

SUNDAY APRIL 26, 2020

SUBJECT—PROBATION AFTER DEATH

GOLDEN TEXT: PSALM 17 : 15

*“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness:
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”*

RESPONSIVE READING: **Ephesians 4 : 1-3, 13, 22-24**
Ephesians 5 : 14

1. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
2. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
3. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
13. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.
14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

This Bible Lesson was prepared by Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent. It is composed of Scriptural Quotations from the King James Bible and Correlative Passages from the Christian Science textbook, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy.

LESSON SERMON

The Bible

1. Psalm 23 : 1, 4, 6

¹ The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

2. John 6 : 1 (Jesus)

¹ Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

3. John 11 : 1, 3, 4, 7, 11 (Our)-14, 17, 21-26 (to .), 32-34, 38-44

¹ Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

³ Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

⁴ When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

⁷ Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judæa again.

¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

¹² Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

¹³ Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

¹⁴ Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

- 17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.
- 21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- 22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.
- 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.
- 24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.
- 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
- 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.
- 32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,
- 34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.
- 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.
- 39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.
- 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?
- 41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
- 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

4. John 5 : 24

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

5. I Corinthians 15 : 51-54

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

6. Romans 13 : 11 (now it)

11 ...now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

7. Colossians 3 : 1-4

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

8. I Peter 1 : 3-5, 23

- ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
- ⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- ²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Science and Health

1. 410 : 4-7

"This is life eternal," says Jesus, — *is*, not *shall be*; and then he defines everlasting life as a present knowledge of his Father and of himself, — the knowledge of Love, Truth, and Life.

2. 242 : 9-14

There is but one way to heaven, harmony, and Christ in divine Science shows us this way. It is to know no other reality — to have no other consciousness of life — than good, God and His reflection, and to rise superior to the so-called pain and pleasure of the senses.

3. 587 : 25-27

HEAVEN. Harmony; the reign of Spirit; government by divine Principle; spirituality; bliss; the atmosphere of Soul.

4. 266 : 20-21

The sinner makes his own hell by doing evil, and the saint his own heaven by doing right.

5. 6 : 14-16

To reach heaven, the harmony of being, we must understand the divine Principle of being.

6. 568 : 30-5

Self-abnegation, by which we lay down all for Truth, or Christ, in our warfare against error, is a rule in Christian Science. This rule clearly interprets God as divine Principle, — as Life, represented by the Father; as Truth, represented by the Son; as Love, represented by the Mother. Every mortal at some period, here or hereafter, must grapple with and overcome the mortal belief in a power opposed to God.

7. 290 : 3-10, 16-25

If the Principle, rule, and demonstration of man's being are not in the least understood before what is termed death overtakes mortals, they will rise no higher spiritually in the scale of existence on account of that single experience, but will remain as material as before the transition, still seeking happiness through a material, instead of through a spiritual sense of life, and from selfish and inferior motives.

If the change called *death* destroyed the belief in sin, sickness, and death, happiness would be won at the moment of dissolution, and be forever permanent; but this is not so. Perfection is gained only by perfection. They who are unrighteous shall be unrighteous still, until in divine Science Christ, Truth, removes all ignorance and sin.

The sin and error which possess us at the instant of death do not cease at that moment, but endure until the death of these errors.

8. 291 : 5-18, 28-31

We know that 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. Mortals need not fancy that belief in the experience of death will awaken them to glorified being.

Universal salvation rests on progression and probation, and is unattainable without them. Heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there and man is found having no righteousness of his own, but in possession of "the mind of the Lord," as the Scripture says.

No final judgment awaits mortals, for the judgment-day of wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error.

9. 36 : 21-29

It is quite as impossible for sinners to receive their full punishment this side of the grave as for this world to bestow on the righteous their full reward. It is useless to suppose that the wicked can gloat over their offences to the last moment and then be suddenly pardoned and pushed into heaven, or that the hand of Love is satisfied with giving us only toil, sacrifice, cross-bearing, multiplied trials, and mockery of our motives in return for our efforts at well doing.

10. 75 : 12-20

Jesus said of Lazarus: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Jesus restored Lazarus by the understanding that Lazarus had never died, not by an admission that his body had died and then lived again. Had Jesus believed that Lazarus had lived or died in his body, the Master would have stood on the same plane of belief as those who buried the body, and he could not have resuscitated it.

11. 46 : 20-29

Jesus' unchanged physical condition after what seemed to be death was followed by his exaltation above all material conditions; and this exaltation explained his ascension, and revealed unmistakably a probationary and progressive state beyond the grave. Jesus was "the way;" that is, he marked the way for all men. In his final demonstration, called the ascension, which closed the earthly record of Jesus, he rose above the physical knowledge of his disciples, and the material senses saw him no more.

12. 76 : 6-21

When being is understood, Life will be recognized as neither material nor finite, but as infinite, — as God, universal good; and the belief that life, or mind, was ever in a finite form, or good in evil, will be destroyed. Then it will be understood that Spirit never entered matter and was therefore never raised from matter. When advanced to spiritual being and the understanding of God, man can no longer commune with matter; neither can he return to it, any more than a tree can return to its seed. Neither will man seem to be corporeal, but he will be an individual consciousness, characterized by the divine Spirit as idea, not matter.

Suffering, sinning, dying beliefs are unreal. When divine Science is universally understood, they will have no power over man, for man is immortal and lives by divine authority.

13. 254 : 16-23

During the sensual ages, absolute Christian Science may not be achieved prior to the change called death, for we have not the power to demonstrate what we do not understand. But the human self must be evangelized. This task God demands us to accept lovingly to-day, and to abandon so fast as practical the material, and to work out the spiritual which determines the outward and actual.

14. 264 : 28-31

When we learn the way in Christian Science and recognize man's spiritual being, we shall behold and understand God's creation, — all the glories of earth and heaven and man.

15. 548 : 15-17

This is the new birth going on hourly, by which men may entertain angels, the true ideas of God, the spiritual sense of being.

THE DAILY DUTIES

by Mary Baker Eddy

Daily Prayer

It shall be the duty of every member of this Church to pray each day: "Thy kingdom come;" let the reign of divine Truth, Life, and Love be established in me, and rule out of me all sin; and may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind, and govern them!

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 4

A Rule for Motives and Acts

Neither animosity nor mere personal attachment should impel the motives or acts of the members of The Mother Church. 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

Alertness to Duty

It shall be the duty of every member of this Church to defend himself daily against aggressive mental suggestion, and not be made to forget nor to neglect his duty to God, to his Leader, and to mankind. By his works he shall be judged, — and justified or condemned.

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 6

Take Notice

from *Miscellany*, by Mary Baker Eddy, page 237

To Christian Scientists: — See *Science and Health*,
page 442, line 30, and give daily attention thereto.

**“Christian Scientists, be a law to yourselves that mental malpractice
cannot harm you either when asleep or when awake.”**

(S&H, p. 442)