

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 121

SUBJECT: Spirit – August 5th, 2018

Pray in Spirit

PSALM 51 : 10-15

10. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

I have found that even if I don't know exactly how to pray in spirit if I start with Psalm 51 I can't go wrong. Also there is a hymn called Create In Me a Clean Heart, which is easy to hum. In John 4 Jesus told the Samaritan woman to pray in spirit and in truth. From things I have read this includes coming with a humble prayer of surrender and the right motive. Thank you, Plainfield Church, for all that I am learning. *****

“Create in me a clean heart.”

HEART: “Mortal feelings, motives, affections, joys, and sorrows.” (*Science and Health*, p. 587:23)

“The manifestation of God through mortals is as light passing through the window-pane. The light and the glass never mingle, but as matter, the glass is less opaque than the walls. The mortal mind through which Truth appears most vividly is that one which has lost much materiality — much error — in order to become a better transparency for Truth. Then, like a cloud melting into thin vapor, it no longer hides the sun.” (*Science and Health*, p. 295:16)

Desideratum: Create in me cleaner, clearer transparency of heart as defined in Mrs. Eddy's glossary: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his

sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Phil. 3:10); that I may suffer self to die in greater and greater ways. For to allow mortal self to express itself is to smudge or besmear the transparency that God created me to be. *****

“For to allow mortal self to express itself is to smudge or besmear the transparency that God created me to be.”

As we realize that we are nothing more nor less than God expressing Himself, we can and will discipline our thought to listen carefully to what He is telling us, and then follow that “commandment.” There is nothing human in this way of life, for the highest expression of Love and Principle to our brethren is a divine impulsion, not human will. This is the discipline of thought that we all must work for if we are to worship God in spirit and in truth. This is where a good practitioner can help us, by spotting pride, or animosity, or “mere personal attachment” in our thought, all of which “smudge or besmear the transparency that God created me to be.”

Thank you for this post. *****

Our Source of Strength

The golden text this week reads “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” This is a profound statement which is contrary to the general belief that strength is willfully driven. It is not a human quality, but the reflection or expression of the Almighty. Nelle Reagan (Ronald Reagan's mother) had inscribed in her Bible “You can be too big for God to use, but you cannot be too small.” This is consistent with Jesus' statement “whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Luke 14: 11.

This I take to mean that strength is a sacred trust to be used in God's service. And then the strength is renewed, not only physical power as needed, but also strength of character, strength of conviction in the supremacy of good, and other appropriate forms of strength. *****

Thank you for this post! I love this! It shows where our heart and mind should be. It speaks to the fact that we (I) have no selfhood apart from God, but with Him, all things are possible. And thank you to the Lesson writer for this Lesson!

I love this: "strength is a sacred trust to be used in God's service" and that I need "strength of conviction in the supremacy of good." *****

Fear to Offend God

"Correct material belief by spiritual understanding, and Spirit will form you anew. You will never fear again except to offend God, and you will never believe that heart or any portion of the body can destroy you." *Science and Health*, p.425

Offend:(from Websters 1828)
"To transgress the moral or divine law;... hinder in obedience; to cause to sin or neglect duty ...to the laws of God, ... 'We have offended against the Lord already' (2 Chronicles 28)."

From Matthew Henry Commentary
"2 Chronicles 28... Those who will not humble themselves under the word of God, will justly be humbled by his judgments. ...those (like King Ahaz) are wicked and ...are made worse by their afflictions, instead of being made better by them; ... men's affections and devotions are misplaced, when they mistake the author of their trouble and of their help."

I realize that I had the idea that to offend God was like offending a person who might feel upset, annoyed, or resentful at something I did. I see that this is about obedience to God's laws and to not neglect my duty to God as written in "Alertness to

Duty" by Mrs. Eddy. Since God is unchanging Love and Principle, the negative results come from disobedience. His laws are for our protection. I see why blame is wrong and useless because I am responsible for my own behavior toward God. "Therefore 'acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.' Be watchful, sober, and vigilant." *Science and Health*, p.324

In Websters 1828 under fear it reads, "the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and his laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the divine character, leading the subjects of it to hate and shun every thing that can offend such a holy being, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience." *****

I appreciate more the line from Mrs. Eddy's article "Taking Offense"
"...determined not to be offended when no wrong is meant, nor even when it is, unless the offense be against God.

Nothing short of our own errors should offend us." *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 224 *****

A New Revelation

Revelation 22 : 2 "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Reading this today in the Lesson inspired me for the first time to think this meant there is a 'tree of life' on both sides of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Checking Matthew Henry; the commentary describes Revelation 22 as signifying "paradise." For me what would be more logical than "paradise" with Christ Jesus and Mary Baker Eddy since no one knows it better than they; Christ Jesus in wording it to the beloved disciple John and Mary

Baker Eddy in this age making it understandable to the less spiritually inclined:) These two as God's emissaries are truly trees of life bearing all manner of fruit for our sustenance!!!

SUBJECT: Soul – August 12th, 2018

Wonderfully Made

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul [spiritual sense] knoweth right well.” (Psalm 139, this week's Golden Text) What a beautiful way of expressing the idea of man in God's likeness! Many thanks to the lesson writer of this uplifting lesson on Soul. *****

Wrestling With an Angel

Thank you for the inspirational Bible Lesson on Soul. I often think of Jacob when going through a fearful trial, especially at night, sweating and worried, I recall his agonizing battle for the light and how he clung to the truth not letting go until he had accepted his true identity. No longer little Jacob, he was now Israel. Christian Science has helped me to see that I'm not a helpless personal self, separated from my Creator. I am invincible, One Mind with All that Is.

Psalm 103 reminds me that God has already given me everything—all his benefits: Forgiven all my sins. Healed all my infirmities. Redeemed by life from destruction. Crowned me with lovingkindness and tender mercies. Satisfied my mouth with good things so that my youth is renewed like the eagles.

The test/struggle is to accept all the wonderful things God has already done in GRATITUDE.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:” (Psalm 103:2) *****

Voice of Truth

“The Soul-inspired patriarchs heard the voice of Truth, and talked with God as consciously as man talks with man.” *Science and Health*, p. 308

We are encouraged often at this church to talk to God. Last Wed. a testifier spoke of learning to talk with God and how it brought blessings to his life taking the time to do this. The above citation from our Lesson this week gave me a deeper sense that listening is a very important part of talking with God. A couple of days ago I came across a book that was written by the same author who wrote “On The Way There” found on our website. The message was a good reminder to me to be a better listener.

“Marjorie bit her lip. ‘Well,’ she said at last, ‘you didn't have the rhyme right, anyway.’

‘Why isn't it right?’ asked the Dream.

‘It's:– Open your mouth and shut your eyes. And I'll give you something to make you wise.’

‘Nonsense!’ said the Dream. ‘If you'd try it the other way, open your eyes and shut your mouth, you'd find that you didn't need anything ‘to make you wise.’

Marjorie pondered for a moment. ‘Perhaps you are right,’ she said, finally. ‘I'm sure I've had more trouble through opening my mouth than I ever had through keeping it shut.’ ” *Through The Woods* by Katherine M. Yates

Here are a few things we are told make a good listener. Listen to learn with the intention of understanding and getting the feeling of the message and to build a meaningful connection, desire to be there, be open, humble, teachable, give your full attention with respect. This made me realize in my time with God I must keep out distractions, not come with a to do list, opinions, or an agenda and be aware to take the time to feel the message. I can see how the discipline of true listening is essential to cultivate.

“To-day, if ye would hear His voice, listen to His Word and serve no other gods. Then the divine Principle of good, that we call God, will be found an ever-present help in all things, and Christian Science will be understood.” My. 152 *****

Thank you! Hymn 237 came to me during my watch tonight, and I wanted to share it right here:

O may we be still and seek Him,
Seek with consecration whole,
Listening thus to hear the message,
Far from sense and hid in Soul.

He hath promised we shall find Him,
Love divine its promise keeps;
God is watching with the watchful,
God is Life that never sleeps.

If we pray to Him in secret,
Lift to Him the heart’s desire,
We shall find our earthly longings
All made pure by Love’s pure fire.

Then upon the precious metal
God’s own image will appear,
Faithfully to Him reflected,
One with Him forever near.

Nothing Can Separate Us

Isaiah 59 : 1, 2

1 Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But **your iniquities have separated between you and your God**, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (Emphasis added)

What are these iniquities that do at least appear to separate us from God and thus prevent us from owning our true identity?

More and more it becomes clear that the false beliefs and ill emotions that we entertain can form “phantom” barriers between us and our God. This is wrong thinking that **MUST** be wiped out through

consistent study, living the Truth and casting out evil’s lies.

SH 520:3-5 “Unfathomable Mind is expressed. The depth, breadth, height, might, majesty, and glory of infinite Love fill all space. That is enough!” It is enough, since there is no space then in Truth, for any evil/error to fill. **Am I knowing this?** Paul also said to the Romans: For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38, 39 (Emphasis added).

The constant clear awareness of that TRUTH does restore my soul; enables me to stand in God’s presence, feel my oneness with Him and KNOW nothing erroneous can enter my being. *****

Thank you for this point. I think many people have a great fear that God will not be there for them when they are in need, – that “he will not hear.” The fact is that God is everywhere, and knows all. All that is real and true, that is. So when we “sin,” or acknowledge as true that which is wrong, ungodlike, immoral, selfish, etc., we put our consciousness in the wrong place. We become unable to “hear.” God answers righteous prayer, but He does not answer unrighteous prayer. “Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” If I ever feel that God does not hear me, it is a sign that I am asking amiss, – that I am in the wrong mind and had better examine my thinking. Where am I allowing some ungodlike thought or desire to occupy my consciousness? If I want the protection and care of the Truth, I have the obligation to live in accord with the Truth, as best I can. And if I happen to stray from that “straight and narrow way,” it is not that God has deserted me, it is that I have deserted God.

I find it a great comfort to know that God always does have an answer to every problem I may encounter, and that, by taking responsibility for my experience, I can learn to know God better, and improve my experience by each lesson learned.