

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 171

SUBJECT: Christ Jesus —
August 30th, 2020

A Great Light

Responsive Reading: Isaiah 9:2

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”

On page 14 of *Collectanea*, Mary Baker Eddy wrote six Footsteps of Christian Science. They are:

1. **A great light** **Matthew 4:16**
2. **Repentance** **Matthew 4:17**
3. **Obedience** **Matthew 5:17**
4. **Purity** **Matthew 5:28**
5. **Less Talk** **Matthew 5:37**
6. **Perfection; resist not evil; love your enemies; return good for evil; etc., etc., etc.** **Matthew 5:48, 39-44.**

For “1. A great light,” that verse from Matthew is a direct quote of Isaiah 9:2 and speaks of Christ Jesus fulfilling the prophecy of “Esaiahs the prophet.”

During my time here in Plainfield, I have kept these six steps close and worked with them frequently. As I came from such a dark, empty time before, when I arrived at this Church everything quite literally seemed brighter. More light, more hope, more opportunity, more joy, more Life! Now I feel that every bit of inspiration God sends brings more light. What a blessing it is to be here!

On page 22 of *Collectanea*, Mrs. Eddy wrote more about “great light”:

“NOVEMBER 22, 1892

When a discord is present, *remember* that when Love is pushing upon the sense, evil is aggravated and is forced from unconsciousness to conscious

thought. Then be not afraid at such times. Darkness should be seen as the forerunner of great light. Then we may rejoice at such times, instead of being filled with fear. Zech. 14:6, 7.”

Thank you so much for posting this. *Collectanea* is new to me, and I hadn’t read this. The part on page 22 is especially helpful, as when you are in the darkness you can’t always see it as the forerunner of great light, and this is so encouraging! I am very grateful for this church and for all that is shared on the Forum.

I, too, thank you for sharing this excerpt from *Collectanea* and want to include something from Mrs. Eddy’s *Christ and Christmas*.

“FAST circling on, from zone to zone, —
Bright, blest, afar, —
O’er the grim night of chaos shone
One lone, brave star. (STAR OF BETHLEHEM)
IN tender mercy, Spirit sped
A loyal ray
To rouse the living, wake the dead,
And point the Way —
The Christ-idea, God anoints —
Of Truth and Life;
The Way in Science He appoints,
That stills all strife. (CHRIST HEALING)”

Abide in the Vine

“I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”
John 15:5

“Abide: To continue, to stay, to remain.”
(Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

“Branches can only bear fruit if they abide in the vine.... The branch is dependent on the vine, but the vine is not dependent on the branch. The branch derives its life and power from the vine. Without the vine, the branch is useless, lifeless, powerless.”
by Brian Hedges

At a recent Roundtable titled, “[Remain in Me, and You Will Bear Abundant Fruit](#),” it was instructed, “You don’t get fruit on your own. You can try to strive to produce fruit, but you will not succeed. We are the branches on the vine, the Christ consciousness. God gives us fruit. Call the sap which flows from the vine, the Holy Ghost. It flows to us, but we must remain in the vine by abiding by, and practicing, the precepts of Christ Jesus. This is following his life example.” (*From my jottings*) Each week we have these tremendous Bible Lessons and classes to help us “abide” in the vine.

The Sunday, August 23rd, 2020 Roundtable instructed, when we label ourselves and others with the pictures of sin, disease, and death, it opens the door for it to become our identity — “as a man thinketh.” By insisting on this identity, it then becomes a conviction. We were told that this resistance or hardened heart can only be dissolved by divine Love as found in this Science of the Christ. No one can “abide” for me; but as I “abide” in the Word, I am finding the promise from *Science and Health*, — “The eternal Truth destroys what mortals seem to have learned from error, and man’s real existence as a child of God comes to light.” (288:31-1) This brings freedom from these ungodlike convictions in my life and others’ lives.

Binding the Strong Man

“No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.”
(Mark 3:27)

“Mortal mind is ‘the strong man,’ which must be held in subjection before its influence upon health and morals can be removed. This error conquered, we can despoil ‘the strong man’ of his goods, —

namely, of sin and disease.” (*Science and Health* 400:4-8)

“Subjection – The act of subduing; the act of vanquishing and bringing under the dominion of another.

“Despoil – to strip, to rob.” (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

Before coming to Plainfield church I did not really understand what was meant by “the strong man.” As a result of working with my practitioner, Roundtables, and Bible Studies, etc., I am learning that in Christian Science I am never dealing with a sick body or a sick business or troubled relationships, or even real-world problems that seem to be coming at us from all sides. It is all the so-called mortal mind that I am dealing with; and when I can fully realize this, and the nothingness of what Mrs. Eddy says has no real existence, then it and its “goods” are cast out. This has helped me to turn away from the suggestions that come, and deal with the false talker, mortal mind. I like how Peter V. Ross talks about this in *Leaves of Healing*, p. 94:

“You can overcome all the impedimenta...as you bind that strong man of deception whom Scripture warns against. And you bind him by knowing that the Almighty is in the midst of you, alert to every emergency.... He knows just how to put His hand on each trespasser, tie him hand and foot, and eject him from the house — and He just delights in doing so. Fortunate are you to have such a defender.”

"Keep Your Violin in Tune"

This week’s Watching Point (216) quotes Mrs. Eddy: “The argument used in healing is simply tuning up. If your violin is in tune, it is unnecessary to tune it up. Keep your violin in tune.”

This statement reminds me of lines from the Christian Science Hymnal, 36:

“Amid the restless eyes of earth
How steadfast is thine eye,
Fixed on the silent loveliness
That fills the morning sky.”

God’s steadfastness is like that of a stable tuning fork tuned to standard pitch, to be used as a

reference tone for tuning the instruments of an orchestra. A tuning fork resting on a music stand in a concert hall will always remain at an unvarying pitch even if all the other instruments of the orchestra be out of tune with it and with each other.

The 1st edition of *Science and Health*, says, “numbers are harmonious only when governed by Intelligence, outside the figures,” and the same can be said of musical notes (page 31).

“Though the grass seemeth to wither, and the flower to fade, they reappear; erase the figures that express numbers; shut out the tones of music; give to the worm the body called man, the Principle of these survives despite the so-called laws of matter, and holds its ideas immortal. If the inharmony of belief hides the harmony of Truth, it cannot destroy this Principle, for it is God, supreme over all; ‘who doeth according to His own will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto Him, what doest thou?’” (*Science and Health*, 1st edition, pages 75-76)

[Here is a practical audio-visual demonstration](#) of what happens when two tones are in unison with one another (cf., “I and my Father are one”) and when they are not.

Thank you so much for your post. Having been a violinist for a few years when younger and part of an orchestra, tuning up was something I was familiar with. Over the years when I would read those words of Mrs. Eddy, I did not really understand how to do that. Since coming to Plainfield, I am once again so grateful to be learning what this means and how to practice this. The video was also a great illustration of how I have to keep in unison with my Father.

Live Service

Words can't convey my experience
But can express my gratitude
When the child sang solo and with others
My ears really listened. Beautiful is an understatement.
Thank you, young person.

Then the last person who read the Scientific Statement of Being Touched my heart with Sparkles (which is how I feel that Light sometimes).

I missed Roundtable so listened after the service. I felt as part of the unfolding of Plainfield rather than just me coming to your treasure trove of truth and blessings.

I know we are all connected,

But to feel it,

To experience like the waves are to the ocean,

Is what happened to me today. THANK YOU!

SUBJECT: Man —

September 6th, 2020

Messenger Dove

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:” (Matthew 3:16)

I love being reminded of the presence of the dove. It was with Noah, in the ark. The dove brought back to him the olive branch — a message of love and blessing from God, foretelling good. It appeared prominently again, when Jesus was baptized. Mrs. Eddy defines dove in the “Glossary” of *Science and Health*: “DOVE. A symbol of divine Science; purity and peace; hope and faith.” That dove, the messenger of God’s love, care, and provision for man, has been ever-present throughout time. I am grateful to have that dove in my ark, and guiding me to the Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent.

The Former Conversation

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24)

From last week's Forum: "On page 14 of *Collectanea*, Mary Baker Eddy wrote six Footsteps of Christian Science." This is the 5th step: "5. Less Talk – Matthew 5:37" (*Corresponding Bible citation is, "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."* Matthew 5:37) Click on this title to hear all six discussed during, "[The People That Walked in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light — Sunday, August 30th, 2020 Roundtable.](#)"

Each step corresponded to citations from the Sermon on the Mount — and beautifully blended with this week's Lesson which has part of the Sermon on the Mount. During the Roundtable talking less was discussed. It was instructed to practice concise language, the importance of simplicity, to talk less so that you can listen. One participant said, "You are not going to find peace in a whole lot of arguing discourse — Why, why, why? Peace is found in simple understanding and accepting simple truths for example, 'This is right. This is kind.'"

Having been a talker most of my life, I am coming to appreciate the importance of listening, most importantly to God. My former conversation was negative human thinking with no time spent with God in a meaningful way, and the result was, "these cometh of evil." Now I am learning to talk less both verbally and mentally, keep my conversation in heaven, and take time to be quiet with God. This has been a life-changing practice that I only learned here through the practical correct teachings of Christian Science.

"You are always talking to yourself, and much of the time, if not careful, you are saying what is not true — how old you are getting, how useless you are, how discouraged you feel, and how much you suffer. Every time you think or declare one of these untruths, you add to the mesmerism which is already weighing you down. You would not make another person have any of these distresses, and surely, God would not. Stop telling yourself these lies. Refuse to think or argue this way, because every time you do so, you take into mentality that

which will work against your welfare." (From [How Can You Help Yourself?](#) by Peter V. Ross)

Thank you for this post, and for the article reference. It is very helpful. This also reminded me of Bicknell Young's article "[Death Overcome](#)." He writes "...I heard a sinister, diabolical, insidious 'voice,' which began to talk to me in a more or less bored, yet masterful way.... Only the fact that I was developed mentally, spiritually, and could 'argue' with the 'voice,' is what saved me from being forced into oblivion."

I was not aware of this "voice" until I started listening to Plainfield Church broadcasts. I thought this voice was me. I feel reading *Science and Health* fills consciousness with Truth and drowns out this voice.

The Bible teaches that living on earth is successful to the extent I reject or turn off wrong thinking and give place to right thinking. The wrong-thinking side of the scales of thought must always be lighter than the right-thinking side, and it should be growing lighter, more insubstantial, every moment, every day.

To the extent that I engage in right thinking, I have attained that state of being which Mrs. Eddy described — in very plain terms — in an 1886 edition of *Science and Health*.

"At present, we know not fully what we are, but this is certain, that we shall be Love, Life, and Truth when we understand them."

Wrong thinking is like the mist or fog that blocks the sun's ray, while right thinking is like the sun's ray itself. These two cannot in the least mingle with one another, ever. "...the carnal mind is enmity with God." (Rom. 8:7)

The Bible designates right thinking as "God," "the Word" ("Logos"), "the Spirit of Truth," etc., and wrong thinking as "the adversary," "the accuser," "satan," a non-existent talking serpent, etc. These two are more distant from one another than east is from west, or as somethingness is from nothingness.

To Christ Jesus as the Son of man, wrong thinking was felt as something immediately discordant, and he never failed to correct it, to rebuke it, to cast it out — instantly and forcefully — as something not his own.

God grant that I be as dedicated to right thinking and as sensitive to wrong thoughts as Christ Jesus was.

Putting on a Heart of Compassion

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; ...And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” (Colossians 3:12, 14)

In thinking about our watch this week, — where it says: “You must feel the divine power is using you. You must kneel in humility at the throne of God asking and seeking to be imbued with deific power,” — I found these passages helpful in reminding me where my thought has to be, to be of service to Him.

The Amplified Bible shed some light on these passages, which I found helpful:

“So, as God’s own chosen people, who are holy [set apart, sanctified for His purpose] and well-beloved [by God Himself], put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience [which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper];” (Col. 3:12) “Beyond all these things put on *and* wrap yourselves in [unselfish] love, which is the perfect bond of unity [for everything is bound together in agreement when each one seeks the best for others].” (Col. 3:14)

Thank you so much for this wonderful Lesson Sermon on “Man.” What a gift was given to us through Mrs. Eddy to have a weekly sermon to study each week and listen to on Sunday, that is without any personal interpretation. The Bible and our textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* are our pastor, and the weekly Lesson post gives one the opportunity to share their own inspiration with others. I have learned so much from these posts. Just another way that Plainfield

Christian Science Church, Independent, provides for serving God.

"Concerning Spiritual Gifts"

“Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. ...there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ...the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” (I Cor. 12:1, 4, 7)

The beautiful verses in Bible citation #5 (I Corinthians 12:1, 4-13) always make me think of our church and its members. God has brought each one of us to this church for a holy purpose. Each member has their special and needed place, protected by God; each has a “spiritual gift” given by God that is needed and worthwhile to His holy Cause. And though each member is unique and different, all are motivated by the same Spirit, — worthy workers for Truth. In a material world where competitiveness and rivalry are encouraged, it is wonderful to see and experience this unfoldment of good in each and every one here. “Father, where Thine own children are, I love to be.” (“Christ My Refuge,” by Mary Baker Eddy)

True Spirituality

“The calm, strong currents of true spirituality, the manifestations of which are health, purity, and self-immolation, must deepen human experience, until the beliefs of material existence are seen to be a bald imposition, and sin, disease, and death give everlasting place to the scientific demonstration of divine Spirit and to God’s spiritual, perfect man.” *Science and Health* 99:23-29

I remember the first time that I read this citation in *Science and Health*, it struck me. Of course! Giving up personal sense and too much “me” goes right along with health and purity. Mrs. Eddy wrote so beautifully, “The calm, strong currents of true spirituality, the manifestation of which are health, purity and self-immolation must deepen human experience....” Her words just put peace right into my heart.

Hymn 382

The Christian Science Hymnal 1932 edition

What is thy birthright, man,
Child of the perfect One;
What is thy Father's plan
For His beloved son?

Thou art Truth's honest child,
Of pure and sinless heart;
Thou treadest undefiled
In Christly paths apart.

Vain dreams shall disappear
As Truth dawns on the sight;
The phantoms of thy fear
Shall flee before the light.

Take then the sacred rod;
Thou art not error's thrall;
Thou hast the gift of God —
Dominion over all.