

## Talk by Alice Bailey to Arcane School students on Friday, April 30, 1943

AAB: I want to do a rather different thing this evening. I have been thinking a great deal, and I have hinted at it once or twice in these talks, about the relationship of all of us in this group to the Masters. I am going to say things that might perhaps suggest questions to you; I want you to note the questions that come into your mind and let me answer them if I can. What I am about to say I want to be taken exactly on its face value; it will be the truth as far as I know it. There is no symbolism or subtle suggestion about what I am saying; I am stating exactly the facts.

I have watched the School for twenty odd years, very odd, and things have happened to students in the School that have justified the work that we have done. Students are always writing in and telling of their wonderful experiences and of being in touch with the Masters, and those of us who handle those letters withhold judgment about this. There are students in the School, one or two, that I have put directly into the Disciples' Degree, who have definitely had contact with the Masters. They are usually quite bewildered and disturbed at the happening. They are afraid of psychism, of autosuggestion, of gullibility; and one of the things I have had to do is say, "Yes, you did have contact with the Master. Go on." You would be quite surprised if you knew who they were. There are others in the School who are definitely conscious that they are under supervision but have not yet registered in their physical plane consciousness a relationship to the Masters. The testimony, as I go about in different countries, is that there are men and women in every country who have definitely made contact with the Masters and know it. There are others who are aware of being disciples and are waiting for the moment of registration. I have the feeling as I work in the School that behind practically all of them lies a hope. They want to know for themselves that the Masters are a fact. They dream of a time when a Master will approach them and tell them they are disciples.

It seems to me that one of the things we have to do in the School is to bear testimony to the fact of the Masters because we *know*. I want to take up with you, largely subject to your interest and questions, how you can know; and I do not mean in vagueness, but in reality. The second thing that we have to do in the School, something that the Tibetan told me to do years ago and that I tried feebly to do, is to talk about the Hierarchy to everybody, not in terms of "I know there is a Hierarchy, therefore I am justified in speaking," but to talk about the Hierarchy so that They appear as a reasonable proposition, and touch upon evidence throughout the world among reputable men and women who believe in the Masters. When you can speak from the point of contact with a Master (not by statements *about* the Masters) your words carry power, though you say nothing about yourself at all. The major result of a Master's bringing himself into relationship with a disciple is not to lead the disciple to say, "here I am; a Master has recognized me," but the power emanating from the Master will be of such a nature that it will affect the disciple and enable him first to think clearly on the subject, then to know what he should do, and then to recognize what he contacts.

At a meeting of commentators two years ago I touched a little on the subject of the Hierarchy and on the subject of discipleship. I made a distinction between *accepted* disciple and *world* disciple, and I took the position that I was a world disciple. It is the only claim that I have ever made, and it is the only claim that I shall ever make. The claim of discipleship is a legitimate claim because disciples range all the way from the accepted disciple who is accepted in this life for the first time, up to such a great and liberated disciple as the Master KH, who is a disciple of Sanat Kumara. The claim of discipleship is one you can always make to anyone. They may not interpret it with the meaning that it has for you, but they will interpret it correctly because the Christian religion and poetry are all full of the idea of discipleship. We are critical of the Church, but the Church has made some very valuable contributions to the thought of the world. They have preserved for us the fact of God in an era of materialism; they have preserved for us the fact of Christ, belief in immortality, in

the Soul, and they have always spoken of discipleship. Those are wonderful contributions no matter how we may regard the Church.

The claim of discipleship is one that I would like to feel that the senior students in the School could make and make truthfully. As I have told you before, some of you with very little effort might make the grade. You do not know how close you may be to discipleship.

What is the difference between an accepted disciple and a world disciple? Why can I say definitely that I am a world disciple and challenge anybody to say I am not? The various inner grades of discipleship are characterized by one fact only – the extent of influence. Now there are heaps of people in this country and other countries who will say they are disciples or high initiates, and yet their influence is very limited. Because they love the sense of power and like to feel that people respond to their influence they overestimate themselves. But a world disciple is a person who in spite of himself influences thousands. I have influenced tens of thousands in my life, and I can say that because I don't care whether I have or not. I am not a Christ; I am not an initiate of frightfully high degree. A great initiate influences millions. Avatars influence everybody on the planet right down to the lowest human specimen. How does that come to be? I will tell you another distinction between accepted disciple and world disciple. An accepted disciple cooperates with the Plan. The Plan is presented to him and he cooperates with it. A world disciple knows the Plan himself and his cooperation is of a different kind. It is not based on obedience; it is based on inevitability. I want to see the School train and develop world disciples.

World disciples are very seldom taught by other world disciples. They generally have to thrash everything out by themselves with a tiny lead given them by some utterly unimportant person. Sometimes I think that all of you have had too much information. Do you get what I mean? You know too much, and the mass of your knowledge obliterates the one or two points that you need to get and that nobody can give you; you have to wrestle them out for yourself. I never had anyone teach me about the Hierarchy. I got a lot of teaching about planes and energy and forces, a lot of academic knowledge. The thing that I had to wrestle out by myself from the time I was 15 until I was 35 had to be done without a soul giving me any assistance. The interesting thing is that you can have a direct contact with a Master but simply not recognize it, not know who he is, and not understand the gist of what he has told you. Only life unfolds the significance of what he said. People are often under the impression that the Master comes to them and tells them that they have reached the point of development where they can do things, that there lies a future of service ahead of them, that an important future can be theirs, feeding the pride, that subtle something in all of us that seeks recognition. I suppose that in my last life as an accepted disciple I sinned greatly along that line, because I have been so terrified of claim-making, of lack of humility, of self-satisfaction, that in this life I have gone the other way.

I remember that I did a big work in India. I went there when I was 22, and after six months, because there was nobody better, in fact nobody else to do it, I was put in charge of six soldiers' homes. I had the catering to do for these six homes, with 600 men in each, every day in the week. I conducted fifteen prayer meetings and gospel meetings a week. I did a good job, and I thought it was the result of my character, but now I think it was because I was young and good looking and full of life and the men were lonely and had nobody else to talk to. This is the point I want to make. I went to forty British regiments; I had a Sunday Bible class of 600 men each Sunday; I got thousands of letters. They were all eulogistic. One day I took them all out of the drawers and boxes and piled them up in the middle of the room and sat down and looked at them and said, "this is where I am beginning to deteriorate. What shall I do to teach myself a lesson in humility that I will never forget?" Then I burned them all. It was a symbol to me that the personality doesn't matter; it is the spiritual influence that counts, and spiritual values are not your personal possession. They are something that, from bitter experience down the ages, you have learned to tap. You use them as best

you can, and then the time comes when you have the necessary experience and enough is pouring through you so that you influence people. Your vision alters all the time. What you think is wonderful, a satisfying experience, reaches a point of endeavor – a point of climax – and then you see something else. Then all that you have achieved seems as nothing, because away on ahead of you is another goal that makes your achievement seem to be small potatoes, very small. I can remember a time in India when I was being written about in all the papers, and the officers' mess in a town would turn out and listen to me talk and sing. But I was conscious that I had reached a point where I wasn't getting anywhere. I had used up all I knew. I was dead sick of teaching, of being orthodox. An old Hindu bearer went with me wherever I went. He used to watch me with a funny expression. I traveled all over India alone, and this old man always went with me. One day he came to me and like a bolt out of the blue said, "Will you please know that same God loves us as loves you, loved us long before you came to India." That old Hindu said in effect that your fundamentalism is all wrong. God is love.

Then a sergeant of the Royal Horse Artillery said to me after I had given a talk on Hell and all the men had left the hall, "If you will only speak the truth from your heart, the men will stay and listen to you. But when you tell lies they will go." So I got help from unimportant people. There was enough in me to use those few words for expansion. A disciple can get more definite training. I suppose I got more of it in another life because when I came across *The Secret Doctrine* it never puzzled me. The accepted disciple can take a lot of teaching, and you have had a lot of teaching. An accepted disciple is one who grows within himself, yes, but grows also in response to outside teaching, whereas a world disciple grows from knowledge assimilated in another life, a seed from the past.

I got a great deal from the Tibetan when he was giving me the subject matter of *Cosmic Fire* and *Esoteric Psychology* because I had taken the trouble to master *The Secret Doctrine* and become steeped in it. I am not talking about myself because I want to talk about myself. I am a guinea pig tonight. What is the good of my going on and teaching all of you and not letting you benefit from my experience? I may estimate you higher than you estimate yourself. I think a great many of you in this room are capable of taking a great step forward. You can all become accepted disciples in this life and then start in the next life the way I did, or you can lay such a foundation of realization of the light that in your early formative years you will be a disciple. Being a world disciple doesn't mean anything but hard work. You are misunderstood; you are so busy with the thing that has to be done and so anxious to help that you make lots of mistakes. A world disciple starts as an accepted disciple and works on from there as he can and makes the grade by hard work.

You might meet a Master and you might be interested in what he says to you, but you also might be so closed up and sealed by your own ideas, by your constant thinking about yourself, that you would not know him for what he was. I tell you this from my own experience: you are not desperate enough to help humanity. You haven't reached the point where you don't care whether you ever see a Master.

I came into incarnation in a very wealthy family. I had everything possible that a human being could have, and as a Gemini I started to travel when I was one year old. I went to Canada and later to Switzerland and all over Europe. I was always delicate, always unhappy, the plainest of my family, the stupidest of my family. Three times, before I was fourteen, I tried to commit suicide - the first time when I was only six years old. I was miserable because the world was so unhappy. I wanted to do something about it and nobody was doing anything about it. When I got to be fourteen or fifteen I would go off onto the moors by myself and lie in the heather and think terrible thoughts and hate God, hate the world, and love humanity, wishing I could do something to make people happy.

The family had all gone to church one Sunday and I was alone in the drawing room, hating life and hating the world, when the door opened and a man came in. I wasn't surprised that he had a turban on his head, and he said, "You are an exceedingly naughty little girl. I am sorry because I had hoped that you would take hold and help us early. I am beginning to wonder whether you will, or whether it will take another life before you do. If you want to be of service to this world, take yourself in hand and make something of yourself. If you do that then we can use you. I will tell you what you have to do, but I am not sure you will do it." He outlined to me something that I could do and walked out. I got scared and thought, "I have seen a vision." I went out into the grounds and thought that I didn't know whether it was a vision or whether I was going crazy, but one bit of that advice was good: I could take myself in hand and become nice. And I was too nice. In fact, one day my aunt came to me and said, "Good Lord, Alice, lose your temper." My intentions were good though foolishly handled. I never told anyone what had happened because I thought that on top of my goodness they would think I was going insane. I thought that I had seen Jesus. Occasionally thereafter in times of crisis I would get an intimation of what I was to do, and always on a beam of light, literally in the room. I began to get compulsive about it and took up work among British soldiers, and then came to this country.

Then I came across the Theosophical Society, went into the Shrine Room and saw a picture of the Master K.H. I had gone from age fifteen to thirty-five and never knew that I had met a Master. I didn't know who he was, and my interpretation was all wrong as to its being a vision. It was twenty years before I discovered his identity. That should encourage all of you. Do the thing you are told to do at any cost, even if you lose your friends. I am not the least interested in people knowing that I am a disciple of K.H. The world is full of disciples of K.H; there are several in the School who have come to me as disciples of K.H. and know it. Roberto Assagioli is a disciple of K.H. There are also many disciples of the Master Morya, great world leaders through whom the power of the Master M. is pouring. The Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms came straight from the Hierarchy, and only disciples could have brought it through in that concise form. It does not matter what you think about the personality of a disciple; the personality does not count.

It is a curious thing – if an initiate of high degree would come and talk to us he would evoke in us all that is undesirable and make us quite impossible. Yet at the same time he would evoke all that is beautiful. One of the things that I have watched in the School, and that you who carry on the work when I am not here will watch, is the effect of spiritual knowledge on the best students. As they develop in knowledge and in wisdom their faults and prejudices also develop. It is an indication of growth, because when a prejudice, a hatred or a selfishness is brought to the surface and to the light, it rides rampant. Then, when that goes too far, they wake up to it. The mark of a disciple is that when he knows a thing isn't right he eliminates it. The best students will be the worst students, because they get over-stimulated. They get discouraged about themselves because all their faults emerge.

At the Wesak commentators meeting we will elaborate on that a little bit. The commentators must become aware of the evocative nature of spiritual force, and of the effect of that spiritual force flowing through him or herself. It will have a good as well as a bad effect. Considering your position in the School, you are subjecting yourself deliberately and voluntarily to the force of a large group. That is going to have some effect on you. The effect of a Master on a group is serious and that is why the Masters do not appear more frequently. I would hate to see K.H. appear to me or at the Wesak meeting. It would mean disaster to some through over-stimulation. The disciple pays the price of contact in his physical body. He can't sleep for days after he has had a conversation with a Master. If a disciple is so affected, what would happen to people not on the path of discipleship? I want this group to think this subject through so that they will speak practically of the Masters.

We talk about the Planetary Logos being one of the imperfect gods. The Masters are not perfect. They get irritated with each other; they often don't agree with each other. I am sure I am irritating to the Master K.H., if he had the time to think about me, because I do such silly things. It's all relative. To listen to some of the schools of thought you would think the Masters were perfect. HPB says that some of the Masters are very uneducated, but they know how to use their disciples' intelligence. Take the teaching of the Tibetan. He can't speak good English, but I am very well educated. He uses my English and my mind through which to work. Some of the Masters know very little. The Tibetan knows far more about the Ageless Wisdom than K.H. knows, but they know the people in their Ashram who have the necessary knowledge. Just as the great executives out in the world pick and choose their sub-executives because of their capacity to meet the need of the organization, they pick and choose their subordinates. But they are perfect so far as you and I are concerned, because they have completely overcome the hindrances that keep you and me away from the center of life.

The Masters work through all kinds of instruments. I often say to Foster, "I don't see how the Masters could ever work through me." Fortunately they are not deterred by personality faults. They work through all kinds of instruments, so we have to be ready and willing to work through all kinds of instruments. If the Masters have to put up with their accepted disciples and world disciples, you and I have to put up with all kinds of people too. But because we are not as far along as they are and are still personal and don't see the picture whole, the personalities of those with whom we work sometimes clash with ours. There is nobody who is attacked more and gets more unkind and untrue things said about them than disciples. You have to be ready for that.

I have wanted so much this evening to make the fact of the Masters a reality to you. One student came to me not long ago and said, "I go subjectively on certain nights to a big room on a mountain under the pines. Off to the left of the room is the small room where you and one or two others are. You are often at a table with charts on it. Off of that room is another room with the Master K.H." I replied, "That is the Ashram of the Master K.H., and I am in that other room with the other people where I have a great deal to do with the charts of beginners." She knew she was a disciple of K.H. It is utterly amazing where you find disciples. They aren't always the wonderful and the beautiful and the outstandingly good people, but they are always people who have influence. The Masters are a fact, and I want you to know them for a fact for yourself.

I tell you as a disciple that you can make the grade if you want to. I do not mean you are going to be a world disciple. I have an idea that the ranks of world disciples are going to be recruited from the very young who are coming in as disciples. Some of you in this room have already made it. I don't want any misunderstanding in what I have said tonight. I have made a perfectly ordinary claim that can be made by hundreds throughout the world. There are hundreds of world disciples; by their fruits you will know them and by the extent of that which they precipitate upon Earth you will know them.

ES: Will you come back to the point you made about the importance of our talking about the Hierarchy, broadcasting the idea?

AAB: Don't talk as I have talked tonight.

HR: We in our turn have to tell what is for us the truth. If we talk the truth then we are all right.

AAB: No, you are not. This is the first time I have talked about my half century of experiences. It would be wrong to talk of your inner experiences. You can say to people who are on the verge of discipleship, "I am a disciple," and by doing so you can strengthen their faith; but you can't do it anywhere else.

HR: Can you speak the truth?

AAB: You mean the truth of the Ageless Wisdom?

HR: The whole truth, if you don't put yourself in.

AAB: You can say the Masters are facts.

RK: We want to forget all about the fact that we talk to the Masters. We have to live them, and then people will want to find out what is the pattern lying behind our lives. It is living, not speech, that introduces the Masters. It is that their inner life reflects itself in my inner life and makes me dynamic.

AAB: We can talk about the Plan and speak of the great disciples in the world through whom the Plan has evolved. Certain great figures say certain things that have affected the consciousness of humanity. Luther brought about the Reformation, the first great step toward the freedom of the human consciousness, the first great blow at theology. Knox and Calvin tried to do the same thing and got themselves hated. They were not disciples. Some day we will have a book written on disciples and how certain great ideas emanating from the Hierarchy worked through their disciples on the physical plane and how they said certain things that brought about certain great changes. HPB was one; she struck a blow at theology and the then science.

HR: We ought to keep in mind the inevitability of the Hierarchy's coming into people's consciousness; so many groups could accept them because they have accepted guidance.

AAB: That is what this School exists for. I have been thinking a great deal about the School. We let in many people who are not material for the School, and in the preliminary papers we say that is our objective. But sometimes I question whether we have done them any good. I sometimes wonder whether we could eliminate the people who are not material for disciples and have a small but more powerful group, a group that would be so magnetic that it would attract to it the material that is ready to be trained as accepted disciples. The whole nature of the Hierarchical method has changed. The Theosophical Society is based on the Indian technique, the Master and disciple. The Master would give a disciple a hint and he would work it out, because there were so few people in the world ready for discipleship. That isn't the practice now. It never was in the Ashram where the disciple is handled in group formation. The Masters train groups and they stand ready to handle the material in the School when we have it ready for them. Insofar as you can make the grade in discipleship, thus far will this group become potent enough to attract to it material that can be trained.