



Plainfield Independent Newsletter

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THE NEW BIRTH

Mary Baker Eddy

St. Paul speaks of the new birth as “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” The great Nazarene Prophet said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” Nothing aside from the spiritualization — yea, the highest Christianization — of thought and desire, can give the true perception of God and divine Science, that results in health, happiness, and holiness.

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.

Time may commence, but it cannot complete, the new birth: eternity does this; for progress is the law of infinity. Only through the sore travail of mortal mind shall soul as sense be satisfied, and man awake in His likeness. What a faith-lighted thought is this! that mortals can lay off the “old man,” until man is found to be the image of the infinite good that we name God, and the fulness of the stature of man in Christ appears.

In mortal and material man, goodness seems in embryo. By suffering for sin, and the gradual fading out of the mortal and material sense of man, thought is developed into an infant Christianity; and, feeding at first on the milk of the Word, it drinks in the sweet revealings of a new and more spiritual Life and Love. These nourish the hungry hope, satisfy more the cravings for immortality, and so comfort, cheer, and bless one, that he saith: In mine infancy, this is enough of heaven to come down to earth.

But, as one grows into the manhood or womanhood of Christianity, one finds so much lacking, and so very much requisite to become wholly Christlike, that one saith: The Principle of Christianity is infinite: it is indeed God; and this infinite Principle hath infinite claims on man, and these claims are divine, not human; and man’s ability to meet them is from God; for, being His likeness and image, man must reflect the full dominion of Spirit — even its supremacy over sin, sickness, and death.

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY REPORT

Members of the Plainfield Church reside all over, and are more active than ever. Did you know that Florence, GA, teaches Sunday School through teleconference, and publishes the Forum Highlights with proofers Wendy, GA, and Edy, TX; Betty, CA, compiles many of the Full-text Lessons and Fairley, MD, proofs them; Lenni, GA, and Dale W., VA, proof the Quarterly, and Dale W. also proofs the Cornerstone; Tony, GA puts up the Watching Point on the website and edits the Bible Study and Roundtable recordings each week? Also, did you know that Tony was elected our first out-of-town member to the Board of Trustees?

Three nights a week there are 30 some participants from 20 states (including Alaska!) on the Unity Watches. On Sunday, we have had some 35 out-of-town members taking turns reading Scriptural selections and Fruitage from S&H. “The field is white with harvest.”

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT

Florence from GA

Our Sunday school is thriving. We have six students who represent how many more young hearts we can reach with this precious Truth. The students are from four different states. They are enthusiastic about learning the Truth. It is so encouraging to share in their examples of how they are putting into practice what they are learning.

Christ Jesus loved children to come to him and Mrs. Eddy emphasized the need to teach the Truth to children. We can all include this outreach to children all over the world, in our watches and prayers.

With our sincere desire to reach children, to help turn thoughts to this life-changing Truth, God will open the way and direct our efforts to accomplish His will.

Just this afternoon we were informed that we will be getting another student next Sunday. We look forward to that.

Addendum from Tony in GA

I left my branch church and joined Plainfield 3 years ago. I never looked back, but have to admit, I missed teaching Sunday School.

Five or six weeks ago, an opportunity presented itself. Three little girls, friends in the neighborhood, had no Sunday School. I saw an opportunity to start an informal kids Bible class -- in my living room.

I told my practitioner about this and he said "That was a great idea and was totally natural. You don't need a centralized church to direct and organize this. This is a right idea and God will lead you". At the appropriate time, I asked the parents about it, and they loved the idea.

For three weeks in a row now, all the girls cuddle up in my living room with my dog Ed on Sunday morning to hear a Bible story and learn a little about God's promises for them. We finish the session with a Bible coloring book!

It's pretty cool to see this unfold naturally.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICES

Fairlie from MD

It's been over a year now since I first came to Plainfield in September 2011, and the other day I was contemplating the time when I found my life through Plainfield. I had suffered clinical depression for five years up until that time and was about to go down again. I had had two or three weeks of hospitalizations each fall, the last in 2010, because I would lose so much weight my family insisted. I was put on a regimen of anti-depressants and other drugs and treatment. Once home I had to go to a psychiatrist, because the present day function of a psychiatrist is simply to prescribe the drugs. But instead of regular visits to her, I would always string it out to see her only once in two months, because it was expensive and, though I ate chocolates she provided all during the session, we talked basically about nothing of importance, the current political campaign, my family. I told her I had for many years been a student of Christian Science though I could not use it.

When I went in to see my psychiatrist in the fall of 2011, I told her that I had at last found my religion and therefore would no longer need drugs or treatment. She was shocked. She said that I was making a terrible mistake and would undoubtedly regret it, and if I quit seeing her, I could call her when I got in trouble, but her schedule might be full so she would not be able to see me. But thankfully she could not persuade me that I was making a mistake.

I am eternally grateful for what I have found at Plainfield, where one is encouraged to go on advancing in Christian Science to the betterment not only of oneself, but all mankind. I am deeply grateful to God, to Jesus, Mrs. Eddy, and all those at Plainfield who give so much with the Bible Studies and Roundtables, the Lesson Sermons, and my wonderful practitioner.

RECORDING / BROADCAST REPORT

Jeremy from NJ

I first came to Plainfield in early June and rather quickly ended up heading the broadcast committee. The first few months involved learning the system that had been in place for the previous few years. It was well done with the technology that was available at the time, but it had disadvantages. The biggest drawback was that it was downstairs, which made it impossible to account for events in realtime during a service. Issues such as feedback and phone call's being too loud or soft were common.

After a few conversations with Andrew, it became apparent that we needed to move the broadcast booth upstairs, into the auditorium, and to update the technology. As I had never done something so ambitious, I was worried it was too much for me, but my practitioner assured me that God would be doing the work.

Bruce was instrumental in making sure I had a full plan, and he also did the electrical and construction parts of the move. There were 100's of feet of cable, and close to 100 connections to solder, a new computer and software and audio equipment to figure out.

At one point, I was getting a little psyched out, but realized after a particularly relevant Bible study that I was caught up trying to please church members instead of God. After that, I stopped trying to conform to any human expectations and God helped me immediately. Issues faded away and everything went so well after that.

Since we have gone live, each service has seen improvements in sound and the elimination of the old problems that prompted the move. Now I am able to start the services without any nervousness because God has shown me consistently that He is there and if I approach it with the right thought there is nothing to fear.

A few unforeseen benefits have been come about: The ability to create better mixes for Peter and Faith's songs; and, being able to record a service and still give a testimonial! Also, I need to thank Tony Moore for being willing to send feedback during the services letting me know how the stream sounds in the world.

I am so grateful to God for bringing me here, and grateful for the lessons this project has brought about.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

Faithful supporters of our Cause translate our Bible Lesson each week:

- Urdu - Adeel in Pakistan where Christians are often persecuted
- Spanish - Teresa in Argentina, also does audio in Spanish, but struggles with power outages
- German - Sonia in Germany
- Dutch - Joseph in UK, also does audio in English
- Chinese - Bella in NJ
- French - Susanne in VT (she types out the French S&H citations!)
- And now, articles in German (Ute and Zari in Germany) and Spanish and Dutch (Jacobus in Costa Rico)

INSPIRED MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

One of the most extraordinary developments in our church service has been the Vocal selection, sung by Faith and Peter. Each week is a World Premiere! as Peter writes the lyrics and music to go along with the Bible Lesson. Void of jargon, these songs reach out to all with the Christian Science message.

MY REBIRTH / RENEWAL

Luanne from NY

I recalled my first new breath in the atmosphere of Truth and smiled, reflecting on the incredible peace that I felt. Since beginning my study of Christian Science, I have been experiencing a higher sense of the world around me, noticing things that I never saw before, in ways that I never imagined.

A program on the Discovery Channel about the birth of a fawn moved me to tears. A mother deer had just brought into the world a newborn fawn, in a summer meadow filled with tiny yellow flowers and tall sweeping grasses. The fawn stumbled about, gaining strength in just a short time and was enjoying the atmosphere of its new surroundings. Soon a nearby coyote caught scent of it and began hunting for it. The mother was alerted to its presence and immediately lifted up one leg and began limping away from the fawn, trying to draw the predator away. The coyote was confused - should it go after the lame mother or the fawn? After a moment the predator began searching for the fawn in the tall grass. The fawn did not make a sound or move, even though it could not see its mother nearby. It laid down and hid itself in the grass. The coyote got tired of searching and moved on.

This sequence awakened me to my own experience. "Truth makes a new creature in whom all things pass away and 'all things are become anew.'" (S&H) What I was witnessing was God expressing Himself in all of His glory. What I was knowing about this picture, was true about myself.

Rebirth to me, is the reconnection to the conscious knowledge of the indisputable truth of my first and true birth, without beginning. The awakening of thought to Soul, the witnessing, from the very heart of consciousness, the relationship between Love and its perfect idea. Rebirth/ Renewal is the first step toward demonstrating the Christ. It is both necessary and inevitable. It is the rising from the slumber of the material dream to a glorious new morn.

PERSONALITY

Mary Baker Eddy

The immortal man being spiritual, individual, and eternal, his mortal opposite must be material, corporeal, and temporal. Physical personality is finite; but God is infinite. He is without materiality, without finiteness of form or Mind.

Limitations are put off in proportion as the fleshly nature disappears and man is found in the reflection of Spirit.

This great fact leads into profound depths. The material human concept grew beautifully less as I floated into more spiritual latitudes and purer realms of thought.

From that hour personal corporeality became less to me than it is to people who fail to appreciate individual character. I endeavored to lift thought above physical personality, or selfhood in matter, to man's spiritual individuality in God,—in the true Mind, where sensible evil is lost in supersensible good. This is the only way whereby the false personality is laid off.

He who clings to personality, or perpetually warns you of "personality," wrongs it, or terrifies people over it, and is the sure victim of his own corporeality. Constantly to scrutinize physical personality, or accuse people of being unduly personal, is like the sick talking sickness. Such errancy betrays a violent and egotistical personality, increases one's sense of corporeality, and begets a fear of the senses and a perpetually egotistical sensibility.

He who does this is ignorant of the meaning of the word personality, and defines it by his own corpus sine pectore (soulless body), and fails to distinguish the individual, or real man from the false sense of corporeality, or egotistic self.

My own corporeal personality afflicteth me not wittingly; for I desire never to think of it, and it cannot think of me.