

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 163

**SUBJECT: Probation After Death —
April 26th, 2020**

"The Lonely Precincts of The Tomb... A Refuge"

In the *Christian Science Sentinel* of September 1938, Violet Tripp (from the UK) shared her testimony of healing from a severe car accident:

"I went down to the country for the day by coach, and was met at a certain point by a niece in a car. As we were traveling along a wide main road, a car shot from a narrow lane without any kind of warning, reducing our car to an utter wreck. The first thing I was conscious of was that I was scrambling out of a deep ditch, where I had been flung backwards doubled up, and was declaring, 'God knows no accidents, so all is well.'"

"....By this time I was conscious of a deep and severe pain, and as soon as possible was taken by a passing lorry to my sister's house. I still held to my first declaration, and was able to sit down to luncheon.

"During the afternoon the difficulty in breathing or moving, owing to the intense pain, became so obvious to my relatives that great pressure was brought to bear upon me to agree that a doctor be sent for at once. I was able to speak the words that dispelled the expressed fear, and nothing more was said.

"I stayed the whole day as arranged, and in the evening the chauffeur, driving me to meet the London coach, was told to drive slowly and with great care. The slightest vibration proved such agony that I felt myself being overwhelmed with fear, as it seemed impossible to attempt two hours in the coach, if I could not stand this careful driving in a private car. Suddenly a passage from the Bible Lesson of that week, 'Probation after Death,'

seemed written before my eyes, 'The lonely precincts of the tomb gave Jesus a refuge from his foes, a place in which to solve the great problem of being,' (*Science and Health*, p. 44). Instantaneously all fear vanished, and I found myself rejoicing at the thought of the two hours' journey in which to work, as I had not been left alone since the accident.

"I had a wonderful journey, and on reaching home found that my sister had telephoned to my friend, to warn her of my condition and urge her to have medical aid, but this friend got in touch immediately with a Christian Science practitioner. For the next two days I was enabled to carry out every duty, including church work and that of my office, in spite of unceasing pain, difficulty in breathing and walking, and having to keep in an upright position day and night. The third day the whole condition suddenly lifted and I knew myself to be completely free."

"I Shall Be Satisfied, When I Awake, With Thy Likeness"

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."

I am very grateful for this verse this week.

While growing up, we moved a lot, and in every new town people would come up to me and let me know how ugly I was. It wasn't just kids, quite a few adults went out of their way to say it, too. At first it really was hurtful, but by the time I was twelve or so, I decided on a few things: first, it must be true because so many people in so many states agreed; second, because I was ugly, I could just let go of worrying about my appearance completely; and third, I better acquire some skills and work on my sense of humor if I am to expect people to want me around.

Learning Christian Science and working with a practitioner has been healing me of a great many false beliefs, for which I am very thankful. But working on this one felt like I was trying to remove an inherent quality, like trying to make room temperature water *not* a liquid, so I was just leaving it for a time until I understood more about Science.

But then this verse came along and made it so simple: The real me *is* His likeness, and that likeness could never be unlike the qualities of each synonym of God. To be here learning to live this Science, waking up knowing God is my Mind, and striving to reflect Him as closely as I understand how to, each day, means I am learning to be His likeness with ever greater fidelity. Basically, by learning to see God rightly (“behold thy face in righteousness”), I am learning to see myself rightly (“awake, with thy likeness”). What could be more beautiful and satisfying than that?

And, for any that may hold the mistaken view of me (or, for me holding a mistaken view of myself or others) I am reminded of the line, “do not be offended by anyone, for they do not know you as you really are; if they did they would love you” from the article [There Is No Death](#) on our website.

I am so grateful for this Science, this Church, practitioner support, and these lessons which bring true healing and comfort daily! Thank you!

“...The Human Self Must Be Evangelized.

“...the human self must be evangelized. This task God demands of 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.” (S&H 254:19)

This passage from the Lesson really made me do some “soul searching.” *Evangelized* is defined as “instructed in the gospel; converted to Christianity” (Webster’s 1828). The rest of the passage told me how I was to do this:

“This *task* (a bond or pledge agreed to be done, — that is, a covenant) God *demand*s of us (requires as necessary — there’s no side-stepping it) to accept *lovingly* (without complaining, whining, or dragging my feet) *to-day* (daily, not once in a while when convenient), and to *abandon* (forsake entirely,

not just what is unpleasant or when it’s convenient) so fast as *practical* (what I am capable of and able to put into practice *now* — God is not asking me to walk on water now) the material, and to *work out* (to effect by labor and exertion — to put forth the effort to spiritualize my “world” — not just say “God is Love,” but *handle* animal magnetism) the spiritual I which determines the outward and actual.”

Thank you so much for this helpful Lesson.

Set your Affection

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3

This sentence brought to mind the story of Lass shared in last week’s forum and discussed during our Roundtable. It was a great help to have this illustration of how we should be at one with God. As the dog Lass placed her trust in Phillip Keller, her affection for him grew. It gave Lass great joy “to set” her undivided attention on him. She would keep him in view. It was said that, like Lass, we should be guided by His Presence; our trust in God should grow and our attention be focused on getting to know His voice; finally, we should be content “to stay” where God has placed us, told us to stay. Distraction from the “things on the earth” will expend our energy until there is nothing left. God is with us even in the most difficult times.

“Oh, may the light that is never dim so encompass you, that no night is there. May His angels hold thee in their power, and Songs of Science be heard in the intuitions of thought, till your life is in tune with the rhythm of God.” (*Divinity Course and General Collectanea*, the ‘Blue Book,’ by Mary Baker Eddy, page 224)

Walk Worthy

Ephesians 4:1 “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,...

Prisoner-In custody – a guarding, care of, captive, restrained in Him.

Vocation – a calling by the will of God; the bestowment of God’s distinguished grace upon a

person or nation. A summons or call. Employment or occupation.

(Words and definitions taken from Webster's 1828 Dictionary.)

I love being a prisoner of the Lord! And I pray to be worthy.

SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment — May 3rd, 2020

Hell is Self-Imposed

In 1898, the *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune* published a summary of a Christian Science lecture entitled "Everlasting Punishment" (see "Church at Cincinnati," *Christian Science Sentinel*, November 1898).

Relevant to the Bible's account of David's sin and its consequences, here is an excerpt from that summary:

"Sin must be punished; sin punishes itself and excludes itself from harmony; without punishment sin would increase and men would be annihilated in a common ruin; hence the eternal justice of the heaven-ordained law, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' This is the law of harmony. 'With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again,' said our master, Christ. In order to ascend in the scale of being, proper restitution is required of mortals. The very suffering we so much dread is often the way of progress. Suffering will only cease when sin ceases. Christian Science teaches that 'sin makes its own hell and goodness its own heaven.'" (The last quote is from *Science & Health*, page 196.)

Here are few more related references, from Mrs. Eddy's writings:

"The sinner makes his own hell by doing evil, and the saint his own heaven by doing right." (*Science & Health*, page 266)

"The evil beliefs which originate in mortals are hell." (*Science & Health*, page 266)

"HELL ... self-imposed agony." (*Science & Health*, page 588)

"...[W]e make our own heavens and our own hells, by right and wise, or wrong and foolish, concept-tions of God and our fellow-men." (*Miscellaneous Writings*, page 170)

The good news is, our heaven is self-imposed as well! Mrs. Eddy brings this out in *The People's Idea of God*, pages 6-7:

"Periods and peoples are characterized by their highest or their lowest ideals, by their God and their devil. We are all sculptors, working out our own ideals, and leaving the impress of mind on the body as well as on history and marble, chiseling to higher excellence, or leaving to rot and ruin the mind's ideals. Recognizing this as we ought, we shall turn often from marble to model, from matter to Mind, to beautify and exalt our lives.

'Chisel in hand stood a sculptor-boy,
With his marble block before him;
And his face lit up with a smile of joy
As an angel dream passed o'er him.
He carved the dream on that shapeless stone
With many a sharp incision.
With heaven's own light the sculptor shone, —
He had caught the angel-vision.
'Sculptors of life are we as we stand
With our lives uncarved before us,
Waiting the hour when at God's command
Our life dream passes o'er us.
If we carve it then on the yielding stone
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own, —
Our lives that angel-vision.' "

Thou Art the Man

Certainly, we all perhaps distance ourselves from David's sin, but have we not all to some extent, in different ways and forms, sinned against God? Repentance, contrition, and an honest desire for reformation are what is required of us.

If we are bearing false witness of ourselves and others by accepting sickness as real, attaching wrong behavior to people; in effect, are we not "killing" our own and others' true being? Some of these hidden wrong thoughts are just as sinful since they defile Love's creation. Thank God for Christian Science and its revealing of what is an offense

against God. And its mission of Love also makes clear what we must do to correct our ways.

I find these citations very helpful for all.

(David's Psalm 139:23-24) **"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."**

We can ask our loving Father to:

"Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)

We know now that there is no unforgivable sin, and none can forfeit the great blessing in II. Chronicles 7:14: **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."**

With tears of contrition should we not all do our part in bringing in the millennium?

Thank you for this post, especially this:

"If we are bearing false witness of ourselves and others by accepting sickness as real, attaching wrong behaviour to people, in effect are we not "killing" our own and others' true being? Some of these hidden wrong thoughts are just as sinful since they defile Love's creation. Thank God for Christian Science and its revealing of what is an offense against God. And its mission of Love also makes clear what we must do to correct our ways."

"Bearing witness" to the perfection of God's creation is what I am to always do! Thank you for this reminder.

"My Sin is Ever Before Me"

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." (Psalm 51:1-4, 6-10, 12)

The phrase "my sin is ever before me" struck me this week. My first thoughts went to these two

quotes: Christ Jesus: "Get thee behind me, Satan." (Luke 4:8)

Mary Baker Eddy: "Let your prayer be daily: reveal to me, Oh God, my secret faults, every error, every sin." (*Collectanea*, page 170)

The recognition of animal magnetism's attempt to ensnare him allowed Christ Jesus to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Christian Science allows us to see the lies coming, so that we can put them behind us by not entertaining them. As was mentioned at this last Roundtable, we must give our consent before error has any seeming power over us. "Get thee behind me, Satan" can only be used correctly when that consent is not given, and the lie is actively handled, not merely ignored.

David consented to a few lies in the story from the Lesson, and one secret fault allowed another, and another. By having these errors exposed by Nathan, they came out front and center to be handled and self-destroyed. Therefore, David seeking to have his sin ever before him was not about giving it power, but having any and all sins exposed and ready to be handled.

Reminds me of the April 29th, 2020, Calendar Statement: "Don't skip over a problem, face it and destroy it." (Plainfield Bible Study) Sounds exactly how David took care of error when he was awake and alert.

Before coming to Plainfield, the subtlety of the lies, and not having Christian Science to know how to detect and handle animal magnetism, came together so that I was blind to a great many errors that were handling me. I am very grateful that this Science and practitioner support has brought many of these secret faults out to be faced and destroyed.

Thank you for this Lesson!

"By having these errors exposed by Nathan, they came out front and center to be handled and self-destroyed. Therefore, David seeking to have his sin ever before him was not about giving it power, but having any and all sins exposed and ready to be handled."

From our Lesson this week we are instructed, "Lust, malice, and all sorts of evil are diseased beliefs, and you can destroy them only by destroying the wicked motives which produce them....Choke

these errors in their early stages, if you would not cherish an army of conspirators against health, happiness, and success.” *Science and Health* by Mary Baker Eddy, pages 404-5.

I can see that if I don’t have, “my sin is ever before me” then I do not choke (handle) the error that plagues me.

Choke: To stop; to obstruct; to check growth, expansion, or progress; as, to choke the spreading of the fruit. To be offended; to take exceptions. (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

This Lesson has given me a greater understanding of why my previous attempts to handle sins failed since I did not recognize or destroy the motive behind them. It is like the Pharisee that is self-deceived by outward actions but does not destroy the sin. It seems the pain of exposure is much kinder than, “...an army of conspirators against health, happiness, and success.” The more I read Mrs. Eddy’s works under the clear teaching at Plainfield, the more I see her many warnings to handle error before it controls us.

Thank you so much for these posts. I must say that growing up in the C.S. church, sin was never spoken of, but there was much visible sinning going on that was never called out. (“Cleanse me from my sin”—what sin?) This led to a very wishy-washy, “anything goes” upbringing for me where I mistakenly thought being a Christian Scientist was being protected by some kind of magical fairy dust while we could just skip along using Christian Science to make life merry. By not speaking openly about the tough subjects — like sin — everything was left to smolder under the surface, and for me, this went on for decades until I discovered Plainfield. I had to reckon with what I had been doing and completely re-learn what it meant to be a Christian Scientist!

Obedience – another “tough love” subject, if you will – was the missing puzzle piece for me. I learned that obedience to God is the most important thing in the world, in addition to truly loving our neighbor, and this became the secret to happiness and a total life transformation.

And sin is nothing to fear – isn’t it believing there is a power apart from God? – that obeying the First Commandment will correct.

"Lead Me in Thy Truth, and Teach Me:.."

The subject of this week’s Lesson has always been one that I did not like. I now know that I was taking punishment personally, rather than seeing that it is the wrong thinking resulting in wrong behavior that is punished because it is no part of God and His expression, man. To understand that we are the child or expression of a loving, perfect God, is the beginning of our realizing that all that is punished is that which would try to hide that fact from us.

In the Responsive Reading this week, with some help from the Amplified Bible, and our watch, I paraphrased the first four citations. “Unto thee, O Lord, do I set my affection. I trust in thee for you are good and upright and acting according to your promise and leading me in the truth and teaching me how not to let mine enemies, self-loathing, hate, deceit, fear, discouragement, self-will, etc., triumph over me. You are the God of my salvation and are teaching me in your own way how to hold thought against false testimony and mental suggestion; therefore, on thee do I wait, rest in expectation, all the day.”

SUBJECT: Adam and Fallen Man — May 10th, 2020

"Incontrovertible...Neither Inverted Nor Subverted"

Thanks so much for this week’s Lesson, which led me to ponder this passage (*Science & Health*, p. 200)

“The great truth in the Science of being, that the real man was, is, and ever shall be perfect, is incontrovertible; for if man is the image, reflection, of God, he is neither inverted nor subverted, but upright and Godlike.”

The words “incontrovertible,” “inverted,” “subverted” all come from the same Latin verb *vertere*, meaning “to turn.” The following quotes are from *Online Etymology Dictionary* and Webster 1828:

CONTROVERT (from 17th century, now obsolete), meaning “dispute (something), oppose by argument...to make the subject of verbal contention, debate, discuss; contend against (someone) in argument,” related to *controversy*, and CONTROVERTIBLE, refers to anything “that may be disputed; disputable; not too evident to exclude difference of opinion; as, this is a controvertible point of law.” [A “point of law” is a disputed legal question or contention that is generally left for a judge to decide.]

INCONTROVERTIBLE (*in* and *controvertible*) refers to anything “indisputable; too clear or certain to admit of dispute.”

INVERT (from Latin *invertere*): “turn upside down, turn about; upset, reverse, transpose; figuratively ‘pervert, corrupt, misrepresent,’ of words.”

SUBVERT (from Latin *subverto*; *sub* and *verto*, to turn.) “1. To overthrow from the foundation; to overturn; to ruin utterly.”

“The northern nations of Europe subverted the Roman empire. He is the worst enemy of man, who endeavors to subvert the Christian religion. The elevation of corrupt men to office will slowly, but surely, subvert a republican government.” [John Ogilvie] “This would subvert the principles of all knowledge.” [John Locke]

“2. To corrupt; to confound; to pervert the mind, and turn it from the truth.” [“Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” 2 Timothy 2:14]

The voice of the talking serpent is the voice of the clay talking back to the potter, an utter impossibility. “Thought passes from God to man, but neither sensation nor report goes from material body to Mind.” (*Science & Health*, 284:30.) Try as it may, the effort of the talking serpent of Genesis chapter 2 to invert, pervert, subvert chapter 1’s original creation story — to convince humans that they are fallen — has always failed, worked in reverse to subvert error itself, like Haman hung on the gallows intended for Mordecai.

"He Be Not Far From Every One Of Us."

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:” Acts 17:27

“There, in the depths of each man’s being, not in temples made with hands, men might find God and hold communion with him...God is not far from every one of us....The writer of the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 30:11-14) had asserted a like truth when he taught Israel that ‘the word was not in heaven, or beyond the sea,’ but ‘in thy mouth and in thine heart, that thou mayest do it.’ ” (*Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*)

The citation from our Lesson this week brought to thought the repeated question in our classes – “Do you feel the power of Truth, Christ? Do you feel God’s presence? ‘Felt ye the power of the Word?’ ” These questions come with the practical solutions and clear teaching of Mrs. Eddy’s pure Science. I can work to feel God by daily practice of the precepts which break down the wall that keeps us from feeling the nearness of God. (For example, not indulge in self-pity. I can express gratitude and pray for others.) I spent many years either living in my “head” (intellect) or feeling the world’s material influence, rather than my Father/Mother God. Now I am finding through the tools provided here and the support of my practitioner I can chip away at this wall. The beauty of this Science is that it is available to anyone anywhere.

“Saw ye my Saviour? Heard ye the glad sound?
Felt ye the power of the Word?
'T was the Truth that made us free,
And was found by you and me
In the life and the love of our Lord.”

(Hymn 298, *The Christian Science Hymnal*, 1932 edition. The words to this hymn were written by Mary Baker Eddy.)

Our Father-Mother God

The citation from our Lesson this week which reads “Father-Mother is the name for Deity, which indicates His (*Her*) tender relationship to His spiritual creation,” brought to mind a paragraph from *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy* by Irving Tomlinson. He writes “The first day’s teaching on

the subject of Love, she (Mrs. Eddy) concluded somewhat as follows: ‘Love is the Father, who is strong in His care for His children and provides for every need. Love feeds, clothes, and shelters every one of His dear ones. Love is a Mother tenderly brooding over all Her children.

‘This Mother guards each one from harm, nourishes, holds close to Herself, and carefully leads along the upward way. Love is a Shepard who goes forth into the darkness of the night, into the storm and wind, to find the lost sheep. This Shepard of Love leaves the beaten path, searches the wood and marsh, pushes aside the brambles, and seeks until the lost is found; then He places it within His bosom and returns to heal and restore.’ ”

How reassuring to know that we are ever with our Father-Mother God and He, She, is always caring for us, especially when there seems to be so much fear and worry about the future.

God Made the World

Acts 17:24, 26 “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;”

In *The Healing of the Nations* by Wm. D. McCracken, he says, “Divine Love alone is sufficient for ‘the healing of the nations’ deep enough, constant, and courageous enough, to speak with authority and command peace. But divine Love also fulfills the law and forgives sin by destroying it.”

I am learning that to just seek peace without reconciliation and seeking God’s will first, is not acceptable or wise. Thy will be done. May I be ever diligent and seek God’s guidance in all things when praying for our nation and world.

Acts 17:26 “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;”

The Bible commentaries I read this week about the above verse brought out the comforting fact that all nations were created by God, and none should ‘assume for itself that it is the cream and flower of humanity’ (*Elliott’s Commentary for English Readers*). How grateful we can be that God is therefore with every one of us at all times, and none of us can be disadvantaged by where we live, or any other perceived human limitation, such as ethnicity or human past. I am very grateful to be learning this, and that we can all fill our own niche, and do the work God has for us to do.

Thank you for sharing this — that passage from Acts stood out to me this morning and the commentary is lovely. It addresses the false notion that some nations or peoples are ‘superior’ or ‘inferior’ to others, when in fact all nations belong to God! Within some of the larger nations there is a seeming infinitude of different peoples, some even yet to be discovered, and there are thousands of languages and dialects all over the world, too many to take note of (although there are those who try!). This always I find humbling, and points yet again to the unfathomable infinitude of God’s creation!

More Confidence in Who I Am

The more understanding of who God’s man is, the least likely it is to be enslaved by the many opinions, mortal laws, false education and misrepresentations of what IS NOT!!

Science & Health, 207:10 “Evil is not supreme; good is not helpless; nor are the so-called laws of matter primary, and the law of Spirit secondary. Without this lesson, we lose sight of the perfect Father, or the divine Principle of man.”

What potential for lasting freedom, to learn and understand who we are — not the Adam man, but the Christ idea, God’s own image and likeness, and what that really means. To be grateful for this every day is to come out of the darkening sense of mortal beliefs! Let us **awake** to know who we are and do our best to help others know that same Truth. **“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”**
