

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 42

**SUBJECT- DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT -
04/19/15**

Reconciliation, Redemption, and Atonement

This Lesson Sermon is very powerful for me because it shows in the Bible how Jesus brought us to redemption, then reconciliation. Mary Baker Eddy explains how all of this produces Atonement, which removes guilt. At one time, I couldn't grasp Atonement at all due to feelings of unworthiness (personal sense). BUT, if we listen to the Christ when he says "Let not your heart be troubled...and ...the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: and ...Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Then Mrs. Eddy explains..." The atonement of Christ reconciles man to God, not God to man; for the divine Principle of Christ is God.....Jesus aided in reconciling man to God by giving man a truer sense of Love,,,and this truer sense redeems man from the law of matter, sin and death by the law of Spirit,----the law of divine Love..." .Hence healing guilt and unworthiness. Atonement for me is living in harmony with God. *****

Do All With God

God has given each individual a place and work to do. No one can do it for us. This stops our growth. Mrs. Eddy says in Science & Health, "He (Jesus) did life's work aright not only in justice to himself, but in mercy to mortals,--to show them how to do theirs, but not to do it for them nor to relieve them of a single responsibility." We must each be responsible. Let God guide. *****

Not My Will

Science and Health, p. 33 "Not my will, but Thine, be done!" — that is, Let not the flesh, but the Spirit, be represented in me. This is the new understanding of spiritual Love.

What Jesus said here, at such a critical time proves beyond measure His total submission to the will of God and His love for God! What a way to teach us to do the same.

So many times come in which we have to make decisions. To want nothing more than to have God's will manifest is one of the best ways I have found peace through the practice of Scientific Christianity. I found that when my will is involved to any degree, there is discomfort of some kind.

He knows the way He taketh, so why not put my hand in His and walk with Him? *****

One of our Sunday School children once asked, "What made Jesus so special?" Some people thought that his "virgin" birth was that which made him so special. That is certainly true, but that alone would not have made him the great example he is for us. In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy writes, "By his obedience to God, he demonstrated more spiritually than all others the Principle of being." Jesus was obedient to God in everything he did. We have no record of his doing anything from his own will. Even as a child, he "was about his Father's business." This is what makes him the practical example for all of us.

To think of his life as a series of magic shows puts him out of reach of the rest of us, and does a great disservice to him and to God. Why would God put him here, and why would he live such a perfect life, if not for our benefit? I am so grateful to Mrs. Eddy for making clear his life teaching and purpose so that we have a practical example to follow. *****

How freeing it is to let God's will be done. I am reminded of many instances where I thought I knew humanly the right decision to make. How much misery and pain I caused myself by not turning "as a tired child" to God and let him open the way. Our Father always knows best. The Master, Christ Jesus, went through so much to get this message to us, not just for the period in which he lived, but for all now! "For this we owe him endless homage". *Science and Health*, page 18:5

Daily Walk and Conversation

"If Truth is overcoming error in your daily walk and conversation, you can finally say, 'I have fought a good fight...I have kept the faith,' because you are a better man." This statement has always been a comfort to me, especially during times when I felt overwhelmed by all the changes and work I felt needed to be done! This is a reminder to take each day at a time, begin where you are to overcome error "in your daily walk and conversation." That is certainly doable! Progress will surely be made each day "till at last he (you!) finishes his course with joy."! *****

I find that the desire and commitment to go all the way with "the light" that is showing me my way is most helpful. It reminds me of where I have come from, what I have gained, and what I do not want to go back to.

Our deepest gratitude for all that God is doing in our lives helps us upward and higher with the Truth! *****

Occupy!

"Work out your own salvation," is the demand of Life and Love, for to this end God worketh with you. "Occupy till I come!"

One morning, I was feeling so down about some disturbing suggestions that kept bombarding me about a situation. In response to the thought that I don't know what to do about it, came: "Oh really! But you DO know what to do. Take just one thought at a time and respond to it with the Truth.

It is the way out of this mental miasma, and the only way out!" That broke the mesmerism. It was a clear and emphatic demand from God to rebuke these lies and hold my ground with what I know to be true. It shifted my thought out of a helpless, victim mode into a sense of dominion. *****

Thank you. In the 1828 Dictionary the word "occupy" is defined as - "to take possession; to cover or fill." Your thought is either filled with the "enduring, the good and the true" (S&H) or with the lies of mortal mind and there never is any Mister in-between! Sometimes I hear people complain (myself included) - "Oh it is so hard to keep thought staid on God. It is such an uphill battle." But that is only another sneaky lie error would like you to willingly accept. Why would it be harder to think a good thought than to think a fearful or negative one? In the long run, and even in the short run, it is much easier to think about "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just..." (Phil. 4) and this kind of thinking brings peace and joy into your life. The negative thoughts will only lead down a hole you will only have to dig yourself out of! *****

The foundation of evil is laid on a belief in something besides God. *Science and Health*, p. 92.

The obnoxious, general belief that there is a material world with all the discords and sufferings only the devil could dream up. It is only the devil's dream, mortal mind.

Only what God is aware of is real. Only what Love knows and feels is real.

I am re-reading an "old" book by Robert Peel, "Spritual Healing in a Scientific Age." I can recommend it. It has so many wonderful testimonies of healing, you'll need a whole box of Kleenex.

Then I wondered, if Truth, Love, healed this girl of polio, why did she get it in the first place? It is because we seem to live in an atmosphere of lies, the photo-negative of God's world, the only world.

The book still can be bought, try Google.

SUBJECT – PROBATION AFTER DEATH – 04/26/15

Heaven or Hell?

Through Science, I learned that neither heaven nor hell is a locality. It made sense since I believed I had experienced hell right here in this experience.

How wonderful that Mrs. Eddy's mission clearly shows what to do to experience heaven right here.

The Scripture, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many," is literally fulfilled, when we are conscious of the supremacy of Truth, by which the nothingness of error is seen.

The spiritual sense that makes me see error's nothingness should keep me on the side of heaven (the Christ consciousness) most of the time. *****

Probation and Growth

—from Webster's 1828 dictionary:

PROBA'TION, noun [Latin probatio.] The act of proving; proof.

1. Trial; examination; any proceeding designed to ascertain truth; in universities, the examination of a student, as to his qualifications for a degree.

2. In a monastic sense, trial or the year of novitiate, which a person must pass in a convent, to prove his virtue and his ability to bear the severities of the rule.

3. Moral trial; the state of man in the present life, in which he has the opportunity of proving his character and being qualified for a happier state.

Probation will end with the present life.

4. In America, the trial of a clergyman's qualifications as a minister of the gospel, preparatory to his settlement. We say, a man is preaching on probation

5. In general, trial for proof, or satisfactory evidence, or the time of trial.

Understanding the word made me realize how the Golden Text related to it.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” - Revelation

I used to feel this statement must only have applied to Jesus, but when reading it in this lesson, I felt it was for me and everyone. This constant state of “probation and growth” means the trials I've had aren't an indication I am unworthy of God's system, but rather it is proof I am within it! God gives us all we need to progress and overcome, but it is impossible without realizing the importance of God and our relationship to him.

To know that He never gave up on me brings such joy, especially coming from a place where I felt I had used up my chances. All that time I was simply being put through trials “until probation and growth shall effect the needed change.” (S&H) I am so grateful that God has brought me to Plainfield so I can actually learn and progress, and while that is happening, we have the opportunity to help and support each other and mankind!

Many thanks to the lesson writer for an excellent lesson that has helped me to finally understand why “Probation After Death” is one of the lesson subjects. *****

When I learned that to have nothing to meet could mean stagnation in spiritual growth, I took a fresh look at the wish to be happy materially.

Truth is uncovering error at all times, hence anything that comes to me to handle (mine or world problems) has to be an indication of more growth in my understanding of the Truth; which I must use to handle error for myself and world thought.

I am grateful for the understanding that we use Science, not for ourselves, but for the greater good of proving God, Truth's Allness! *****

This is why Abraham told the rich man that "though one rose from the dead," his brothers would still not repent. They would still be looking for happiness

and security in material things. I believe this is what probation is all about, - the testing of our heart. It is going on right now, and it will continue after the experience called "death." If I am looking for happiness in material things, or in personal relationships, or human accomplishments, my heart must be broken so that I look to God alone for my happiness and security.

Some people fear death. Others look forward to it, as though it has some power to make things all better. But it doesn't, as the story of Lazarus and the rich man shows. I still have work to do. "Every mortal at some period, here or hereafter, must grapple with and overcome the mortal belief in a power opposed to God." (*Science and Health*) When I look at my experiences this way, life becomes much clearer, and death loses any significance.

"Denial of the claims of matter is a great step towards the joys of Spirit, towards human freedom and the final triumph over the body." (*Science and Health*) *****

Anything worth having is worth working for. This is especially so in the death of wrong thinking—negativity, limitation, doubt, fear, anger, comparisons, etc., etc.--in order to make room for all that's good and right—love, compassion, sensitivity, joy, gratitude, etc., etc. It's done through proving, probation, and done with joy; and the only one we want to please, is the God who loves us. "Universal salvation rests on progression and probation." (*Science and Health*) *****

My Soul Thirsteth for Thee

"O God, Thou art my God: early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Having this deep longing for God, when nothing else really matters except to have a close relationship with the Father – this is what dramatically changes a human sense of life into the divine concept. It is to align yourself with the 1st Commandment – having no other gods before the One God. Usually life brings so many distractions

it is easy not to get to this point of yearning until something jars you into the awakening that you need something much more than a superficial way of existing. Remember the Bible states, "Thus saith the Lord.... ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah) *****

Bosom Companion

In citation 5, *Science and Health*, p. 569 Mrs. Eddy mentions "bosom companion", which means someone you know very well and like very much indeed. This, she says, is sin, which comes back to the sinner with accelerated force. In citation 6, she expands the definition to include sickness and disease, which shut out the true sense of Life and health. Ugh, bosom companions! In citation 7, she gives us the remedy: denial of the claims of matter. Thank God for Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science which have brought us the true and only means of salvation! Many thanks to the lesson writer. This lesson is full of these golden nuggets. *****

This is a good reminder not to take any sin as a "bosom" companion and nurture it in some part of our being, letting it fester and grow into something we do not want! This is not the truth about man! But if we indulge in neglectful disobedience to the One who created us - the Adam dream with all its misery awaits! *****

Striving

The tale Jesus gives us of the rich man and Lazarus is truly cautionary; it is a tough lesson. Finding God is the great blessing, thanks to all we are learning at Plainfield. Free of fear, the challenge is to keep striving to live the perfect life. *****

From Bicknell Young's "Dynamic Christian Science:"....man is spiritual in so far as his mental activity presents the perfection of thinking. Perfect thinking is man's spiritual nature. Worth pondering!