

# FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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**SUBJECT: Man – March 5th, 2017**

## **Immortal Man**

*Science and Health*, p. 405

*Immortal man demonstrates the government of God, good, in which is no power to sin.*

The admonition to put off “the old man” is vital to our practice of Christian Science. It means relinquishing our material history, in order to embrace and identify with the man of God’s creating, the real man, who is His manifestation and His reflection. This is immortal man, the spiritual individuality which possesses “All That My Father Has. . .” and is under God’s government, with no power to sin and is of the substance that cannot be sick nor die. \*\*\*\*

## **Never Despair of an Honest Heart**

In *Science and Health* is the statement “We never need to despair of an honest heart.” There is a lot that can be said about an honest heart, but the inclination to just tell the truth is a basic starting point. I can recall requiring to tell the truth when it did not reflect favorably on something I had done. But I still recall the liberating feeling when I got it clear in my mind that I would tell the truth, just for the sake of truth, and regardless of how it reflected on me or anyone else. And, when I did, it opened the way to forgiveness, so there was nothing to fear or despair about being truthful. It sheds some light on Jesus’ statement “the truth shall make you free.” The preservation of integrity of character preserves your manhood. It takes a man (and this can be male or female) to hold the ground for right, regardless of the direction the winds of personal preference are blowing. \*\*\*\*\*

Thank you for this post, which brings it right around again to Mrs. Eddy’s statement “Honesty is spiritual power. Dishonesty is human weakness, which forfeits divine help.” There is the idea out there that telling lies can somehow be gainfully

manipulative to get things to go one’s way. Phooey to that! And yet this is a common, everyday occurrence of being in the wrong mind, consumed by material thinking. It may work for a while, but it always catches up with you (“...there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed”-Matt. 10). Been there, done that!

I am now daily encouraged by “Honesty is spiritual power.” Somehow I missed that statement until recently, and it’s probably because I wasn’t exactly living totally honestly with myself, God, or my Science, before coming to Plainfield.

Now it’s become a lynchpin of my daily existence, and when I share this statement with others, always quoting Mary Baker Eddy, people are immediately touched by this truth. Because it takes courage to stand up for the truth, to listen to that small voice that says, speak up! “Honesty is spiritual power...” is an encouragement to do the right thing, and who in their right mind would want to forfeit divine help? \*\*\*\*\*

## **Honesty is Spiritual Power**

“Honesty is spiritual power. Dishonesty is human weakness, which forfeits divine power.” (*Science and Health*, p. 453)

I used to wonder how honesty could be spiritual power, but have grown to see that honesty is a state of thought that is worthy of divine power, because it is receptive to that which is right and uncluttered with lies. Dishonesty is a thought that is all cluttered up, so that God can’t be heard. Nothing worthy of divine anything, hence Mrs. Eddy’s description as not only human, but the worst of human weakness.

I’ve seen that people can make the worst mistakes; yet, if they are made honestly, and not hidden in deception, God will reveal whatever is needed to learn from those mistakes. I think of Paul persecuting Christians. Talk about a big mistake. Yet, he honestly thought he was doing right, and when he was blinded by the light, he did not try to

hide from anything or anyone. God was able to use his honesty to do great things.

I'm grateful to learn that it is not a badge of shame to make a mistake. As long as I am honest about it and open, God reveals what I need to learn from the experience. Rather is it a badge of shame to try to hide the mistake and lie about it, for then the lesson is not learned. Ananias and Sapphira found that out the hard way.

Good lesson on what it takes to be a real man (and woman).

## **Be Honest—The Story of Ananias and Sapphira**

I found commentary about Ananias and Sapphira on Bible.org in which the last paragraph was particularly good. I read it in Bible Study this morning and was asked to post it here.

“A penetrating question lingers in our minds after we have drawn the curtain on the life of Ananias and Sapphira. Which is really more important to us—to maintain the appearance of spirituality, or genuinely to be what God wants us to be? Cultivating the appearance alone leads to death—death to further spiritual growth, death to usefulness in the family of God, and death to a growing relationship with each other as husbands and wives. But the Spirit of God can use an honest openness, on the other hand, to produce in us the life of Christ, and that means abundant life, abiding joy, and abounding blessing.” \*\*\*\*\*

## **The Two-Edged Sword**

This weekend, at the Roundtable, someone mentioned about deep-rooted problems that sometimes seem difficult to come out from hiding to be uncovered and destroyed. Perhaps we are not even aware of what is troubling us or holding us back from making a much desired demonstration. In the lesson this week, Hebrews 4: 12, 13 speaks to this. The Amplified Version states, – “For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power (making it active, operative, energizing, and effective); it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life

and the immortal spirit of joints and marrow (of the deepest parts of our nature), exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart. And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, naked and defenseless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.” Even though we may try and hide what we feel are our shortcomings, nothing is hid from God and that is a good thing! Let the Word of God go deep with its cleansing and purifying effect! \*\*\*\*\*

## **I Make Peace and Create Evil**

From the lesson:

In Isaiah we read: “I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things;”

This is where the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures is so important. Now that I am beginning to understand better this spiritual interpretation, it has opened my eyes to passages I used to gloss over because I wasn't awake. How does the Lord create evil? If you read the Bible literally, that's how it would be interpreted. And when I looked at the online Bible commentaries on this passage, they all explain the evil part as God's punishment – old theology.

But Mrs. Eddy explains that “the prophet referred to divine law as stirring up the belief in evil to its utmost, when bringing it to the surface and reducing it to its common denominator, nothingness. The muddy river-bed must be stirred in order to purify the stream. In moral chemicalization, when the symptoms of evil, illusion, are aggravated, we may think in our ignorance that the Lord hath wrought an evil; but we ought to know that God's law uncovers so-called sin and its effects, only that Truth may annihilate all sense of evil and all power to sin.”

It would be very depressing to believe that God created evil. No – God's law uncovers the evil so it can be annihilated! \*\*\*\*\*

Thank you. This reminds me of what Mrs. Eddy states on page 210 in Miscellaneous Writings: “Christian Science never healed a patient without proving with mathematical certainty that error,

when found out, is two-thirds destroyed, and the remaining third kills itself. Do men whine over a nest of serpents, and post around it placards warning people not to stir up these reptiles because they have stings? Christ said, 'They shall take up serpents;' and, 'Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.' The wisdom of a serpent is to hide itself. The wisdom of God as revealed in Christian Science, brings the serpent out of the hole, handles it, and takes away its sting."!! These Truths understood and applied are so powerful. My false concept of Christian Science had me in a state of constant fear and cover-up – trying always to hide error and to pretend (hope) it didn't really exist. It doesn't exist! BUT any false belief must be forced out of hiding and faced and destroyed with the sword of Truth and so proven to be nothing. If you had 2 plus 2 equals 5 written on a blackboard, you wouldn't attempt to hide it somehow, but you would erase it and replace it with the right and provable understanding that 2 plus 2 equals 4. This correct application of Christian Science has made all the difference! \*\*\*\*\*

I love this explanation of Mrs. Eddy that "God's law uncovers so-called sin and its effects; only that Truth may annihilate all sense of evil and all power to sin." It reminds me of the beautiful story of the leopard Diabolo who was renamed Spirit when his true nature was revealed through love \*\*\*\*\*

## **SUBJECT: Substance – March 12th, 2017**

### **Honor The Lord With Thy Substance**

In the responsive reading it says "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Here is one of the laws of the universe stated in biblical terms. Each one has a purpose, to be a giver. And specifically how is a matter of conscience between him and his Maker. No one can live to himself, each has a purpose to fulfill, and his life is found in living in service to God in some way. Can't help but think of the phrase from Mrs. Eddy's hymn "My prayer, some daily good to

do To Thine, for Thee; An offering pure of Love, whereto God leadeth me." \*\*\*\*\*

This is the principle behind tithing. When we tithe the "first fruits" of our income to our church, our synagogue, our clergy, practitioner, we are giving practical proof of our gratitude to God for our life. That practical gratitude shows no fear of lack; it shows complete trust in Him. It is not irresponsible. It is the confident knowing that God is the source of all substance. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This is a law of the universe. When we give to God as he directs, and give to others as He directs, He supplies us with more to give. We don't have to worry about where it comes from. All we need to know is that good is infinite, because God is infinite and the source of all good.

I thank God for Mary Baker Eddy for clearly explaining these principles in practical ways. \*\*\*\*\*

Thank you! This Proverb is exactly the truth and was proven this week for my family and me. We were in a situation that appeared to be adverse, but with a practitioner's help and acknowledging God as Omnipotent and leaning on Him and not human power, we were shown the correct paths and all is well and prayer is being continued for everyone.\*\*

Thank you for this post! These two verses of Proverbs were my guide throughout my searching years, searching for the right path! Through every trial, thick and thin, I repeated these words. They were always a comfort. And all paths led to the Plainfield Church! Interestingly, I don't refer to these as much as before, as I've made progress: the teaching in this church has taught me how to keep my focus on God, keeping me on the right path. I am so grateful to be able to live Christian Science now, instead of just *wishing* I could live it! \*\*\*\*\*

### **What Have We Accepted**

Man is what he has accepted as his mind. "What is the model before mortal mind? Have you accepted the mortal model? The world is holding it before your gaze continually." (*Science and Health*, p, 248) I realized that is what has been happening most of my life, with an intermittent dose of antidote from

Christian Science the last 25 years. I think most of us should have no illusions about our mental state, the world's model is so persuasive and invasive, that it feels like we are swimming in it as a fish in the sea, and it requires our constant effort to breathe and to keep our eyes above the waves. Pray without ceasing.

“Absorbed in material selfhood, we discern and reflect but FAINTLY the substance of Mind.” Bicknell Young wrote: “Man is the individual appearing of Mind.” We can ask ourselves: for how far am I this “man?” \*\*\*\*\*

This is why it is so important to have a correct understanding of what God is. Mrs. Eddy states in *Science and Health*, p. 258: “We know no more of man as the true divine image and likeness, than we know of God.”

I find that when I take the time to really get something from the lesson first thing in the morning, I have more confidence and dominion during the day. I can discern the false from the true more easily and discard the false more readily. I also find it true that when I have the right concept of God foremost in my thought, I can trust in it, receive its instruction, as we are told in Proverbs.

This lesson is full of the practical instruction for trusting in the substantial things of Spirit, God, rather than believing the false supposition that there is substance in matter.

We can be truly grateful to Mrs. Eddy for bringing these Biblical treasures to life and pointing the way to a consistent and disciplined way of thinking and living. \*\*\*\*\*

Thanks for this post! For a long time I did not understand that in Science, I must embrace the only man (spiritual man) as my true identity since from that standpoint could I work to realize what that true selfhood is. Without that understanding, I used to struggle with material identification trying to be what my spiritual nature includes; like spiritual man being immune from sickness.

*Science and Health*, p. 313 ...he and the Father were inseparable as God and His reflection or spiritual man. This is the Perfect God, perfect man which is “the basis of thought and demonstration.” Is that the man I am knowing I am in Truth? I cannot stop

striving for the REALIZATION of this right identification; since material man will never be the perfection inseparable from God, Spirit. \*\*\*\*\*

## Grace And Peace Are Multiplied Unto You

In the Lesson this week, in II Peter 1:2-8, there is a list of important godly characteristics in which to imbibe – one trait building upon the next. I looked each of these words up in the 1828 Webster's Dictionary to help me think more deeply about how I can better express each one:

Grace and peace are multiplied unto you – “For His divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life” This is what God's grace has given unto you when you love and obey Him.

**Diligence** – steady application in business of any kind

**Faith** – entire confidence or trust in God and the doctrines of Christ with unreserved surrender of the will to his guidance

**Virtue**- practice of moral duties from sincere love of God and His laws

**Knowledge** – a clear and certain perception of that which exists or of truth

**Temperance** – moderation in all things

**Patience** – confident expectancy of good; a calm temper which bears evil without murmuring and discontent (something the Children of Israel needed!!)

**Godliness** – living in obedience to God's commands from a principle of love to Him and His laws

**Brotherly kindness** – that disposition which delights in contributing to the happiness of others

**Charity**- supreme love to God and universal good will to men: that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men and to do them good

Of course, the basis of this all is to love more divinely, to get self out of the way and let God's will and plan unfold – and the promise is that you shall neither be “barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” What better promise could there be?