

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 102

**SUBJECT: Probation After Death –
October 22nd, 2017**

How Sweet are Thy Words

Our last Bible Study we discussed the question, “How are we made clean through the word?” (*1 Peter 1:22*). Obedience was the answer.

In our discussion we talked about that affliction alone does not bring us to God, we have to turn to the Word of God. It is the Word that purifies and cleanses. That is why we need to study the Word so we know it but we must obey it, apply it, and live it in our daily life. It was pointed out that we need to cultivate our spiritual sense so we can hear the word.

Psalm 119 this week from our Responsive Reading speaks to me of this active obedience to the Word: 97. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. (To me that says I must love the Word and want it more than anything else.)

99. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

100. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. (Through abiding in the Word, I will have an understanding for combatting all unlike God. This Truth the world will never be able to bestow, no matter how “educated” it appears)

101. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. (Obedience includes refraining from evil in all its forms, whether it appears good or bad, which human will and knowledge can not accomplish.)

102. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. (Diligence, consistency, and accuracy are qualities needed to stay on the course.)

103. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Joy and gratitude)

104. Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. (The Word helps me discern the difference between God’s message

and man’s so I won’t be taken away from the pure Science of the Christ. I will then hate anything that gets in the way or takes me from this love and devotion to knowing God.)

After so many years of getting mixed up in human knowledge and false prophets, hidden in the guise of “spirituality”, I am deeply grateful to being made clean through the Word, as brought to light here in our classes, materials, and teachers who demonstrate what they teach. As I practice this true Science, the fruits show me the huge difference. “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

Thank you for this wonderful post! Even though the Bible has been seemingly swept away to make room for “secular” thought, yet when the Bible is mentioned in one-on-one conversations, even with strangers, I find there is an evident thirst for God’s Word, as God’s children are naturally drawn to the Word of their Father! Our Father speaking to us through the Word is truly awesome.

In the Amplified Bible, for “keeping” God’s precepts and word in *Ps. 119*, I found it helpful how it was explained as “hearing, receiving, loving and obeying”.

100. I understand more than the aged, because I keep Your precepts [hearing, receiving, loving, and obeying them].

101. I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Your word [hearing, receiving, loving, and obeying it]. *****

And When He Said This, He Breathed on Them...

This week, I read in *John 20:22*, “And when he said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Recently this important verse came to my attention for the first time. And here it was again. I closed my eyes and

imagined what that would have been like to be in His presence during the miraculous events that unfolded on that holy, sacred Sunday of his resurrection. What a glorious transformation his disciples received from their beloved Master, the risen Christ. Not only had he overcome death, but lived and breathed his resurrection power into their spirit so they could continue the Father's work! And the wonder is that it continues to this day as we open the door and invite him in to sup.

Science and Health, 496:15-19: "Hold perpetually this thought, that it is the spiritual idea, the Holy Ghost and Christ, which enables you to demonstrate, with scientific certainty, the rule of healing, based upon its divine Principle, Love, underlying, overlying, and encompassing all true being."

Unity of Good, 42:13-15: "Man, in Science, is as perfect and immortal now, as when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." *****

A Great Sacrifice

From *Science and Health*, pg. 15 "A great sacrifice of material things must precede this advanced spiritual understanding."

It is beautiful how this line from last week's Lesson connects with the responsive reading this week. The Psalmist in Psalm 119 points out what he has given up in order to keep God's word!

101. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

104. Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

His tone in this Psalm shows how much he values "The Word," hence what he is willing to give up in order to keep His word.

How much of my old habits, beliefs of sickness, past mistakes, regrets, disappointments and those delusive so-called pleasurable indulgences have I given up (or am I willing to give up) in order to keep God's healing words? Surely we cannot hold on to old ways, false beliefs, and gain the

"healing," new! *****

Gold

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise...at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Prize, price, praise, appraisal are all derived from the same etymological root denoting value, honor, worth, excellence, worthiness. "Praise is the just price."

The mining, processing, and refining of gold all have to do with separating gold from all the different kinds of impurities which are bonded to it in its natural, unrefined state. The gold-refining process is necessarily in stages, each step designed to remove a particular impurity. Only after subjecting the gold to intervals of intense heat, cooling, along with washings of various kinds (not only with water, but with caustic chemicals) is this step-by-step purification process complete.

Metaphysically speaking, now is the time I must work to allow this incremental process of refining the spiritual gold in my own life, until I am no longer expressing matter in any way, but expressing Spirit in every detail of my life. As Mrs. Eddy says in the final entry of this week's lesson: "It is a warfare with the flesh, in which we must conquer sin, sickness, and death, either here or hereafter, — certainly before we can reach the goal of Spirit, or life in God." Mrs. Eddy also admonished that this transformation is best accomplished in the here and now, not the hereafter, quoting the Apostle Paul: "Now is the accepted time." Thus, I am required to embrace each step of this purification process as I take it — in this now moment: to "count it all joy" (*James 1:2, 1 Peter 4:12*) and no step may be skipped or abridged in any way. *****

Loose Him, and Let Him Go

When Jesus raised Lazarus, he instructed the crowd to "Loose him, and let him go." To many, this meant to unwrap his burial cloth and let him put normal clothes on. But Jesus' words always had a spiritual instruction. He was always teaching the science that was the basis of his healing.

He was really telling the crowd to free Lazarus from the false, limited, mortal beliefs they held about him. “Let him go...” Let him be what God made, rather than trying to hold him in some preconceived belief as to who and what he was. One of the most difficult things for a parent is to let our children go. And yet, it is essential that we do just that, – to not hold any preconceived plan for them, or some limited, mortal view as to who and what they are, but, rather give them the best understanding we have of our relationship with God, and to let them find theirs.

Before Jesus raised Lazarus, he wept. They thought he was weeping because Lazarus had died. But that was not the case. He was weeping because the people around him did not get the science. Their hearts were hardened so that they did not get the essential points Jesus was trying to get them to see. In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy writes, “Jesus restored Lazarus by the understanding that Lazarus had never died, not by an admission that his body had died and then lived again. Had Jesus believed that Lazarus had lived or died in his body, the Master would have stood on the same plane of belief as those who buried the body, and he could not have resuscitated it.

It’s good to ask, is there anyone I am holding in a limited mortal belief? Then I must “loose him, and let him go.” *****

**SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment –
October 29th, 2017**

The Trial Commences

The patient feels ill, ruminates, and the trial commences.” (*Science and Health*, p. 430) An important point from the “Trial” we have learned here at Plainfield is to beware of rumination. One of the definitions of “ruminate” is “to chew again and again, what has already been chewed.”! Not a very pleasant thought or action! However, it can be easy, if one is not watchful, to go over and over again – thinking about how one is not feeling well and thinking about all the symptoms or to go over and over again the injustices one has had to endure

etc. This kind of false and negative thinking will only put you in the court of error and as we can see from this story it is not a very good place to be! You will be tried and sentenced according to mortal mind’s unjust rules. Far better to stay away from ruminating about error and to “hold thought steadfastly to the enduring, the good and the true.” (*Science and Health*, p. 260) This way you will remain in the court of Spirit and find your healing and your deliverance ever at hand! *****

Cast Down the Accuser

Revelation 12:10

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: **for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.**

The last phrase of this citation struck me, in that it is a reminder I must be constantly working to put on the armor of Christ and cast down the accuser (evil, error, malice, hypnotism, pride, fear – whatever thought is not from God and however aggressively or subtly it comes) because the accuser is in full-time employment trying to destroy the Christ, Truth (see *Misc. Writings*, p. 177). Thus, I must be equally in full-time employment declaring what is true about myself and God’s creation. Doing so puts all the power on the side of God, good, which I must hold to despite what the physical senses seem to testify at times.

From Kratzer’s “*Revelation Interpreted*” on the verse “Which accused them before our God day and night”:

Satan, false sense, is constantly declaring that man is more or less sinful, more or less imperfect, temporal, finite, and material, – none of which accusations are true, for man is the image, the continuous expression of his perfect Creator, and is therefore perfect. To prove this is to overcome Satan, and to work out our salvation; it is to “put on the Christ.” *****

Thank you for this very helpful post, and to referring to the “Sunday Services on July Fourth” in *Misc. Writings*, pgs. 176-177. It is a call to arms and a solemn reminder, especially in these times! A few

excerpts:

“... in the great crises of nations or of the human race [:] It is then that supreme devotion to Principle has especially been called for and manifested. It is then that we learn a little more of the nothingness of evil, and more of the divine energies of good, and strive valiantly for the liberty of the sons of God.” Mrs. Eddy then speaks of the Pilgrims, and continues:

“But what of ourselves, and our times and obligations? Are we duly aware of our own great opportunities and responsibilities? ... Never was there a more solemn and imperious call than God makes to us all, right here, for fervent devotion and an absolute consecration to the greatest and holiest of all causes. The hour is come. The great battle of Armageddon is upon us. The powers of evil are leagued together in secret conspiracy against the Lord and against His Christ, as expressed and operated in Christian Science....

What will you do about it? ... Will you give yourselves wholly and irrevocably to the great work of establishing the truth ...? Answer at once and practically, and answer aright!”

This is the holy work of our unity watches, our Web site, our services, testimony meetings, Bible studies, Roundtables, publications, and every effort made to get the word out about true Christian Science! *****

Personal Sense is The Plaintiff

“Suppose a mental case to be on trial, as cases are tried in court...

...Personal Sense is the plaintiff. Mortal Man is the defendant...

...Mortal Minds, Materia Medica, Anatomy, Physiology, Hypnotism, Envy, Greed and Ingratitude, constitute the jury...”

Websters 1828 definitions of:

plaintiff: “opposed to defendant”

(Personal sense is not my friend- pride, self will, self pity, belief selfhood apart from God, etc. I am grateful for the teaching here helping us let it go for, “man’s spiritual and eternal individuality”

Science and Health).

defendant: “he that is summoned into court, and defends, denies or opposes the demand or charge, and maintains his own right”

(“The Court of Spirit, where Christian Science is allowed to appear as counsel...” is where I will find my freedom and rights. It will never be found, no matter how promising, in psychology, medicine, new thought, human intelligence or matter)

jury: “empaneled and sworn to inquire into and try any matter of fact, and to declare the truth on the evidence given them in the case”

(“The Jury of Spiritual Senses” is where I want my thinking to be -focused on God, obedience to His will, gratitude, joy, good will, love)

Today, the words, “envy, greed, and ingratitude” stood out to me. It was a strong reminder to me to check my attitude moment by moment, to watch that it does not fall away. I ask myself, “Do my actions and feelings express true gratitude for God and His creation?” *****

Don't Fight Error on Its Terms

In the trial, the new attorney for the defendant, Christian Science, took it to a new court, the court of Spirit. Can you imagine if it had to be tried with Judge Medicine on the bench and with that horrific list of jurors? To me, this means that error cannot be reasoned with, talked to, or convinced of its own wrong ways. It has to be abandoned and left to its own self-destruction. It can’t be fixed. Thank God we have a way in the court of Spirit, in the way of serving God, confident that He will care and provide all good. *****

Principle is in Operation

I find this lesson on Everlasting Punishment to be very encouraging. The first verse in the responsive reading “The lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed” says it clearly. The claim of error is that we are in a bad way and are stuck with it. We are not stuck with anything but divine mercy. Principle is God, good and He does operate. Whatever we find in our experience of evil, oppression, or anguish, the one fixed rule about it

all is that it comes to an end. We can be thoroughly confident that these things do end. God always will make a way for us to work through and out of sin, sickness, or any other form of oppression. The divine Principle, Love, always prevails. *****

From Everlasting to Everlasting

“The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting...”

The only thing that is everlasting, the only thing that is eternal, is the mercy of God. The idea that punishment can be everlasting or that damnation can be eternal is a human contrivance designed to control people through fear and guilt. When Jesus helped the adulterous woman, he told her that he did not condemn her, but that she should go and sin no more. Hence, the principle in Science that once the sin ceases, the punishment ceases. Sin (a mistake) punishes itself. God does not do the punishing. “Divine Love (God) corrects and governs man.” (*Science and Health*) And while the correction may feel like punishment, it is not God punishing you. It is Truth correcting a mistake. And it will feel like punishment only so long as we keep making the mistake.

This is why it is essential that we take responsibility for every experience. We can't blame others, or the government, for our experiences. But we can learn from our mistakes if we want to, and grow in grace, and be of use to God and mankind while we are here. And God blesses that. Thank God for Mrs. Eddy for seeing this so clearly and explaining it so well. *****

We need to know that when we repent and stop the sin, that there is no more penalty for it. For many years, I had been a binge drinker of wine and I was healed of this about 4 years ago. But, in my thought I always felt there may be a residual penalty to my health, in particular, my vision. Since coming to this church and in studying Christian Science I understand this is only human belief and not true. *****

Yes, thank you! This text was pointed out to me again today ... “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him...” In the past I would get hung up on the

word “fear”. In the 1828 Webster Dictionary, it says in part, “Fear - a holy awe or reverence of God and his laws... real love of the divine character.” Living this brings “...his righteousness unto children’s children.” *****

There is No Condemnation

From *Science and Health*, Pg. 461:16-23, Mrs. Eddy makes a distinction that while we deny sickness, sin must be admitted to be healed. If you believe that you are sick, should you say, “I am sick?” No, but you should tell your belief sometimes, if this be requisite to protect others. If you commit a crime, should you acknowledge to yourself that you are a criminal? Yes. Your responses should differ because of the different effects they produce. Usually, to admit that you are sick renders your case less curable, while to recognize your sin, aids in destroying it.

The Lesson teaches the extent of God’s mercy when sin is admitted and followed by repentance. It shows there is no need to condemn oneself when God is merciful and just.

The adulterous woman:

- a. Admitted her sin
- b. She marveled at the discerning power of the Christ, grateful for Jesus’ discourse with her and humbly accepted His mercy and blessing.
- c. Then she, one woman, full of gratitude went among her people (Samaritans, who were unfriendly with the Jews at the time) to proclaim the Christ without fear.

From Wikipedia about her:

“Her continuing witness is said to have brought so many to the Christian faith that she is described as “equal to the apostles”. Eventually, having drawn the attention of Emperor Nero, she was brought before him to answer for her faith. She is remembered on the Sunday four weeks after Pascha, which is known as “the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman”.

A wonderful lesson on why we cannot condemn people. We can speak to the wrong but avoid condemnation of anyone including ourselves. They brought this woman to be stoned and she ended up doing more for God than her accusers. Interesting.