

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 54

SUBJECT: DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT
10/18/15

ATONEMENT

What a joy it is to be studying this week's lesson on Atonement! It gives a clear picture of its meaning. I didn't have a clue as to what Atonement was, prior to coming into Independent Christian Science.

In order to participate in the "Doctrine of Atonement," one needs to give up PRIDE, and embrace HUMILITY. That constitutes being "At One" with God. We need to recognize any sinful characteristics, and get rid of them. Jesus said to the women with an issue of blood 12 years, "Your sins are forgiven, go and sin no more." That requires restitution. We must NEVER lose sight of where our blessings come from. It is in daily gratitude, meekness, and humility that keeps us safe, that keeps us in "The Kingdom of God" We are not waiting to see, or be in the Kingdom of God, it is here, NOW. The Lord's Prayer, with its spiritual interpretation by Mary Baker Eddy states, "Thy Kingdom IS come, thou art ever present." Once we think, "How great I am." Watch Out! We're ready for "the fall" ("Pride goeth before a fall"). Pride is what happened to King Uzziah. He was the second longest reigning king of Judah.

He felt himself "above the law." After all, wasn't he a supreme and mighty King for 52 years? So, Uzziah went into the temple, and as he begins to light the incense, he is caught. He is confronted by the high priest plus 80 other men in high positions. Instead of asking forgiveness, instead of being remorseful, he lashes out in anger. Suddenly, as he lashes out, the men watch as his forehead breaks out with the whitish sores of leprosy! When the priests see this, they run him out of the temple. He is admonished forever.

He is reduced to the lowest of the low. He is never healed of leprosy. He dies with it. His tomb is in a field somewhere. His epitaph only

reads: "He had Leprosy." What a tragedy! How different things would have been if he had "seen the light". If only he asked for forgiveness. If only he admitted his mistake. If only he repented. If only he were able to take the correction. When I read the story, that's what I thought. I thought about how we are sometimes corrected when we off track. How grateful we should be to have a loving rebuke come our way. How fortunate a practitioner brings to the surface what ever we might be doing wrong? How grateful we should be that it is pointed out, so we can correct it and heal it. If left alone, not addressed, not corrected, and restitution isn't made, we open ourselves up for all kinds of terrible happenings. Keeping ourselves with God, staying humble, thanking him in everything we do every day, giving God all the power, and the glory.. forever. That is the Doctrine of Atonement...or, (At-One-Ment) with God. *****

The Lord Alone Shall Be Exalted

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isa.)

Uzziah, the king, found out the hard way that when he thought HE was doing the work, and not God, there's a penalty to pay. But I guess we all many times learn by "suffering" rather than by "Science"! We've probably all found out--I sure have--that when we think we're doing anything, there's a flip side to that—feeling overburdened. I remember at a time in my life walking around saying, "I can't do everything!" In talking to one of our practitioners about it, she told me, "No, you can't—but God can!"

That has been an enormous help to me. Any time I feel like I have too much to do, I know I'm doing it humanly and I'd better get out of God's way. Instead, now I thank God for the privilege of doing His work—whatever it may be—and asking him to

show me what to do and how to do it. So grateful for every lesson I've learned, and am still learning!! *****

A few weeks ago at the roundtable, I quoted a book entitled "The Light and the Glory" telling of how Christopher Columbus had felt inspired by God to go forth and search for what became known as the New World. He had wonderful success in these endeavors and became very wealthy and powerful. But unfortunately, like in the story of Uzziah, Columbus began to think "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth." God was left out of the picture entirely. The atrocities committed by his men to the peaceful and friendly natives on the islands he encountered were unconscionable. These lessons from the past are warnings to me - to be ever on guard to the wily nature of animal magnetism. For even the very best beginnings and intentions can get turned upside down when one becomes unwatchful.

I made the same mistake of thinking I could do something without God driving in a severe storm. I humbly listened to God until I got about 5 miles from home and then I disregarded the voice telling me to turn. I thought I knew a better way and I put myself in a desperate situation with flooding all around me. When I admitted I was disobedient to God and got humble, He led me to safety.

This was a good lesson to learn and it taught me, "I can of mine own self do nothing." (John 5:30)

Our Unity With God

Only as I humbly accept and realize my spiritual nature (a spiritual fact) can I be cognizant of my unity with God. Repeatedly, we are warned that the carnal man is not the likeness of God. Thus the need to learn the correct understanding of man and be a "part in the at-one-ment with Truth and Love." (*Science and Health, p 20*) *****

Yes, thank you. And I am learning that this is done with humility and gratitude.

James 4: Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. Lift us up to the

understanding that we are one with Him. I was always timid about this, thinking I was way too bold, but now I think because of the Christ teaching us and what Mary Baker Eddy says about a drop of water being one with the ocean, I can humbly feel closer to God. *****

This lesson is a great lesson on the real meaning of humility and why it is essential. Common beliefs would have us think that humility is self-deprecation, weakness, silence, etc., when it is none of these. True humility is simply being at one with God, fully obeying God, and being bold about it! It is "claiming no intelligence, action, nor life separate from God." (*Science and Health*)

It is the source of all intelligence! You can know what you need to know and make correct decisions for yourself, for your family, your business, and your nation. There is nothing weak about that. It is the source of all strength to act rightly! You can do whatever it is God wants you to do without fear, without fatigue, and without delay. There is nothing weak about that. It is the source of all life! It gives you whatever you need to live life right now, to care for yourself, to care for your family, your business, your church, your nation. There is nothing self-deprecating about that. From Deuteronomy: "for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."

The key is to "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord," not in the sight of other men. There is nothing human about humility. It is the only atonement, because it is complete obedience to God. Powerful lesson! *****

Yes, how true. A dear practitioner once explained "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Not human meekness, but the meekness that knows we have the Mind of Christ -- not a human mind -- enables us to inherit the earth -- all the good that God has for His beloved child. It takes a truly meek heart to know "I can of mine own self do nothing." Such a powerful thing to know. I pray to know it more. *****

We all have spiritual sense. It is the only sense that connects us with our Maker, so cultivating that sense is about the most important thing we can do.

SUBJECT – PROBATION AFTER DEATH **10/25/15**

.....The Great Gulf

In Jesus' story of Lazarus and the rich man, Abraham had to inform the (formerly) rich man that "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." Don't feel sorry for the rich man. It is inevitable that sin has to be punished until it is entirely burned out. Abraham was addressing thought.

The great gulf is that there is no connection between good and evil, between love and hate, spirit and matter, pride and humility. There are a million miles in between and no way to bridge that gap. It is black or white. There are no gray zones! A consciousness filled with the goodness of God cannot be infected by evil. A consciousness that is entertaining evil cannot hear God. "Clad in the panoply of Love, human hatred cannot reach you." (S&H) And vice versa. This is why the lions could not attack Daniel. He was on the right side of the great gulf, and there was NO CONNECTION.

This is the basis of Christian healing. There is no connection between the truth that you are the perfect image and likeness of God and the erroneous belief that your life is wrapped up in a mortal body. You can't straddle this fence. Your thought is on one side or the other.

The moral of the story is to get myself on the right side of the great gulf and stay there! Thank God for Christian Science for showing us what all this means. *****

Choose ye! We cannot be on both sides. It's a good question to ask oneself. Which side am I when confronted with any error? *****

The great gulf impressed me. No one is going to do the work for me. I must do it myself. In Lazarus' time, he had Moses and the prophets. I have a practitioner. I must listen to the Truth that is being given to me and learn the lessons. I learned years ago that you don't go into the kingdom of heaven in pairs. Each day I am choosing the right or the wrong. It is my choice. You can't straddle the fence. Thank God for Christian Science and what I am learning in this church. *****

Precept Upon Precept

I have often used this verse from Isaiah in my life. Long ago, our family practitioner gave it to me when I was struggling with "New Math" that had been introduced into my school. It seemed everybody else "got it" except for me. Later, when I became a teacher, I passed it on to many a discouraged, frustrated student.

We seem to live in an "instant" society. Microwave ovens make instant dinners, computers run our lives and businesses, cell phones bridge our daily life. The media tells us "pop a pill". We can take a picture with our cell phone. It's there in an instant. Instant messaging brings us close to a loved one. It's all good. But,...why is my healing not coming about faster? Why can't I solve this problem? Why can't I seem to make a right decision? Etc., etc. In these multiple instances, this verse has been instrumental to my keeping my focus on God, and not giving up. Discouragement is the mark of the devil. Mortal mind would have us quit anything we started that is worth striving for. God requires nothing more than our keeping at it. I'm reminded of the words by Winston Churchill, "Never, never give up!" When a child learns to write, it takes repeated lessons. First he draws one line, then another line, and another. Then, he learns to connect the lines. He may need to repeat this exercise over and over again. Each lesson requires the one previous to it. Like building blocks or pieces of a puzzle, each piece is an integral part of the whole, without which there would be no whole, no completion. The teacher and student repeat it many, many times, over and over again; "here a little, there a little." Remember the old proverb, "Practice makes perfect?" or, "God helps those who help themselves" It is good to remember God is always

working with us, teaching us lessons along the way. He has never lost sight of us, his children. Then, "here a little, there a little" one step at a time. One precept, or rule at a time, builds upon the previous one. Suddenly, comes the breakthrough, and the whole, complete thing appears. Whatever it may be, health, a math problem, business problem, relationship problem, we come through and rise victorious, and perfect! *****

Thank you, that is really helpful. I was thinking about that statement, too, and I think this could also be the orderly handling of wrong thinking as it appears. It's a reminder to correct my thinking every minute, instead of letting the little things go by unnoticed, and pile up—of accepting little annoyances as "normal," not noticing a little negativity that sneaks in to my thinking. Then at the end of the day—or week—or month, there's something big that needs handling! It's taking each thing, one at a time, step by step, and applying the Truth and wiping it out—and finding the answer to that math problem!

It's like Mrs. Eddy's statement about being minutemen and women, and standing porter at the door of thought—and being consistent with it. ****

Thank you Heidi and Carol, discouragement is mortal mind -- feeling separated from God. When I make a mistake, it has been hard to regain my balance, but following precept upon precept, I can overcome this personal sense and truly let God direct my mental and daily path. *****

Isn't it interesting that Gilbert Carpenter named his books about Mrs. Eddy – "Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Footsteps and "Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Precepts"? A precept refers to commands respecting moral conduct. In these books, Carpenter illustrates how Mrs. Eddy practiced and exemplified all that she taught and all that she wrote down in her books, "Science and Health" and also "Prose Works." She had wanted someone to write a biography illustrating how she used this Science – "precept upon precept; line upon line." Interesting, too, that the BOD sued our church for printing "Precepts" and asked us to send all the books we had already printed back them... And they did all they possibly could to keep these books

hidden and suppressed from the public as is written about in the Richard Oakes pamphlet "Discerning the Rights of Man." Thank God their plan did not succeed and thank God for the Carpenters who made sure it did not! Any advancing Scientist who is reading or has read any of the Carpenter books knows how essential they are. "Line upon line; and precept upon precept."!

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This is just what animal magnetism would attempt to do; to hide our leader's example of how to live this Science. These are invaluable lessons for the sincere Truth seeker to achieve the change of base in thought necessary for living Christian Science. *Science and Health*, p.162:9. The effect of this Science is to stir the human mind to a change of base, on which it may yield to the harmony of the divine Mind.

This is why we hear, I have had many healings but cannot seem to do my own healings or understand such and such. Spiritualizing thought is requisite; which can only be achieved by giving up pride, fear, following her example, etc. Thank God these books are available now; Truth had the victory, so that all who want to may be able to live Christian Science.

Hymn 290: "Press on, press on, ye sons of light, Untiring in your holy fight, still treading each temptation down, and battling for a brighter crown." I am so grateful for Christian Science teaching us what our life is in God. And there is no fear in love when we work in Christian Science, *Science and Health* "watching and praying, ...to "gain good rapidly and hold their position, or attain slowly and yield not to discouragement." I find I may move slow but cannot allow myself to give into discouragement, since I am still in the battle "between Spirit and flesh," looking for victory, of course! Many thanks to all the help available at Plainfield. *****

Yes! Press on, press on because it is not some FACT or changeless something we appear to be confronted with; it is working steadily to break this earthly spell through the might of Truth and Love.

How reassuring that there is victory: 1 Cor. 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*****

"Therefore. Seeing that you ought not to despair, but to share in this confidence of triumph. Steadfast. Firmly fixed in your own conviction. Unmovable by others. Abounding in the work of the Lord. Doing diligently and ungrudgingly the work of your lives, which is His work. St. Paul does not meet doubt by angry denunciation, or by crushing it with the iron mace of impatient authority. What would now be thought of Christians who denied the resurrection? Doubtless they were not mere speculative deniers of the resurrection, but recent Gentile converts, who could not get over their pagan difficulties. Yet St. Paul meets them by personal appeals, by helpful analogies, by lofty reasoning, by the glowing force of inspiring convictions. Instead of taking refuge - more ecclesiastic - in anathema and excommunication, he meets error by the counter presentation of ennobling truth." - Pulpit Commentary
This description of Paul sounded like how teaching is done at Plainfield. *****

I think one of the dangers we all face is the desire to have everything "alright" right now so we can get comfortable and stop battling. There is a "heaven" that we all search for, but that heaven is that "perfect" state of being that has dominion over every false belief of sin, disease, and death. And this doesn't happen overnight.
The lesson is full of wise counsel from Mrs. Eddy about this:
"all will be changed 'in the twinkling of an eye,' when the last trump shall sound; but this last call of wisdom cannot come till mortals have already yielded to each lesser call in the growth of Christian character."

"the false claim of error continues its delusions

until the goal of goodness is assiduously earned and won."

"the judgment-day of wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error."

"the human footsteps leading to perfection are indispensable."

"When we wait patiently on God and seek Truth righteously, He directs our path."

There is a finish line, but none of us can reach that line until we have run the entire race (whatever that race may entail). Nobody can be carried to the finish line and walk over it (And none of us can carry anyone else to the finish line). Each of us must run the race that is set before us. Thank God that He loves us and shows us what we need each step of the way! Those with a humble heart seem to run better and enjoy the race more than those with a lot of pride. Pride will cause us to fall down and sometimes run in the wrong direction.

The value of a good church is that we can cheer each other on in the right direction and catch one another when we stumble. *****

SUBJECT- EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT 11/1/2015

Error Is Poison

I came across this, and I think it is good to share.

ERROR IS ESSENTIALLY POISON

As far as the Divine Mind (and ourselves as evidence of that Mind) is concerned any form of error is toxic in nature because is necessarily poison the purity of that Mind.

So we must realize that ANY form of negative thinking, any form of thinking which holds error to be real, is essentially poisonous in nature. The purity of the Divine Mind cannot tolerate it.

PURITY

Purity is then the realization that we cannot afford to entertain error in any form or hold it as real. Do that, and the poison kicks in and the purity is lost. When Jesus said that the devil cometh and findeth nothing in me, I am sure he meant that he found no impurity in him.

But the point here, which is critical, is that we will not take this step of avoiding error unless we realize how toxic it is. We do not make that mistake at the human level with arsenic or cyanide. We avoid any contact with it. But we need to see the toxicity of error at the metaphysical level because it is equally poisonous.

LIGHT IS PURE

We also need this perspective because it takes us to the point where we realize that light is pure. And if we are to be the light of the world, we cannot be that light without the purity. If you consider the characteristics of light, you will realize that it IS pure and cannot be dirtied or tampered with in any way. *****

Thank you. It is interesting how I have ignored the issue of poison until this week when I came across something Mrs. Eddy said about mesmerism being poison.....then I took notice. Your post is excellent and a great help to me. *****

ERROR IS ESSENTIALLY POISON

Thanks for this post, as it reminds us that because error is poison NO AMOUNT of it is good. Those subtle, seemingly benign thoughts about ourselves and others, are poison that must be emptied out. **

This is such an important point. Mrs. Eddy speaks of poison often in her writings and the importance of being aware of poison and handling it so it does not invade one's consciousness and taint one's purity. On page 93 of WPA she writes, "There is no morphine of malice poison, that puts to sleep – that is, to your own best interest, and causes dreams and illusions.

There is no strychnine of jealousy poison, that contracts and keeps from seeing beyond one's own self – that is to make us voice error where we should voice truth.

There is no sulphur of hatred poison; that always inflames – that is, we must watch this; that it does not open to the hatred of the world.

There is no arsenic of envy poison to swell and puff up.

There is no cocaine poison to cause depression.

There is no corrosive sublimate of worry poison; that eats and gnaws.

(Mrs. Eddy gave these arguments to Dr. Alfred Baker, a former M.D.).

At one time, I felt I was always saying the wrong thing, not what I really meant, and found it very upsetting – due to these instructions given by Mrs. Eddy, I handled the belief of strychnine poison (jealousy) and the problem left.

So if you are ever experiencing any of the symptoms mentioned here, trace it back to the claim of poison that is trying to gain entrance to your thought. Never the Truth – but it must be seen in order to be destroyed! *****

Thanks so much for these insights on poison. I just wasn't getting what all the references to poison in various writings were about. Now, I have something to work with, so helpful. *****

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LIGHT IS PURE.

Such an important concept. This is why in the lesson this week we are admonished to "loathe" error. We can't be neutral - we must be as Mrs. Eddy says a "terror to error." And in the Dixon letter, he states only the pure in heart will be able to survive the later days. Error will not be able to find entrance into a heart that is pure.

Reminds me of hymn # 383 - "whatever dims thy sense of truth, or stains thy purity, though light as breath of summer air, O count it sin to thee."*****