

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 175

SUBJECT: Probation After Death — October 25th, 2020

Superabundance of Being

What a strengthening assurance from *Science and Health* (201:11) in this week's lesson, "the superabundance of being is on the side of God, good."

Superabundance, "More than enough," per the online *American Dictionary of the English Language*. Big enough to cover the whole world's challenges. What need we more?

Thank you for bringing attention to this word. I never paid any attention to it before but it's a good one.

"Error Uncondemned Is Not Nullified"

In keeping with this week's lesson on the subject of dealing of the unreality of evil, Mrs. Eddy has said, "To be delivered from believing in what is unreal, from fearing it, following it, or loving it, one must watch and pray that he enter not into temptation — even as one guards his door against the approach of thieves. Wrong is thought before it is acted; you must control it in the first instance [just as Jesus had to do throughout his trial in the wilderness], or it will control you in the second. To overcome all wrong, it must become unreal to us: and it is good to know that wrong has no divine authority; therefore man is its master." (*Message to The Mother Church for 1901*, 14:19).

With each confrontation with evil in the wilderness, Jesus condemned it, yet not because the power of evil was real to him, but because it was unreal to him. In sharply condemning evil, he

absolutely refused to let evil mesmerize him into accepting it as reality.

Jesus said to his followers, "I give unto you power...over all the power of the enemy." (Luke 10:19) If evil is unreal, why would Jesus say such a thing? Why would Jesus require his followers — past, present, and future — to confront, condemn, and cast out evil, something that is non-existent?

Mrs. Eddy continues, "*Error uncondemned is not nullified. We must condemn the claim of error in every phase in order to prove it false, therefore unreal.*" (*Message to The Mother Church for 1901*, 15:4) (Emphasis added.)

It is not enough simply to believe that evil is unreal; we must prove it to be unreal — in the same way a math teacher does not allow an error to remain on the blackboard except to point out its inaccuracy.

Flood-Tides of Love

"The way to extract error from mortal mind is to pour in truth through flood-tides of Love. Christian perfection is won on no other basis." (*Science and Health*, 201:17)

From Webster's 1828 dictionary:

"Flood tide: An overwhelming quantity; flow."

"Extract: To draw out by distillation; to take out."

"Distillation: Dissolve; act of purifying."

"Pour: Send forth."

This week when error assailed me, I thought of this citation. When the suggestion that something was too hard rather than accepting this and entertaining self-pity, I poured the word of God into my thought to purify my attitude. I had become so accustomed to accepting this lie that it took a surge of truth to start to dissolve this negative pull. I used gratitude, perseverance, joy, patience to help stand this lie down. The idea of

flood-tides of Love was a great blessing this week.
Thank you, Lesson writer.

“...the trying of your faith worketh patience”

“Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (James 1:3, 4)

I found these comments about patience instructive from *The Student's New Testament Compilation*. Maclaren writes: “Notice that the very language of the text puts aside the common notion that patience is a passive grace. The ‘patience’ of my text does ‘work’...the patience that James would have us all cultivate is an intensely active energy, and not a mere passive endurance. There is much force that goes to standing motionless when the wind is blowing. But, for all that, the mere bearing of trouble by no means covers the whole ground of this royal and supreme virtue to which my text is here exhorting us.... It is the fixed determination to ‘bide not one jot of heart or hope, but still bear up, and steer right onwards,’ in spite of all hinderances and antagonisms which may storm against us. It is perseverance in the teeth of the wind, and not merely keeping our place in spite of it that James exhorts us to here. The ship with sails wisely set, and a firm hand at the tiller, and a keen eye on the compass, that uses the utmost blast to bear it nearer its desired haven...is the higher form (of patience).”

A wonderful insight about patience not a passive grace. The line, “There is much force that goes to standing motionless when the wind is blowing” is especially clarifying, thank you!

“Let Patience Have Her Perfect Work”

“...let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (James 1:4)

As I read this all week, I thought how each temptation that we are met with, makes us stronger, tempers us like steel. Steel is one of the strongest metals, and tempering makes it even stronger by heating it to a high temperature, then immersing it into oil. This process toughens steel, by lessening brittleness and reducing internal stresses. So, the heat of temptation is often like an all-consuming fire, a “ring of fire,” burning up and casting out any untoward tendencies in thought. Finally, we are immersed in the oil of inspiration and gladness that solidifies our spiritual growth, and toughens us, so that we are of more use to God.

In *Pulpit and Press* (82:6), Mrs. Eddy speaks of the new woman: “Her hand is tender — but steel tempered with holy resolve...she is soft and gentle, but you could no more turn her from her course than winter could stop the coming of spring.” So may each temptation make us perfect and entire, and temper us this way.

Thank you for your post on this valuable trait PATIENCE and temptations. I have learned that with patience, one can overcome much!! Not many can tolerate being around impatient attitudes. One can also lose friends, opportunities, and other things. It never helps solve any problem, nor is it ever a help in treading temptations down.

In “The Law of Love” by Ann Beals, she says: “**Impatience:** This false trait usually comes from thwarted self-will that is intolerant of delay, opposition, or obstacles to what it wants or expects of others. Impatience can go from irritation to anger to rage over having to wait for any reason. It puts pressure on others by being aggressive, restless, agitated, ill-tempered with them. An impatient mentality is often impetuous or impulsive. This trait is seldom classified as sin, yet it is deadly sin. Habitual impatience can lead to difficult, stubborn, even seemingly incurable, physical problems.”

With such a description of what **impatience** includes, shouldn't we all prayerfully ask and do our part to be patient?

Thank you, such a helpful post. It made me think of "...and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." How can I expect God to be patient with me, if I am impatient with others?

SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment — November 1st, 2020

"Deliver Me from Bloodguiltiness, O God." (Psalm 51:14)

"Bloodguiltiness – The guilt or crime of shedding blood" (Webster's 1828 dictionary). Psalm 51 was written by David after he had caused the death of Uriah. In Charles Spurgeon's sermon no. 713, he considers this psalm a 'photograph of a contrite spirit.' But he also expands the meaning of 'bloodguiltiness' to point out that not just physical murder is contrary to God's laws, but what he calls 'murder of the soul' of a man, by thoughts about another such as anger, resentment, bad temper or envy. He also asks us to examine our conduct to ensure we are not a poor example, that we fulfill our family duties in bringing up children, that we are willing to share our faith, or pray for others in need.

I am very grateful to the lesson writer for this week's lesson, which explains how to make progress towards "demonstrat[ing] the government of God, good" (*Science and Health*, 405:20) by improving thought.

Going With the Flow

The *correct* flow, that is. According to the Bible, the Law is my schoolmaster or disciplinarian, leading me from Christlessness to Christliness (Gal. 3:24). This is the Law of sowing and reaping. Nowhere is the Law made more plain than in the book of Jonah: whether I am aware of it or not, the Law is absolute, unchanging, and, as demonstrated in Jonah's story, unforgiving. He that knows his Lord's will and does not do it "shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke 12:47)

And yet this punishment is not everlasting. It lasts only as long as disobedience lasts, no more, no less, as it was with Jonah.

The powerful rapids of the river of Life flow forever unstoppable, and in one direction only, God's. If I resist the flow of this river, try to swim against the current, the rapids will buffet me without mercy. Mercy comes only as I repent, turn in the direction opposite my resistance and flow with the current, not against, as did Jonah when he finally turned back to God.

"It is not through enjoyment, but suffering, we learn the error of Life in matter, and outside of suffering it can only be learned of science; which do you choose for a teacher?" (*Science and Health*, Mary Baker Glover, 1st edition, p. 219)

"The loving discipline our Father gives to teach us the science of being, in the nothingness of material things, is the schoolmaster that leads us to Christ, Truth." (*Ibid.*, 219)

"When the miser loses his gold he has little left, and when the sensualist loses his five personal senses, what he has left is Soul, not understood by him, and the body is mortal until Life is understood, therefore, be wise to-day; willful ignorance culminates in outer darkness, and the future will reveal the great error of leaving the work of time for eternity." (*Ibid.*, 219)

Jonah at Once Changes Course

The story of Jonah requesting to be cast out of the boat during the storm reminds me of where Mary Baker Eddy writes in *Science and Health*, p. 253. "If you believe in and practise wrong knowingly, you can at once change your course and do right."

He did at once jump into the sea during the storm, once he acknowledged he was wrong, and chose to correct his disobedience, then and there. This must have taken a lot of courage and trust. He didn't wait till the storm had ceased to correct his actions. He put his life in God's hands at that very moment. Even if we seem to be in a self-created mess from a mistake, in the fish's belly, we can turn to God. God saved him from the fish's belly

and Jonah got back to working for God. Thank you for a great lesson, as always.

Thank you! We can always turn to God no matter the mess we are in — usually self-created.

I became very curious about Jonah after my Bible fell open to the 4th and last chapter. Even after Jonah returned to God in his prayers, was delivered from the whale's stomach, went to Nineveh as God directed, he was still angry about the whole thing and wanted to die. I was struck about how God stayed with him, and although Jonah was given a rebuke, He made it clear to Jonah that he must trust God in His judgment and be content. This is a wonderful lesson not only to obey God, but also not to question what God is doing or has done.

This is a good lesson on the wiles of selfishness. It was selfishness that drove Jonah to take a boat to Tarshish. When he saw that his selfishness endangered the lives of others, his love for others took over, and he was willing to do whatever would save the rest of the passengers. But after delivering the message to Nineveh, and seeing God's forgiveness of their sins, his pride and selfishness tried again, this time to persuade him he would be better off dead, than alive. Mrs. Eddy emphasizes over and over the importance of humility. The Bible is full of it, as well. Unless we are totally without pride, it will try everything it can to trip us up and prevent us from doing what is actually in our best interest to do.

“...And They Turned From Their Evil Way”

Commentary from Matthew Henry:

“Jonah 3:5-10. There was a wonder of Divine grace in the repentance and reformation of Nineveh. A very small degree of light may convince men that humbling themselves before God, confessing their sins with prayer, and turning from sin, are means of escaping wrath and obtaining mercy. The people followed the example of the king. It became a national act, and it was

necessary it should be so, when it was to prevent a national ruin. Let even the brute creatures' cries and moans for want of food remind their owners to cry to God. In prayer, we must cry mightily, with fixedness of thought, firmness of faith, and devout affections. It concerns us in prayer to stir up all that is within us. It is not enough to fast for sin, but we must fast from sin; and, in order to the success of our prayers, we must no more regard iniquity in our hearts.

“The Ninevites hoped that God would turn from his fierce anger; and that thus their ruin would be prevented. They dared not presume, but they did not despair. Hope of mercy is the great encouragement to repentance and reformation. Let us boldly cast ourselves down at the footstool of free grace, and God will look upon us with compassion. God sees who turn from their evil ways, and who do not. Thus, he spared Nineveh.

“We read of no sacrifices offered to God to make atonement for sin; but a broken and a contrite heart, such as the Ninevites then had, he will not despise.”

Thank you lesson writers for this story of Jonah. I have never gotten so much out of it as I have this week. So relevant to today.

All the Ends of the Earth Shall See the Salvation of our God!

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing:...and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” (Isaiah 52:7, 8, 10)

On Sunday the importance of the United States Constitution was lightly touched upon during the Roundtable. The Constitution's true purpose of protecting Christian Science is well explained in *Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Precepts*, Volume 2, by Gilbert Carpenter, C.S.B. (He spent a year living in Mrs. Eddy's household.) It gave me a

deeper appreciation of this sacred God-ordained document.

Carpenter writes: “In complying with civil law in founding the Church, Mrs. Eddy was not attempting to establish a permanent thing in what she herself taught was unreal. She was merely being guided by divine Mind to make her organization earthquake proof, to establish it so firmly that no phenomenon of mortal mind or matter could overthrow it...It should be made as permanent as the last demonstration to be made in tearing down the temple of matter, so that it will remain until the end of mortal illusion.

“Mrs. Eddy wrote that the church must be properly chartered, and the whole proceeding be made strictly legal. She knew that the laws of our country are foundational. Thus, if the Christian Science Church in its human expression is supported by the Constitution of the United States of America, it has the greatest chance of perpetuity of anything man-made. It will remain until the last stone of the temple is torn down.

“Once a typhoon swept over a tropical island. The only survivors were natives who clung to the oldest and largest trees. Those who took refuge in the church, which was built of stone, were drowned!

“Mrs. Eddy selected the most enduring thing that our country has produced, — namely, its Constitution, — for her Cause to cling to. This will be the last belief to be overcome; and the world will be ready for spiritual freedom, when demonstration has been carried that far.”

Hymn 75

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,
1932 Edition*

God comes, with succor speedy,
To those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong;
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

His blessings come as showers
Upon the thirsty earth;
And joy and hope, like flowers,
Spring in His path to birth.
Before Him on the mountains
Shall Peace, the herald, go;
From hill to vale the fountains
Of righteousness shall flow.

To Him shall prayer unceasing,
And daily vows, ascend;
His kingdom still increasing,
A kingdom without end.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever:
His changeless name of Love.
