:
Unity Pamphlet, "UNITY AND THE BIBLE" (Meyer)
Foreword, "MYSTERIES OF GENESIS" (Fillmore)
LESSON 12 — "THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

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ATTENTION-GETTING SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCTION: In this lesson we are concerned with a secret of riches and success that has been buried 1,900 years deep. Since time began, mankind has been searching for this secret. It has been found and lost again a score of times. The ancients of all races have had some inkling of it, as is proved by the folktales and legends that have come down to us, like the story of Aladdin and his wonderful lamp, or Ali Baba and his "open sesame" to the treasure trove. Every nation has such legends. Every nation has had its Wise Men, its men of genius and vision who glimpsed the truth that is buried in these old folktales and who understood at least something of how it works. But it remained for Jesus to re-discover this secret in its entirety and then to show us clearly, step by step, how we might use it to bring us anything of good we might desire. What is this secret? "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven."

QUOTATIONS THAT MIGHT PROVE HELPFUL: "What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affections, it is love." (Emerson)

"The flesh is but the visible outshowing
Of a portentous and a mighty thing,
Whereof each mortal knowing
Becomes a king." (Angela Morgan)

"God is a circle whose center is everywhere
And whose circumference is nowhere." (St. Augustine)

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL FROM MISCELLANEOUS SOURCES: Had the Kingdom, to which Jesus so often referred been a city with golden streets, in the skies, He could easily have located it in that way, but he did not do so. On the contrary again and again he gave illustrations that it was a desirable condition which would be brought about among them through the power of the Spirit. He did not speak of it as situated anywhere in particular nor did He say that it could be attained quickly. Certainly the many parables given to explain the Kingdom are a strange lot of comparisons if He had in mind a place where the good go after death.

In the Apocryphal New Testament the disciples asked Jesus when the Kingdom of Heaven would come. He said, "When two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within." It seems obvious that Jesus attempted in many ways to teach that there is an inner and an outer side of everything, that life cannot be understood in terms of the outer, the appearance, the flesh and blood man. We can observe life from appearances but we cannot understand it in that way. We must enter into the spirit of life to comprehend that which stands under it.

You may observe the working of an atomic reactor and see the effects of its action, and it may be thrilling to see and to contemplate, as far as you can do so. But the physicist sees it and understands it because he has entered the kingdom within matter and has come to know the why and wherefore of that which we only see. Jesus knew that man could never really find himself or fulfill his infinite possibilities as a child of God until he entered into the kingdom of heaven and came to know himself in relation to the infinite.
The word "Heaven" is perhaps the most misunderstood word in the Bible. In the original Greek text, the word used for "Heaven" is ouranos, which, translated literally, means "expansion." What is expansion? It is increasing, spreading out, multiplying, etc. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of expansion, and all these things shall be added unto you." Seek a place or state of being where you can expand, grow, increase, multiply, bring forth fruit. But we needn't look elsewhere for such a place, for Jesus assured us that the Kingdom of Heaven is already within us. So we must look within ourselves for this faculty of expansion.

What, within us, has unlimited power to expand? Our muscles are elastic, our lungs and many of our organs can be expanded to an extent, but none of them can expand greatly without harm to itself and to the body. The only thing in us that can expand without limit is our mind, our imaging faculties. We can expand our horizons of perception, of aspiration, of vision, of imagination. It is in this ability to "lift up our eyes unto the hills" that we find that unique relationship of man to life that distinguishes him from the lesser forms of creation. Browning said, "Man's reach should exceed his grasp, else what's a heaven for?"

A consideration of the parables teaching of the Kingdom in Matthew 13 is helpful. One thing we find - that predominantly the parables evidence the idea of "expansion." Consider the property of a mustard seed - it spreads. A single seed will grow into a tree, a single tree will produce enough seeds to plant a great field. What is the property of leaven or yeast? It expands - in a single night it can expand a hundred times in size.

On this plane of the "Inner Kingdom" is a substance or Life or Mind Essence which is the root of all things, the primal substance of which all things are made that are made. It is not life as we recognize it in particular forms of manifestation -- it is something much more concentrated than that. It is that "unity of spirit" which is unity, simply because it has not yet passed into diversity. It is the conception of Life or primal substance as the sum total of all its undistributed powers, being as yet none of these in particular, but all of them in potentiality. Now you can see why Jesus had to use parables to teach such an abstract idea.

Jesus did not speak in parables just to confuse people, to be mysterious, to withhold the Truth from the un-elect. This has been a concept that has had wide circulation, but it seems to be refuted by Jesus direct and straightforward approach in teaching. Any teacher of abstract principles must take recourse in symbols, illustrations, examples. We can only understand the unknown by relating it in some way with the known. When Jesus talked to farmers, he used illustrations of the sower, the seed, the tares and wheat. These were things they understood. When he talked to the housewife he talked about leaven. To fishermen he referred to dropping the net on the right side of the boat. Though to us moderns these illustrations may not be as clear as they once were, it is only because he was speaking to another age. The parables of the kingdom could easily be brought up to date, making them refer to automobiles, assembly lines, and do it yourself home and gardening enthusiasts.

Man's tendency is to become centered in things, in outer conditions and circumstances. "We live too close to the circumference of our being." When we are centered in materiality, in sense consciousness, then we think that we are using life, using money, using ideas -- rather than being the expression of Life, substance, and intelligence through us from the Inner Kingdom. It is for this reason that we are told "The love of money is the root of all evil." The root of all the limitations of life are to be found in the tendency to love or be centered in the outer, in money, in things, in appearances, in the physical.
Lesson 12 - page 3  ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL - continued

In this consciousness there is strain, strife, worry. The Master says, "Be not anxious (take no thought) saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed...Consider the lilies, how they grow..."
Here again is the reference to the idea of expansion of something within, rather than attainment of something supposed to be without.

There is a process of expression that must always work from the inner to the outer. Any attempt to reverse the process or to limit it in any way always results in chaos. Through a compressed time camera and the use of radioactive substances fed into the tree through the soil, it is possible to speed up the sight to such a point that we can see the action of life in the tree. We can see the sap start in the ground and suddenly gush forth through the tree, throwing apples in all directions.

Jesus points out here that there is an orderly activity of growth, which has nothing to do with time. The time required in healing or demonstration of any kind depends only on the consciousness of the individual -- the response of the finite to the expansiveness of the Infinite. The moment the recognition of the Power takes place, and the individual accepts the promise, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" -- then the action of Spirit is all ready to cover the ground in the twinkling of an eye", if it can be so accepted.