

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 55

SUBJECT: ADAM AND FALLEN MAN

11/8/15

No Original Sin

I'm filled with gratitude this morning for Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science for debunking the whole "original sin" myth. It is a relief to know that we are not born inherently separate from God and that we can continually claim, demonstrate, and celebrate our true identity as created in God's image and likeness and, as it states in Isaiah, graven upon the palms of God's hands. Also, a big thank you for the current watching point (#263) which further emphasizes the unreality of sin.

"The Serpent Was More Subtil..."

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

What Matthew Henry says was so helpful to me: "It is the subtlety of Satan to blemish the reputation of the divine law as uncertain or unreasonable, and so to draw people to sin." Isn't it just like error to convince me that adhering to God's demands is unreasonable or even impractical! A social situation, a hungering appetite, or false pleasure often make a little deviation from God's demands seem justifiable,...but they never are. Being alert to this subtle "wile of the devil" gives me the needed encouragement and strength to resist a particular temptation that has been very difficult up to now.

I agree that it is very helpful to think of the subtlety of error and how giving in to its temptations, even slightly, can lead to destruction if not corrected. This makes me think of Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which

leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." I envision a tightrope walker high in the sky, who is tempted over and over to look away from his focus, but does not give in and has almost reached his destination. When he is unable to resist any longer, suddenly he looks away, loses his balance...and eventually falls (departs from his path).

In II Corinthians 11: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

The truth is simple. How comforting is that! And yet, how often does life seem so complicated? Each one of us, in truth, is the image and likeness of our perfect Father, and when we trust our spiritual sense and get rid of pride, hatred, envy, revenge, etc..., we know what we need to know when we need to know it, and life becomes like the "straight and narrow" path.

However, if I trust my material senses instead of my spiritual sense, then I merely observe the human condition and am tempted to try all that the world has to offer. That is being in the "carnal" mind, which is "enmity against God." We observe some things that are good, some things that are bad, and we observe many things that we're not sure about. Life gets complicated. I'm not sure where to send my kids to school, not sure who to vote for, not sure whether to take that trip or not, etc...

If life seems complicated, it is a sure sign one is in the wrong mind, that he has lost touch with the Mind "which was also in Christ Jesus." To attempt to draw conclusions from observation of the human condition is self-deception. Without spiritual sense, life is complicated. Mrs. Eddy refers to it as an enigma (a problem without a solution).

I'm grateful for Mrs. Eddy, for pointing out the subtlety of error, and helping us not to be "corrupted

from the simplicity that is in Christ." *****

Thank you for this reminder! I am so grateful for the simplicity that Christian Science has brought me. When I think of the complexities that my life had, I can see how they brought about problems without a solution.

For example: Loyalty to more than one person made it increasingly difficult to please everyone without feeling like I needed to lie so that everyone would get along. Now that I am learning to only be loyal to God, this simplification has made it so I never feel I need to lie to smooth out a situation. What a wonderful change!

9. II Corinthians 1

12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

Upon reading this, I realized that ‘conversation’ might have had a different meaning than I knew, so here is the 1828 Webster’s definition:

CONVERSATION, noun

1. General course of manners; behavior; deportment; especially as it respects morals.

Let your conversation be as cometh the gospel. Philippians 1:27.

Be ye holy in all manner of conversation 1 Peter 1:15.

2. A keeping company; familiar intercourse; intimate fellowship or association; commerce in social life. Knowledge of men and manners is best acquired by conversation with the best company.

3. Intimate and familiar acquaintance; as a conversation with books, or other object.

4. Familiar discourse; general intercourse of sentiments; chat; unrestrained talk; opposed to a formal conference.

By these meanings, “our conversation in the world” seem to be the totality of our words, actions and thoughts in the course of our life. I now see that to keep all that “in simplicity and godly sincerity” is

only possible with Christian Science. *****

The Talking, Lying Serpent

In Science and Health, Mrs. Eddy tells that the talking, lying serpent (evil) in Genesis doesn’t exist anywhere in the animal kingdom. And she says, “Evil, by whatever figure presented, contradicts itself Seeing this, we should have faith to fight all claims of evil, because we know that they are worthless and unreal.”

So evil really is nothing but an absurd hoax! No matter what evil calls itself — sin, disease, death, war, terrorism, “global warming,” so-called “natural disasters,” etc. — it’s not anything real or true, since its basis is nothing but a fraud! Just like the Wizard in “The Wizard of Oz,” who turned out to be just a tiny, little man, with no power at all, even though he seemed to be huge and imposing with great powers?

So any time we’re confronted with an error, let’s stand strong with God, and remember that evil is “worthless and unreal” and hasn’t got a chance against the all-power of God! As Mrs. Eddy also says, “Why stand aghast at nothingness?” *****

I Shall Not Die

I once heard about a woman who was sent home from the doctor’s office with the medical verdict that she only had a few more weeks to live. She posted this verse from Psalm 118 all over her home as a reminder to herself – “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.” She got up joyfully each morning, going about her daily tasks, praising God and relying on Him for strength. And guess what?! She did not die, but she lives and continues to “declare the works of the LORD” - a living testimony that all things are possible to Him.

Thank you so much for this lesson! “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.) *****

These verses from Ps. 118 also prove a grateful

heart and a consciousness that is sure of its present perfection, its indestructible unity with Life!

It is not fooled by whatever verdict the material senses present. Such a heart continues with joy to serve God because of its love and gratitude for the power and certainty of Truth.

How important to always remember God is All, Good is All, in Truth, no matter what appears, spiritual perfection changes not. If we remain unshaken by sense testimony, we do realize the **present** perfection. *****

This made me think of something I repeat a lot, which I believe is from a Watch. The beginning states that matter flounders, but " God stands and we are one with Him and we will not be shaken." sometimes I just say out loud I will not be shaken. Thank you both for bringing Psalm 118 to our attention. *****

Humility

In Luke, when asked to a wedding, it says not to sit down in the highest room lest a more honorable man comes and you will be asked to take to the lowest room. But sit down in the lowest room (humility) and you may be asked to go up higher. Luke 14:11 says, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Moffat Bible says, "For everyone who uplifts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be uplifted."

We need to keep our head low in humility, and humble ourselves before God. Be willing to do whatever is asked of us in the service of God. The man with his head held low in humility cannot fall. He will be aware of every step he is taking. *****

Yes, here again, another lesson that emphasizes the importance of humility! And when you think about it - what causes man (and remember only in belief) to fall from his high estate? "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."! (Proverbs)*****

We are often reminded in this church never to seek a position, it is God who does the appointing and the only way to accept a God-appointed position is with sincere humility. In doing so we have security in our place, then the only one who can "...say to thee, Give this man place..." Luke 14:9 is God, and He always moves us on to something better (to a higher place) and not to the lowest room, to continue to humbly serve Him. By learning this, I'm finding that humility is its own reward. *****

Beautiful posts! Thank you all. I like what is in the lesson from Obadiah; what, perfect response to pride: Obadiah 3:3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? 4 Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

Simply to never think we are above others or apart from God; but like our great exemplar, walk humbly, our hand in His, like a "son" who knows his place. We have been given a place with our Father-Mother which we must humbly accept and cherish. *****

SUBJECT – MORTALS AND IMMORTALS 11/15/15

Put Off The Old Man

"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; holiness. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Ephesians 4

"Penance is not Christian Science. Intelligence demands that we destroy the sense of sin, and not perpetuate it by mourning over and distracting ourselves over that which never happened. I now refuse to dwell on the past, and am having much success in "putting off the old man." There is no good or virtue in this habit. The demand is that we address our thought to the eternal now, and not to

the dead past."

TEACHING AND ADDRESSES OF EDWARD
A. KIMBALL, C.S.D.

This is a powerful lesson this week on repentance, reformation, regeneration, spiritual baptism, and purity,*****

Thank you for this post. The quote from Edward Kimball reminds me of an article that was featured on the carousel a while back, "God's Nearness" by Mary Baker Eddy. In it she says, "All the past there is to us, is our present consciousness of it." So, it's up to us to let go of any discordant, unreal past! **

Regeneration And The New Birth

1828 Dictionary - Definition of Regeneration:

"In theology, new birth by the grace of God; that change by which the will and natural enmity of man to God and his law are subdued, and a principle of supreme love to God and his law, or holy affections, are implanted in the heart."

From Matthew Henry:

"Regeneration or the new birth, is a subject to which the world is very averse; it is, however, the grand concern, in comparison with which everything else is but trifling."

Mary Baker Eddy, Miscellaneous Writings: The New Birth:

"The new birth is not the work of a moment. It begins with moments, and goes on with years; moments of surrender to God, of childlike trust and joyful adoption of good; moments of self-abnegation, self-consecration, heaven-born hope, and spiritual love."

I love the thought that the new birth begins with moments ... moments of surrender to God. As so eloquently said in the Roundtable – we need to trust God in the moment, listening to Him and hearing what He is telling us to do at that moment, and not taking our thought off that.*****

Thanks for this post. Jesus' statement in Matt 19:28 to Peter's question in Matt19:27 says a lot:

Matt19:27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, **in the regeneration** when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Emphasis added). The addition of "in the regeneration" speaks to how important the recognition of our New Birth and all that it includes is, to our spiritual growth. It means I must know persistently and consistently that I am not a mortal, subject to all mortal mind decrees but with gratitude and Love own my true selfhood, what Loves knows and is saying to me that I am. *****

Be Not Conformed

I have liked the Amplified Version of the Bible Romans 12:2 which reads, "Do not be conformed to this world (this age) (fashioned after and adapted to its external superficial customs), but be transformed (changed) by the (entire) renewal of your mind (by its new ideals and its new attitude), so that you may prove (for yourselves) what is the acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect (in His sight for you)." It is a reminder not to be swept up with the current worldly fads, fashions, etc. but to always be renewing our mind with God's Word. He is a constant and ever-present Source for all things. He is the one who gives us Divine help, inspiration and guidance...if we would but humbly ask Him for it. *****

It's wonderful that we have so much right here to constantly renew our minds with God's Word. Each service, Roundtable, Bible study, Unity Watch, and the *limitless* material available on the Plainfield Web site is just what the world needs for consistent progress. No matter what question I have, or challenge I'm faced with, I can always find an answer right here to transform my thought. I've been reassured since coming to this church that I can always turn to God, for anything, at any time day or night. I'm so thankful that I can also access our Web site for needed guidance, help, and

inspiration at any time day or night, it is a sure representation of our "ever-present source for all things". Thank you for this reminder. *****

I have loved this passage about be not conformed to this world, but before coming to Plainfield I wasn't sure just how to accomplish this! Now I am gaining insight, although I sometimes would like to be a little faster at this. Even working with humility, gratitude, earnest prayer, I get tripped up by things people say. But one of the biggest things I have learned here at Plainfield is to: NEVER GIVE UP, STAND WITH PRINCIPLE AND PRINCIPLE WILL STAND WITH YOU. *****

"Do not be conformed to this world (this age) (fashioned after and adapted to its external superficial customs), but be transformed....."

Thank you--I never thought of this passage as referring to this age! This is an invitation to expand one's horizons and contemplate eternity! "...this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15:53)... "inherit everlasting life." (Matt. 19:29).

How easy it can be to get bogged down in the everyday human picture, rather than lifting our view to contemplate that "Life and goodness are immortal." (*Science and Health*, p246)... in "eternal harmony." That's certainly uplifting, and Mrs. Eddy declares that knowing "even in small degree" that "Being is holiness, harmony, immortality... will increase longevity, will purify and elevate character." (*Science and Health*, p 492) Sign me up! *****

To the world matter and evil are real, and this is the foundation of all error. The world seems to be, but is not. I believe that Mind only knows heaven...reality, Truth. *****

Amenable

"...God made Man immortal and amenable to Spirit only." *Science and Health*, p. 434

AMENABLE, a. (1828 edition)

1. In old law, easy to be led; governable
2. Liable to answer; responsible; answerable; liable

to be called to account; as, every man is amenable to the laws.

(1913 edition)

4. Willing to yield or submit; responsive; tractable.

I love how the writers of the lesson had us just focus on this part of the sentence.

This made me think of one of our daily duties which says: "In Science, divine Love alone governs man; and a Christian Scientist reflects the sweet amenities of Love, in rebuking sin, in true brotherliness, charitableness, and forgiveness. The members of this Church should daily watch and pray to be delivered from all evil, from prophesying, judging, condemning, counseling, influencing or being influenced erroneously."

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 1 "...God made Man immortal and amenable to Spirit only." *Science and Health*, p. 434 *****

"God made Man immortal and amenable to Spirit only." This statement reminded me of a lesson I learned when I first came to Plainfield. I always tried to please people. A practitioner told me that I didn't have to please man. I only had to please God and if I pleased God the people around me who were right would also be pleased. Amenable - easy to be led; governable. I only have to be amenable to God. *****

Unloading the Contraband

GOLDEN TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 5: 17

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Through what I have been learning about Christian Science, I can feel how those old things are passing away, because so much of what was important to me before now has no meaning. There are times when a day seems particularly hard to get through, but that only makes me think back to how almost every day was difficult to get through before coming to Plainfield! And I will take difficult days with God over any difficult moment without Him.

Here are a few quotes that helped me to get perspective on this process of becoming new:

Suppose that Jesus, on the night of Calvary, had begun to grumble. Suppose he had said: "I never was crucified before I came into Christian Science, and do not see why I should have this claim to meet." Would there have been any resurrection? No. Yet he was tempted in all points like as we are.

—from *Teaching and Addresses on Christian Science*, by Edward Kimball

If a vessel was loaded with contraband, she would be the legitimate prey of any nation; but the moment she unloads it she is safe. Similarly, as long as man retains any belief in materiality, if he is a student of Christian Science, that Science must protect him from animal magnetism. But when he eliminates all materiality, then old things have passed away and he is no longer carrying contraband; he cannot be attacked by animal magnetism. The only possible contact point in man through which animal magnetism can reach him, is through the materiality that he retains. If there is no materiality, there is no contact point.

—from *Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Precepts*, by Gilbert Carpenter *****

A Living Sacrifice

"I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans) I once wondered how in the world would this be possible – to present your bodies as a living sacrifice?! Quite a tall order, or so I thought. It was around then that I discovered the beauty found in hymn #324. It gives simple and practical help as to how to do this. It is a wonderful hymn to sing, think about and to practically apply as you go about your day. It reads thus – "Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee. Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise. Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love. Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee. Take my voice and let me sing Always, only for

my King. Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee. Take my every thought, to use in the way that Thou shalt choose. Take my love; O.Lord I pour At Thy feet its treasure store. I am Thine, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee." What a perfect way to present your body as a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."!*****

I've always loved this hymn as one of my favorites. Sometimes the sacrifice God requires is so simple and obvious we overlook it. This morning, I asked God "What do you want me to do?" and the answer that came softly to me was "just love more." I first heard this from Reg Kerry, a dear Christian Scientist and supporter of our church, and then often from Mr. Evans. Such a simple and yet powerful admonition -- and one I will strive to fulfill more each day. *****

This is a beautiful hymn that has helped me to surrender all that I believe myself to be, to God. Take every part of me God and make me as a vessel of Love. Draw me in, animate me, let me to speak Thy word, I will praise Thee from the top of the mountains. I surrender my "self" to Mind, Spirit, Life, Truth, Love.

Thank you for giving me this Hymn to work with. It enabled me to look beyond any pain I was suffering from and give my hands, my feet, and my body to God, so that the Pottery Shop could be built.

Truth, Unfolding its Own Immortal Idea

I love the thought of "unfolding." Each day we can expect to see, and experience, new unfoldments of God's goodness and blessings. What a wonderful thought to wake up to every morning! This unfolding is often expressed as new views of ourselves—maybe new abilities we never knew we had, or new ways of dealing with situations.

I remember thinking at times when I couldn't see my way out of some problem, "Well, how is God going to make this happen?" And He always did—each thing unfolding at the right time. Just exactly what was needed, when it was needed—and it always brought growth and a new understanding of God. What a way to start the day--what will God unfold to me today?