

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: Soul — February 16th, 2020

Soul is The Divine Principle of Man...

“Soul is the divine Principle of man and never sins...” (*Science and Health*, p. 481:28)

What a magnificent statement this is! I was raised to believe that soul was something inside of me, tainted with an “original sin.” This made you feel like you were constantly trying to rub out, or erase, some indelible evil within you. This glorious statement in *Science and Health* exposes this claim as such a lie! What a freedom to know that Soul, God, divine Principle, is the source of *all* individuality and could never sin, nor be receptive to sin. What a sense of ever-present Love governing and guiding me — *and everyone*. I am so grateful for Christian Science and its true explanation of Soul. *****

Moral Freedom

Science and Health, p. 58:12 only “**There is moral freedom in Soul.**”

There is a persistent belief that working for God means a life of strictures and blandness. I certainly wondered if that was going to be the case when I came to Plainfield. The phrase “moral freedom” sounded humanly like an oxymoron. I am grateful to say that nothing could be further from being true. Working here has certainly brought a needed order to my life, but it has also brought a freedom that has been both unexpected (at first) and liberating (every day since)!

Learning in Christian Science that God, Soul is All – and that *moral* is defined in the 1828 Webster’s as “Conformed to the rules of right” – it is clear that the moral freedom we are given is the freedom to think rightly and act rightly in the only

reality there is. While the promise of moral freedom sounded initially like shackles, it is in fact more like getting the keys to the kingdom!

I am so grateful to this church, and my practitioner, for giving me the teaching needed to find out how wonderful moral freedom is. Thank you! *****

Thank you so much for your post. This is one of the most important things I have learned, but only after coming to Plainfield.

Growing up in the C.S. church, I found a lot of immoral activity being accepted as OK, and I fell into the same. As unbelievable as it sounds to me today, I had little guidance about morality by the C.S. adults around me, and so I suffered dearly for it. Of course, my wishy-washy view of morality got me nowhere.

The Plainfield Church teaching set me straight — and I have found the greatest happiness in the moral freedom of the ‘straight and narrow way’! That same ‘straight and narrow way’ that I thought would “shackle” me, has brought me out of the constant unsettled feeling of my former ways.

I am also very grateful for this moral freedom! *****

Jacob, the Supplanter

“SUPPLANT, verb transitive [Latin *supplanto*; *sub* and *planta*, the bottom of the foot.] To trip up the heels. [See Genesis 25:36 – Jacob taking hold of Esau’s heel.]

‘Supplanted, down he fell.’ [Milton]

1. To remove or displace by stratagem; or to displace and take the place of; as, a rival supplants another in the affections of his mistress, or in the favor of his prince....

2. To overthrow; to undermine.”

(Webster, 1828 Dictionary)

As firstborn son, Esau stood to inherit two things from his father: the birthright (a double portion of the estate), as well as a spoken blessing especially favoring the firstborn alone. Through subtlety, Jacob was able to “unseat” his brother and obtained all the firstborn’s blessings for himself, in his brother’s stead. Therefore, Esau cried out, “Is not he rightly named Jacob [supplanter]? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing.” (Genesis 27:36,)

Fearful of Esau’s intent to kill him and his loved ones, Jacob had nowhere to turn on earth, so he sought heaven — with all his might, all night.

It’s helpful to think of Jacob wrestling with his “shadow self,” like the shadow of someone’s body insisting that it’s more real than the body and it’s in charge of that body; or like a movie star’s stand-in refusing to leave the set, aggressively insisting that he/she has always been the real star of the show.

Then came to Jacob the realization that his most important work was to live up to his name as never before, by a new and living way: to supplant his evil stand-in — his mortal selfhood — with his immortal selfhood, that which is “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:13.)

“Seeking is not sufficient. It is striving that enables us to enter. Spiritual attainments open the door to a higher understanding of the divine Life.” (*Science and Health*, p. 10:14-16)

“Spirit never believes in God because it understands Him. Power is a belief of matter, a blind force, the offspring of will and not Wisdom, of the mortal, and not the immortal mind, — yea, of error, and not Truth. The headlong cataract, the devouring flames, the tempest’s breath, the lightning and storm, together with all that is selfish, dishonest, and impure, represent power. Might belongs to Spirit, the very ‘winds are in His fists;’ and, controlled by Spirit and not matter, they are harmonious.” (*Science and Health*, p. 349, 1st edition.) To personal sense, Jacob perceived his brother’s wildly discordant wrath like an approaching firestorm from which he could not escape. But at Peniel, Jacob reversed the course of his spiritual life, put the kingdom of heaven first,

and thus reversed the curse over his life on earth, “overruling the evidence of personal sense altogether, and thus reveal[ing] the harmony of man and the universe, on a reversed statement.” (*Science and Health*, 1st edition, p.160.) In so aligning himself with Soul, not sense, Jacob also protected Esau from the condemnation that would surely have resulted had Esau been allowed to carry out his deadly intentions.

This is how God makes the wrath of man to praise him “Surely”! (Ps. 76:10.)

Jacob supplanted his sense-led self with his Soul-led self. The great supplanter supplanted discord with harmony, and everything out-of-tune in his life became one with the music of the spheres. *****

I love the sense of how being a supplanter of the “right thing” becomes a blessing. It is of great importance that Mrs. Eddy admonishes, instructs, counsels us to adhere to the Truth of Being. That is our saviour, our starting point, our premise for demonstration. We should, as often as possible, identify ourselves with God daily. Soul, as God, has helped me with this, although not easy at first. I have learned to become stubborn with that Truth of Being and it is a blessing. *****

I was interested to learn from a Bible commentary that the word translated as “wrestle” also means to “be-dust,” or to cover with dust, as wrestlers used to do to their bodies. This suggests to me that Jacob was wrestling with a mortal sense which was “be-dusting” his thought about himself and his brother, until the clarity of Love prevailed.

So grateful for what I am learning. *****

Crieth Out For The Living God.

Psalm 84: 2 “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”

“my heart — Strong’s Hebrew 3820: The heart, the feelings, the will, the intellect, centre

“my flesh — Strong’s Hebrew 1320: Flesh, body, person

“cry out — Strong’s Hebrew 7442: To give a ringing cry for

“For — Strong’s Hebrew 413: Near, with, among, to

“the living — Strong’s Hebrew 2416: Alive, raw, fresh, strong, life

“God — Strong’s Hebrew 410: Strength, mighty, the Almighty

Lexicon

This week I used the selection below by Peter V. Ross before I had to meet with someone with whom I felt intimidated. It made me think about the above Bible quote from our lesson, “my flesh crieth out for the living God.” A statement from our Roundtable Sunday came to mind, “Make sure your home and body are a dwelling place for God. The temple of the Holy Ghost.” (1 Corinthians 6:19).

I saw that thinking should be a, “dwelling place for God” and by filling it with truths and silencing the negative lies I was making room for the “living God.” Doing this before the meeting brought peace and joy, knowing that all the qualities were within me given by God.

“Say to yourself, ‘I am the temple of the living God; the Lord is in His holy temple, let this world of pain and trouble be still. I am eternal Life on exhibition. I am the place where all-knowing Mind is diffusing courage, wisdom, resourcefulness, keenness of vision, and soundness of judgment.’”
How Can You Help Yourself, by Peter V. Ross

SUBJECT: Mind — February 23rd, 2020

God

Science and Health, p. 587: 5-8 “GOD. The great I am; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all substance; intelligence.”

It has been suggested that we memorize this definition, work with it daily, and include others after you have prayed for yourself. Recently, I have been using this as a prayer for others after I pray for myself, sending it out when I do blessings and affirmations. God’s man and his universe go together, so when praying about God and using this definition it is natural for it to go out to everyone.

“...there is no place where God is not...”
Science and Health, p. 480:3 *****

David Encouraged Himself in The Lord His God

I Samuel 30:6 — “And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.”

This reminded me of a verse from our last Bible Study’s recommended reading:

Nehemiah 5:7 — “Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.”

I feel like it is an important lesson in each case that might be overlooked since it was written so plainly. When an opportunity presents itself, there is no need to poll for consensus or to Google the problem — and definitely no need to descend into self-pity or worry — we simply need to go to God and He will direct us. The comfort, encouragement, and counsel we need is always an inspired moment alone with God away.

Of course, getting to the point where we know how to purify our thought of the muck, and be that clean, shiny surface that can reflect Him clearly takes Christian Science as properly taught here. I am so grateful to my practitioner for being available to help me find that comfort, encouragement, and counsel needed when I’ve not been able to on my own.

Such a blessing to be a member of this church and to have access to every resource here. Thank you! *****

From *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*:
“[1 Samuel] 30:1-6 – When we go abroad in the way of our duty, we may comfortably hope that God will take care of our families in our absence, but not otherwise. If, when we come off a journey, we find our abode in peace, and not laid waste, as David here found his, let the Lord be praised for it. David’s men murmured against him. Great faith must expect such severe trials. *But, observe, that David was brought thus low, only just before he was raised to the throne.* When things are at the worst with the church and people of God, then they begin to mend. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. His men fretted at their loss, the soul of the people was bitter; their own discontent and impatience added to the affliction and misery. But David bore it better, though he had more reason than any of them to lament it. They gave liberty to their passions, but he set his graces to work; and while they dispirited each other, he, by encouraging himself in God, kept his spirit calm. *Those who have taken the Lord for their God, may take encouragement from him in the worst times.*”
(Emphasis added.) *****

Us

I love the definition of Mind in this week’s Lesson, that starts out: “MIND. The only I, or Us...” I don’t think I really zeroed in on it before!

To me it is so comforting to be an idea of Mind, and part of “the only I, or Us”! It includes everyone. The definition of Mind continues, “...not that which is *in* man, but the divine Principle, or God, of whom man is the full and perfect expression...”

If we are the “full and perfect expression” of God, isn’t that just wonderful, and enough? I find it dangerous to think of oneself as having a grey-matter brain with a human mind to manage and worry about — so I refuse to go there. I find it very liberating to see myself — as well as everyone else — as an idea of Mind. What a revolutionary concept — and I’m so grateful for Mary Baker Eddy for bringing Christian Science to mankind.

"A Buckler to Them..."

“He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”
(Prov. 2:7)

Webster’s 1828 – “Buckler: A kind of shield, or piece of defensive armor, anciently used in war. It was composed of wood, or wickers woven together, covered with skin or leather, fortified with plates of brass or other metal, and worn on the left arm. On the middle was an umbo, boss or prominence, very useful in causing stones and darts to glance off. The buckler often was four feet long, and covered the whole body.”

I never looked up the word “buckler” before. This definition gave me new meaning to the protection and governance of Mind, — when I “walk uprightly”; that is, when I live “honestly; with strict observance of rectitude.” It is such a complete shield and protection — in all jurisdiction, in all movement, in all faculties, in all medicine, — and teaches me without a torrent of *my* words. This Lesson is the most inspiring and comprehensive lesson on Mind that I have ever read. Thank you, Lesson-writer. *****

"Easy to Be Intreated."

“...the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” James 3:17

Entreat: Ready to obey, willing to listen, to yield. Not stubborn, obstinate, controlling, overbearing, or sour. (from different sources online)

“Wisdom: The right use or exercise of knowledge; godliness; piety; the knowledge and fear of God, and sincere and uniform obedience to his commands.” (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

“...one of the signs that God’s wisdom is at work in a person’s heart is that he is ‘easy to be entreated.’” Total Life Ministries

“For the LORD giveth wisdom:” Proverbs 2:6

To depart from pride and cultivate meekness, obedience to God, honesty, patience, humility, concern for what God wants is wisdom. To get myself out of the way is wisdom. As we are told

here over and over, pride is not your friend. Plainfield is the only place that I ever found addressing the “burning out of pride” with a clear understanding of the Science of the Christ; most other approaches enable pride. This is where a covenant with God is a lifesaver to keep you on the straight and narrow. I am grateful to be where this is taught and lived. Thank you. *****

In Patience Obedience to a Patient God

Thank you for the Bible lesson on Mind. This verse jumped out at me.

Science and Health, p. 254:10-12 “When we wait patiently on God and seek Truth righteously, He directs our path.”

Recently I’ve been working on memorizing a powerful citation on patience and obedience from *Science and Health*, p. 242:15-20. “In patience obedience to a patient God, let us labor to dissolve with the universal solvent of Love the adamant of error, — self-will, self-justification, and self-love, — which wars against spirituality and is the law of sin and death.”

I’m so grateful for Mrs. Eddy’s teaching. In the midst of trying, extended circumstances, I’m making some progress. Choosing to be still and patient, getting my personal self out of the way, and letting God’s plan come shining through with love. I’m listening more to angel thoughts rather than rashly speaking out and plowing my own way. I’ve gained such peace by yielding to that Truth. *****

I stumbled upon this online while doing a generic search for “In patient obedience to a patient God,…”

“Patience and Obedience

THERE was a colony of little ants living out on a golf course. A golfer’s ball landed near the colony. And every time the player swung his club, it missed the ball and plowed into the ants, scattering them to the winds. Finally one little ant said to the other little ant, You know, if we want to live, we had better get on the ball. It wouldn’t be enough, of course, for the ants to figure out what

to do. They had to be obedient to the thought before they would be safe. And so it is with us. God cares for each of His ideas, both great and small. When we listen for and are obedient to His messages, we are safe in His arms.” The article goes on... (CS Monitor, September 27, 1993)

I love how Divine Mind guides us to what we need to help us shift. Thank you, too, for all the wonderful resources you share on your beautiful Web site. *****

Neither Be Ye of Doubtful Mind

Luke 12:29 “And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.” From Webster 1828 some descriptive words and phrases about “doubtful”:

- “1. To waver or fluctuate in opinion; to hesitate; to be in uncertainty; to be in suspense; to be in uncertainty, respecting the truth or fact; to be undetermined.
2. To fear; to be apprehensive; to suspect.
3. To question, or hold questionable; to withhold assent from; to hesitate to believe; as, I have heard the story, but I doubt the truth of it.
4. To distrust; to withhold confidence from; as, to doubt our ability to execute an office.”

I now know it was too much doubting that kept me in bondage to fear for so long. I am certain that David, when he was so distressed by the Amalekites but “encouraged himself in the Lord his God” recalled the many times God had protected him, guided him, provided for him and with gratitude and reverence for what God has done had increased faith to follow when the direction came to pursue the Amalekites.

Aren’t we all to do the same when doubt tempts so aggressively? “Hitherto has He helped me and hitherto He will!”

Hymn 240

O Spirit, source of light,
Thy grace is unconfined;
Dispel the gloomy shades of night,
Reveal the light of Mind.