

The corn of wheat

(John 12:24)

“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Jesus was stating a law here which is inexplicable by the standards of the senses. He was showing that unless any form of teaching, any aspect of the bread of Truth — that is, “a corn of wheat” — falls into the ground of human consciousness and dies to sense measurement and cognizance, it remains a mere surface impression — it remains the equivalent of a single grain of wheat, serving no purpose; whereas if it does die in this way, it will spring up again and bear much fruit in individual consciousness and experience. He was pointing to the fact that the surface impressions of Truth which the human senses grasp in their longing to learn about God are never sufficient for Soul. However exhilarating the surface impressions we gather from some form of teaching or illustration, it is not these which will bear fruit abundantly, whereas if they seem to die in us, so that we are unable to find or feel them, then they will spring up and bear much fruit.

The Science at the back of this is that Principle will develop its idea to human apprehension in its own right time. The divine idea is always ahead of the human atmosphere in which it first appears, and therefore it is often lost to human comprehension until experience and growth lifts that comprehension to the levels at which the idea originally appeared.

Most of us have the experience of going through a class, reading a book, or attending some lectures which carry us away to the heights of inspiration. However, unless the ideas presented fall into the ground of our individual character and being, and even appear to die,

they do not have much real effect. If they do fall into that ground, they eventually come up in new, sturdy, individual growth.

Sometimes we leave a class and feel that we have lost all the inspiration and do not know where it has gone. We may even feel cast down with disappointment and our own lack of ability. That very impression, which arises from our sincerity, shows that the inspiration *has* registered and will do its work, although unknown to us. It will register so deeply that it may appear to us to have died. Even if we do not lose the inspiration but remain thrilled with the surface truths, their deep meaning is what will later unfold.

The inspiration of listening to a talk by some spiritually-minded individual has often enthused the hearers for many days, but the real thing that falls into the ground of their characters probably bears fruit many *years* later. If it does not do so, they will perhaps have months of that inspiration and then go off on another tangent and forget it. Many things we have been told do not remain with us, but that which is special for *us* falls into the ground of our character and later returns (having appeared to die) to bear fruit, much fruit.

Therefore what is the lesson? The lesson is that we should never worry if we are sincere and have listened or read sincerely, even if everything seems to have gone from us. What is right for us will have fallen into the ground of our character. If we cannot remember this or that point, we should not despair, but know that Principle was the sower and we can leave the rest to Principle. What is designed for us will fall into the ground of our being and bear fruit in our individual life, perhaps without our knowing anything about it. When after a class or after reading something we try to recall everything on the basis of human memory, this does not do as much good as that which sometimes appears to have fallen into the ground and even to be lost to memory. Most people can think of instances when passages from the Bible or "Science and Health" or other statements of Truth came vividly back at a time of need when they imagined they had forgotten them. Of course there is no reason why such passages should not remain with us in their verbal form because of the spiritual impress they have made upon us; in this case the corn of wheat has fallen into

the ground of our spiritual capacity to understand and accept it. But in any case teaching has to fall into the ground of our individuality and die from its original form before it can bear fruit for us. If we memorize it, we merely have it as someone else gave it and it has not come up new for us in its own right time.

This saying of Jesus declares a scientific truth. All our reasoning may rise up against it, because we cannot see why we cannot keep Truth alive and never let it fall into the ground and die. We ask ourselves: why *shouldn't* we be able to memorize ideas and make them our own humanly in such a way that there is no need for the corn of wheat to fall into the ground and die? The reason is that all these actions on our part imply that the understanding is ours and not Principle's, that it is *our* mind which grasps everything, and this is not so. These things are things of Soul, and we can neither make Soul nor make ourselves understand Soul. We can only acknowledge Soul and wait. And since the realm of Soul is the only real realm, why should we want to keep things on the surface of words, memory, and so on? The time to worry is when we are satisfied and satiated with the surface, not when it appears to be dying.

We should bear in mind that Jesus makes the point here that unless a corn of wheat does fall into the ground and die, it remains limited in effect and purpose — it stays only as a series of surface impressions which, however attractive they may be, are tainted with personal opinion and sense testimony. But because the divine is the divine, it operates divinely, and so the corn of wheat, the spiritual essence, falls into the spiritual areas inherent in everyone; and there, lost at last to sense, it develops in its own purely spiritual way under the guidance and impulsion of the Principle which formed it.

The true corn of wheat always does fall into the ground of the consciousness of man and by the grace of God (that is, the purpose of Principle) is dead to human sense; for when the human is not attempting to supervise it, the divine is allowed its rightful freedom to produce its perfect results. When the human sense is not cognizant of the corn of wheat, it cannot for that very reason interfere with its silent but purposeful activity in the character of man. This activity

will finally break surface in fresh realizations which are the beacon lights to human progress and will ultimately rest in the "one endless day" (Mis.399:5) of man's whole consciousness being nothing more and nothing less than God's realization of Himself.

The Master was aware of so much that would not bear lasting fruit because men allowed it to remain superficially exciting. One of the best illustrations of what he had in mind when he spoke about the corn of wheat falling into the ground can be found in the record of the so-called miracles of the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand and in the unusual but emphatic reminder which he gave to his disciples following the feeding of the four thousand. They were in a boat after an encounter with the Pharisees which had made Jesus sigh "deeply in his spirit" at their lack of spirituality. He said to his disciples therefore, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod," warning them against accepting teachings based on the physical alone, whether dogmatic so-called spiritual teachings, as in the case of the Pharisees, or openly materialistic, as in the case of Herod. It was those false teachings which were trying to overcome the corn of wheat which he wanted his students to recognize in relation to these incidents, for what predominated in their thought, as distinct from what was important to him, was the apparently miraculous feeding of large crowds of people.

The disciples thought that when he gave this warning, he was referring to the fact that they had very little bread with them in the boat. "And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?" (Mark 8:15-21)

It is unmistakably clear that he laid special emphasis on the symbolic numbers involved — that is, the *five* loaves for the *five* thousand

and the *twelve* basketsful picked up, the *seven* loaves for the *four* thousand and the *seven* baskets picked up. Could physical numbers have been of any importance when the greater number of loaves was used for the feeding of a lesser number of people?

Jesus called out of his students answers which by the quickness with which they were given revealed that the corn of wheat *had* fallen into the ground of their true studentship and registered in its spiritual content, although it had apparently died or been lost in the overlay of the senses' impressions of wonder and possibly awe at such a marvellous meeting of the human need. His aim was that the corn of wheat, cleansed of the human marvels, should be revealed as not having died, but vitally present, ready to spring into spiritual fruitage, the only fruitage which he longed that men should find through all his demonstrations. He knew that if they understood what lay beneath the glamorous surface, they in their turn would be able to feed any multitude at any time and it would never be primarily by the standards of the senses.

If ever we find ourselves concerned as to whether the crowds were fed materially, would it not be better to remember how often we have been present at a meal where the inspiring ideas were what really fed us and we cannot even recall what type of food was served? We know we were fed in every way needed at the time, but we also know what was of prime importance. It should of course be realized that the man who walked on the water and turned the water into wine, as well as accomplishing many other so-called miracles, could be expected to meet the human need, as expressed by the crowds on these occasions, with the same freedom of spiritual realization and total disregard for matter (which was completely unreal to him) as was demonstrated in all his work.

The Master was now leading the disciples into the soul of the events by showing them the infinite resources of Soul, for what was taken up after the feeding was greater than the amount with which they started.

We have to remind ourselves that on both occasions Jesus had quieted the anxiety of his students as to how the feeding would be

accomplished by simply asking them, "How many loaves have ye? go and see," in response to which they went and found *five* loaves in the one instance and *seven* loaves in the other. We can see that all these actions and the spiritual emphasis on the symbolic values give us an opportunity to raise the veil of the senses and take a look into that spiritual realm where Jesus' Christ consciousness lived and moved and had its being, the spiritual realm from which he drew in order to provide the answers to the human phenomena of which men are cognizant. In asking his students these questions Jesus was deliberately stirring them to become conscious of the world in which he lived and in which they also lived — and in which we all live. He longed for them to be in that world as consciously as he was.

What he showed the disciples as the reality of feeding is just as vitally true for us. We all find that we have a picture before us which continually asks for this feeding. We either take the opportunity offered, or we fail to do so. Either we feed that picture, feed our affections for it through Soul, or else we starve ourselves and leave our affections famished through accepting sense-impressions at their face value and letting them pass into our being in all their negative aspects. The picture before us may at times set up a formidable challenge to thought, but each of us has through Soul all that is required to meet that challenge. The only way to feed the picture presented by the five physical senses is with the senses of Soul, which appear to us humanly as five in contrast to the five physical senses. In that way we become metaphysicians, resolving "things into thoughts" and exchanging "the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul" (see S&H 269:14-16); and as we do that, we feel ourselves fulfilling the purpose of our true manhood, symbolized here by the gathering up of the twelve basketsful.

We gain a clearer view of what the Master had in mind if we consider the statement, "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick. Thus Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is intact, universal, and that man is pure and holy"

(S&H 476:32-5). The "sinning mortal man" who "appears to mortals" is not an *evil* man, but anyone who believes in matter in any of its myriad aspects, for that belief constitutes sin and is mortal. We may look at a friend, for instance, and our senses may say that he is a nice, pleasant, good-looking man; but if we leave it at that, we find that if we follow out the pattern of mortal thinking, we have to add, "He will grow old and not so good-looking or useful and will eventually die." Here, then, on the evidence of the senses we are looking at a good mortal man who through ignorance may be a sinner in the scientific sense of sin — that is, a believer in matter and its mortal modes. Therefore right before us is the opportunity to do what Jesus always did — to plunge beneath the material surface of things and find the spiritual man, who is not just the character-expression of goodness according to human definitions, but being wholly spiritual possesses the divine attributes of an immortal being. This is the very corn of wheat which is there beneath the surface showing and yet unseen and dead to the senses. Some day it will inevitably reveal itself in the experience of that individual, but here and now if we feed that picture of famished or limited sense from our Soul-resources (ours by reason of our spiritual being) we can immediately rebuke the senses' testimony, be it pleasant or otherwise, and entertain a picture of the real man, our real friend, expressing and responding to those unseen spiritual forces which are the source of his attraction to us and to others and of his purpose in being what he is — neither more nor less than God expressing Himself, that is, God's expression. This feeding of the senses and their testimony from the resources of Soul has nothing in it but healing, for it has rejected the lying evidence and in its place discovered the certainties of Soul; and through this activity we have seen God's own likeness, with all the blessings for our friend and thence for ourselves which this recognition of true identity assuredly brings.

Both with the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand we have noted that Jesus asked his disciples, when they were filled with consternation at the challenge of feeding the crowds, "How many loaves have ye? go and see." He brought out that they *had* the

ability to feed sense-testimony hungry for Soul. We all feel the longing to feed sense-evidence with answers from Soul's resources, and Soul has "infinite resources with which to bless mankind" (S&H 60:29). Each of us has the means of feeding from Soul our first sense-impressions of anything until it is translated into its true meaning. For example, we may look at a flower which the senses tell us is a thing of beautiful colour, shape, and scent. But then we ask ourselves, "What is at the back of all this? Why do I like it in the room? Does it do physical things for me, or Soul-things? Why do I give it to a friend as a token of love and as a means of giving him happiness, a happiness which he in his turn will spread? Why don't I give him a cabbage or a cauliflower?" We begin to appreciate consciously that the flower speaks to us of joy, contentment, healing, and evokes responses of care and tenderness, for instance. It is a proof that we live in and respond to a world of Soul, for all those qualities are of Soul, not sense. The flower is not a lovely physical thing having a good human effect. Nor is it a question of dressing up a piece of matter with spirituality. The flower is there as a divine presence, part of God's presence for us, expressed in a language which we can understand and to which we can react.

Moreover, we know that if we have fed one flower through Soul-sense with its limitless resources, we could do it for five thousand, for in "the scientific relation of God to man, we find that whatever blesses one blesses all" (S&H 206:15-16). And if we have exercised this same ability on behalf of one man or one condition, we could do it for all. The important thing is to activate our Soul-sense at the very point where we are and towards the very symbol which confronts us at any particular moment.

Jesus continually revealed the corns of wheat which were dead to the senses of sense but present to the senses of Soul. Take his illustration of the lily of the field, where physical beauty was the story to physical senses. What he showed was that Principle's praise for itself through its idea was ever-present and effortless in expression. This corn of wheat was hidden to the senses yet present both in the lily and in Solomon's temple, but the Master showed Solomon's mistake

in responding to it by trying to fashion matter into intricate and perfect material beauty in order to render praise to that which is purely spiritual. The corn of wheat was there in both instances, but Jesus revealed that even in human expression the lily had attained to it not through any effort of its own, but by allowing Principle to fashion its own purpose of praise to itself. It was the unselfed adoration of Principle revealed in the lily which made its praise so much nearer the spiritual presence of Principle than was Solomon's devoted effort, weighed down as that was by the belief in matter as the essential factor. But in both cases it was the underlying spiritual fact of Principle's expression of praise for itself which was there as a corn of wheat to be found, with its lesson in spirituality and consequent fruitage to man; it was found the moment the senses of Soul which were present in Jesus saw beyond the surface impression to their affirmation of the presence of Principle. (See Matthew 6:28,29.) So it must be that the cultivation of this use of the Soul-sense which we reflect and have will lead us into the world of Spirit where Jesus' whole consciousness lived and moved and had its being.

Whenever we feed our world through Soul, there is a resulting satisfaction, a rounded-out conviction as to the purpose of life and of what man is — that he is a complete being, fully imbued with answers. This gathering up of fruitage is symbolized by the twelve basketsful, for "twelve" stands for a completed, rounded-out activity or experience. There are twelve months in a year; Jacob came to a sense of fulfilled manhood through his twelve sons, who formed the basis of the twelve tribes of Israel; Jesus chose twelve disciples to give him a complete team, representative of man.

The full purpose and identity of each of us is found in Mrs Eddy's "scientific response" to "the oft-repeated inquiry, What am I?": "I am able to impart truth, health, and happiness" (My.165:19-21). As we look at a flower or any other symbol, we can feed it from our Soul-sense with "truth, health, and happiness" and thereby meet its feeding of us through those very qualities. This is the true feeding of spiritual man, and it is more satisfying to the human hunger for goodness than anything else. This is the work of man. This is what

we are here for, just as Jesus was here for the same reason. We are all here to find the corns of wheat — the Soul-messages designed for us as Soul-beings — and to realize that although they may have fallen into the ground of sense-testimony and therefore died, the very challenge posed by realizing this can inspire the Soul-activity which will cause them to spring into fruitage for us.

So we see in the feeding of the five thousand a great lesson in the purpose of manhood — exchanging “the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul” of which those objects are but the symbol. This is the important work of man in relation to his universe and to all humanity.

Turning from this feeding of the five thousand, we come to the miracle of the feeding of the four thousand on another occasion, when Jesus again expressed his spiritual realization of Being and its purpose in a manner beneficial to mankind. Here the symbols which he used and later emphasized to his students were the “seven” and the “four.” “Seven” is used throughout the Scriptures as a symbol of divine completeness — for instance, in the seven days of creation at the beginning of Genesis and above all in the sevenfold nature of God, an understanding of which is essential to the proper understanding of the sevenfold nature of man. Jesus was fully conversant with all this in the sense that the sevenfold nature of God illuminated his thought with a constant conviction of God’s presence and onliness. That aspect of God which Mrs Eddy termed *Mind* was as real to him in its purpose and presence as it must become to us, as witnessed by such words as these to his disciples: “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake ... but when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak,” “your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.” We realize Jesus’ understanding of the nature of God as *Spirit* from statements like these: “God is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth,” “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” It is quite plain that what Mrs Eddy termed *Soul* was also real to him because his words and works consistently emphasized that we must dismiss the testimony of the senses

and be possessed by the certainty of Soul-sense; he required all men to imbue their faith with a quality of certainty from Soul and stressed that this Soul-certainty would give them power to remove the mountains formulated only by lack of faith in the ability of that very certainty to produce good. *Principle* was so naturally present to him that he said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," for wherever perfection is expressed it reveals the presence of the immaculate Principle. His sense of *Life* was so outstanding that it could be summed up in his statement, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." No one can miss his sense of *Truth* if they heed his words, "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," or his declaration to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The whole of his life spelt out the presence of *Love* and his response to it, and the requirement he voiced to his disciples underlines its importance: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another."

Then there is the symbol "four," employed all through the Bible as a symbol of the fourfold sequence of purposeful spiritual reasoning. The beloved disciple's revelation of the city foursquare and Mrs Eddy's explanation of it in her chapter on the Apocalypse are as important to the student as is the sevenfold definition of God given by Mrs Eddy in her answer to the question "What is God?" The reason for this is that the city foursquare highlights the activity of the divine Being in a fourfold aspect, and Mrs Eddy saw that the four sides of the city stood for the Word, Christ, Christianity, and Science. Without a proper appreciation of and responsiveness to this fact of the purposeful operation of Principle we may lapse into definitions of God which are correct but have no real and beneficial influence on our lives. The lives of both the Master and Mrs Eddy reveal an active and practical response to a living and dynamic Principle, and unless this is fully accepted we are left with a definition of God more as an idol than as a presence activating the entire experience of man.

The illuminated consciousness of the Revelator showed him that the fourfold flow of conscious activity is an established fact of being

which pertains to every aspect of experience. It is the movement and demonstration of the presence of Being and reaches right down through the whole experience of man. In every sphere of life the individual seeks — which corresponds to the working of the Word in human thought. This is followed by a finding of the answer to that seeking in the ideas which come to him — this corresponds to the Christ activity in man. That is succeeded by his using of that answer in relation to his world — which represents the activity of Christianity. And this gives way in turn to some realization of the Science at the back of it all which impelled the whole activity and brought all the processes to their human fruition — the timeless Science in which beginning and end are one.

Having admitted the naturalness of this fourfold flow of purposeful thought, we can appreciate that Jesus was stressing to his students that unless this “four” is fed by the “seven,” by an understanding of the sevenfold nature of God, it can become an instrument of error. For example, a group of people can mistakenly seek power, on the basis that there is no God and that man is the sole creator and source of intelligence — this is the reversal of the Word; they can then feel this power to be within themselves — reversing the Christ; they can try to impose this power on humanity — reversing Christianity; and they can do all this in pursuance of their belief in materialistic processes as the only science.

It is because the fourfold activity of consciousness cannot be avoided that we need to be consciously aware of it in order that it may be guided aright or fed by the sevenfold nature of God. Since the fourfold flow cannot be stopped, we have to recognize that if it is not fed by an understanding of God and His expression in man, it will be fed by the very opposite, the claims of matter and of man as a separate being holding within himself the qualities and functioning of destructive forces. Jesus brought out the dangers of the false feeding of the fourfold activity of thought when he said to the Jews, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he

speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." In her turn Mrs Eddy drew attention to the negative and the need to be alert to deal with it in this paragraph from "Science and Health": "Who, that has felt the perilous beliefs in life, substance, and intelligence separated from God, can say that there is no error of belief? Knowing the claim of animal magnetism, that all evil combines in the belief of life, substance, and intelligence in matter, electricity, animal nature, and organic life, who will deny that these are the errors which Truth must and will annihilate? Christian Scientists must live under the constant pressure of the apostolic command to come out from the material world and be separate. They must renounce aggression, oppression, and the pride of power. Christianity, with the crown of Love upon her brow, must be their queen of life" (450:27-7). The way to come out from the material world is to enter that spiritual state of consciousness and truly rewarding activity given us by virtue of this method whereby we use our understanding of the sevenfold nature of God in a fourfold completeness of reasoning as defined in the city foursquare or "divine infinite calculus" (S&H 520:14-15).

The negative side of the fourfold activity of consciousness, being wholly unreal, can finally only demonstrate its own unreality in its self-destruction; but unless that false process is nullified through an understanding of the forever activity of Principle in its sevenfold nature, it will result in temporary inharmonious experience, just as the true feeding of the "four" by the "seven" results in harmonious experience.

So there is set before us a very definite picture: either the activity of consciousness in its fourfold purposefulness is fed by the divine influence of the sevenfold nature of Being, or else the opposite reasonings of error channel it into the destructive directions which claim to exist and whose claims can never be destroyed in any other way than by feeding the fourfold consciousness of being with a realization of the divine nature of that being.

In her definition of God Mrs Eddy indicates the fourfold aspect of the "seven" in the four introductory adjectives preceding the seven

synonymous terms — “incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite,” which correspond to the Word, the Christ, Christianity, and Science. “Incorporeal” gives a clear pointer to the Word; “In the beginning was the Word,” and to begin rightly any form of mental activity we have to dismiss matter and materiality as factors in our reasoning. “Divine” applies to the Christ, because we cannot humanize the Christ standard for our own convenience, but have always to submit to the fact that Christ is the “divine manifestation of God,” although of course it also “comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error” (S&H 583:10-11). “Supreme” gives us the key to the activity of Christianity, because to approach in any degree what the term covers we have to see that it points to a whole area of consciousness in which Principle is supreme and where God, good is demonstrated as omnipresent. For any understanding of Science we have to realize that it is “infinite,” subject to no limits in any direction. So here again our attention is drawn to the fact that this great fourfold aspect of the divine Being must be continually fed with our understanding of what that divine Being is. That is why Mrs Eddy’s question is “What is God?” and not “Who is God?”

The student will find specific orders of the seven synonymous terms for God and specific facets of each of those terms corresponding to the four sides of the city in Revelation; and many other avenues will open up as he accepts the interplay of the “seven” and the “four.” Only in that way can he come to understand why that aspect of being symbolized by the city foursquare is as important to him and his progress as is the sevenfold nature of God. The sevenfold nature of God and its fourfold activity constitute the essential basis for the operation of Science in human consciousness. So here Jesus was bringing home this one fact — that to define to ourselves the whole purpose and meaning of God we have to take the sevenfold deific nature and discover it in its fourfold activity. In that way we feed that fourfold aspect with meaning and purpose and through so doing we gather a greater sense of the value and meaning of the sevenfold nature of God; that is, in the symbolic words of the Gospel story, we pick up seven basketsful. We take up a deeper conviction of

the consistent and purposeful perfection of the divine in operation.

One day we shall realize that all the seeking, all the finding, all the using of the means and methods of good, and all the final conclusions of a timeless divine Science in operation — all will be found to be impelled and carried through for the individual by the presence of God in his consciousness in its sevenfold nature. We shall see so clearly that it is this sevenfold nature of God which awakens in us right desire; which presents the ideas which show us how to achieve that desire; which inspires us with the energy to shake off inertia and pursue to its right conclusion the line of action pointed out; and which causes us to be caught up in the infinite Science wherein what is foreknown is also foreordained.

The work indicated in all this may seem stupendous to the student in his first contact with it, but once he accepts as fundamental these truths taught by Jesus and Mrs Eddy he finds that his own true selfhood enjoys walking along these avenues of being and that he finds such going increasingly natural and therefore easy. If his initial impression is of something beyond his capacity, a simple example may help to dispel it. Let him realize that he starts his day with some sense of seeking, even though he may not define it as such; he seeks what he should do and how he should conduct himself during the day ahead. This attitude of mind leads to answers coming to him — that is, to a finding. He is helped by these answers when he adopts them into his responses — in other words, as he uses them. And in doing this he has responded to a flow of intelligence which is scientific in purpose and results. Now let him acknowledge that if he approaches his day with no realization of the divine nature but instead with his own small personal selfhood as the sole activator and the major factor in his considerations, more often than not this leads to a sense of toil and disappointment. But if he feeds this fourfold conscious activity in the right way by knowing that it is Mind which causes him to seek, Mind which gives him the answers, Mind which impels him to respond to those answers, and that it is all Mind interpreting to him its omni-action, then he has an example of the beneficial effects of feeding the fourfold activity of consciousness

from his understanding of the sevenfold nature of God; and obviously he would have a similar but distinctively different sense if he substituted the term Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, or Love for the term Mind. As he accustoms himself to these great truths, he will find a true sense of identity and a happiness and satisfaction which make the effort tremendously worth while. He recognizes something of the vast activity which constitutes Science, whose divine definition is "the atmosphere of God" (No.9:26). It is in that atmosphere of consciousness that we are embraced. As the Mars Hill orator said, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you ... for in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

It was this activity and its necessity which Jesus emphasized forcibly to his students. This was the corn of wheat which had fallen into the ground of their consciousness but had lain fallow until he roused them to bring it to life and meaning, so that they would understand this aspect of the spiritual realm in which he lived and moved and had his being and from which he drew all his ability to demonstrate it in meeting the needs of humanity.

The seemingly miraculous feedings of the thousands had been made possible by Jesus' continual contact with these divine facts and their operation underlying all experience, and it was his love for his disciples which impelled him to waken them back into a conscious awareness of those facts so that they could understand more fully the Science he was always teaching them — and us — and thus be equipped to have these experiences on their own after he had left them personally, just as here and now through his teachings and the teachings of Christian Science *we* can have them and can enter that "Holy of Holies, where the miracle of grace appears, and where the miracles of Jesus had their birth" (Mis.77:29-31).

These illustrations symbolize the great corn of wheat hidden to sense, but always ready to be found and allowed to spring into fruitage when given the freedom to be active in Soul. Forever in the ground of consciousness, unnoticed and dead to human thought when such thought is based on physicality, it is ever present to be brought to light and fruitage when human consciousness gives way to

the divine through its admissions of what the Master longed to see understood by his students and would have longed for us to understand. He would have remonstrated with us as he did with them in order to wake us to the opportunity available through his teaching. His question to them, "How is it that ye do not understand?" should make us too stop and think seriously.

In everything Jesus did, it is the story of Soul that we have to bow before. We must take off our shoes, for this is holy ground. But if we do, and we decide that the best and highest surface impression is not the real one and we hunger and thirst after righteousness and plunge beneath the material surface to find the spiritual cause (see S&H 313:23-26), then the corn of wheat — the teaching, the message, the purpose — will fall into fertile ground and bear much fruit. When Jesus used the word "die" here, he meant that the corn of wheat in dying to all sense measurement, estimate, and cognizance breaks free from those limits and produces its own expression of true spiritual understanding and fruitage. It was to this that Jesus entrusted himself at the time of the crucifixion. He let go of every argument of material sense, not blindly but in the consciousness of Soul, where he belonged. He spoke of "the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." We know so little as yet of the realm of consciousness in which Jesus lived. It is miraculous to us because we look at it from the point of view of the senses and sense measurement. But it is a world to which we too belong, because we feel its stirrings in us. It is "out of this world" and yet we feel responsiveness.

This whole statement, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," is normally taken as referring to Jesus' crucifixion; but it goes much further than that, for it spans the whole of our experience as we progress to the understanding and realization of that statement, "all is Spirit and spiritual" (S&H 331:24-25). In the case of Jesus it revealed that he had to place his utter reliance on that onliness of Spirit. His real ordeal was his realization that he had to let all that he had taught fall into the ground of human consciousness in order that it should spring up and bear much fruit. His disciples had seen so

many demonstrations and received so much teaching and tending, but it was still on the surface, and he knew that he had to let it all fall into the ground of their thought; then the Comforter would come to them and give them the true scientific understanding of what it was all about. And as he acknowledged this at Gethsemane, he threw himself with his face to the ground, symbolic of what he knew had to happen. We find in the Gospels that his movements often followed his mood. His will as the human Jesus would have been to go on tutoring and guiding his disciples. That is the will of all human goodness at its best, but he knew he had to let that go. The disciples were living with the wonder of the phenomena they had witnessed, rather than becoming more aware of their noumenon, and it was this which they needed for progress. And so he saw that it was expedient that he as the human Jesus should go. He was the human man expressing the true corn of wheat, but they were looking at the human man, just as they looked at the surface of the healing work he did.

We need the surface healing and the surface realization — there is no doubt about that — but we have to leave the real lesson at the back of the surface healing to fall into individual ground in order that the real fruitage may appear in due course, namely, the pure scientific realization of which the surface manifestation was the effect. That real fruitage comes when the surface realization appears to lose its vitality and outstanding colours.

Sometimes it seems to us that the work we have done for ourselves or for someone else in all sincerity has had no effect. We have to remember that a corn of wheat can fall into the ground and rot, so if we believe that the truth we have known has had little or no effect, that is how it may be from a short-term point of view, because in that case we have allowed ourselves to become subject to the human belief that truth can fall on deaf ears and meet obstruction. If we acquiesce in that, we have allied ourselves to the error and put up the obstruction. But on the other hand we can take what Jesus says here and realize that the truth has fallen into ground (not cement) and that it is good ground, because it is man, and man is consciousness, intelligence, love, discrimination, evaluation. Since all those qualities

which are man are active, the truth (in spite of the fact that it has gone into the ground and has not appeared to have immediate effect) will nevertheless spring up into fruitage. It has not died, and its appearing to die is an illusion. It has gone into the ground which is the true consciousness of man, forever accepting Truth, and we can leave it with that assurance.

A mother may be anxious to ensure that when her child leaves home, he will continue to respect and obey the principles practised in that home since his childhood. But she cannot impose anything on him, and if she tries to cling to her old position, the healthy young man will reject her authority as stifling his individuality. The corn of wheat must be allowed to appear to die if it is to spring up and come to healthy individual fruition in the expanding life-experience of the child. The rules of conduct which he has been required to submit to and obey in the home have developed his individuality to the point where it is ready to fall into the ground of his experience beyond the influence of home. In these new areas his individuality will necessarily develop under the laws of progress and will throw aside even that which nurtured it, but nevertheless the Soul-instincts awakened by the home rules will still be there to evolve their new form for *him*.

We should therefore be glad about this and not saddened by processes which are in themselves proofs of the infinitude of man under the government of the one infinite Being. This outlook gives us a true respect for all that any human organization (such as home, college, church) has stood for in our life. We should accept with joy this statement of Jesus, and all that it implies, that *unless* the corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies out of the previous conditioning which was necessary for its time, it cannot bear fruit.

The Master showed his deep understanding of what he was saying here when he said to his disciples, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." The corn of wheat fell into the ground after the crucifixion. The disciples went fishing. It seemed all over as far as they were concerned. But of course it could not be. The Christ idea often appears put aside or gone, but it returns in new strong growth. And

so it came back to *them*. The Gospels were written and everything was done that needed to be done. And the Christ idea was with them, as it is with us, "even unto the end of the world," that is, to the end of our ignorance about the truth of our being and of all being.

The grain of wheat when it grows up is not the old stalk, but a new growth. For instance, the seeds that Jesus sowed fell into the ground and died for many centuries, but they had their own momentum through the ages and the new stalk which finally came up through Mrs Eddy was equal in stature, strength, and fruitage to the need of the hour in which it appeared. It was not the same as Jesus gave — if it had been, it would not have been right.

With Mrs Eddy we can see that all her longings and yearnings fell into the ground of her experience and appeared lost, but then they sprang into vital new being when she saw "Life in and of Spirit; this Life being the sole reality of existence" (Mis.24:17-18). From that revelation she fed *her* thousands.

We should realize that without question the corn of wheat which fell into the ground at the time of Jesus — a corn that was fashioned by his clear expression of the Christ-idea — is that which has sprung into fruitage in this age through the revelation given to Mrs Eddy. The proof of this is that everything about that revelation exactly conforms to the original; it has the same rootings and the same fruitage. We should acknowledge this and accept the fact that, as Jesus pointed out in this analogy, it will continue to grow and bear much fruit.

The teachings of Jesus which appeared to fall into the ground and die sprang up into the much stronger and more universal fruitage embraced in the discovery by Mary Baker Eddy. The format and temporarily necessary organization which she created to bring the truth of that discovery to mankind may also fall into the ground and die. But we can be certain that the Christ Mind which made Jesus and gave the impetus to his teaching and to the foundation of Christianity is the same Christ Mind which impelled Mary Baker Eddy towards her discovery and its later human presentation. So if that human presentation through the organic methods which she employed seems to fall into the ground, that same Christ Mind will

care for it; it will impel it into greater and more universal expression than may be perceptible to the understanding of those conditioned by the organic methods which served the ideal in their particular day. Mrs Eddy herself tells us that "Christ's Christianity is the chain of scientific being reappearing in all ages" (S&H 271:1-3). That truth does not cease with this age!

In studying the works of Mrs Eddy one becomes convinced that she knew that what she had established would become but the corn of wheat to a vast new and more universal growth. Through what? Through that which may appear to our ignorance to be its falling into the ground and dying. Jesus was rested in his assurance of these things when he made such declarations as "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Mrs Eddy had the same assurance, and we catch a glimpse of this from the end of her statement to the New York Herald in 1907: "What remains to lead on the centuries and reveal my successor, is man in the image and likeness of the Father-Mother God, man the generic term for mankind" (My.347:2-5). We should specially note the last six words.

Although Jesus' words were uttered in a decaying language, he was sure that they would not pass away, and we can be just as sure that Mrs Eddy's works, especially "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," will remain and will maintain their divine purpose, even if an age in advance of our present one interprets that purpose through spiritual language in the same manner as we today can only interpret Jesus' sayings through that spiritual language.

With these assurances let us remind ourselves that *we* live today and that today we have her writings and an understanding of words and their meanings whereby we can reach through to the spiritual interpretation. This is the message to us, and we should not try to envisage how the corn of wheat, after it has fallen into the ground of advancing humanity, will find expression at some future time. The idea will care for its child.

Martin Luther said, "Here I stand. I can do no otherwise; so help me God!" That is our position in relation to Christian Science today. Let us use every means available to so stand and not waste time

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concerning ourselves with the "how" of the inevitable progress of the spiritual idea.

The corn of wheat may die to all sense measurement, but this is only in order that its real fruitage may appear to men. But while everything seems dead from the standpoint of the human senses, it is all very much alive to Soul. That is the scientific certainty which this verse expresses. And so it is with the individual: every sincere thinker should know that the very sincerity which may cause him to feel disappointed at what *he* terms his progress according to *his* standards of measurement really defines the import of the activity going on in his Soul-sense, deep and never to be interfered with by human estimates or distrust. This activity will become apparent to him at the right time for him, although to Principle that time is now and this ensures its safety and success. Allow the truth embraced in this one verse to fill your whole consciousness with trust in God, and in the ratio of that allowance will *you* feel the workings and the wonder of it, far exceeding in revelations of Truth anything that your human standards could have dreamed of. God is Love, and Love, being just that, embraces its child in a fulfilled perfection and then, being Love, waits patiently and happily for that child to realize what it (Love) already knows and rests in. This is the truth. How wise we are if we accept it. The reason for it is that at this moment there is this wonderful and only universe of Soul in which we live, and move, and have our being; and all that ever has to go is the overlay of sense — or as the Bible puts it, the mist, which "went up ... from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

Let one who doubts this imagine looking at the ground in winter: strain his eyes and strain his physical reasoning as he may, there is no movement to be seen. But spring is there and very much at work and inevitably breaks through to rebuke with the gaiety of truth the doubts and despondencies which may have assailed the weary winter onlooker. When we realize this, let us remember those words in "Science and Health": "All nature teaches God's love to man" (326:8-9).