

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: MIND - 02/23/14

Am I a Christian?

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Matt10:37

Not worthy?? YES! If Christ is not dearer to our heart than all family relations, we are not Christian, and certainly not a Christian Scientist!! How dare we turn to God for help that none other can give, and yet cling to a family member as our most sacred possession?

Further, in Christian Science, we declare God is our Father-Mother, that we are spiritual, never born into matter, etc. - and yet we are willing to do what Job did? ""secretly accept persons" Exo 20:10 and then lose everything? "In Christian Science, denial of Truth is fatal" *Science and Health* 372:27

This is serious stuff, not to be dabbled in! *****

Why should there be a separation? Maybe we should see our family members differently, see them as God sees them? It seems more a warning against the personal sense of anyone. *****

"Maybe we should see our family members differently, see them as God sees them?"

Yes - but in practice, what would that mean for Job? If he saw his children as God saw them, but they continued their unprincipled action, would he just "know the truth" - or would he be roused into action, recognizing that, "animal magnetism" was aggressively asserting itself, and unless he did something to break the mesmerism, they were in grave danger? Stamp his foot, withdraw all funds, shout - whatever it takes to break the selfish, self-centered behavior which is NOT what God sees!! Simply "knowing the truth" would be no better than praying that God forgive their iniquities!!

From *Science and Health* 167:7: "We apprehend Life in divine Science only as we live above corporeal sense and correct it." Job claimed to be a righteous man, but he saw his children indulging in materialism, becoming satisfied with a material, human sense of existence, and he did nothing to help them out of it. He didn't correct anything! As a result, he had to go through a gut-wrenching experience before he was willing to listen to Elihu, get rid of his personal sense of existence, and give it all to God.

A good practitioner will push us up and out of our "comfort zone." This is a very tough change for most of us, but here we have Jesus and Mrs. Eddy telling us it is essential. Live above corporeal sense and correct it! Otherwise, I deceive myself, thinking I am doing good when I am not.*****

Mrs. Eddy says on page 266 of *Science and Health* "Would existence without personal friends seem to you a blank? Then the time will come when you will be solitary, left without sympathy; but this seeming vacuum is already filled with divine Love." What is this personal sense of others? One description would be when you think there is either personal good or personal bad. "Good" comes only from God. "Bad" is the suppositional absence of Light or God, Good. Job must have thought his children were basically bad. He personalized the error, therefore could not deal with it. He unwittingly became a malpractitioner – on his own children! If he knew the error was not theirs, he would have been able to cast it out with the authority of Christ – He definitely would not have prayed that God would overlook their sins!! What kind of prayer is that?!! *****

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In the parable of the prodigal son, the father gave his son's inheritance to him, and bade him farewell; quietly, deliberately, allowing his son to indulge, unchallenged, his penchant for licentious prodigality -- but without once replenishing his son's purse, without once sending a rescue party after his son, without once affirming his son's error by daily begging God to overlook it while incessantly beating the drum of "My child is in error, my child is in error, my child is indulging in error!"

The prodigal son's father somehow knew that his son had so deeply and resolutely embraced the "imperfect model that the world [was] holding before [his] gaze continually" *Science and Health* 248:20-21 that he was hell-bent on sculpting his life according to an imperfect model; thus, he simply bade him Adieu, understanding that, at this point, parental words and actions could not reach much less teach his son, yet knowing that his son would be disciplined, indeed: by life itself, the harsh, self-punishing life-experience that lay ahead of him.

The prodigal son's father somehow knew that he would have to beat a different drum if he were ever to see his son again. The father thus maintained an infinite, indomitable faith in the true image of God that his son truly was, is, and ever shall be, for he surely must have kept affirming and making real to himself his son's true nature, far and away beyond any temporary, albeit extreme expression of selfishness. The father filled the blank emptiness of his one-son-less household with the extremity of Truth: the constructive-thought version of his missing son, present and accounted for, just as Mrs. Eddy advocates: "We must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually," in ceaseless spiritual warfare allowing no imperfect hideously formed "matter-model" to take its place *Science and Health* 248:26-27 -- the son that, in reality, never left the father's household. *****

Did God Say This?

".....or I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children

unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" Exodus 20:5

Just wondering if God said this because there is still the belief that the sins of parents will continue to punish their generations later? Or is this a belief? *****

Well, we know from sociology that children from dysfunctional families and a bad background are unlikely to "succeed" in life, exceptions confirming the rule. Besides the mental contagion, there is the contagion of syphilis and other diseases that carry on for several generations. So there must be some truth in this warning. *****

Well ... seriously, is it God's law for generations unborn to be doomed for their ancestors' sins? Or, is it the human condition until someone breaks the cycle? If God is no respecter of persons, then this couldn't be God's law. Certainly, you see in the lineage descriptions in the Bible, sons who did well in the sight of The Lord, even though their fathers did evil. So maybe this is along the line of, "the only way to stop sinning is to stop sinning." *****

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Isn't any truth in this line of thinking tied to the world belief of man's origin in matter? This is the belief that stretches to the point where labels are given to children and lower academic performance is expected because of poor family circumstances. I wonder what the results would be if a teacher went into class everyday and saw all his/her students as God's ideas possessing all the qualities of God?

When Truth is known and the cycle of such thinking is broken, (as stated elsewhere), results would be different.

This is why the right foundation, man's spiritual origin must be known and all like Christ Jesus must behold the perfect man in thought! If Christian,

then I must do what Christ did! *****

I think the key words are: "Those that hate me".
God will visit all our inequities, no matter who you think your parents are. The Truth is..are we as their children, their image, or are we the image and likeness of God? We must turn to the Right, NOW.

CHRIST JESUS - 03/02/14

Competition!

In the Roundtable discussion yesterday, we talked about competitiveness. In the lesson this week, we see that Jesus was confronted by it every time he came into contact with the scribes and Pharisees. They complained to his disciples that Jesus was spending time with publicans and sinners; that he was healing on the Sabbath!! This is the competitive, manipulative personality trait that is destructive. It thinks to build itself up by tearing down another.

Jesus didn't go there. He "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts..." He held nothing but contempt for this self-righteous, competitive attitude. That is why his Beatitudes are so profoundly important. They show that state of thought which is of use to God and to mankind. And, yet, do I fully respect the humble, pure heart that has no guile? Or do I condone the competitive personality that likes to exalt itself by making another appear to "lose"?

"Blessed is that man who seeth his brother's need and supplieth it, seeking his own in another's good." *Science and Health* 518:17 *****

Definition of Competition in Webster's 1828--
1. The act of seeking, or endeavoring to gain, what another is endeavoring to gain, at the same time; rivalry; mutual strife for the same object; also, strife for superiority; as the competition of two candidates for an office, or of two poets for superior reputation.
2. A state of rivalry; a state of having equal claims.

That is the culture of corporations, growth, more profit, bigger, at the cost of what? Is it the general welfare, the environment, the future? You are either a winner or a loser. Is it too much competition and not enough cooperation? Jesus proved that a real winner is the one who serves, and rejoices in another's well being. *****

I am not comfortable with the way competition is being used to describe a type of evil. Competition is not evil.

Did the Pharisees compete with Jesus, or did they want to kill him because he threatened their way of life? There was a total lack of God in their hearts and that is why they raged against him. To call that hatred competition rubs me the wrong way. We don't call war competition. It is war. Evil and hatred lead to sinister behavior. But let's not lump competition in with those deeds.

True competitors respect one another and display good sportsmanship: win, lose, or draw. Competitors bring out the best in one another.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Matt 16:24 What a far cry from competition!
Hmmm *****

Competition is the natural state of human affairs, and is necessary for progress out of the human condition. Religious ideas compete with one another; social ideas compete. That is in large part why we have freedom of expression laws (though not the only reason), because we want to encourage ideas to fall or rise on their merit, rather than by governmental imposition. It was in this country that Christian Science could be presented, because competition of ideas was permitted.

But there needn't be "competitiveness" - if something is better, it should be more well-received and more popular. It's still competition, just without personal sense attached.

Within ourselves, there is competition. We must

"compete," fight. (Root word means to fight with). That said, competition with the motive of self-aggrandizement, or to prove to oneself he is worthy of existence, or to show "I am greater than somebody else," is pride and exclusive of God. I find competitiveness, for example, at work to be SO OBNOXIOUS, because it really is dense blindness, shutting out God, and quite hurtful to people who might be struggling with low self-esteem, etc. *****

"Girls Softball Miracle - Central Washington vs Western Oregon" Video on Youtube: [v=UEDBnKahuNs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEDBnKahuNs) *****

The explanation below is for our readers who have no access to the Internet: The above video is worth watching should you ever have the opportunity to do so.

Briefly, it's about a top player who offers with some of her team members to carry the opposing team's injured player (who batted so well but couldn't complete her run due to the injury) to finish her run. They carried her touching every base till the end because her own team members couldn't do that according to game rules.

This example of selflessness touched people. It proved the true spirit of sportsmanship!

"Throw away the selfishness... ..and let the beauty of helping others come into our hearts. Be a blessing!" (This video's description online)! *****

"Gratefully, this player was not "boxed in" by limited thinking!"

This player was doing more than playing to win or to feel superior. Why can't we do anything good or even strive to do things better just for GOODNESS sake (God's sake or to God's glory)?

In my experience, I have found that wherever there is that awful sense of competition, there is an underlying sense of inferiority, which makes one want to do something to impress or to feel superior to another. I call it *awful sense* because it can lead some parents to persuade children to choose professions they are not suited for, or choose

husbands or wives for children just so that they can feel better than someone else!

Christ Jesus never competed. He was selfless, doing all for the glory of God and to bless mankind. He is *the one* to emulate, and He left so much for us to do with God's help; so who has the time or the need to feel competitive? *****

Here's an example: my son is a customer service representative for businesses at AT&T. He is number 1 on his team, most productive. He has no sense of competition, but his goal is to help. If he sees someone struggling, he helps. However, if he sees they are not really trying, he doesn't help. I recently saw him in action on a trip we took together. He was always looking around to see what needed to be done or if anyone needed anything, and whatever it was, he did it without hesitation. "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." *****

Take Up His Cross

The Golden Text says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

It struck me that we need to deny ourselves daily. This is not a one-time situation and then we have reached the kingdom of God. We must do it daily, and many times during the day, as needed. This is being active in the Truth.

Matthew Henry says, "If any man will," that is, wishes to, "come after me, to follow me where I am going" (Jesus was going to his kingdom), "let that man be prepared to give up earthly ease and comfort, and be ready to bear the sufferings which will be sure to fall on him if he struggle after holiness."

Christian Science is an active religion, not saying your rosary or doing your lesson and going on your way to do whatever you want. Situations come up all the time where we have the choice to put God first and give up the earthly ease. Thank God for what we are learning in the Plainfield Church.