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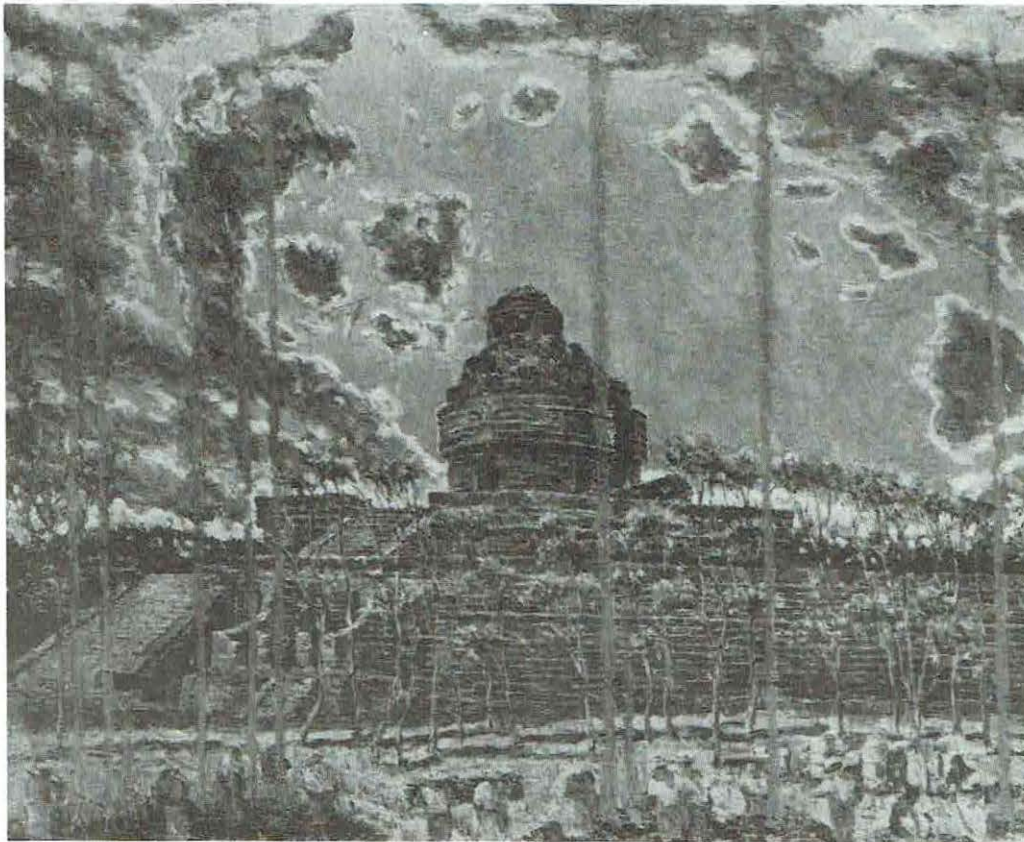
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Degree 8 - 9

THE MAYANS
SAN ANTONIO,
TEXAS

Number 138

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THE "DO IT" LECTURES

MAYAN REVELATION

138

THE LAW OF INCREASING RETURNS

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THAT IS GOOD THAT DOTH GOOD.

-- Venning

BELOVED CENTURION:

This is the fifth lesson in the DO IT Series, called "The Law of Increasing Returns". The material of which it is comprised is a favorite subject of your Instructor.

The subject matter is not new to you; in fact, there are few people in the world to whom it is new, but the practice of it is something which is quite new to a great many. We use the words, they slip glibly from our tongues, but we fail to do the thing of which we speak so freely. I refer to the GOLDEN RULE.

No one realizes more fully than I that, while it sounds like a very simple rule to follow, it is indeed quite difficult as is the commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself". A young minister once said to me that in his chosen career, the most difficult of all to master in his theology was the ability to put these principles to work in his ministry. He found it difficult to turn the other cheek, as it were, and he knew he had a great obstacle to overcome in his ministry before he could really feel that he was ready to admonish his people.

So you see, Beloved Centurion, the Golden Rule, and the Commandment in Mark 12:31, "Love thy neighbor as thyself", are not easy to follow but it can be done. DO IT!

Think for a moment what our world would be like if everyone in it could live by these two principles. Do I hear you saying it's not practical, it can't be done? Perhaps not, from the standpoint of the whole world, but we, as Mayans - and there are thousands of us - can do a tremendous amount of good through carrying out this plan in our own lives, not only for ourselves, but for the general public. Everyone that we come in contact with can be touched by our goodness and, as Mayans, several thousand strong, you can see how many we can contact for good.

Remember that to love the public, to make a study of universal good, and to be interested in and promote all the world, inasmuch as it is possible for us to do so, is attaining the very height of goodness; and we can do more good by really being good than in any other way from the standpoint of its effect upon others.

Remember that we are influencing someone, somewhere, by our deeds whether they be good or bad. The person that does good for other people is good; perhaps he may suffer for the good that he does, but, if so, that makes him even a better person; and if those to whom he ministers do not seem to appreciate his good work, this is not important; - he is a bigger and better person for having had the courage of his convictions.

It doesn't matter whether the good we do is appreciated or not. It has its effect in the lives of those whom we touch, and the good that it does in our

own lives cannot be measured.

Do all the good you can, in all the ways that you can for everyone that you can, in all places that you can, and as many things as you can, with all the enthusiasm and interest that is in you. Yes, you can follow the Golden Rule in your life and be a happier person for having done so. As you proceed with the lesson, you will find these principles analyzed for you, and with all my heart I hope that you will think on this lesson as one of great importance in your development for good.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. Matthew 7;12.

1. A LOST FORMULA

To be lost a thing does not necessarily have to be in an unknown place. It may be lost even though we see it every day.

A man once needed to establish a certain proof, and had no known means of doing it. He traveled many hundreds of miles and spent considerable money in the effort, but to no avail. He collected a number of certificates and affidavits, but they were not sufficient. Finally he decided the thing could not be done, and gave it up.

Some time went by. One day he was turning the pages of an old book he had often picked up and turned through casually. There on an unnoticed page he came upon the record he needed, written in long faded ink. It never would have been found if the book had not been opened to that particular page.

The human race has done something like that. Every generation and each individual in it has needed a formula by which people can live successfully and satisfactorily in the same world and the same society with disadvantage to none and with benefit to all. Many people have tried to work out such a plan, but with little or no success. Some have despaired of the search and just tried to get along on a hit or miss basis, but the results have been disastrous. Some have made up their minds that no such formula is possible, and that human nature is such that people simply cannot get along and work together peacefully and might as well not try. This is pessimism at its worst.

Meanwhile the formula, written down long ago, was hidden away all the time in the pages of an old book. It was lost, though it was not hidden. The book is not wholly unread, though it is not read enough. The trouble has been that so many people, though they knew the directive by heart, made the mistake of assuming that it is just something written in a book to be read but not carried out.

They have heard the voice of the Master saying, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them", but they have failed to hear the gentle voice of Mary saying, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." They have stopped between the point of thinking and the point of doing.

All the help in the world is of no avail unless it is heeded. It becomes

help only when it is accepted and followed. The Golden Rule is only a combination of words till it is carried out, then it becomes an active and unailing principle of living. Unless you carry it into action it might as well never have been written as far as you are concerned.

The way to carry it into action is to take it as an order, to apply it in all the interests and affairs of life, and to begin now.

2. LIFE IN THE AGGREGATE

Jesus always recognized that personality expresses itself in two forms, that of the individual and that of the crowd; and He dealt with either form according to the situation that presented itself. He also made His teachings adequate to the needs and problems of both.

A code for individual living is comparatively easy, but one for collective living is a different matter. The point where life begins to be in the aggregate has always presented a serious problem and a sore need for an adequate working formula, and it tends to become more imperative with passing time.

A world with only one person in it would have plenty of problems, but that of human relationships would not be one of them. So long as society was simple the situation was not so serious, but today with increasing populations and complexities it is overwhelming, and disaster must result unless human beings learn how to live and work in peace and harmony in the same world, that is unless the individual learns how to be cooperative.

A condition that was disturbing has become compelling. Having discovered that life is definitely a related thing, thousands of people are feverishly trying to find a satisfactory way to live it so, but they keep bypassing the only formula that ever worked.

The world life is a collective personality made up of all our individual personalities together, and different from any of them. When things are combined, they often become something different even from the sum total of them. This happens with human society as a whole. The crowd, the organization, the mob - any of them is different from any or all of the individuals that compose them. Our need is for something that will keep the race from being a mob, a rabble, or even a crowd, and make it an orderly cooperative manifestation of life in which the individuals work together for the advantage of all like the cells of the body do.

This is not easily accomplished, and it certainly will not do itself. Many have advanced it on a large scale, but each individual can promote it in some degree. After all, the crowd is made up of individual people. We have said that it is essentially different from any one person, yet there is one sense in which it may become unified into a single personality, however vast. That would be true if all would live and work as brothers, cooperating for life and progress at their best - for all. Each person who makes the GOLDEN RULE a pattern for daily living in all his activities and relationships furthers that possibility, which brings it down to you.

World confusion is nothing new. The Master lived and taught in a time of it, and that was more than nineteen centuries ago. That confusion is intensified today, which makes His plan for cooperative living more imperative than ever. The visible manifestation of the kingdom cannot appear until harmony replaces discord. That is not too much to expect, and here is the formula by which it can be done.

What holds it back? Presumably the idea that to obey it would be costly. On the contrary, it would be more profitable than any other way. It is the converse of the law of diminishing returns. Therefore we call it the law of increasing returns. There is a good way to determine whether this is true. DO IT. Many have, and they testify with one voice that it pays, which is truer than they know.

3. THERE'S THE RUB

The difficulty in the way of getting the Golden Rule generally accepted and practiced as the right plan for adjusting human relations is much the same as with the commandment about being perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect. Too many people are incredulous. As we have said, they think it would be too costly, and for many that means that it just couldn't be done.

They assume this without really knowing, because they never put it to the test. No one ever knows whether a thing can be done till they try. Too many assume in a case of this kind that it is simply of no use to try.

Another proposition closely related and quite similar to the Golden Rule is that part of the so-called Great Commandment which bids one to love his neighbor as himself. People are incredulous about that too, and for the same reason. Of it they say with even greater emphasis that it demands an impossibility.

Let us pause a moment with the question of accepting or rejecting such things. He is not a good thinker who leaps quickly to a conclusion and without more ado announces to all and sundry that he does or does not believe something. Such a person doesn't really know WHAT he believes. Probably he doesn't really believe anything, for he does not know what belief is. He simply says he does not believe because he has heard someone else say so. He is like a parrot. He either goes by impulse and feeling, or else he just assumes something by guess. Neither is thinking.

You never can tell from the appearance of a proposition whether it is true. The way to deal with it is first to examine it carefully and then test it out. When we do that we sometimes find that something which first looked utterly impossible is really true, and vice versa. So the real thinker goes through the years revising his first impressions and even some of his later opinions about all kinds of things because he took hasty judgment which experience proved not to be true.

The Great Commandment may at first glance look costly and even impossible, but it is not. The Golden Rule may look like too much of a surrender, but in fact it demands of us nothing more than playing fair with each other. Why should we even think of doing less than that?

Mature consideration should make it plain, and experience with it surely would, that in the ultimate sense what we do to others we do to ourselves. The wrong conditions we help create are as bad for us as they are for others, and the right conditions we set up for others are as good for us as for them. More and more

we find that life is a kind of reflector, and that what we send out comes back to us like an image or an echo. As the circle widens it is thrown back to us from more places, so it becomes the operation of a LAW OF INCREASING RETURNS. What is coming into your life today is largely what you have sent out in hours, days, and even years gone by.

The immediate result of doing good to others is a happier condition around you. It grows and spreads till the effect improves community, national life, and the world life, for it is a chain reaction that is set up. Among its results is one that pays off in a happier YOU. When you really learn this great truth - and put it into practice - you are on your way to a happy, rich, healthy and prosperous life.

4. KEEP LIVING RELATED

In a certain place stands a very strange house. It belonged to a wealthy woman who became obsessed with the idea that she would live only as long as she kept adding to this house. So she kept building, year after year, any kind of addition she could think of. When she ran out of ideas she kept on building anyway - stairways that went nowhere, doors that opened on nothing, rooms that had no ingress or egress. None of it was related to any plan, for no plan was needed. All that was needed was to keep building. The result was a structure so fantastic that for years it has been a public curiosity, visited by people from everywhere, not for what it is but for what it isn't.

There are people who build their lives much the same way. They run out of plans, if they ever had any. They have to build, because they keep on living; but there is no value in the result because nothing is related to anything else. They do not know how to make a plan, or never thought a plan necessary.

What is at the root of these distressing situations in the world life today? Simply the fact that the race has built, and developed, and progressed, but has failed to relate its efforts to anything or the efforts of individuals and groups to one another. The result is a house divided against itself, not in one but in many ways. No wonder it cannot stand.

We cannot possibly live our lives alone, and we might as well not try. What we do in such a manner will sooner or later have to be done over, so it is easier to do it rightly in the first place. The right way to live and work is in relation to others, to all others, our families, our neighbors and friends, our fellow-citizens, and to strangers all over the world, even to the work done in the past and the work yet to be done in the future. You have heard many people say they can get along alone, they do not need others. Well, that is not true. We all need people and the more we avow that we do not is the surest proof that we do.

William Morris, writer, artist, and designer of fine furniture, managed a large organization happily and well because he had the idea of cooperative living. He stated it well when he said: "I'm going your way, so let us go hand in hand. You help me, and I'll help you. We shall not be here very long, for soon Death, the kind old nurse, will come and rock us all to sleep - let us help one another while we may."

There are two ways to live and work together in the world:

One is to bicker, snarl, scheme, and jockey for advantage, the result of which is strife and ultimately probable bloodshed.

The other is to consider each other, and live, and work, and build for the good of all. That is the secret of the peace problem, and the happiness problem too.

Are people about you as happy as you can make them? Are all the children you know safe, comfortable, and well? Are conditions for the living of all you can reach favorable for well-being and worthy endeavor? In business do you consider the other person's side as well as your own? Unless it is so you will not really profit.

TO CONSIDER THESE THINGS IS TO OBEY THE LAW OF INCREASING RETURNS. It means as much to you as it does to anyone else. DO IT.

5. MORE ABOUT RELATED LIVING

We have already likened the people in the world to the cells in the body. Billions of cells live and work together in peace and cooperation. Each has the wellbeing of a cell because it helps maintain the wellbeing of the body of cells. It seems as though each individual cell has intelligence to realize that its welfare, even its existence, depends on the health of the collective life.

Now and then something goes wrong in this wonderful picture. A little group of cells decides to quit doing to others as they would have others do them. They set themselves to live and work for themselves alone and no longer share the labors and destinies of the rest, like short-sighted people deciding they can do better by not bothering about others. This colony of cells starts growing more rapidly, but wildly and haphazardly, making a picture of confusion.

The result very quickly becomes one of the several types of malignant tumor. The final result of this refusal to live relatedly is that either the self-seeking group has to be removed by surgery or else it manages to carry the whole organism, including itself, down to annihilation. The reward for this foolish attempt to live for self only includes one thing that even selfishness can understand - that selfishness reacts against even itself.

The refusal of one or more people to play the game of life fairly, to consider their neighbors as well as themselves, to do to others as they want others to do to them, is no less short-sighted and destructive. No reorganization will correct it, and no law points a way out. But this dictum of the Master does, simple and plain as it is, as easily and quickly applied. Nothing stands in the way of its benefits but human selfishness with its certain process of self-defeat.

None of us can live life at its best till all have an opportunity to do so, for what is bad for others will also militate against us. You cannot correct the whole situation, but you can alter it in your own dealings and relationships. The Master was speaking in earnest when He said it. DO IT.

6. LET HIM DENY HIMSELF

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me", said Jesus on one occasion. When we look twice at this assurance, we can see the spiritual elements of the Golden Rule hidden in it. "Let him deny himself" - that seems to stand out from the page with a special glow. That is a formula the spirit is always insisting on, and the flesh is always shrinking from, just as in the case of the Golden Rule itself. One cannot keep the Golden Rule till he learns to deny himself, and discovers that the reward of self-denial is greater than its loss.

The writer once knew a man who had the problem of certain vexing contradictions within himself. He was honest and good at heart, but frail in resolution. His spirit was willing, but his flesh was weak. He very much wanted to be a good man and live rightly, but it was hard for him, and his heart was often sore from the conflict raging in and about it.

One day he said in a moment of confession, "I want to live a good life but I often fail because I cannot deny myself. When I want anything, or to do anything, or have a temptation in dealing with someone or making some choice, I favor myself too much." He continued to have this problem, and in the course of time he got himself into real and serious trouble because he never got it solved.

But it is a problem we have to solve. It will get in our way again and again till we do solve it. Only then do we begin to get into right adjustments.

The command looks sterner than it is. It is no demand that we do ourselves any real injustice. It is not that we are to obliterate self, but that we are to bring it into line and keep it in its rightful place. Self is so insistent and demanding that unless we do this it will keep getting into the position of control and will get a great deal more than its fair share of consideration.

This is all to the good, for getting more than its fair share is bad for it as well as for the ethical quality of our lives. Consider the people you know on the basis of the degree to which self controls their lives. Doubtless some of them are people who are always looking out for themselves alone, trying to get everything and every consideration they can in their own interest, placing themselves before everyone and everything else.

Are they happy people? If they seem so, are you sure they really are? The chances are that they are the most miserable people you know. Self-interest does not make us happy, nor even fortunate. It gets us out of line and into trouble. It detracts from the general welfare without which our personal welfare is bound to suffer.

But what about the people who keep self under control, who discipline it by relating its desires and interests to those of others? Are they not happy people, every one? The long story of experience indicates that they are.

When we go for a walk in the sunshine which do we seek out - the poison vine or the rose? Think it over, and see which fares best in the long run. The conclusion is obvious. You know what it means. DO IT.

7. POPULARIZE THE GOLDEN RULE

The Golden Rule is one of the most popular sayings in any language, and it is written and spoken in many languages. Some of these languages are ancient, for the Golden Rule is very old. It originated long before the time even of Jesus. In one form or another every land and every age has heard it. Probably no saying is repeated oftener, or with more respect. It is a wonderful bit of instruction - for the other person.

We say the Golden Rule is popular, but it is only superficially so. Anything that is applied only to other people is not really popular. As a principle of action to be applied in our own lives, its standing is not so good. Anything that is considered too harsh and difficult is not popular. Anything of which we think it sounds well, but actually to carry it out would be too hard and costly is not popular. Yet anything that has the peace, prosperity and happiness of the human race in it, needs more than respect. It needs to be used. It needs to be popularized.

PEOPLE EVERYWHERE NEED TO REALIZE THAT THE GOLDEN RULE IS AN OPPORTUNITY, NOT A RESTRICTION. It is as much for the happiness and welfare of the person who observes it as for those of the people in whose interest it is observed. It is even more so, for it makes them better people for the doing of it. If it sounds better as a quotation, it works out still better as a plan of life.

Self fares better in place than out of place. It is better off in a subordinate position than in a dominating one. It was never meant to control us but to serve us. It is healthy only in proportion to the total life and relation to the total situation. Egoism is a dangerous force in the world, and the practice of the Golden Rule is the only sure antidote.

How can you go about learning, practicing, and demonstrating the Golden Rule? It can be done very simply. Just develop the practice of putting yourself in the other person's place. You will find that things look quite different from that angle. You will also find that in that position you begin to feel quite different, and that consequently you speak and act quite different. Therefore matters begin to take a better turn.

If the other person is hungry, or in a hard position, or the victim of an injustice, or troubled about his loved ones, what if it were you? What would you do? How would you want to be treated? How would it be with the world if everyone took your attitude and followed your course of action? What would happen to you if you were the other person?

Learn to stop and think of these things. You will begin to be a different person, a happier person, a better loved person. When to do so becomes the rule of human action, it will be a happier world. That is why the Golden Rule needs to be popularized, so lend a hand. DO IT.



PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me to treat others as though our places were exchanged. Amen.

That this lesson may be a blessing unto you is the prayer of your Instructor.

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR.



I know that you are going to eagerly await this next lesson because we are all interested in health, mentally, physically and spiritually; and this coming message is important. It is entitled THE PRINCIPLE OF RECOVERY, and contains the following subtitles:

THE CURE AT THE BETHESDA POOL	HEALTH OF MIND
MADE WHOLE	HEALTH OF SPIRIT
HEALTH OF THE BODY	HEALTH OF RELATIONSHIP
IN THE DAY'S WORK	

