

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: Life – January 21st, 2018

Life Can Never Be Erased!

“Man is not the offspring of flesh, but of Spirit, — of Life, not of matter. Because Life is God, Life must be eternal, self-existent. Life is the everlasting I AM, the Being who was and is and shall be, whom nothing can erase.” (*Science and Health*, pg.289-90:31-2)

“The illusion of material sense, not divine law, has bound you, entangled your free limbs, crippled your capacities, enfeebled your body, and defaced the tablet of your being.” (*Science and Health* p.227:26-29)

“The decaying flower, the blighted bud, the gnarled oak, the ferocious beast, —like the discords of disease, sin, and death, —are unnatural. They are the falsities of sense, the changing deflections of mortal mind; they are not the eternal realities of Mind.” (*Science and Health*, p.78:1-5)

A suppositional mortal mind presents false, limited images to our thought that never touch our real bodies or being. For our real body is the reflection of all right spiritual ideas created by Mind. The symbols imaged forth by mortal mind on the tablet of our being are the inverted images of God’s eternal, real ideas. When I stop to examine and think about the images presented to my thought and translate them back to God’s spiritual ideas, I see correctly the right ideas or Truth. I am learning to stop and slow down and not accept the outward picture of things, but to translate these images back to Soul, the creative force behind all things real. I am so grateful to this Church for all that I am learning here! *****

Thank you! This is what I strive for every day. I say to myself often.... you are not mortal, you are spiritual! *****

Only In Belief

Science and Health, p, 328 Understanding little about the divine Principle, which saves and heals, mortals get rid of sin, sickness, and death only in belief. These errors are not thus really destroyed, and must therefore cling to mortals until, here or hereafter, they gain the true understanding of God in the Science which destroys human delusions about Him and reveals the grand realities of His Allness.

This is a reminder that when healing takes places, in addition to our gratitude we should yearn to “gain the true understanding of God in the Science which destroys human delusions about Him and reveals the grand realities of His Allness.” Since without that true understanding, the errors are not “really destroyed,” the healing is only in belief, and is likely to reappear. This to me is saying watch out for the desire for quick healings just to get out of the in-harmony without the understanding that the error is a lie about God’s Allness to begin with! Yes, we should expect quick healings, but it is better if with true understanding. *****

Receptivity

Last Sunday’s Roundtable included discussion on being receptive to God’s word. Again, something I didn’t think about as being an attribute to hone. In this week’s Lesson, Isaiah 1: 19 “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:” caught my eye. I can say I’m obedient, but if I only hear a tiny fraction of what God is saying, it’s not doing much, even if I’m obedient to all I hear (need more work on that for sure!!) Very grateful because this cues me in to being more “willing and receptive” in listening to God and then staying obedient to all I hear. *****

Thank you. Receptivity is always an important point to consider when it comes to healing. Years ago, in one of our classes, we discussed the following sentence on page 365 in *Science and Health* – “If

the Scientist reaches his patient through divine Love, the healing work will be accomplished at one visit, and the disease will vanish into its native nothingness like dew before the morning sunshine.” Of course, we all would like to have such a speedy healing, but the word emphasized in our class that night was the word, “reaches”. The patient needs to be reached. I know in my own experience, healings were rarely instantaneous, and I must admit I had many walls of resistance that needed to be broken down. I have learned and I am still learning many lessons on how to become more receptive to God’s healing power, which is ever with us and possesses all power. *****

God's Law Uncovers

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

During our Bible study on Isaiah, it was brought out that part of our walk with God is the willingness to have pride and other ungodlike qualities burned out (chemicalization) and that this uncovering is a good thing, even if it feels bad. Before coming here, my main goal was to make myself as comfortable as possible, but I am learning that this is very far from being a disciple of Jesus and has nothing to do with true Christian Science *****

At our Roundtable, we reviewed how excuses interfere with our growth. I realized that excuses can be used to avoid the discomfort of the burning process. It was helpful to review this habit that takes us off the path. An article titled, “Alibis and Excuses” can be

found in Addresses by Martha Wilcox in the Chapter titled, Definition of Intelligence.

Some of the things I have learned here that I am grateful for are: excuses are intolerable, don’t judge, no comparisons, don’t complain, honesty heals, watch ruts, keep moving on, make a covenant with God. I can’t imagine, anymore, going over this once a year, such as at Association, now that I have seen the blessings in my life of these weekly classes.

Swimming Against The Stream

Genesis 6: 9 “... and Noah walked with God.”
Genesis 7: 5 “And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.”

Noah had such faith in God that he was able to swim against the stream of corruption that was around him. It could not have been easy to build the ark (for years and years) while everyone was probably mocking what he was doing, yet he forged ahead. He was so sure of God’s presence that nothing else mattered than to be obedient to Him.

From MacLaren’s Expositions:

“What beauty there is in that description of the isolated man, passing lonely amid his contemporaries, like a stream of pure water flowing through some foul liquid, and untouched by it, and yet not alone in his loneliness, because ‘he walked with God!’ The less he found congenial companionship on earth, the more he realized God as by his side. The remarkable phrase, used only of Enoch and of Noah, implies a closer relation than the other expression, ‘To walk before God.’ Communion, the habitual occupation of mind and heart with God, the happy sense of His presence making every wilderness and solitary place glad because of Him.”

Noah’s resolve also reminded me of what Herbert Eustace says in *Christian Science, Its Clear, Correct Teaching*: “You must arrive at the point where it would make no difference to you if there were not another Christian Scientist in the world. You must so understand Christian Science, and its truth must be so vital to you, that you would be satisfied to be the only Christian Scientist, if that were necessary.” **

Ageless

“Life is eternal. We should find this out, and begin the demonstration thereof. Life and goodness are immortal. Let us then shape our views of existence into loveliness, freshness, and continuity, rather than into age and blight.” (*Science and Health*, p 246) I am very grateful for the regular study sessions we have at Plainfield, to be reminded of the truth of our immortal existence, when the mortal tendency is to believe in aging. *****

SUBJECT: Truth – January 28th, 2018

Radical Reliance on Truth

Mrs. Eddy writes in *Science and Health*: “Only through radical reliance on Truth can scientific healing power be realized.” The lesson is full of instruction not to rely on anything else, or to take “halting and half-way” positions, or to “work equally with... Truth and error.”

To rely solely on Truth for everything in our life does seem very radical to the ignorant human mind. The human mind wants to weigh things, hedge its bets, take the “safe” route, not offend anyone, yet follow its lusts and passions, and then accept mediocrity, sin, sickness, and death as normal. This is the enigma of the human condition. It does not know how to get out of its own way.

To the spiritually minded, however, to rely solely on Truth is the only “normal” way to live. It requires total trust in our spiritual sense, for our material senses can’t help us to know what truth is. When Elijah relied entirely on God to light the fire, it appeared very “radical” to the others, but was perfectly normal to Elijah, because he was told by God to do it. His reliance on Truth was a hallmark of his life, which is why he has a prominent place in Biblical history.

We today have a tremendous privilege to embrace Truth and live it to the fullest. It is emancipating humanity. *****

“This is the enigma of the human condition. It does not know how to get out of its own way.”

I like how you’ve worded this! Looking for

answers from the five material senses only results in more questions and confusion. Looking away from matter to Spirit, towards the light of Truth, always provides comfort and clarity. We just have to trust, which is where that radical reliance comes in, and the more we exercise it, the more “normal” it feels.

Differentiating Between The Human And The Divine

4. I Kings 18

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

This reminded me of the following, from *Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Precepts*, by Gilbert Carpenter:

Many times when a thought seems to come from God, it may come from the human mind. When one places himself in position of listening for God’s voice, he opens himself to the possibility of being influenced by the thoughts of others. Hence one must watch, and learn to differentiate between the human suggestion and the divine impartation. Mrs. Eddy indicates that if she took time enough to demonstrate, she could not be misled by suggestion. The reason for this is that demonstration continued long enough, will surely silence the voice of suggestion, and leave God’s voice alone holding the field. When Elijah had his contest with the priests of Baal, his demonstration proved to be on a higher plane than that of Moses, because the latter did not prevent the magicians of Egypt from giving exhibitions of their powers to match his, up to a certain point. Elijah, however, not only caused fire to come down from heaven, but prevented the priests from bringing forth phenomena of

any sort. Mrs. Eddy never regarded the demonstration of hearing God's voice completed until it had silenced any suggestions claiming to come from mortal mind.

I am grateful to this church for showing how to "differentiate between the human suggestion and the divine impartation" by giving the opportunity to demonstrate it with practitioner support. Learning how to live Christian Science is a wonderful blessing, and the way that we can "apprentice" here really feels right to me.

Thank you! I especially like "demonstration continued long enough, will surely silence the voice of suggestion, and leave God's voice alone holding the field." I think this gives great hope and encouragement to hang on and go forth with demonstrating the truths we have learned about Christian Science as taught here at Plainfield Church, Independent. *****

Jezebel

The falling away of Judah from the rulership of Spirit began with Solomon, whose desire for human, political harmony caused him to take many wives from the godless nations surrounding Judah. The process of falling away accelerated with king Ahab's marriage to the authoritarian Phoenician princess, Jezebel, in a similar attempt to create a multicultural paradise apart from God. Jezebel was steeped in Baal worship, which, along with associated gods eventually became the ruling deity in Judah. She actively pursued evangelizing Judah with the worship of her beloved Baal. There is no better example of the consequences of misguided "tolerance" for religious multiculturalism than this cautionary tale of Ahab's off-centered attempt to mix matter with Spirit — his fateful marriage of convenience to Jezebel. "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest [you tolerate] that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Revelation 2:20). *****

Remnant

Remnant: "that which remains of an original body or substance. In reference to God's people, it means those who are faithful to His original truth despite apostasy and opposition." (Bibleinfo.com)

The idea of a remnant is found 540 times in the Bible. Most of the time, the remnant concept is disguised by the way the words are translated into English. In the Old Testament, remnant is translated by six Hebrew root words, each of which has the underlying meaning of "what is left," "what remains," "survivors," "escapees," or "the rest." The one Greek root used in the New Testament and in the Septuagint has the same meaning. (Biblestudytools.com)

The remnant (those who are faithful and obedient to God) has always been a minority, but despite this, has all the power on its side. I love what Mrs. Eddy writes in Pulpit and Press:

"Is not a man metaphysically and mathematically number one, a unit, and therefore whole number, governed and protected by his divine Principle, God? You have simply to preserve a scientific, positive sense of unity with your divine source, and daily demonstrate this. Then you will find that one is as important a factor as duodecillions in being and doing right, and thus demonstrating deific Principle. A dewdrop reflects the sun. Each of Christ's little ones reflects the infinite One, and therefore is the seer's declaration true, that **"one on God's side is a majority."** *****

Thank you for this beautiful post. In thinking about the remnant this week and preparing for the Bible Study, it came to me that God always has a remnant on whom he shall call.

Joel 32. " And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."

We must first call on Him. I read recently that we must love God before we can be obedient. That makes sense to me. We must give all for the Christ. I also read that we must never give up in the battle for the recognition of the ONE SOVEREIGN POWER that governs all nations and man. *****

Nor Speak Lies

“The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth:...” Zephaniah 3: 13

I am grateful to be learning at Plainfield Church, Independent how to prepare the heart and work to stay the long course and the importance of making a covenant with God.

It is interesting how heart and mouth connect in the Bible. From last week, I looked up “heart” since it was mentioned several times. Jesus says, “...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” He was addressing the hypocrisy, deceit, and speaking of lies. Here the mouth is the overflow of the heart. From Webster’s 1828, “Heart: The seat of the will; hence, secret purposes, intentions or designs.” In my life, I got into the habit of trying to keep things smooth (mollify, flatter, appease, pacify). This often led me to suppress the truth or give in rather than face the situation honestly. My heart was full of fear and thoughts of self and it was hidden in being “good”. As I go along, I find it is so much easier to refute a negative thought immediately, than later when it is well-established habit.

It struck me that to be part of the remnant demands honesty. I am grateful to be learning how to “pitch” my heart as Noah did the ark. Honesty, a Biblical principle, is continually and clearly taught at Plainfield. *****

SUBJECT: Love – February 4th, 2018

Love, And The Way

Science and Health, p 454

Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way.

Four abridged definitions from the 1828 Webster’s Dictionary:

Inspire:

To breathe into.

To infuse into the mind; as, to inspire with new

life.

Illumine:

To enlighten, as the mind; to cause to understand.

Designate:

To mark out or show, so as to make known; ... to designate the limits of a country;

To appoint; to select or distinguish for a particular purpose;

Lead:

To guide by the hand; as, to lead a child.

To precede; to introduce by going first.

Then this from John 14: 6 about “the way”:

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Taking these definitions, I see that Love breathes into me the life and desire to seek the way; the light to understand each successive step of the way; the clear lines to stay within along the way, and Love guides me forward in the way.

Combining this with what I have learned here about the way being Christ’s Christianity, Christian Science, it becomes clear that God has created me and everything in His creation with a purpose and a rationality that blesses all.

What more could I hope from Love than to have meaning and a place? What more from Truth but to have the joy of knowing everything makes sense? What more from Life than the inspiration and vitality to be God’s idea? *****

Thank you so much for this posting! It is beyond beautiful and I love the way you tie Life, Truth and Love together, relating it to our own journey, reflecting Love in our own special way which blesses all. *****

Thank you. Years ago, I wrote those definitions of the words “inspires,” “Illumines,” and “designates,” in the margins of my textbook and still refer to them to this day. Another definition of “inspires” I had written down, which I have found especially helpful, is “to be informed by the Holy Spirit; to communicate Divine instructions to the mind.” Isn’t it true, when you feel “inspired” you feel something

wondrous going on – you feel joyful and enlivened and enabled? How wonderful to know you are receiving direct communications from God! And if I am ever feeling uninspired, I think about these definitions and pray to feel God’s Love taking hold. It is always the Love of God that brightens our path and points out the way and leads us joyfully on. *****

Wow, this is all so inspiring! I think Mrs. Eddy’s beautiful words, “Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way” should go at the top of my “To do” list every day. Yes, I want to be “informed by the Holy Spirit” and “communicated Divine instructions to my mind” before I launch into my tasks for the day!

Thank you all for sharing these beautiful definitions, thoughts, and ideas. *****

And this is why divine Love is the only true incentive in both healing and teaching. When someone is struggling, the divine Love that you express to them is the only thing that can open their heart to receive whatever they need to be lifted out of their misery or ignorance. No matter what the problem, divine Love “is a mighty spiritual force,” as Mrs. Eddy once wrote to a student. That is why the only remedy for a difficult situation is to love more – divinely, not humanly. I have seen the most unhealable diseases healed by an outpouring of divine Love. I have seen the most impossible human conflicts resolved by the outpouring of divine Love. I have seen extreme hatred and anger dissolved by the outpouring of divine Love.

It is the most potent of powers (actually, the only power). Wield it like a sword in the face of all opposition and you will be amazed at the results. Nothing is impossible to God (Love)! *****

With Lovingkindness Have I Drawn Thee

From Jeremiah, God has said “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” It is easy to see that people with similar interests are drawn together. But little consideration is given to the intelligence, attraction, or force that makes it happen. Mrs. Eddy has said “Love is a mighty

spiritual force.” This is an amazing thing to think about, that God’s great love has drawn us together, the love that draws us together is an everlasting love. Because the love is divine, it is stable and enduring. What wisdom it is to recognize that God’s love holds us together, and our love for God and what He has done will keep us safe and not allow us to venture away from that to which God has drawn us. ***

Thank you! For some reason, the meaning of this verse has escaped me all these years. I always interpreted “with lovingkindness I have drawn thee” to mean that God made or designed each one of us individuals with lovingkindness (as if He did it in a drawing!). I now see I just had the wrong meaning of the word “drawn”. I love learning more about God’s love that you’ve so beautifully illustrated here. *****

Dwelling in Love

I John 4:16, 17

16. “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

17. “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.”

“Day of Judgment”

“No final judgment awaits mortals, for the judgment-day of wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error. As for spiritual error there is none.” (*Science and Health* p.291:28-32)

I do believe that God is Love; and, that as we live in Love we experience Life eternal now. That our judgment day is hourly and that as we listen to God for our direction, we do reflect the Love that God is, and we are happy and complete now. We can have boldness to face any error with the omnipotence and Love of God in whom we dwell now and forever. I know that in every moment of judgment, we have the Love and mercy of God with us to govern, direct and protect us.