

# FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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**SUBJECT: Christ Jesus —  
February 28th, 2021**

## **“Whom Say Ye That I Am? “**

“...whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood have not **revealed it unto thee**, but **my Father which is in heaven**.” (Matthew 16:15-17)

As if asked the same question, “Whom say ye that I am?” — Mrs. Eddy was told by Laura Sargent: “My students recognize you to be God’s witness and mouthpiece. They are convinced that God is guiding you in this work which you are carrying on for the cause of Christian Science. They feel that you fulfill the prophecies of the Scriptures — that you represent the God-crowned woman mentioned in the Apocalypse.” Mrs. Eddy answered [with the same answer, in essence, as Jesus gave to Peter] by **“pointing her finger upward and saying ‘that is from above.’”** (*A Biographical Sketch of Victoria and Laura Sargent, C.S.D.’s & Mary Baker Eddy — The Prophetic and Historical Perspective*, by Paul R. Smillie, p. xx)(emphasis added)

It was only after: (1) Jesus clearly explained/expounded on his place in prophecy as found throughout the Scriptures, during the Walk to Emmaus; and after, (2) The disciples experienced the day of Pentecost and were filled with the Holy Ghost; and after, (3) Peter “lifted up his voice” to the men of Judea and Jerusalem, clearly acknowledging Christ Jesus’ place in prophecy (Acts 2:14-41), that then the early church membership began to grow exponentially (with 3,000 souls added after just that one sermon!).

So, logically, it follows that only after we “lift up our voices” to all mankind, clearly

acknowledging Mrs. Eddy’s proper place in prophecy (as the Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent is doing, and has been doing for many years!), that then will the Christian Science Church’s membership worldwide likewise greatly increase again (as the membership of the Plainfield Church is doing now!).

- Mrs. Eddy: “People seem to understand Christian Science in the exact ratio that they know me and vice-versa. It sometimes astonishes me to see the invariableness of this rule.” (*ibid.*, p. xviii)

- “In proportion as the Movement overcomes its resistance to Mary Baker Eddy, so will the world begin to overcome its resistance to Christian Science.” (*ibid.*, p. xix)

- “We have work to do, and this work is to break the mesmerism that keeps Christian Scientists from loving their Leader. It is this love for her that will prosper her Cause.” (*ibid.*, p. x)

- “...the time has come for a proper recognition, or ‘true sense,’ of our beloved Leader.” (*ibid.*, p. xx)

I am SOOOOOO grateful to have been led to find the Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent — “...the remnant of her seed...who recognize her place in Bible prophecy....” (*ibid.*, p. 252)!!

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## **Good — None Beside**

“When Christ changes a belief of sin or of sickness into a better belief, then belief melts into spiritual understanding, and sin, disease, and death disappear.” (*Science and Health*, 442:19-22)

“Our Master cast out devils (evils) and healed the sick. It should be said of his followers also, that they cast fear and all evil out of themselves and others and heal the sick. God will heal the sick through man, whenever man is governed by God. Truth casts out error now as surely as it did nineteen centuries ago.” (*Science and Health*, 494:30-3)

“Gospel” means “good news.” We know from the first chapter of Genesis that God — which is another word for Good — created all things good. “Very good,” in fact. The only news that heaven reports is the Gospel, or news of the Good — omnipotent Good, omnipresent Good, omniscient Good, omni-active Good.

Thus, there is no room for laws and ordinances based on the bad-news, anti-Gospel creation story of Genesis 2 to come against Good or Good’s image and likeness. Furthermore, Good’s image and likeness is complete and complicit in this omnipotent Good, “which is the head of all principality and power.” (Colossians 2:10)

Relevant here is this excerpt from Mrs. Eddy’s letter to Eldridge and Melinda Smith in 1882, written from Washington, D.C. (archived in the Mary Baker Eddy Library):

“The relation that Jesus sustains to the race is not primarily as a teacher but an inspirer of faith, understanding, immortal hopes and divine love. Now my dear students, catch those heavenly echoes and send them resounding along the dim corridors of time.

“The highest cannot be put into words for words would limit what is infinite. There is a greater power than speech, the power of Being, yea, of Life. Speech is of man; Life, Spirit, is of God. Herein is the atonement, the power and science of Jesus was his divine Truth, that saved from sin, sickness and death. Now, my dear children, possess yourselves of this divine power, yea, of this Truth and you are saved — and you will save and heal others.

“Be not afraid of the storms that beat against this rock. They can never overthrow the super-structures built thereon. The enemy is at work in Washington, and we have at last learned what the old dragon is and what he is not. He has not horns or hoofs, but he claims personality, for he is the error that says, ‘The “I” is a personal intelligence instead of the impersonal Good. And thus, I can go to minds mortal and breathe into their thoughts lies, temptations, and fears — and win them over to error.’

“But, dear ones, ‘Resist this devil and he will flee from you. Draw near unto God and He will

draw near unto you’. A mental malpractice is this Satan unchained for a season. Watch that your house be not broken open. What I say unto you I say unto all: Watch.”

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Thank you! Such a wonderful quote from Mrs. Eddy to work with.

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### **“Blessed Is He...”**

“And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.” (Matthew 11:6)

When I first came to Plainfield Church, and Christian Science, I heard many strong statements of Truth from the practitioner and teacher. Often these statements offended me — but they were *always* the Truth. They were hard to take, because there was something in my thinking that needed to be healed. So, I went home and wrestled with them, much like Jacob, until they blessed me. And this blessing goes on, as long as one is receptive. For Christ, Truth *always will bless* when it is taken to heart and accepted.

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Thank you for this post.

From the NIV translation: “And he added, ‘God blesses those who do not *fall away* because of me.’” (Strong’s Greek 4624: to entrap, i.e., Trip up or entice to sin, apostasy or displeasure)

Amplified Bible: “And blessed [joyful, favored by God] is he who does not take offense at Me [accepting Me as the Messiah and trusting confidently in My message of salvation].”

Contemporary English Version: “God will bless everyone who doesn’t reject me because of what I do.”

Pulpit Commentary: “Verse 6 — And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me; shall find none occasion of stumbling in me (Revised Version). But exhibits perfect trust under delay and disappointment (James 1:12).”

Peter, while very imperfect, was a model of not turning away although receiving fierce rebukes, or falling away, not always understanding what Jesus

meant, and making mistakes. He also was the one who responded to Jesus' question whether they would leave like the others, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." This speaks to me of keeping the fire burning and the spirit alive in our hearts. His response feels like gratitude to me for he must be thinking of all he has seen, felt, and heard.

Thank you, Lesson writers.

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## **SUBJECT: Man — March 7th, 2021**

### **Man of God**

The following is a paragraph from page 2 of the little "*Miscellaneous Articles*" booklet by Bicknell Young:

"Man's characteristics are: love, harmony, dominion, accomplishment, clear discernment, and perfect, accurate action in everything he thinks or does. Man and his activities are the full and normal presence and expression of infinite Principle — incapable of even the slightest variation from absolute perfection. Man being the presence and expression of infinite Mind, man has within himself all that constitutes completeness and harmonious being — he does not desire — he is in possession."

I thought this description of God's man fit well with the wonderful Bible Lesson this week.

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### **The Measure of the Stature**

"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:" (Ephesians 4:13, emphasis added)

"To understand all our Master's sayings as recorded in the New Testament, sayings infinitely important, his followers must grow into that *stature of manhood in Christ Jesus* which enables them to interpret his spiritual meaning. Then they know how Truth casts out error and heals the sick. His words were the offspring of his deeds, both of

which must be understood. Unless the works are comprehended which his words explained, the words are blind." (*Science and Health* 350:6-15, emphasis added)

The life of Joseph in this week's Lesson prefigured that of Christ Jesus, as both were able to scale the mount of attainment to achieve dominion over their respective environments and to realize "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52) Jesus was not the fully developed God-man the instant he was born. Like mastering a musical instrument, he had to grow in grace, developing and maturing into a full understanding of Christ. As his estimation of the stature of Christ increased — the length of it, breadth of it, the depth of it, the height of it — he increased in stature according to the measure of the fulness he sought for, step by step.

This is the principle of "I become what I behold." Thus Jesus, at last, matured into his true identity as image and likeness of God, the only true man.

The fulness of the stature of God's fully expressed idea was the measuring stick by which Mind measured the progress of Jesus' growth in grace.

So it must be with you, me, all of us: "To the vision of the Wisemen, this spiritual idea of the Principle of man or the universe, appeared as a star....As the Wisemen grew in the understanding of Christ, the spiritual idea, it grew in favor with them." (*Miscellaneous Writings* 164:11-21)

So today, as wise ones' apprehension of God's perfect man increases, the more they hunger and thirst for the Truth of Christ and the more desirable the goal of attaining the fulness of the stature of the Christ. Then is the parable of the Pearl of Great Price fulfilled. (Matthew 13)

"Divine and unerring Mind measures man, until the three measures be accomplished, and he arrives at fulness of stature; for 'the Lord God omnipotent reigneth'.... The three measures of meal may well be likened to the false sense of life, substance, and intelligence, which says, I am sustained by bread, matter, instead of Mind." (*Ibid*, pages 172, 175)

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## **“Fear and Trembling”**

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12)

I grew up in a religion based on fear, so this passage often puzzled me. So, the following explanation of “fear and trembling” from various Bible commentaries was most helpful:

“Not of tormenting misgiving, but of profound reverence and wakeful conscience; not slavish terror, but wholesome, serious caution; a serious, filial fear, implying a deep humility and submissiveness of mind, with a reverential awe of the Divine Majesty. It is an eager, trembling anxiety to obey God in all things. This fear is self-distrust; it is tenderness of conscience; it is vigilance against temptation; it opposes high-mindedness. It is taking heed lest we fall; it is a constant apprehension of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the insidiousness and power of inward corruption. It is the caution and circumspection which timidly shrink from whatever would offend and dishonor God and Christ, the Savior.”

Having this type of “fear,” God *will* work with you “to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.”

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## **“Without Murmurings and Disputings”**

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings.” (Philippians 2:14)

“You don’t have to go around uncovering evil all the time. What you have to do, is to see God in everything, from the stars of the universe to a potato patch. Divine Love isn’t busy uncovering evil in everyone, divine Love is busy all the time just being Love. What I said to the self-righteous woman who was always uncovering evil or error for everybody but herself, ... She wasn’t serving the Cause of Christian Science, but the cause of animal magnetism.” (1936 *Primary Class* by Bicknell Young)

“Murmuring: grumbling; complaining.  
Disputing: contending by words or arguments;

controversy; altercation.” (*Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*)

Having been a complainer, this jumped out at me. My focus was always on the negative and the negative I got. I am grateful to be at Plainfield learning how to cultivate spiritual vision, seeing as God sees, and the blessings in doing this. Looking for good, expecting good, and keeping a grateful attitude. Thank you, writers, for these beautiful weekly Lessons.

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## **Be Content — Undisturbed Serenity of Spiritual Perfection**

“...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:11-13)

Philippians 4:12 caught my attention this week, with its juxtaposition of opposites, and the lesson to “be content” in “whatsoever state” we find ourselves — i.e., whether abased (reduced to a low state, humbled, degraded — Webster’s 1828 Dictionary) vs. abounding (having great plenty, being very prevalent, prevailing — Webster’s 1828 Dictionary); whether full vs. hungry; or whether abounding vs. suffering in need.

One of the articles I read in which these citations in Philippians appear, is entitled “Adaptation,” by Annie M. Knott (*Christian Science Sentinel*, 10/13/1917). She states, “...all growing things must adapt themselves in a very vital way to their surroundings.” And she expounds on how the life of Moses is a wonderful example of how to adapt to what she calls the “law of growth,” based on Mrs. Eddy’s statement in *Science and Health* (520:26), that “growth is the eternal mandate [authoritative command, formal order] of Mind.” Moses certainly had to adapt in a big way from “the splendors of the Egyptian court,” to his life as a humble shepherd, and finally as the leader of the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt!



This week's Lesson writer brought out so beautifully how the life of Joseph is also an outstanding example of perfect adaptability to the "law of growth," clearly demonstrating the lesson of how to be content in "whatsoever state" one finds oneself – from being cast into the pit by his brethren, to being sold as a slave, unjustly ending up in prison, and eventually being elevated to the highest position aside from Pharaoh himself! Adapting to the "law of growth" demonstrates further that "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28), which Joseph so clearly understood as evidenced by his declaration to his brethren years later: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Genesis 45:5)

Another article, entitled "Pressing Toward the Mark" (*Christian Science Sentinel*, 12/27/1930, by Nellie B. Mace), makes this observation: "God's reflection, man, cannot be abased; nor does he need to know human triumphs. Extremes belong to human experience: the undisturbed serenity of spiritual perfection alone is real." ["Serenity" – clearness, calmness, quietness, stillness, peace, evenness of temper — Webster's 1828 Dictionary].

Joseph experienced the extremes of abasement to abundance, yet always maintained his "undisturbed serenity of spiritual perfection" because of his ever-clear perception of God's unfailing care in "whatsoever state" he found himself. Thanks to this week's Lesson writer for such a fulfilling "feast of Soul." I am ever more at peace as I strive to "gain a little each day in the right direction" towards realizing the dominion and "boundless basis" of God's immortal man!

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### **Hymn 221**

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,  
1932 Edition*

O Jesus, our dear Master,  
Thy works, now understood,  
Reveal their full effulgence  
Through love and brotherhood.  
Today Christ's precious Science  
Thy healing power makes plain:

With joy may all obey thee  
And cast out sin and pain.  
The Christ, eternal manhood,  
As God's own Son beloved,  
A tender ever-presence  
Within each heart is proved.  
O God, our Father-Mother,  
Thy name we see expressed  
By man, who in Thy Science  
Is perfect, holy, blessed.  
O Science, God-sent message  
To tired humanity,  
Thou art Love's revelation  
Of Truth that makes us free.  
Thy kingdom, God, within us  
Shows forth Love's sweet control.  
God's idea, man, rejoices;  
He knows the reign of Soul.

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### **Hymn 382**

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,  
1932 Edition*

What is thy birthright, man,  
Child of the perfect One;  
What is thy Father's plan  
For His beloved son?  
Thou art Truth's honest child,  
Of pure and sinless heart;  
Thou treadest undefiled  
In Christly paths apart.  
Vain dreams shall disappear  
As Truth dawns on the sight;  
The phantoms of thy fear  
Shall flee before the light.  
Take then the sacred rod;  
Thou art not error's thrall;  
Thou hast the gift of God—  
Dominion over all.

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