

### *Meditation: Christ as Healer*

**T**HE “OTHER SIGN” that Jesus did was the healing of the nobleman’s son (John 4:46-54). And here now we see Christ engaged in a special activity, which had great significance in His life: in healing *sickness*.

If anything is to be done in this sphere, we must go especially cautiously to work, because in scarcely any other sphere is there such danger that egoism and materialism may thrust themselves in, as in the sphere of healing materialism, to which the body is too important, and egoism, to whose heart its own comfort lies too near. This shows itself clearly in many phenomena of today, where there is the will to heal, but in no praiseworthy way. Against these two dangers the meditation based on Christ’s second sign helps us. We begin in it to find once more that the story becomes transparent, so that we recognize in it a cosmic occurrence. The nobleman was probably a so-called heathen or half a heathen. At least, he is serving as a soldier in the non-Jewish world. There at that time the need was greatest. Humanity really lay dying. This was even true externally. Clairvoyance reveals a scene from the early history of Christ’s activity: the young Jesus in His wanderings as carpenter beyond the boundaries of Palestine came to the site of an ancient temple. The sacrifice had fallen into decay. Men were plagued by a dreadful sickness. They beg Jesus to help them because they have come to have great trust in His being. But when He would help, He sees in

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Oil on canvas, Gabriel Cornelius Max (1840-1915)

#### ***Healing the Sick Child***

*While the healing power of Christ can be transmitted by the laying on of hands, as shown above, it can also be invoked and directed from a distance by intense faith-based willing.*

spirit that here there have once been great acts of revelation, but now all is ruled by demons. The impression is so terrible that Jesus falls fainting. Such experiences prepared for the revelation in Christ, also for His activity as healer.

In the nobleman and his son, one sees in two generations the evolution of humanity itself. The father serves a king. Thus did men pay homage to an old wisdom which was given from above, and which was exercised by priest-kings. The son is

sick unto death. In the father, the old heathendom comes in a picture to Christ and begs him for help. Christ at first refuses the help, or rather, waits until He sees real faith. The necessity for the new help must come from within. Then He speaks the word: "Thy son liveth." It is one hour past mid-day. The hour of humanity's meridian has just been passed.

It would be an entire misunderstanding of such thoughts to see in them cleverly thought out, or trifling, improving allegories. Everything in the life of Christ is heavy with meaning for the world's history. Out of everything human fate is looking at us. And were we ourselves filled with the divine in the events of our lives, the backgrounds of the world's being would everywhere come into view, our life and deeds would everywhere become symbolic happenings. All that passes away would, in a higher sense than Goethe meant, become a parable.

It is the wrong way round if we, because healing was a part of Christ's activity, rush straight at some sickness and want to heal it in the name of Christ. It is important that first we should see with clear eyes the world of sickness, the whole fullness of sickness, and the whole fearfulness of sickness. One must "lift up one's eyes" and receive into one's consciousness the terrible burden of sickness which lies torturingly upon humanity. Most men take serious notice of sickness only when they themselves are suffering under it, or when someone closely related to them has been struck down by it. That is far from being the true cosmic will. When Christ came upon earth, He found men distracted by thousand-fold suffering and in many acts He set His will with all its force against it.

The first thing that ought to rise up in us against the misery of sickness is the will. *All this ought not to exist in humanity!* All this belongs not to mankind but to the enemy of mankind. All this has nothing to do with Christ, but is to be overcome by Christ. In Christ is the power which will, and can, make whole everything that "proves ill in earthly being" And first the only thing to be done is to see this fate of humanity clearly, not to pay attention merely to what is individual or our own, but to look at the whole and to unite our will with the will which is in Christ, against the whole world of sickness, *so that the true Christ-Will against sickness*

*may awake in us.* We take the side of Christ against the world. We feel Christ's healing power, out of which can come healing for all the sick in the world. We see in the son who lies there sick and in danger of dying, *the* picture of the human being; we see in the father, who comes to Christ, the picture of *the* longing, and see in Christ, Who speaks the helping word, the picture of *the* healing. Simpler or more mighty the picture could not be. The more strongly the Christ Will against sickness is present, so much the better is it for humanity, even if we cannot yet heal the smallest sickness....

One can actually allow the will of Christ in meditation also to flow into one as health: and out of it feel with Christ how he became sorry for the people, how His eyes overflowed, how the power to help was opened in Him. With Christ against the world, ultimately, and in everything; that is what we must be if we wish to achieve consecration of the will.

To be a healer, directly, through the real powers of Christ, is only possible to-day in exceptional cases. For it requires not only special gifts and an especial guidance of destiny, but also a special call. And the possibilities of deceiving oneself and failing in the necessary conscientiousness and modesty are very great. A special call must be there for every single occasion. Professionalism is just as great a danger as too great familiarity among men. And the truly Christian insight into the divine will for man and humanity must ever illuminate such healing activity and must become continually clearer. Otherwise serious harm would arise.

Every sickness has its special duty in the life of the one who is attacked by it. Those who have the ultimate feeling of responsibility may heal only if they are in a position to procure in some other way for the person concerned that which he ought to gain through his illness. If, for example, one wished to take away from a man who is given to debauchery his nervous sensitiveness, one would, in some circumstances, rob him of just that through which the fault in his character can be healed. This is often the case. Naturally the practical doctor of today cannot survey the whole net of a man's fate and the whole construction of his character. And even for the spiritual healers of the future a complete survey will not always be the

single requirement under which they may let their healing powers work. But the conscientiousness which must rule in this sphere must be stricter than anything which is today called conscience. No personal wish whatsoever must come into play, nor any personal apprehension, only pure obedience to the divine will and the strict resolve to act only according to a divine call which has been distinctly felt. If we have not more healers, that must be because humanity is not yet sufficiently trained for it. The pure streaming across of Christ's powers to heal is limitless. And we must dare to think such thoughts as these if we take the commands of Christ Himself seriously and desire to oppose the perverted phenomena of the times. It is exactly as a result of materialism and its development that new illnesses will arise against which the stronger powers of healing from within will be required. But only when the inward dispositions, of which we must speak more explicitly in regard to this sphere, are right, will blessing come.

Before a man himself wishes to heal, he must first allow himself to be very thoroughly healed....[I]n the most solitary meditation Christ can be active in His unrealized power to

heal. At first perhaps one experiences it through feeling the places in one's own body where one is not completely healthy; then further in noticing that healing power is there, but cannot yet get in touch with the powers of sickness: then, perhaps, in remarking how the area of health in one's own being is growing greater, is purifying itself and strengthening itself, and, lastly, because at least certain symptoms of sickness fall away.

But even this, that one wishes to heal oneself of certain manifestations of sickness and allows oneself to be healed of them, we would not advise at first, but rather that one should let Christ be pre-

sent as health in mind and body, not in the body alone, and again, not in body and mind, but in mind and body; so that one feels: "Sick is the dwelling into which Thou enterest, but through Thy word my soul becomes whole."

Even in ordinary medicine, and in the cure of souls, one often advises men to live from that sphere of life which is whole in them, and that they should let this sphere of health grow greater and greater in them. We can think of such experiences

when we feel health to be like a kingdom of soundness in us, which is always trying to extend itself, and in which we can live as in our central being. If one feels this so powerfully that one thinks that streams of living water go forth from us, that one has the feeling that one's very clothes must pour out healing, then one is on the way in which one must now wait to see if one dare give bodily help to another.

In the early Christian church they healed by the laying on of hands. And indeed one will notice how power to heal gathers itself in the hands, and will stream forth from them.

So-called Christian Science tries to overcome sickness simply by denying it, yes, simply by ignoring matter.

That is a perversion of the truth, even if many healing results are attained by it. The right thing is always to approach sickness, even in one's ultimate feeling, as something which ought not to be; as something which has only transitory value as a training; as that to which Christ has opposed His being. If in early Christian times Christ in His servants still healed by the laying-on of hands, in later times at least the Host was still used as a medicine. And the decay of Christianity shows itself in this, that today, on the contrary, people fear to be infected in the Lord's Supper and with individual cups and purifying cloths try to avoid the germs of



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sickness. The very first thing we have to learn today is how to enter every sickroom in the right frame of mind, in no wise to fear the sickness, but also in no wise to consent to the sickness; to bear about with us a surrounding sphere of healing, and out of this sphere unconsciously to spread around us strength and health, because we belong to the Saviour, the healer. In every single sickness we should see with eyes that penetrate and should fight against the whole world of sickness, against which the divine will itself is directed victoriously.

So again we stand between East and West; between the *East*, which looks at sickness with fatalistic eyes and all too willingly leaves the field to it; and the *West* which takes it too seriously, lives in fear of infection, fights externally and exclusively in a materialistic way against bacilli, and ends by falling sick through pure hygiene.

When one is near men who spread around them a Christ-filled atmosphere of health when they are in the room, one will usually feel for the first time what health is, in a stronger and more spiritual sense than men usually know health today. We shall not come again to a victorious Christianity if this activity is not there. As sunlight heals, so some day will the light of Christ heal.

We have thus before us in our meditation the picture of healing through Christ as an event which embraces the world, the father representing ancient humanity, the son, modern humanity, sickness as a fact of humanity, Christ as the great helper, and so, after we have brought all before us with intense vividness, we must pass over in our wills to Christ and experience with Him out of His soul how the will breaks forth: *Thy Son lives!* So we become one will with Christ against the powers of destruction and have not only life in Christ but create with Christ's life.

In this it will be of the greatest importance if we always feel the *wonderful holiness of the will*. It is so characteristic of the men of our time that they dispute about the freedom of the will, quick-witted and penetrating, theorizing and psychologizing. But it is much more worth while to feel the *royal power of the will* in all its nobility. One cannot admire enough the Creator of the world, one might all too humanly say, because he had the courage to give to men a will that can will even against God

Himself. This is the most divine gift which can come to men. By this above all He has made us kings and given us of His own divinity. Yet not too much strength of will ought to be given to man lest great evil should follow. But as it is, human will has the greatest future. And in union with Christ it may unfold itself, for certainly the Godhead has given Its gifts, not for them to lie fallow, but to come to flower. Thankful joy over the sublime gift which is given to man and over the trust which is shown in him is the right mood in which to exercise the will. The will which is given to us is like *a call to a divine office in the universe*. "Holy is the will": let us ponder that within us, and become strong and glad because of it. "White will," one would like to say—as one, not without reason, speaks of "white magic." It is a gradual surging up of mighty divine power in men.

For all exercises of the will let still a double hint be added. The prayer for St. John the Baptist's Day in the Act of Consecration of Man speaks of "John who humbly bore the Father-spirit in the sphere of his body." Such words are, in their smallest details, not phrases, but the truest realities. Within the sphere of our bodies we find the cosmic will which bears us up. Out of this sphere we can draw it in, breathe it in meditatively. This is in accordance with the fact known to spiritual science that the will is united to man more loosely and more freely than thinking, and even than feeling. As it were at the boundaries of our spiritual bodily existence the will enfolds us, which can be brought to our consciousness and enveloped into pure greatness. And as in the sphere surrounding the body, so it is also good to feel the will especially in our hands and feet. As something primally sound shall we experience this will, but also as something primally strong; in the feet more as the power to stand and walk, also in the spiritual sense; in the hands more as the power of creating and blessing, again taken in the spiritual sense. We shall feel the being of man's will to be richly articulated, and also find "right" and "left" to be different in hands and feet. With it all there opens up before us a premonition of the coming Christianity: to work with Christ as one Will against all the powers that destroy the world. (Continued) □