

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: Love — February 2nd, 2020

The Divine Law of Loving Our Neighbor

"I Give You Back To God"

Victor Hugo did not have many good things to say about the established church of his day, so replete it was with corruption and materialism. As a rebuke to the religious status quo, Hugo created the character of the good bishop Myriel in his immortal novel, *Les Miserables*, who was in fact modeled after a real-life priest. Of this man of God Hugo writes, "There are men who toil at extracting gold; he toiled at the extraction of pity. Universal misery was his mine. The sadness which reigned everywhere was but an excuse for unfailing kindness. 'Love one another'; he declared this to be complete, desired nothing further, and that was the whole of his doctrine."

The following scene from the 1998 film version of Hugo's novel depicts homeless convict Jean Valjean's late-night burglarizing the bishop's home after the bishop offered him food and lodging.

[The bishop's response is one of the greatest passages in all of literature.](#) *****

Thank you for your post. I have seen the movie you refer to and remember how touching that scene was, and the look on Valjean's face. How the world needs this reminder today that just one kind, loving gesture can possibly transform a life, and eventually our world. *****

"**Love one another.**" This command is worthy of all the prayers and study in order to understand and live all that that summation of our Master's mission entails. Yes, the clip above is beautiful and so true! *****

Science and Health, p.205:22-3 "When we realize that there is one Mind, the divine law of loving our neighbor as ourselves is unfolded; whereas a belief in many ruling minds hinders man's normal drift towards the one Mind, one God, and leads human thought into opposite channels where selfishness reigns."

This stood out today! So, my lasting knowing must be **One Mind that's All**. What a healing message, since the true sense of Loving is what frees us all! I am also grateful to learn that this highest way of loving does not mean ignoring wrong or covering it up; but, because you want to strip the lie (be it behavior, sin or sickness) from a neighbor in order to behold their innocence and purity as God's image and likeness, you rebuke if necessary to awaken a neighbor. That is Loving as Jesus, out of divine Love, strongly rebuked the money changers in the temple. *****

Lay Down Our Lives

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he (Jesus) laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." I John 3:16

I am learning here at Plainfield Christian Science Independent Church that this true Christly love has no personal self in it. If I worry about what others think, try to make them happy, or avoid doing the righteous thing because I fear the consequences, then I am full of personal self with no room for God to work or His will to be done.

I am grateful to be learning how to cultivate spiritual sense so that I can perceive the love of God and work to get personal self out of the way. *****

Thank you very much for this post!

That verse from the Responsive Reading, and the following one from John 15:13 (“**Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.**”) has given me a lot to think on this week. The greater love that Christ Jesus demonstrated certainly lasted longer than his final moment on the cross; but to human thought, laying down our lives is treated like a momentary thing. Yet how many decades did Mary Baker Eddy lay down her life for the world? How many in this church right now – and those who have come before – have laid down their lives in a similar manner?

The Lesson includes *Science and Health*, page 454:22, “**Wait patiently for divine Love to move upon the waters of mortal mind, and form the perfect concept. Patience must ‘have her perfect work.’**” This reminded me of Mrs. Eddy’s words from page 248:26, “**We must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually, or we shall never carve them out in grand and noble lives.**”

It seems clear that the perfect concept or model is the one which has put aside all personal sense to patiently wait on God. Expressing that greater love is the work of a lifetime, not a moment. I am so grateful we have those models to look to, and for the importance placed here on living Christian Science. I also found Christ Jesus’ use of the word *friends* very comforting, and was happy to be led to the three verses (John 15:14-16) after the last line of the Responsive Reading: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

Thank you! *****

The Repairer of the Breach

“And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the

foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of the paths to dwell in.” Isaiah 58:12

Matthew Henry’s commentary on this verse reads in part, “Those that now are of thee, thy princes, and nobles, and great men, shall have authority and influence as they never had;” or, “Those that hereafter shall be of thee, thy posterity, shall be serviceable to their generation, as thou art to thine.” “They shall carry on and finish that good work which was begun long before, and shall be helped over the obstructions which had retarded the progress of it: They shall raise up to the top that building the foundation of which was laid long since and has been for many generations in the rearing.”

“‘They shall raise up foundations which shall continue for many generations yet to come;’ they shall do that good which shall be of lasting consequence. They shall have the blessing and praise of all about them.”

“‘Thou shalt be called (and it shall be to thy honor) the repairer of the breach, the breach made by the enemy in the wall of a besieged city, which whoso has the courage and dexterity to make up or make good, gains great applause.’ Happy are those who make up the breach at which virtue is running out and judgments are breaking in.”

Is it any wonder why Plainfield church is accomplishing what is remarkable for such a small group of members? God is working His purpose out which is so plain here to me. I am so grateful to have been led here to do my part in the “raising up foundations which shall continue for many generations yet to come.” *****

Fervent Desire for Growth in Grace

“...fervent desire for growth in grace, expressed in patience, meekness, love, and good deeds.” (S&H 4:3) I noticed this morning that “patience” is mentioned 5 times in this Lesson on Love, so I looked it up in Webster’s 1828 dictionary.

“Patience: The suffering of afflictions, pain, toil, calamity, provocation or other evil, with a calm unruffled temper; endurance without murmuring or

fretfulness. A calm temper which bears evils without murmuring or discontent” (“*bleeding sweet*” because one **knows** evil is **unreal**).

“The act or quality of waiting long for justice or expected good without discontent. Perseverance; constancy in labor or exertion. The quality of bearing offenses and injuries without anger or revenge.” This definition gave me a better understanding of the growth in grace that I need in order to express more love. *****

Wait Patiently

Science and Health, p. 454:17-24, “Love for God and man is the true incentive in both healing and teaching. Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way. Right motives give pinions to thought, and strength and freedom to speech and action. Love is priestess at the altar of Truth. Wait patiently for divine Love to move upon the waters of mortal mind, and form the perfect concept. Patience must ‘have her perfect work.’”

This Truth written by MBE has made a significant change in my life. Waiting patiently on God and standing in the gap for His perfect plan to unfold brought a family member’s return to me as I have previously mentioned in a testimony. He has turned out to be a blessing and continues to stay in close touch. This experience has given me the strength and courage to stand in the gap for a different family member with whom I have lost touch.

What cannot God do? I am grateful for our church where this kind of Love is taught, and for my practitioner’s prayers and continued loving support. Also, thank you Lesson writers for your fine work that is sent out just as God intends His Word to speak to all mankind. *****

SUBJECT: Spirit — February 9th, 2020

Man is the Idea of Spirit

Science and Health, p. 266:27-29 (to 1st .)
“Man is the idea of Spirit; he reflects the beatific presence, illumining the universe with light.”

The next citation in *Science and Health*, p. 88:14 only, says; “Ideas are spiritual, harmonious, and eternal.”

I desire to have this Truth **always** as clear as I have $1 + 1 = 2$, because this is how I can see past personality and be able to more readily rip error off as part of anyone, since ideas are perfect and unchanging. For example, if the statement that “Man is an embodiment of **right ideas**” is clear in thought, I would be firm in my thinking that every organ is an idea; hence it’s immortal, spiritual perfect!! Mortal mind lying about God’s man with falsities of sickness, or discords of all kinds would be impossible to me. To identify as an immortal, spiritual idea is the only true identity that can be the expression of the nature of God, — the only identifying that can be in constant, inseparable, indestructible unity with God!

The Scientific Statement of Being in *Science and Health*, p. 468, talks about man being spiritual, and also in the *Treatment for Everyday*, where Mrs. Eddy states: “I am perfect in God.”

Again, that is talking about our spiritual being as perfect, not mortal mind’s suppositional opposite. And to the question, “What is man?” in *Recapitulation* p. 475, part of the answer is, “Man is spiritual and perfect; and because he is spiritual and perfect, he must be so understood in Christian Science. Man is idea, the image, of Love; he is not physique. He is the compound idea of God, including all right ideas;...”

Both the Bible and *Science and Health* emphasize this fundamental spiritual Truth; this is what should be prominent in my thinking, displacing the false teaching of knowing myself as blood, bones, tissues, etc., and all the “hell” that wrong teaching/incorrect view of self brings.*****

Come Naturally Into Spirit

“Emerge gently from matter into Spirit. Think not to thwart the spiritual ultimate of all things, but come naturally into Spirit through better health and morals and as the result of spiritual growth.”

Science and Health, p. 485:14.

“Emerge: To rise out of... that is, emerging from the deep. To reappear, after being eclipsed;

To rise out of a state of depression or obscurity; to rise into view; as, to emerge from poverty or obscurity; to emerge from the gloom of despondency.” (Websters 1828 Dictionary)

Before coming to Plainfield, “emerge gently” was a way to explain my lack of progress and healing. On the other hand, I also had the opposite idea that if I read or said absolute Truth that was Christian Science; but I think it was trying to “thwart” the process. Since coming here and working with a Plainfield practitioner and participating, I have been given solid building blocks. This practical application is more of a step by step, precept by precept.

“Emerge gently” means to show what you know by daily bringing my thinking, attitude, behaviors in line with God. While this requires great persistence, honesty, and discipline, it is more “natural” and has resulted in better “health and morals” of which I am very grateful. *****

"You Become What You Behold"

“You become what you behold.” (William Blake) “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18.)

In context, to behold is “to be” and “to hold,” holding my spiritual gaze upon the One beside Whom there is none else — my First Love — in a state of continual, present-tense being-ness.

This keeping or holding attention has nothing to do with bemused, distracted, “material ecstasy” (*Science and Health*, p. 7:17–23 and 14:6-9). But it has everything to do with holding to the Word of promise, jealously attentive to it, keeping myself in a Word-enriched, thoughtful, watchful state of heightened awareness of the One of whom I am image and likeness; the mindset and the stillness of a soldier standing at attention.

“Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now I have *kept* thy word.” (emphasis added) (Ps.119:67) This also means keeping myself in a state of “stern resolve” to “keep pace with highest purpose.” (*Science and Health*, p. 514:17-18.)

“[W]e all, with open face beholding...are changed into...” that which we behold. “With open face” means discarding the veil of mortal-mindedness, being open to receive heavenly instruction, open to change, yielded to Spirit as clay is to potter. The word for “changed” is translated elsewhere in the New Testament as “transformed” and “transfigured.”

“From glory to glory” means that this change is not instantaneous but rather a metamorphosis, a step-by-step process. *****

Thanks for this post! It is a very helpful caution to check what I am beholding since this other citation confirms, “**If thought yields its dominion to other powers**, it cannot outline on the body its own beautiful images, but it effaces them and delineates foreign agents, called disease and sin.” *Science and Health*, p. 485:24. (Emphasis added) Must keep the window of thought clean!! *****

Our Fellowship is With the Father

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (I John 1:3)

Before I came to Plainfield Church (and *returned* to Plainfield Church), I yearned for companionship and association with those of whom I had something in common, — a kindred spirit. The only place I ever found that, is here in Plainfield Church. Here, we learn that we are all of one Mind, united in the one Spirit, the holy mission of our church, the furtherance and prospering of Mrs. Eddy’s pure Christian Science for all mankind. Even though we are all unique, and very diverse as individuals, there is a kinship, a fellowship among us, a unity that cannot be broken, nor infiltrated by any personal sense, ego, or “co-elbowing.” It not only is a Spirit of liberty, but it is a Spirit of safety, since we are all moving in the same direction — Godward.

I am so grateful to be a part of this sweet, blessed fellowship. “Father, where Thine own children are, I love to be.” — Mary Baker Eddy, Hymn 253