

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: MATTER – 3/20/2016

Faith In Matter

“The first idolatry was faith in matter.”
(*Science and Health*) I have been asking myself what faith do I have in matter and making sure I bring everything back to God as the only Cause and Creator. Do I see people as wielding power rather than knowing that God is the only Power? Do I see a rose bud, tree pollen, gluten or any other such thing as causing allergies rather than understanding God’s creation can only bring blessings? Do I feel the weather is beyond His control rather than knowing “Mind’s control of the universe, including man, is no longer an open question but demonstrable Science.” (*Science and Health*) Do I see a paycheck as the source of my supply, forgetting that all my supply is in and of God? Martha Wilcox states in her article “Overcoming by Obedience” – “Our world and all that comprises it is mental and spiritual now, and we only need to have a correct sense of it.” *****

Having that “correct sense of it” is our watching, standing porter at the door of thought, as Mary Baker Eddy instructs us to do, constantly translating what we see into its spiritual signification (wonderful examples above).

It is easier than we may think to have faith in matter –as we may not even realize it!– since we are constantly bombarded with this or that material remedy or advice. One method will contradict the next one that comes along and so on. Having a spiritual sense about things is the only way that makes sense of this mess. Bring everything back to God, as you say, and He guides our

every move and decision, lifting us up out of the mire of human knowledge. *****

Idols

IDOL (Webster’s 1828)

1. An image, form or representation, usually of a man or other animal, consecrated as an object of worship;
2. A person loved and honored to adoration.
3. Anything on which we set our affections;

This week lesson’s citations on idolatry inspired me to think about what I am consecrated to. I realized a continual focus on my personal self is a form of idol worship. We can be tempted to devote a lot of time thinking of ourselves and society encourages it. I was suddenly aware of how many of my thoughts, when unchecked, lead back to me - will, worries, ego, pride, over sensitiveness, etc. Even if it seems I am reacting to my environment, it still boils down to how I filter these thoughts. I am grateful for all I am learning here that truly helps me think out from God, to be un-selfed and gaining an understanding of my individuality as created by God.

Self (excerpts from Webster’s 1828)

1. ...the individual subject to his own contemplation...
2. It also signifies personal interest, or love of private interest; selfishness.

“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.” Psalm 118:8

“Sacrifice self to bless one another, even as God has blessed you. Forget self in laboring for mankind; then will you woo the weary wanderer to your door, win the pilgrim and stranger to your church, and find access to the heart of humanity. ” MARY BAKER EDDY Misc. p. 155 *****

I understand now that humility is an imperative quality for all who live this

Science. It is to acknowledge our oneness with God. We are not separate nor can we do anything on our own. And we certainly cannot heal without humility. This is where the First Commandment, if obeyed, handles the thought of idols. There is NONE BESIDE ME, NOTHING OF ANY KIND. This I find very helpful when material sense testimony tries its assertion of false beliefs. THERE IS ONLY GOD!! *****

Both your points on humility and God's allness were helpful. This was a reminder for me to watch negative thoughts by obeying the First Commandment. Humility puts the focus on God where it should be (antidote to self-centered thinking). Your comment today during Bible Study about humility being a form of repentance also resonated with me. *****

Demoralization

From this week's lesson:

12. 133

In national prosperity, miracles attended the successes of the Hebrews; but when they departed from the true idea, their demoralization began.

From Webster's 1828:

DEMORALIZATION, noun The act of subverting or corrupting morals; destruction of moral principles.

DEMORALIZE, verb transitive To corrupt or undermine the morals of; to destroy or lessen the effect of moral principles on; to render corrupt in morals.

The effect would be to demoralize mankind.

The native vigor of the soul must wholly disappear, under the steady influence and the demoralizing example of profligate power and prosperous crime.

DISCOURAGE, verb transitive discourage. [dis and courage. See Courage.]

1. To extinguish the courage of; to dishearten; to depress the spirits; to deject; to deprive of confidence.

Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they

be discouraged. Colossians 3:21.

2. To deter from any thing; with from.

Why discourage ye the hearts of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them? Numbers 32:7.

3. To attempt to repress or prevent; to dissuade from; as, to discourage an effort.

I always took demoralized to mean discouraged – in the sense of “I feel like giving up!” – but to know its meaning is “to destroy or lessen the effect of moral principles” gives me a much different understanding now. Without God in my life, I can have no morality, no Love, no Principle, and no courage. All that is left is false belief and fear, and to be the “expression of error.” (*Science and Health*, p. 289)

I am very grateful to this church and Christian Science for lifting us out of that error – de-error-ization – to a place where we can be useful to God. Thank you! *****

We ended up having a full testimony meeting, but it didn't feel right to leave this unsaid:

My whole life, I have been prone to feeling easily discouraged and to never feeling like I know if I am making right decisions. I see now that I was raised to seek the end result without having a clue what the process was that actually creates it. To know that God is the source of all, and that He supplies me each day with the means to achieve His purpose is a wonderful revelation to me. I was always discouraged because I didn't go to God for everything, and perpetually demoralized because I had no idea how to even understand what constituted a good result.

This church has taught me that good results only come from obedience to God, because only God knows what the result should be in the first place! Christian Science is teaching me that we cannot expect the result to be good — in other words, from God – if the recipe we are following is all wrong. I need to live this.

I am so grateful for this church, these lessons, for Christian Science, for practitioner support, and for God giving me a place and purpose at all times. What a blessing this is, that even a single word in a lesson can bring so much healing! Thank you! *****

Be Still

“Be still, and know that I am God.” This statement has helped me many times; if I am feeling anxious, or pressured, stressed, reminding myself to be still, and know that I am God has calmed me so I am able to hear God’s voice.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” God is right with me to help me no matter what the situation. I am very grateful to God for leading me to this church. *****

SUBJECT – REALITY – 3/27/ 2016

Perfection Now

Are we seeking perfection of matter, body, job, home; or spirit, mind, our thoughts? Our only desire should be to grow closer to God, Spirit. “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:2 “above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” Colossians 3:14 All is the reflection of God: perfect God, perfect man, perfect universe. “Man’s perfection is real and unimpeachable.” *Science and Health*, 414:28 Gratitude heals! *****

That’s a good point—where are we looking for perfection? We’ll never find it in matter. But when we faithfully correct our thinking, replacing the false picture that may be in front of us with the truth about God’s creation, that will out-picture itself and what we have, and are, will be beautiful and

glorious—we’ll see the perfection that’s always been there. *****

Yes, it is true – sometimes we can see someone (or perhaps be so ourselves!) trying to be humanly perfect. Every tiny speck of dust constantly must be dusted away, every subject in school must be an A plus, plus, plus, every hair on one’s head must be perfectly in place etc. This is all human striving without any God in it (only pride and ego) which is why it is exhausting and ends in failure and frustration. I’ve tried it! In Science, we learn even as God is the only Good, so also God is the only Perfect One. We only come close to perfection as we rid ourselves of self and let God shine through us. Look how a beautiful flower unfolds in total perfection! No muss and fuss with exhausting effort there! And so it should be with the sons and daughters of God – shine forth, be what God made you to be! For in “beauty, grandeur, order, His handiwork is shown.” (Hymn #329) *****

Be Ye Therefore Perfect

“To reach perfection, we are told that every thought must be brought ‘to the obedience of Christ,’ of Truth; but because we recognize this as the goal, and are earnestly striving therefore, surely it is no excuse for condemning either ourselves or others, because of present lack of attainment. Christ Jesus did attain perfection; it is therefore attainable, as he emphatically announced, by all who follow in his footsteps. This problem is individual, and cannot be accomplished by one for another, any more than can music or mathematics be learned by a substitute. Its attainment requires the same consecration and indefatigability (persistence) that must obtain to insure success in any undertaking of value, never can it be accomplished through discouragement or indolence. The effort, then, of the individual must be to bury the past, with all its failures, sicknesses, sorrows, and mistakes, and, beginning anew,

with the Bible and its Key, the Christian Science text-book, for his guides, to govern his life accordingly, for thus, and thus only, can the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures be gained and their power be practically demonstrated.” By Herbert Eustace excerpt from:

1905 Christian Science Journal article titled “KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES” *****

This is similar to the instruction from Paul to Timothy, to study the scriptures, “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” The idea of perfection can be a tough one, especially when we see human imperfection all around us. And I guess that’s the point. Perfection is not a human quality. It is a divine quality that we experience as we live in obedience to the laws of God. Mrs. Eddy assures us that “man’s perfection is real and unimpeachable,” and Jesus instructed us to “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” It starts by being perfectly honest, with myself and with others. Be up front with God and with my own heart. Be perfectly humble. Get my own will out of the way. This is a tough one! But it means to get rid of all will and pride. Have a perfect motive for everything I do. Does this bless others? Does it express the love that God has for me and for all His creation, or is it selfish? Be perfectly principled. Is this in accordance with my highest sense of right? The result of all this is perfect health, perfect sanity, and a perfectly useful life. Certainly worth striving for. And the best part of it is that it is real and unimpeachable! *****

Risen With Christ

In Colossians, Paul writes: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,” To me, the important words are “with Christ”. Let me never forget that it is the ways of Christ, the truth learned in

Christian Science that has elevated me, has lifted my thought, has improved my experience, healed illness, and resolved problems. It is only by Christ that I have risen, and not by my own personal efforts. Remembering this, I will naturally seek things that are above and humbly watch to follow the divine leading. This is the reality of living. *****

It’s wonderful learning about the Christ through Christian Science! The Christ IS here, present everywhere. *Science and Health*, p. 583 Christ: the divine manifestation of God, which has come to the flesh to destroy incarnate error. How often do I think of the Christ as my real spiritual being, hence impossible to have all the false claims as real? To think any discords, imperfections, defects, etc. are real is to dishonor the Christ (my Christ, everyone’s Christ as having no power to destroy incarnate error). **That** is unreal, far from the reality of the Christ’s ever-present healing power! To prove this reality each time with our demonstrations is blessing ourselves and blessing the whole of mankind.

Recognize Man's Spiritual Being

Simply put, I must recognize man’s spiritual being for myself and everyone. In order NOT to be fooled by the supposed something that claims to be real, I MUST accept the reality of man’s perfection (that is the real man) and persist in this view contrary to all the false senses that come. If this seems so difficult, it still does not mean it is NOT the reality. How to gain some ground in attaining this position is also given us in the Lesson: *Science and Health*, p.254 Individuals are consistent who, watching and praying, can “run, and not be weary; ...walk, and not faint,” who gain good rapidly and hold their position, or attain slowly and yield not to discouragement. (CONSISTENCY and PERSISTENCE). *Science and Health*, p. 272 This sense is

assimilated only as we are honest, unselfish, loving, and meek. In the soil of an “honest and good heart” the seed must be sown; else it beareth not much fruit, for the swinish element in human nature uproots it. (WE MUST PREPARE THOUGHT TO RECEIVE)*****

This has become a very important point for me and I feel sure that if I am unable to see God’s man correctly and as Christ saw all mankind, I will never understand who I really am in God’s kingdom. Thank you for the two guidelines from *Science and Health*, and I like, “WE MUST PREPARE THOUGHT TO RECEIVE”. I usually just jump right in thinking about God’s man, but preparing my thought in prayer will help me to understand that, “man is pure and holy”*****

I believe that this is an important part of what Paul meant when he wrote to the Romans: “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Yes, it is work, but to transform myself by renewing my mind (bringing it back to its original state, a reflection of God, the only Mind) is the only way I can see what is real and true.

One important point is not to covet or compete. The good that others have is theirs, and there is infinite good to go around. If I am doing what God wants me to do, He gives me everything I need with which to do it, and that is sufficient. Spirit, God is All, and is the source of everything good and real, and when I keep that in thought, I can never lack anything good.*****

SUBJECT: UNREALITY – 4/3/2016

Rolling Away the Stone

The citation #7, *Science and Health*, p.44:28-10 of Christ Jesus rolling away the

stone from the sepulcher brings to mind the story of when Jacob meets Rachel for the first time (Gen. 29.) In those days the wells were covered with a huge stone so that it took more than one man to remove it to water the sheep. Jacob falls in love with Rachel the minute he sets eyes on her. After a discourse with a couple of shepherds who say there aren’t enough men to remove the stone, Jacob by ‘himself’ rolls away the stone to water Rachel’s flock. Divine Love rolls away all of our mortal beliefs. *****

If we, in obedience and humility, accept the Truth that GOD IS ALL, we benefit greatly from God’s constant and loving care. This brings to mind what Mrs. Eddy says about the might of Mind, which is ours to acknowledge when faced with claims. *Science and Health*, p.391:7-16 Instead of blind and calm submission to the incipient or advanced stages of disease, rise in rebellion against them. Banish the belief that you can possibly entertain a single intruding pain which cannot be ruled out **by the might of Mind**, and in this way you can prevent the development of pain in the body. No law of God hinders this result. It is error to suffer for aught but your own sins. Christ, or Truth, will destroy all other supposed suffering, and real suffering for your own sins will cease in proportion as the sin ceases.

The sin referred to is our own trust in material sense testimony, instead of allowing Truth to destroy the false senses. The might of Mind is forever present to move the dense falsehoods that would prey on us, if allowed! This clears our view so we can discern what is REAL and what is UNREAL. *****

... ruled by the might of Mind which rules our anything inharmonious. Ruled: governed, administered, controlled, managed, be in authority, order, prevail, reign, preside, direct, decree, and run the show. God “runs the show”. *****

"The Tree Is Known By His Fruit"

Science and Health, p. 299: 18-23

Knowledge gained from material sense is figuratively represented in Scripture as a tree, bearing the fruits of sin, sickness, and death. Ought we not then to judge the knowledge thus obtained to be untrue and dangerous, since "the tree is known by his fruit"?

Soon after I first arrived in Plainfield, the verses from Galatians (see below) about the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit were in a lesson. It impressed me how clear it is what is right and what is wrong, and I often refer to the fruit of the Spirit to be sure I am expressing them. I spent enough time being known for fruit that was not good, so I am very thankful to be given the opportunity to learn and do better. Christian Science brings so many blessings! Thank you!

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Galatians 5: 19-23

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*****

Revelation

Science and Health, p 70:1-6: "MORTAL existence is an enigma. Every day is a mystery. The testimony of the corporeal senses cannot inform us what is real and what is delusive, but the revelations of Christian Science unlock the treasures of

Truth. Whatever is false or sinful can never enter the atmosphere of Spirit."

I look back and realize how much my life always seemed to be an enigma, as I went from one human goal to another, from one relationship to another, until I happened to find Christian Science and recognized the truth of our life in reading Mrs. Eddy's wonderful revelation in *Science and Health*. Still, I was very frustrated in recognizing the truth I had found, but not being able to use it successfully in my life experience. I did not have physical problems, but the mental struggle remained until I learned how to use Science at Plainfield. Much gratitude, always. *****

My Sheep Hear My Voice

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (Christ Jesus) I was once shown a funny and also very sweet YouTube video depicting a pasture of sheep with various people calling to them – all without any success whatsoever!

When the real shepherd of this flock began to call out to them however, the results quickly changed. The sheep came quickly from all parts of the pasture at his simple beckoning. We each have within ourselves the ability to hear the Good Shepherd's voice. It may have gotten rusty from lack of use or from the cares and trials of this world but it is there, nonetheless.

It is a God given ability and if we treasure and cultivate our at-one with Him, we will begin to hear His voice more and more distinctly.

Don't ever let error trick you into believing you can't hear your Master's voice! Keep listening and trust His Love for you. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." *****