

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT - SPIRIT 02/09/14

“.....for the Letter Killeth, but the Spirit Giveth Life.”

Without the quickening power (Spirit) the letter can kill; it can lull me into the self deception of "knowing" when I really don't because I am not living the Truth.

Below are some of the many citations that brings the essence of Spirit to light in this lesson for me:

302: 19-24, 31-1 The Science of being reveals man as perfect, even as the Father is perfect, because the Soul, or Mind, of the spiritual man is God, the divine Principle of all being, and because this real man is governed by Soul instead of sense, by the law of Spirit, not by the so-called laws of matter.

463: 6-20 To calculate one's life-prospects from a material basis would infringe upon spiritual law and misguide human hope.

289: 2-7 Mortal man can never rise from the temporal debris of error, belief in sin, sickness, and death, until he learns that God is the only Life.

183: 16-21 The supposed laws which result in weariness and disease are not His laws, for the legitimate and only possible action of Truth is the production of harmony. Laws of nature are laws of Spirit; but mortals commonly recognize as law that which hides the power of Spirit.

To blandly quote the letter of Science to someone in need without divine love and

compassion would cast a stone on the heart, doing more damage than if nothing were said at all. I find it helpful to remember that in many of Jesus' healings, he sent everyone out of the room except a few close disciples and closed the door. He didn't want anyone in the room with the patient except those whose hearts were filled with the Spirit.

It was in last week's lesson that we had this from *Science and Health*: "Remember that the letter and mental argument are only human auxiliaries to aid in bringing thought into accord with the spirit of Truth and Love, which heals the sick and the sinner." Unless the letter is helping me get closer to God, where I can feel the need and hear God more clearly, then it has done nothing good and, perhaps, much to the wrong.

When Jesus spoke in the temple, the people were astonished, "for his word was with power." It was the Spirit of God within him that they felt. I was attracted to Plainfield many years ago because when Mrs. Evans spoke, I could feel the power of God in each word. Not something I had felt in any other church. That's why our church is here today.

Absolutely correct. I will never forget my days of anguish when the simple words of Truth spoken from and with the heart by the teacher at Plainfield touched my heart and made a difference.

I have listened to some of the "best" lectures; with the correct words of Truth and yet have not felt the way I felt listening to Mrs Evans. I am simply making clear that something

"unsearchable" was left in this Church through her teaching.

My desire is to have that quickening sense in what I say, so that I can comfort and uplift where I am led to do so. *****

That statement means a great deal to me as well. I remember keenly how it felt to be so well-versed in the letter, to feel on a cold, intellectual level just how much sense the word made. But I can't honestly say I felt the "power of the word." What was so agonizing and frustrating was the lack of growth and healing this caused. I could never understand what I was doing wrong, why my family and I were seldom healed. So I would just comb through the letter, trying to get more understanding, thinking I'd find that one statement in *Science & Health* that would spark a healing.

I'm so grateful that I'm learning to feel the spirit, to feel God's presence here at Plainfield! *****

Yes, I felt it when reading Doris White Evans writings, so simple, yet so strong. I think Myrtle Smyth had the same anointing. In other denominations, they call it the Holy Spirit. Without it, and without obedience, study becomes endless and fruitless. Been there, done that. *****

Not by My Might

Occasionally, when I do a watch or am praying diligently about something, I find myself almost straining mentally – like I'm trying to lift a huge weight. When this happens, I stop and catch myself, because I realize that I'm not really aligning myself with God or letting the spirit of God work through me – I'm trying to do something myself, harmonize a real problem, affect an outcome by some supposed

power of my own. I love the statement in Zechariah which speaks to this: "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It's a wonderful reminder that it's the spirit of God that works within us, not something we're humanly doing ourselves.

"I love the statement in Zechariah which speaks to this: "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Interesting to note that what follows this passage is reference to the two olive trees on each side of the candlestick - "These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." This has been said to represent Christ Jesus and Mary Baker Eddy. It makes sense to me. In thinking about this "we pause, — wait on God..." *Science and Health* - the enormity of Mrs. Eddy's revelation - what a privilege and responsibility we have...

I have noticed this straining as well—just this morning, actually! —and it is so unnecessary. Straining, worry, and frustration will not help me learn my lessons quicker or better, in fact it just might shut the process down completely!

Only by turning to God humbly will I be able to learn and know and do what He asks of me.

"I have noticed this straining as well—just this morning, actually!—and it is so unnecessary."

Unnecessary? "The only incentive of a mistaken sense is malicious animal magnetism, — the name of all evil, — and this must be understood." (Miscellany) The practice of Christian Science should take us to a whole new level - not the same old human wrestling. Amazing how much sharper we become when this is understood - we enter into the Bible declaration of man in the image of God and given dominion! - for once we have

identified the animal magnetism, not of God! - it has no cause, no law, no substance to support it - what is left? Nothing! *****

"Not by might [of matter] . . . but by My Spirit. . ."

Regarding Zech 4:6 --- Thanks for this lesson and discussion!

"There is a **wider difference** between Spirit and matter than between light and darkness, that surely are not mingled into one." (*Science and Health*, 1st edition, p. 224).

Matter-mindedness declares matter to be reality, discounting Spirit. Spirit-Mind declares Spirit to be reality, discounting matter. This is the essence of the difference, the utter enmity, the warfare between them.

"And there was war in heaven." (Rev.12:7)

"Jesus uttered things which had been 'secret from the foundation of the world,' — since material knowledge usurped the throne of the creative divine Principle, insisted on the might of matter, the force of falsity, the insignificance of spirit, and proclaimed an anthropomorphic God." *Science and Health* p 317:1-5

"These two contradictory theories — that matter is something, or that all is Mind — will dispute the ground, until one is acknowledged to be the victor. Discussing his campaign, General Grant said: 'I propose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer.' Science says: All is Mind and Mind's idea. You must fight it out on this line. Matter can afford you no aid." (SH 493:14-21) *****

SOUL - 02/16/14

Blessing

I feel not qualified to comment on any of the passages from *Science and Health*, those being

SO tremendously far above the human level of thinking. But I feel that blessing only the first born eldest son is a bad tribal custom, that caused this family dispute. The Bible teaches that God is no respecter of persons. A father should love his children equally, and have no favorites. Luckily, the two sons matured, and overcame this ridiculous and imaginary feud. There was no real reason for it. We are all equal before God. *****

This silly tribal thing is still in full swing! Goes along with material existence - "ghastly farce" - but that is not the purpose of the story is it? So what is? Why should Jacob, after all his dishonesty, be blessed as Israel? What qualities did he have that Esau did not? Esau turned out to be a pretty decent fellow. *****

"This silly tribal thing is still in full swing!"

It sure is! Many still using that foolish excuse to be deceitful and take what rightfully belongs to younger siblings.

The point of this story though is about what Jacob was willing to go through to see himself right. Jacob was persistent and repentant. He was crying out and was answered!

I remember teaching this story in a Sunday school class a few years ago and a little girl was quite anguished about what happened to Jacob. She put her hands over her heart and said quite passionately, "Jacob was only obeying his mother, he was only obeying his mother — what else could he do?!!" We could argue he didn't have to obey his mother and that he was a very willing conspirator — but in this child's eyes he had no choice. Her earnest plea for what she considered to be Jacob's horrible dilemma was a fresh and innocent observation. *****

The Hollow of Jacob's Thigh --

Thinking about the hollow of Jacob's thigh being out of joint as he wrestled with the angel.

What would it take to disjoin a thigh? Can you imagine the force and pressure and shock of that wrestling? The strongest or one of the strongest muscle/joint/sinews being disjoined - - what sense of myself or of things do I keep so close, that it would take such a force to free me from it? And it was an angel that did it --

This is a contrast to "emerge gently from matter to spirit" ...*****

Excellent point. "Emerge gently," taken out of context, is a wonderful justification for status quo. "...from matter into Spirit." *Science and Health* is addressing the over-zealous who try to walk on water before they are able. "Wrench away" is used elsewhere in the textbook to describe the process of divesting oneself of personal sense, false pleasures, etc. This was the process Jacob went through. This latter describes the evolution of our church - no healthy change has come without a mighty effort to overcome resistance - the protection of status quo. *****

"Thinking about the hollow of Jacob's thigh being out of joint as he wrestled with the angel. This is a contrast to "emerge gently from matter to spirit"

This is how I see it as not a contrast: We cannot but emerge gently from point A to Z in our spiritual growth. But in the process from point C to D might require a Jacob's experience. Each stage is different, some smoother or easier than others.

Precept upon precept, line upon line... sounds like an overall gentle rising to me.*****

"Material man is made up of involuntary and voluntary error, of a negative right and a

positive wrong, the latter calling itself right." *Science and Health* p 491 7-11 Yowza! Emerging gently from voluntary error isn't going to happen, because it thinks it is right and has no reason to emerge!! So, perhaps, to Andrew's point about context, we emerge gently when we recognize the error that is to be overcome. But, if we have no reason to believe we need to emerge from certain errors, it takes an angel to wrench them from us.

The human mind and body are myths..both must be destroyed by Science..it is in the textbook. If we hold on to them, we get involved in the destroying process..... Emerging gently would be nice, but there is too much resistance in mortal mind, it will not let go without a fight. On the other hand, we cannot overcome by sheer willpower, it must be by God's Spirit...*****

This from Watches, Prayers, and Arguments: "The birth out of matter into Spirit is not gained by *argument*, nor by force. It is *growth hourly*; it is forever getting nearer Love that is *Love*; universal, divine *presence* and power; alias *might* and dominion; first over the body; then over its reflection is dominion all the earth." Perhaps this the involuntary error - Jacob wrestled with the voluntary error? *****

After studying for the Bible study and getting more into this Bible story--I must say that this is the first time I have understood what's going on here! I'm realizing how much studying the Bible is essential to understanding *Science & Health* and Christian Science.

Thank you everyone at Plainfield Church!