

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 11

**SUBJECT: SACRAMENT -
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Sacrament According to Mrs. Eddy

This week, I have been thinking more deeply about what all this symbolism means to me and how I can incorporate it into daily living more effectively.

1. "Baptism – purification from all error." Am I daily purifying my motives, aims, and deeds to be less about self and more about God?

2. "Eucharist – Spiritual communion with the One God." How often do I have communion with my heavenly Father and am I really grateful for this supreme privilege - for it is a supreme privilege!

3. "Cup – the Cross." Am I willingly to speak out against an error even if it is an unpopular stance to take? Am I willingly to suffer persecution from others because I am no longer willing to comply with worldly ways and means?

4. "Wine - the inspiration of Love..." Am I fully aware that all my thoughts and actions should come forth from Love? That unless I am motivated by this Love, nothing I do is really of any value?

So often it is easy to just go charging forth into our day without even considering what is required of us if we truly want to keep his commandments. *****

"Yet Learned He Obedience"

Heb 5:8 "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

In Heb 5:8-9 (The New Testament Modern English), the verse reads: But, Son though he was, he had to prove the meaning of obedience through all that he suffered." If even Jesus had to do this, who am I to complain when faced with challenges.

This is a reminder of what Eustace says about the value of experience, "Every painful experience is the good of Truth appearing but negatively interpreted - a challenge to his understanding."¹ ¹Christian Science, Its "Clear, Correct Teaching" And Complete Writings, p. 293 or 349

We must wrestle every benefit from the experiences we go through. "Each experience comes at the right moment to confer the greatest blessing." This gives much inspiration with which to face the tough times! *****

Interesting how this passage jumped out to a lot of us! I was thinking of it in the way you guys described, but also I thought of it (and the rest of this week's lesson) in the context of what we discussed this past weekend -- the common fallacy in CS (at least in the CS "culture"), that the more you progress, the smoother things get. Jesus' life wasn't smooth in the sense of no challenges or conflicts presenting themselves.

Whenever you're in God's service, then "the scourge and cross" will await you in some form. That use to discourage me, because the scourge and cross sound just awful from an

unprepared, human standpoint. However, I think this lesson points out that the requirement is to live it (not talk it or ritualize it) and when we do that, we grow and find ourselves equipped to handle the challenges that present themselves to us daily. *****

I was struck by this, as well. Surely Paul was debunking the misconception, probably already cropping up back then, that Jesus was God! Rather he was like us, having to overcome, as we must, the Wayshower. *****

Drink his Cup - Persecutions!

"Christians, are you drinking his cup? Have you shared the blood of the New Covenant, the persecutions which attend a new and higher understanding of God?" *Science and Health* p 33: 27-28. What persecutions? As we grow in understanding, we naturally can no longer tolerate base conversation or gossip or constant rehearsal of physical problems - we may also outgrow friends, family members, or a job, etc. Most would rather not rock the boat, and so are not willing to drink his cup and gain "a new and higher understanding of God." *****

That is so true! Since finding Independent Christian Science, I have a much harder time relating to or even conversing with many of my old friends (at least those who still call themselves Scientists) because they definitely don't want to hear anything I've learned, often refuse to consider that there may be a veil over Christian Science, or just in general their cup is already full - they already know everything so there's nothing I can share with them. It's been difficult for me, as I love these people, but it's been more difficult to keep "beating a dead horse," as it were, in continuing to make the attempts or go through the motions just for the sake of maintaining a friendship. It certainly doesn't help my spiritual growth to get pulled back to something I've outgrown. *****

An Offering Pure of Love

The fact that Jesus told Peter three times – that if he really loved him he was to feed his sheep, shows what a highly important command this must be. Also this was the final instruction Jesus left to Peter (us) before he left this earth. For this reason - at the end of the day I will ask God if I fed his sheep, if I have given enough love and thought and time to this most holy command. I know I could always do better, and this self-examination helps me get my priorities straight. The other things on my “to do” list don't seem so important! Thank God this church gives us practical ways to “feed his sheep” (and writing on the forum is one of them!)... “My prayer some daily good to do to Thee, for Thee; An offering pure of Love, whereto God leadeth me.” (Hymn # 253) *****

Bread

This bread is referred to in the lesson as, “Their bread indeed came down from heaven. It was the great truth of spiritual being, healing the sick and casting out error.” *Science and Health* p 33:6 -7

This great Truth is revealed to the “receptive heart.” I see clearly now that, although in theory many claim to want this Christ Truth, it is the kind of teaching, the constant inspiration to become better that is fostered in this Church, that makes that realization possible. (This Church makes me realize how much more I need to learn.) Striving to be better is made practical here!

I can become quite content fooling myself, with voicing how much I love God and yet remain steeped in old habits, sins, etc; without doing anything to prove my love for God and man . *****

Plus, the path is not an easy one! This lesson points out that it's not a path of roses. It takes

consecration of thought and desire and it takes "walking the walk".

The words from Mrs. Eddy's poem and hymn "Feed My Sheep" are useful to contemplate: "Shepherd, show me how to go, O'er the hillside steep, How to gather, how to sow,-- How to feed Thy sheep. I will listen for Thy voice, Lest my footsteps stray; I will follow and rejoice All the rugged way." "Feed my sheep" involves going "o'er the hillside steep" along "the rugged way". *****

The Poor = the Receptive Thought = State of Harkening (SH 2&6, Golden Text)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit" is the first sentence of the Sermon on the Mt. (Matt 5:3). Maintaining a state of being poor in spirit, the humility of a deep-rooted, settled state of receptive thought, is the first of the Beatitudes, the most important thing on the mind of Christ Jesus preparing to speak to the multitude. On closing, he speaks of being grounded in the Sermon's principles, the need of making sure that one has the proper, stable foundation on which one's house should be established before even considering the details of constructing the house itself. In fact, he does not speak of the house in any detail at all. He speaks only of the foundation: embracing God's words by acting on them, not simply hearing them.

St. Paul used athletic metaphors in teaching Christian principles, and the greatest athletic coaches have always placed basic conditioning above all other training activities. So the Sermon on the Mount is all about the basics: conditioning, endurance training, establishing a foundation, prepared ground for the challenges ahead.

To maintain this receptivity is also "to hearken" -- "To listen; to lend the ear; to attend to what is uttered, with eagerness or curiosity" (1828

Webster's Dictionary). So hearkening carries with it a sense of anticipation: listening for God, as well as listening to God. Inherent in hearkening is the sense of obedience: "Josiah, not hearkening to them, was slain." (Thomas Hobbes, 1651).

It has to do with getting in touch with the "immortal cravings" residing restlessly in each of us --- cravings of holy dissatisfaction with self, sense, and the world of sense and cravings which we are to make more and more intimately real, cravings which mortal mind ever-seeks to control, to dominate, to deny, to stupify, to subdue, and to silence.

Thus, as found in Carpenter's Collectanea (Prayers, p 61), Mrs. Eddy never ceased instructing even her most advanced students in the basics: "Be like a little child. Turn your thoughts to Love and say, O Love, just take me in; give me one Mind, one consciousness and make me love my neighbor as myself. Let your heart cry out to divine Love. A child cries out to its mother for more light, more truth, more love. Ask Love for what you need and for what Love has to give; then take it and demand of yourself to rise up and live it. God will direct you in all your ways, if you trust Him; faith must take hold before sight or fruition, and this faith will, when instructed in divine Science, become understanding and you will have no doubts, but every proof of His promise, 'Lo! I am with you always.'" *****

SUBJECT: LIFE - 01/19/14

Joseph - What an Example!

Jesus' "woe unto them by whom the offenses come Could there be a more perfect example of how to deal with adversity? How to handle animal magnetism (evil)?! It is said that reaction is the bridge over which animal magnetism comes to us. Joseph appears to have refused the bridge.

One could argue that Potiphar's wife was animal magnetism and she caused Joseph to be thrown into jail. But Joseph did not go sour over the injustice. That would have been the bridge. Instead, he continued to let his light shine, even in prison.

It is not that bad things happen to us - it is how we react. The pseudo Christian Scientist accepts failure if something "bad" happens, lets animal magnetism spoil his disposition. The real one rises up and declares, "This can only bless me" and proceeds to prove it - as did Joseph. *****

What an example of forgiveness! It is clear that to heal from any wrong I must be able to genuinely FORGIVE...then resentment or anger is replaced with the Love that separates God's man from the wrong and loves the changeless man of God's creation.

If Joseph did not do this, he could not have welcomed his brothers and gone on to do what God wants Him to do. Guilelessness is one of the nine qualities of Love; it comes from genuine forgiveness.

Psalm 32: 2 "Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." *****

I beg to differ. There is no indication in the story that Joseph ever resented, and therefore I question that he ever needed to forgive. In order to resent in the first place, one must have taken the bait and personalized evil. I do not believe that Joseph did that! "The Christian Scientist loves man more because he loves God most. He understands this Principle, — Love."(Misc. Wr. P 100:26) When jealousy lashes out at such a one, it rolls off him like water off a duck's back. Joseph was an exemplary Christian Scientist! *****

The whole forgiveness issue -- I love the story of Joseph. He could not have been the great man he was all those years if he had harbored resentment toward God or his brothers. He must have understood that, whatever happened, God was working, or at least trusted in that. What would have happened if Joseph stayed with his family? He wouldn't have had the mighty experiences he had, that eventually saved his family. And, don't forget his family is the children of Israel. With that said, I'm sure that when Joseph was in the pit, or sold into servitude, he wasn't thinking, "Thank you God for this experience." But, early on, he must have come to terms with it, and gave it up to God.

It makes me think of Jesus' statement (paraphrased), "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Offenses drive us closer to God, closer to fulfilling His purpose for us. It is inevitable, and it is a blessing! The flesh is at enmity with the spirit. Woe unto the one by whom offenses come, because the fleshly mind is pitiable, and "they know not what they do." (I was recently struck by Lincoln's reference to " statement, in the Gettysburg Address.) *****

The "Tree of Life"

I have never focused on "the tree of life." After some reading, I found this: "Mortals point with pride to their family trees - endless genealogies designed to show a long and illustrious line of earthy progenitors, believing that they have inherited some good from the traditional past. According to Christian Science, however, the real family tree is "the tree of life," and by following Christ, Truth, all men can trace their spiritual ancestry to one heavenly Father, in whom all have their being." (R. P. Verrall, "The Tree of Life", C.S. Journal, July 1913)