

I leave the Fathers Home and turning back I save.

Good afternoon everyone and Welcome to the Festival of Pisces; a warm welcome also to the many friends and co-workers who are listening in on the internet via our website.

The keynote for Pisces is: I leave the Fathers Home and turning back I save.

Let us take the first part of the keynote: I leave the Fathers Home - The Fathers Home is the light and life of the Monad and 'leaving home' means consciousness detaches itself from the Monad and descends into the ocean of matter and attaches to form. The soul is then held captive within form for many incarnations, passing through the zodiac from Pisces to Aries. During this time individuals are subject to the glamour and illusion of the material world. The moment the individual emerges out of that illusion and is no longer subject to the glamour and the effect of world maya, they enter the second part of the keynote, which is -Turning back I save. Then the motion of the great wheel is reversed, and there is a slow and laborious trudge from Aries to Pisces. On this reverse wheel, spiritual ambition and a desire for liberation gradually takes the place of worldly ambition until finally, there comes a true sense of reality which supersedes both earthly and spiritual ambition. The individual now serves an ever expanding range of contacts. The reverse wheel is mounted in Cancer and the disciple becomes the world initiate in Capricorn, an incarnated world server in Aquarius, and later a world saviour in Pisces.

In this brief synopsis we see how the divine life leaves the synthetic consciousness of divinity and passes through a human interlude developing intense self-consciousness. First though, it passes through all the lower kingdoms of nature before individualizing in the human kingdom. Then mass consciousness slowly develops into this intense self-awareness, before the wheel reverses. The aspirant then treads the spiritual path back towards Divinity armed with the experiences of form life. This treasure of experience adds a richness of quality to the original state of divine synthetic consciousness that was left behind so long ago. The world saviours are the symbols and guarantees of this process. Christ showed this synthesis through his life, being both a man, and God. He, therefore, mediated between the spiritual and the material. He, as a world saviour, showed the complete fusion of love and mind. This will be the role of humanity; humanity will act as Christ did and become mediators between the spiritual and the material, redeemers of the lower kingdoms in nature. This is humanity's heritage.

Before we continue let us pause for a few moments and ponder on the fusion of love and mind. Let us work with Christ and aid in His mediatorship between the spiritual and material. Let us sound together the Mantram of Unification:

*The sons of men are one and I am one with them.
I seek to love, not hate;
I seek to serve and not exact due service;
I seek to heal, not hurt.
Let pain bring due reward of light and love.
Let the soul control the outer form, and life and all events
And bring to light the love that underlies the happenings of the time.*

*Let vision come and insight.
Let the future stand revealed.
Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.
Let love prevail. Let all men love.
OM*

Pisces is closely linked to Christianity as Christ came at the beginning of the Age of Pisces, an Age of approximately 2000 years. It is an Age that we are currently passing out of into the Age of Aquarius. Pisces is seen as the head of the list of astrological signs because it is governing the present great astrological world cycle of 25000 years. We are currently moving on this greater wheel from Pisces to Aquarius, a process that takes approximately 5000 years. The wheel that governs the Hierarchy, the lesser cycle, is also moving from Pisces to Aquarius. Therefore, the two cycles are aligned, the wheel that governs Shamballa, on the greater cycle, is aligned with the Hierarchy on the lesser cycle and, therefore, it is a time of unprecedented opportunity. The Hierarchy is now becoming receptive to the second aspect of the Monad, the aspect that relates to the perfection of form. The third aspect of the Monad, the creative aspect, influenced the Piscean era.

That which was created in Pisces, such as, the Christian ideals of love and goodwill, shall be perfected in form, in the Age of Aquarius. Alice Bailey tells us in *From Bethlehem to Calvary*¹ that 'Christianity will not be superseded. It will be transcended'. In other words, Christianity will not be replaced it will go beyond itself, rise above itself in excellence. So today we are going to look at the evidence, is it apparent that Christianity is indeed rising above itself, can we see it evolving towards perfection in any tangible way? Is the 'Will to Good', or the 'Will to put things right' making itself evident within Christianity?

All the ideals associated with Christianity were the product of Christ's life and death on Earth. However, the Christianity of the early Christian fathers is far removed from the Church Christianity we see today. Throughout the Age of Pisces, with the help of the 6th Ray of Idealism, Christianity constantly evolved and changed. It has seen periods of rapid growth, periods of stagnation and also decline. It has experienced numerous cleavages, the most important being the Great Schism in the 6th century which led to the split between the Western, Eastern and Oriental Churches. The Great Reformation of the 16th century which, in effect, was the birth of the Protestant. By the 18th century, scientific authority began to displace religious authority, Darwin in the 19th century with his book *The Origin of Species* and his theory of evolution had serious implications for religious scripture.

Today, in some parts of the world, for example Western Europe, Christian worship is in rapid decline. This has come about partly due to the advancements in science, and partly due to secularisation. As we also know, there has been a shift in polarization from the emotional to mental bodies for a large part of humanity and, as such, religious doctrine and dogma no longer satisfies.

Many also associate the Church with the numerous negative issues that dominate the press; such as, the sexual misconduct of priests, abuses of power, sexual inequality, misuse of funds, as well as, what are considered by many as out-of-date doctrine, on homosexuality, abortion and contraception. It appears that the Church is out of synch with modern society. However, many of these issues are being addressed and there is significant optimism that the new Pope, Pope Francis, who has been noted for his humility and his concern for the poor, will be a catalyst for change. He has stated that Catholics have concentrated excessively on condemning abortion, contraception, and homosexual acts and have neglect the greater need for tenderness, mercy and compassion.

Christianity started out as a champion of the poor, the needy and the marginalised of society, and evolved into powerful institutions that legitimised the authority of the ruling classes. Nowadays,

however, in an increasingly secular world, Christianity has had to find a different role. One of those roles is in being the voice of dissent. The problems and conflicts of the world have created a practical as well as critical role for Christianity, and Christian groups are increasingly involved in areas, such as, the environmental debate, inequality issues and social problems. This is a role, perhaps, more in harmony with the ways of Christ.

Christianity is however, growing exponentially in countries such as Africa and Latin America, particularly in the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. By 2011, Charismatic and Pentecostal Christians exceeded 500m, which is a quarter of the 2 billion Christians worldwide and the second largest group behind Roman Catholics. Although they accept the authority of the Bible, Charismatic and Pentecostal churches encourage a direct and personal relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. Instead of relying on scripture and the priesthood to inform and guide, worshippers are encouraged to engage directly with Spirit. What is learnt through this direct contact is considered more relevant and meaningful than scripture. It would seem, from an esoteric perspective, that individuals are making direct contact with the soul, and therefore the group, through worship, which translates to the enormous sense of community that is evident within charismatic and Pentecostal Churches. Their commitment to serving each other, their support of the poor and needy, and their dedication to praying for humanity, are all definite soul qualities.

Perhaps the most promising developments within Christianity are evident in the Emergent Church, of which the Charismatic and Pentecostal Christians are a part. The Emergent Church originated in the late 20th century and embraces a wide range of Christian communities that include Protestant, Post-Protestant, Evangelical, Post-Evangelical, Adventist, Reformed, Conservative, Neocharismatic and so on. Emergents can be found throughout the globe, predominantly in North America, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Africa. Some attend local independent churches or house churches, while others worship in traditional Christian denominations. As such, there are a vast range of standpoints in the Emergent community and the key to their approach, is a commitment to dialogue. They call their movement a “conversation” which emphasises its developing and decentralised nature.

The core of their agreement is the general disillusionment with the teachings of the established church. The increased communication between those of different religious observances in Christianity, has led to a mixing and blending of ideas. Through this network of ideas has come the realisation ‘that no one of the member parts or connecting networks has the whole or entire “truth” of anything’.² This has led to some in the Emerging Church to move the emphasis away from eternal salvation to the importance of what they do in the ‘here and now’ on earth. The incarnated Christ came and worked in the world and, therefore, adherents feel the responsibility to do this also. They aim to influence, transform and be involved in the local environment to bring about change and betterment. They attempt to transform through social activism, hospitality and acts of kindness.

Emerging church leaders see interfaith dialogue as a vital way of sharing their narratives as well as an opportunity to learn from the narratives of others. There has been a major shift away from the idea of ‘Christian exclusivity’ which is the belief that there is no salvation for those who do not believe in Jesus - a dogma that held sway in the early and mid-1900s. There is general recognition that there are many paths to God.

Interfaith dialogue is not just the preserve of the Emergent and Protestant Churches. Pope John Paul II was a major advocate of interfaith dialogue. Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, visited Pope John Paul II eight times, more than any other dignitary. Today, Pope Francis has written about his commitment to open and respectful interfaith dialogue as a way for all parties engaged in that dialogue to learn from one another.

On another note, there are also signs that the ancient wisdom teachings are beginning to resonate within the Christian community. For example, books linking Christianity with reincarnation, mindfulness, devotional meditation and karma are increasingly available. It was in the 1960's when Buddhist teachings became widely available in the West, and given the nontheistic nature of some of its branches, it sat quite innocently within or alongside other religions. As such, the Buddhist tools to enter and encourage the subjective experience have filtered into Christianity providing the worshipper with a deeper, personal experience.

These are all very encouraging signs and suggest that the unity and fellowship of spirit, that is the basis of all religions, is emerging in human consciousness. The Tibetan tells us that it is through the workers in the field of religion that the universal platform for the new world religion will be formulated. This, he tells us, will lead to great struggle within the churches themselves as the enlightened elements fight to spread their understanding of unity to others. This will lead to a backlash from the fundamentalists, the narrow-minded and the theologians in all the world religions who refuse to let go of the old interpretations and methods.³ This is clearly evidenced today in religion in general, not just in Christianity.

The Tibetan tells us that 'what the Great Ones seek to break is not the form of Christianity but the grip of the churches on the minds of the masses'.⁴ It is, perhaps, within the Catholic Church that the greatest battle will be fought, however, according to Alice Bailey the battle will be the Church's 'greatest opportunity and also her greatest crisis'. She says that 'If the Catholic Church can change her techniques, can relinquish authority over the souls of men (which she has never truly had) and can really follow the way of the Saviour, of the humble Carpenter of Nazareth, she can render a world service and set an example which will serve to enlighten the followers of every faith and of every branch of Christianity.'⁵

This is indeed a wonderful vision, a vision that we can hope is coming into play now as the new Pope, Pope Francis, brings his influence to bear. Perhaps, Christianity is indeed, rising above itself. There is clear evidence that the subjective influences encased within the form of Christianity are beginning to emerge. It is hoped that during the Age of Aquarius, with the aid of the 7th Ray of Ceremony, that Christianity will approach the perfection that is at its core.

Let us now work with the Pisces energy so that we can play a mediating role in aiding humanity in turning back to the Father, and in this process act as Christ did, as a world saviour. The seed thought for reflection is again:

I leave the Fathers Home and turning back I save.

1 Bethlehem to Calvary - pg 12

2 Great Emergence - Phyllis Tickle – Kindle Edition pg 1723

3 DINA I pg 38

4 Externalisation of the Hierarchy pg 502

5 Problems of Humanity – pg 139