

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

WWW.PLAINFIELDCS.COM

ISSUE 79

**SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment –
October 30th, 2016**

The Uses of His Rod

“Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.” (Job) I was never one who much liked to be corrected. It would be hard not to want to roll into a little ball and hide out for a while! I can see now how important it is to have the humility to take correction and to change. It really does make one happy! Mrs. Eddy says quite a bit about this quality. In *Miscellaneous Writings*, she states, “The Hebrew law with its ‘Thou shalt not,’ its demand and sentence, can only be fulfilled through the gospel’s benediction. Then, ‘Blessed are ye,’ insomuch as the consciousness of good, grace, and peace, comes through afflictions rightly understood, as sanctified by the purification it brings to the flesh, – to pride, self-ignorance, self-will, self-love, self-justification. Sweet indeed, are these uses of His rod! Well is it that the Shepherd of Israel passes all His flock under His rod into His fold; thereby numbering them, and giving them refuge at last from the elements of earth.” *****

As with all things, motive and demonstration are the keys. When the correction is Scientific and results in a better understanding of God, then demonstration becomes ‘normal’ and it is easier to accept correction because it is based upon a Principal of God, rather than a materialistic fable. I’m so grateful to have received possibly the most important piece of the Holy Ghost; even though I couldn’t Scientifically demonstrate. I received such a conviction that what Mary Baker Eddy wrote down was Truth that I didn’t give up on Christian Science through years of no one correcting my lack of understanding. Thanks for your humility in admitting to the path you’ve traveled because it makes others (me) realize that they too can attain

this through persistence and correct teaching given at Plainfield! *****

Yes, I have been grateful for your testimony ever since coming to Plainfield. It has encouraged me and made me know I am not alone. Mrs. Eddy says in *Science and Health*, “It is easier to desire Truth than to rid one’s self of error. Mortals may seek the understanding of Christian Science, but they will not be able to glean from Christian Science the facts of being without striving for them.” *****

I never liked being corrected either. I wanted everything to be “nice.” But without the corrections, I never would have changed my ways and would have continued to suffer because of it.

In the Moffat Translation of the Bible, in Hebrews 12:11 it says, “Discipline always seems for the time to be a thing of pain, not of joy; but those who are trained by it reap the fruit of it afterwards in the peace of an upright life.”

Thank God for everyone who loves enough to give a correction and get us on the path of right thinking. It requires love for God and man and the teaching in the Plainfield Church shows us how to give corrections with love. I am very grateful. *****

In my understanding is a God who rewards and punishes scholastic theology. Error brings its own punishment every lie against Truth will reap what it sows. But yes, I have experienced this shepherding and the rod and the staff, but on the other hand, Mind knows not about our mortal dream. Sin, or missing the mark, is experiencing the mortal nightmare, darkness, and the light beckons and attracts and pulls us.

But I would like to hear other understandings about this. *****

“It is believed by many that a certain magistrate, who lived in the time of Jesus, left this record: ‘His rebuke is fearful.’” (*Science and Health*)

This reminds me of our late practitioner and teacher, Doris Evans. Whenever she detected the

human mind trying to interfere with God's government (and that was often), she would rebuke it, and her rebuke was fearful. It wasn't always easy, but I quickly learned that the "fearful" part of her rebuke was the error, latent in my thought that was fearing the rebuke, because that rebuke was the beginning of the destruction of the error. It is always an erroneous belief that fears the rebuke of Truth, and causes others and me to feel uncomfortable.

I didn't always understand what needed to be corrected, but when I asked God to show me, I eventually learned a good lesson and changed with each rebuke. It took a little training, but I also learned to accept the discomfort as a necessary part of my spiritual growth. This was not easy for Mrs. Evans, as it was not easy for Mrs. Eddy or for Christ Jesus, to give stern rebukes. But it was a sign of their great love for God and man that they were willing to make people feel uncomfortable in order to help them out of the mortal dream into a higher vision of the truth. We should all, as Scientists, be willing to take, and give, sharp rebukes to error.

"Through the wholesome chastisements of Love, we are helped onward in the march towards righteousness, peace, and purity, which are the landmarks of Science." (*Science and Health*) ****

Welcome Reminders

I used to get so discouraged when a claim I thought I have been working on to "heal" kept coming back. At times, the claim would "hide" for a while and then, voila! Here it would come again rearing its ugly head. And here is the reason, given plain and simple; *Science and Health*, p. 240:18-4
Mortals move onward towards good or evil as time glides on. If mortals **are not progressive**, past failures will be repeated until all wrong work is effaced or rectified. (Emphasis added)

When I had not really understood the counter-fact of that claim and used it to get convinced of the unreality and powerlessness of it (error's only chief blow) why would I think the claim is extinguished

and would not show up again? The repeated appearing meant I had not rendered the claim as nothing. It remained something I believed in as real; which in a way said I was not accepting, respecting and obeying the Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omni-action of God, whom I professed to reflect.

So no complaining, no getting all discouraged or thinking I can use some other non-lasting means, but rather say welcome to all the reminders that forces true spiritual progress! *****

Thank you! In one of Gilbert Carpenter's 500 Watching Points, he states that after every healing it is important to understand and to know it was never true in the first place. How can something not true re-occur? It cannot! Sometimes Christian Scientists get mocked for saying sin, disease, and death are unreal, but when we fully understand the deeper meaning of this statement and realize, as you stated so well, there cannot be two powers but only the One Supreme Power – God Good, then the unreality of sin, disease and death becomes self-evident and thus provable. Just as in mathematics, so in Christian Science, some of these problems might take awhile to prove and to understand. But that is OK. As we take up the work day by day – we get plenty of opportunities to practice the Truth of these God-given Principles until we finally see clearly and can no longer be fooled by the lie.

I had maybe a rather childish inspiration a couple of days ago. It goes something like this: God is saying, "If all this were real, surely I would do something about it. I would heal all disease, eliminate all evil and correct all error and lies, and be done with this opposing mortal mind and its world. But I, God, cannot fix anything that does not exist. That is why I sent my Son, to show you it is not real."

I feel sad when I realize how millions of good Christians have implored heaven to "fix things," and heal loved ones. But evil and matter always was their reality, and as long as we think it is reality, it will be. So much unanswered prayer, so much suffering. It takes constant work to keep ourselves above it, because it does seem very real and normal to our senses.

Isn't it an insult to God to think He has anything to

do with “this?” That He could know it, be aware of it, allow it? God knows only His perfect Mind or creation, harmonious, perfect, wonderful, sweet, happy, good. And Love is reflected in love. *****

“Isn’t it an insult to God to think He has anything to do with “this?”

Yes it is the “wrong” understanding of God that perpetuates that He, a good God, can send disease, bad weather, etc. to punish His own children. This can lead one to think that a great deal of Christian life is in profession only, but not in practice. What even we would not do to our children, we have the audacity to think God is capable of doing.

Interesting how many times we hear, “God is good **all the time.**”

Does the “all the time” mean anything or it just sounds good?

Only God, as understood through Christian Science is logical and makes sense; this is why Mrs. Eddy says in *Science and Health*, p 390:7-9 “It is our ignorance of God, the divine Principle, which produces apparent discord, and the right understanding of Him restores harmony.” The leaven of Truth is leavening, so we can trust Truth’s work! *****

**SUBJECT – Adam And Fallen Man –
November 6th, 2016**

Christian Science Feels Right, Because It Is Right!

RESPONSIVE READING: I Corinthians 15: 22
22. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Before coming to Plainfield, I would read about different religions and self-help methods that purport to help people live their lives to the fullest, and eventually there would come that moment where the teaching would give me a nauseous feeling. As soon as that sick feeling came on, I’d stop and then look elsewhere. I am sure I studied hundreds of systems, trying to find meaning and fulfillment in this life, and each method failed that test.

I am so thankful for Christian Science, as the more I learn, the more it makes sense! I continually find it so wonderful how Christian Science not only gives us the tools to understand the Bible, but also how obviously in step with the Scriptures it is. When I read that statement from I Corinthians, it made me so happy to know that there is no trickery in Christian Science. All I have learned at this church has shown me without a doubt that the Bible and Science and Health work together. Christian Science feels right, because it is right!

What a blessing it is to finally be moving forward! Thank you! *****

I am sure there may be others out there searching, as you were, for the Truth. This may be just the encouragement they need. Thank you for itbeautiful and touching.

Yes, thank you.

I grew up in Science and didn’t really question or look into other religions or “systems,” so it’s refreshing to hear the perspective from one who did look into them and found why they didn’t work and why Science does. *****

Begins Reign Somewhat Mildly

“Adam, the synonym for error, stands for a belief of mortal mind. He begins his reign over man somewhat mildly, but he increases in falsehood and his days become shorter.” (*Science and Health*) Error makes its inroads subtly – never announcing its name and intent with any fanfare. That is how it can enter into consciousness undetected and that is also why we must be ever alert to its falsehoods posing as our own thought. Knowing there is only one Mind is an important Truth to hold on to. Mrs. Eddy’s article “Ways that are Vain” is a good one to study. She says in part, “Animal magnetism, in its ascending step of evil, entices its victim by unseen, silent arguments. Be ever on guard against this enemy. Watch your thoughts, and see whether they lead you to God and into harmony with His true followers. Guard and strengthen your own citadel more strongly. Thus you will grow wiser and better through every attack of your foe, and the Golden

Rule will not rust for lack of use or be misinterpreted by the adverse influence of animal magnetism.” *****

Always alert, checking our thoughts was a worry for me, but as said at the Bible Study, “Grace is the law of God acting in our hearts unconditionally.” This is calming to know that through God’s unconditional grace, we are up to the task of facing and uncovering all error before it can get a foothold. It is a wonderful blessing that God’s grace is always in operation to help us strengthen our citadel. Thank you *****

The exact statement at the Bible Study was “Grace is the law of God acting in our behalf unconditionally.” Yes, we can feel God’s grace in our hearts, but His law operates in our behalf to meet whatever the human need is. This is practical stuff! And His grace covers the whole ground! ***

Heavens And Earth Were Finished

I found this excerpt from First Edition *Science and Health* by Mary Baker Eddy p. 242; that corresponds to this week’s lesson Bible citation #3.

“ ‘Thus the heavens and earth were finished, and all the hosts of them.’ Here the Scripture repeats again the science of creation, namely, that all was complete and finished, therefore nothing has since been made; that Intelligence embraced all from the forever, and that all is perfect, infinite and eternal. As matter-substance, all is lost, but as Principle and idea, all is eternal. Never a mineral, vegetable, or animal was formed of dust; Spirit alone fashions all things. Birth, decay, and death are a personal sense of things, not their idea; man and the universe are complete and eternal in Intelligence, and nothing can exist out of that.”

The term ‘science of creation’ brought home to me that Principle is in control of all creation and it is a ‘personal sense of things’ which explains the mist that went up from the Earth, that obscures our view from God’s complete perfect creation. *****

This was discussed briefly in our Roundtable last week. The “mist” coming up from the earth is the materialism that clouds our vision. When we put

faith in what we see with our eyes or hear with our ears, we “see” things upside down and backwards. We totally miss the spiritual reality of things. It is only through our spiritual sense that we can see anything clearly.

I thank Mrs. Eddy for explaining that this is what the entire second chapter of Genesis is all about - a fantasy picture of creation seen through the mist of material belief. That is why she calls it a myth. None of it is true. And the result of such clouded vision is that women shall experience pain and sorrow in childbirth and men are doomed to till the ground until they die. All of this is untrue.

The Bible section finishes with John’s explanation that God sent Jesus “that the world through him might be saved.” It occurred to me that this “saving” is the clearing of our vision so that we might see things as they really are – spiritual, healthy, painless, sinless, diseaseless, and deathless.

Jesus would not have told us to “be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” if it weren’t possible (and true). *****

The Lie Deceives Itself

Science and Health, p. 529 “Whence comes a talking, lying serpent to tempt the children of divine Love?” Because there can be no such ridiculousness, it says, “Seeing this, we should have faith to fight all claims of evil, because we know that they are worthless and unreal.”

We must appreciate this to help us learn that harmony is real and discord is unreal. As we do this, we can continue our spiritual journey, “joyfully acknowledging now and forever God’s supremacy, omnipotence, and omnipresence.” *Science and Health*, P. 521:10-11*****

Yes. I felt God explaining to me: “NOT AS LONG AS I AM THE ONLY REAL CONSCIOUSNESS!” All that...you know whatall that...is not real, as long as God is our only consciousness. I gave my puppy a treat, and she wagged her tail. How often do we wag our tail in joy and gratitude? God wants to and does give us treats continually. God is Love!

SUBJECT – Mortals and Immortals – November 13th, 2016

Immortal, Not Mortal

Mrs. Eddy says in *Watches, Prayers, Arguments*, “How unspeakably blessed is the deliverance from the fiction of error that has deceived mortals.”

Recently, I was speaking with a practitioner on a family situation, and the practitioner pointed out to me that I was allowing human will to enter. I was grateful it was pointed out, and I started praying about human will. I realized that it is so easy for me to fall for this fiction, or lie. I thought I was leading my family in the right direction, but it was what I wanted, with no God in it. I needed to let go and pray for God’s will to be done; and, if what I wanted was God’s will, great, and if it not, He had something better.

I found in *Watches, Prayers, Arguments*, the statement “I (You) have no human will. God’s will is all, and I am (you are) its reflection.”

I know God’s plan is better than I could ever imagine. I am grateful for the love of the practitioner for pointing out this erroneous thinking. This is being delivered from the fiction of error and bringing my thought back to God. I am immortal—not a mortal—and living the glorious life of an immortal. *****

Remember Ye Not The Former Things...

1. Isaiah 43

1: “...thus saith the LORD that created thee, ... Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

18: Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.”

What a mandate! Put it all behind, and move forward with God. This gives me even more insight into Jesus’ words “...whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14: 33) Everything I’ve done wrong, every time I was thoughtless, each time I was less than the man God created me to be, needs to be let go. I am not called to regret any of it, or

feel endless guilt. Nor do I need to replay in my thought any of my mis-steps. All I need to do is move forward with God. What a literal Godsend that Christian Science provides the only true method to expunge the past, find our purpose, and understand our place in God’s creation. Thank you for this lesson! *****

All Things Made New

Have you ever heard that some person will never change or said I can never change with a sense of discouragement? The Bible assures us that things impossible to man are possible to God. After reading the golden text and responsive reading, it is a wonder what God does: He makes all things new, He takes us from among heathens, He cleanses us, He gives a compassionate heart, He puts His spirit within us, He causes us to walk in His statutes, and He assure us that we are His people and that He is our God. Who but God himself could do all these things? This is enough to encourage anyone, renew hope and remove any trace of discouragement. Thanks be to God. *****

I, too, felt the encouragement of the citations. This morning I was listening to the audio of the article “Love Your Enemies” by Mary Baker Eddy. Below is a quote that I thought fit in with the theme of our lesson this week.

“The best lesson of their (our) lives is gained by crossing swords with temptation, with fear and the besetments of evil; insomuch as they thereby have tried their strength and proven it; insomuch as they have found their strength made perfect in weakness, and their fear is self-immolated. This destruction is a moral chemicalization, wherein old things pass away and all things become new.”

Earlier in the article she writes:

“Simply count your enemy to be that which defiles, defaces, and dethrones the Christ-image that you should reflect. Whatever purifies, sanctifies, and consecrates human life, is not an enemy, however much we suffer in the process.”

Before coming to Plainfield I thought everything always had to be smooth, no trouble, free from disagreements, etc. I tried to obtain this by human effort not spiritual scientific demonstration-like

when Jesus stilled the storm. Jesus had to drive out the money changers from the temple. He did not just stand by and let ungodly behavior continue because he did not want to upset anyone. Now I see if peace is not based upon God, it is not pure, honest, nor lasting. A false peace puts one to sleep to Satan's plots, which as I found in my life, just smolders underneath until it breaks out into flames. I am very grateful for the pure teachings of the Science of Christianity based on Mary Baker Eddy's discovery and Bible classes that are given here. *****

At Once Change Your Course

In *Science and Health* it states "If you believe in and practice wrong knowingly, you can at once change your course and do right." I can remember when this statement lighted up for me and what a refreshing and uplifting sense it gave. The first part says that if doing wrong, you actually do know it, which requires some serious self-examination with blunt honesty. But this is a healthy thing, releasing self-will and pride, and opens the connection with God. The other thing it says is the change is at once, no drawn out and contested readjustment, nor is there any selfish disappointment about having to change, but rather a joyful compliance with God's directing. Mrs. Eddy said, "There should be painless progress" (see *Science and Health*, p 224: 8 – 10). With God's help, the way to doing right is open. *****

The lesson is also very instructive on how to change our course. It is to be "born of the water and of the spirit." One of the things that meant to me is to fully trust my spiritual sense, and to really work at shutting out the personal, human, material picture that is thrown in our faces by the media. Paul is such an inspiration in this regard. He turned on a dime, literally, and became one of the most powerful forces for good the world has ever seen. Mrs. Eddy writes a lot about Paul for that reason. In S&H, "Saul of Tarsus beheld the way – the Christ, or Truth – only when his uncertain sense of right yielded to a spiritual sense, which is always right."

This is a tremendous, empowering point, that our spiritual sense is always right! But how often does it get overclouded by the personal, material senses? Mrs. Eddy exhorts us, "If the disciple is advancing spiritually, he is striving to enter in. He constantly turns away from material sense, and looks towards the imperishable things of Spirit." Being born of water and of the spirit requires work on our part, because the devil does not stop trying to distract us from following our spiritual sense. But, "the battle is the Lord's," and when we fight the good fight, "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."

When Error Confronts You

"When error confronts you, withhold not the rebuke or the explanation which destroys error. Never breathe an immoral atmosphere unless in the attempt to purify." (*Science and Health*) These are the words that are inscribed on the wall over the heads of where the 1st and 2nd Readers sit in The Mother Church, in full view of the entire congregation. Mrs. Eddy chose these words herself. She did not choose, "God is Love" which is in the original Church edifice. She knew what would happen to her Church if these instructive words were not heeded -and it has! This quote from our textbook, served as a warning for all time, and to all people, in all places. And yet how many even notice or realize the deep import of her command? And it is a command – not a suggestion! "As in Jesus' time, so to-day, tyranny and pride need to be whipped out of the temple, and humility and divine Science to be welcomed in." (*Science and Health*). *****

Immortality

"Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" —
Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.
The Soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.