

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 198

**SUBJECT: Doctrine of Atonement —
October 17th, 2021**

The Doctrine of At-one-ment

I discover the word ‘atonement’ in Hebrew-cum-Latin is ‘expiato’ meaning to make amends, to purge, to sacrifice (Lev 16).

As well, I discover, in 16th century Britain, a new word emerges, namely, ‘atonement’, which implies ‘at-one-ment’, ‘in harmony’, ‘in accord’, ‘to agree’. Today, atonement interprets as reconciliation, not appeasement.

Jesus of Galilee, in His astonishing and seeming radical demonstrations, exemplifies at-one-ment. For three years, Jesus demonstrated His Oneness with God. ‘I and my Father are one’ was Jesus’ outstanding message of at-one-ment (John 10:30-33). The new covenant, given to the world by Jesus, as the Christ-man, is all about Love, Compassion, Humility, Meekness (not weakness) and Forgiveness. Jesus never merely reacted, but supremely and freely acted out of divine Love... a love incomprehensible to human sense.

That said, the Doctrine of At-one-ment interprets as the Sermon on the Mount to me. The Sermon speaks of the way to ‘resist not’ both evil and sin through understanding there is an Infinite Reality within. And, besides this Infinite Reality, there is only a dream of an existence, a dream of an existence masquerading as sin, sickness, and death. From this dream, we all can awaken via the precepts of atonement set out by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. ‘Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth’. The truly meek know of God’s Reality through at-one-ment with it. As witnesses thereof, they experience God’s unlimited storehouse of supply, pouring forth as wisdom, forgiveness, love, joy and harmony.

As disciples witness God’s spiritual supply, they naturally demonstrate the divine attributes of gratitude, meekness and purity, and do hunger and thirst after right-use-ness, whilst acting as peacemakers, healing the sick. They stand out as Lights since they know they have inherited the earth, thus have dominion over so-called ‘sin’ and ‘devil’ to their degree of understanding (John 8:40-58; *Science and Health* 1875,149-152).

Ultimately, all disciples, as Christ Science men and women, understand they are not subject to material or physical conditions and laws because these have no power in ‘My Kingdom’. Working with *Science and Health* and the four Gospels, it becomes apparent that as our spiritual nature unfolds, our human ways and conditions improve. It becomes apparent that human goodness is not Spiritual Good; moreover, that God does not co-exist with evil.

I give thanks to Spirit! Behold IT underpins Plainfield CS and this lesson; Spirit is guiding Me out of the clouds of ignorance.

Atonement Explanation

Found this on page 220 of the *Blue Book* and wanted to share this wonderful explanation. “What is the atonement? It is self-sacrifice that finds the way for others through the experience that meets and overcomes error; then shows this way to others who have slept, to save them from a similar experience.”

The At-one-ment Mindset

The at-one-ment mindset understands existence as spherical, having neither beginning nor end. At-one-ment is a state. Thought proceeding from the at-one-ment state is causal:

it is thinking *from* Cause, not merely *of* or *about* Cause. “. . . [M]an has not a separate mind from Deity, for that would make other Intelligences, and there would be more than one God.” (*Science and Health*, first edition, 1875, Mary Baker Glover, p. 116). It is from Cause that Jesus wrought his many wonderful works. At-one-ment consciousness is “I-and-the-Father-are-one” consciousness, and for this Jesus was crucified by those who said, “Away with him, for he maketh himself as God.”

Nevertheless, understanding is knowing, not believing, that “I and the Father are one. The Father is greater than I. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” And it is only this One-with-Cause consciousness that can heal the sick, raise the dead, move mountains, and assault the gates of hell.

Opening of Eyes!

Thank you for the wonderful testimony given in Sunday’s Roundtable (October 10) about how prayers for the eyes of family members to open resulted in the mother of the family asking for a copy of *Science and Health*. What a joy to then read in this week’s lesson the story of Jesus and the blind man, whose sight he restored after anointing his eyes with clay and telling him to go and wash in the pool and literally open his eyes to sight.

Recent worldly events are causing so many people to question and reconsider their lives and lifestyles. I can’t help wondering if all this seeming chaos is actually the clay anointing eyes so that they will be opened to the Truth, rolling away the stones of matter, mortal mind and the lies of error.

Beautiful discernment!

Blind From Birth

In this week’s lesson we read in John 9:1-3, “. . . as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but

that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” Reading this passage, the words, “blind from his birth” stood out to me as never before. By my unquestioning acceptance of a physical birth beginning in this mortal world, I am blinded to the Spiritual Reality that my identity is not separate and cannot be separated from the Allness that is God, Good.

I am grateful that my eyes, Spiritual discernment, have been touched by divine Science, opening a pathway to gain an understanding of this eternal Truth. Mrs. Eddy writes (*Science and Health*, pg. 305, 23-30) “In the illusion of life that is here today and gone to-morrow, man would be wholly mortal, were it not that Love, the divine Principle that obtains in divine Science, destroys all error and brings immortality to light. Because man is the reflection of his Maker, he is not subject to birth, growth, maturity, decay. These mortal dreams are of human origin, not divine.”

Washing One Another’s Feet

“John the Baptist indicates that this was looked upon at that time as the lowliest of services, for he uses it to illustrate how far above him is ‘he that should come,’ when he says that he is not worthy to stoop down and unloose the latchet of his shoes – as preparatory to washing his feet. The discovery that their ‘Lord and Master’ could stoop and perform this himself for his disciples brought them an object lesson in humility and brotherly love. There is no service that does not become honorable when performed by love; and the expression to ‘wash one another’s feet’ may signify, not only **the clarifying of the understanding for each other**, but the rendering of any helpful and compassionate service which the occasion demands” (emphasis added) (from CSJ, “Baptism and Communion” by Ida Mitchell Roff, May 1912.)

As I read this description, it occurred to me that with every single testimony, and every single sharing at each Bible Study and Roundtable, and every article written, etc., we are, in essence, partaking in the washing of one another’s feet, as each statement or experience of truth shared is helping each one of us in clarifying our

understanding of God as our ever-present Father-Mother, Love. I am touched by this beautiful thought!

There Is No Power Apart From God

“There is no power apart from God. Omnipotence has all-power, and to acknowledge any other power is to dishonor God.” (*Science and Health*, p. 228)

“Power: Force; strength; energy; influence; command; government; dominion; ruler; sway; authority; right; dominion; operation; ability.”
Websters 1828 Dictionary

I was given this citation to work with from our Bible lesson this week. I took each word from the dictionary definition and put it in place of the word “power”, such as: There is no force apart from God.

The word “dishonor” is to bring reproach; lessen the reputation; lack of reverence and respect.

Thank you for this post! I’ve been using these definitive words you found for “power” — it really brings it home in every circumstance, every phase of life, that God is the only power!! It makes me think of a statement from *Science and Health* (544:14), “No mortal mind has the might or right or wisdom to create or to destroy.” This statement was included in a healing experience I read. It was held to and resulted in the overcoming of a very dangerous situation, lives were transformed, and many turned to Christian Science.

Reconciled

Romans 5:10: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

Science and Health p.19: “Jesus aided in reconciling man to God by giving man a truer sense of Love, the divine Principle of Jesus’ teachings, and this truer sense of Love redeems man from the law of matter, sin, and death by the law of Spirit, – the law of divine Love.”

1828 Webster’s Dictionary: - RECONCILE, verb transitive [Latin reconcilio; re and concilio; con and calo, to call, Gr. The literal sense is to call back into union.]

1. To conciliate anew; to call back into union and friendship the affections which have been alienated; to restore to friendship or favor after estrangement; as, to *reconcile* men or parties that have been at variance.

We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye *reconciled* to God. 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20.

2. To bring to acquiescence, content or quiet submission; with *to*; as, to *reconcile* one’s self to afflictions. It is our duty to be *reconciled* to the dispensations of Providence.

3. To make consistent or congruous; to bring to agreement or suitableness; followed by *with* or *to*.

SUBJECT: Probation After Death — October 24th, 2021

Death in Perspective

This week’s study lesson, ‘Probation after Death’, is considered in the Light of Mary Baker Eddy’s 1886 healing and of Jesus Christ’s resurrection and ascension.

The whole purpose of Christ Science, indeed of life itself, is encapsulated in two confronting truths that run through *Science and Health*. The first truth is that eternal Life never created death; and the second is that only a false belief of life in matter brought death to ‘this world’. Mary Baker Eddy proves, as scientific fact, that sin, disease and death are illusion, hypnotism or error, and these are ‘appearances of nothingness’ to Christ Understanding. Mrs. Eddy teaches as a constant that the Christ-ideal is ever-present as eternal Life, (as my Life and as your Life).

God is already ‘closer to (me) than breathing, nearer than hands and feet’ and ‘will never leave (me) nor forsake (me)’. Understanding spiritually that Christ is divine Mind or God expressing as eternal Life frees me from belief in death.

After studying 'death' in *Science and Health*, it becomes apparent that there is nothing ever to fear except the temptations of error that will cause me to step into the hypnotic belief of a birth-sin-disease-death existence. Applying divine Principle (at-one-ment with God), moment-by-moment, to temptations of error becomes a probationary experience.

Probation, then, is a time of study, contemplation, practice and spiritual demonstration vital to ascension. Further, it signifies 'a process of testing the character or attributes of a person who is new to a role or practice.' Following 'the way' or 'the footsteps' of eternal Life leads to a face-off with error (hypnotism). This face-off, I earmark 'probation'.

Probation as daily practice of at-one-ment will continue until Christ Understanding declares that since 'thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord [Christ]' (Matt 25:23).

Conclusion: Please grant me Christ, that I may not be deluded by the world-hypnotising belief in death, and that it touches not my neighbour. My heart sings in gratitude to Spirit and to Plainfield CS for this demanding lesson of which only the surface has been touched herein.

Prep School

"We are put on earth a space that we might learn to bear the beams of love." (paraphrased from William Blake)

"The hour of darkness will come to those who improve not the preparatory school of the present, to fit them for the future, but would step suddenly into all the benefits of experience . . ." (*Science and Health*, Mrs. Glover, 1875 edition, 198)

This "now" moment is the "preparatory school of the present".

"[T]he science of Life . . . enables us to come out from the world and be separate; to reach the moral distance between Life that is Spirit and the supposed life of matter, and live apart from all that is sickness, sin, or death. " (*Ibid*, p 212).

In proportion to the determination and perseverance with which I attend to the things of Spirit here and now, the death-grip of the five senses will tremble and falter until its strength is utterly exhausted. The more I refuse to play hooky from this prep school and its required courses, the more prepared I am for the hereafter.

According to The Tenacity of Error

"The period required for this dream of material life, embracing its so-called pleasures and pains, to vanish from consciousness, 'knoweth no man . . . neither the Son, but the Father.' This period will be of longer or shorter duration according to the tenacity of error." (*Science and Health*, p. 77).

"Tenacity: A quality which keeps from parting; the effect of attraction."

"Stronghold: A place where belief is strongly defended or upheld." Webster's 1828 Dictionary.

In the First Edition, 1875, of *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy refers to "Man at ease in error" then in the same paragraph writes, "and how long the pangs necessary for error's amputation continue, depends on the tenacity of the belief of happiness in personal sense."

"Evil suggestions will come as long as one believes that he is receptive to them. Only when one neutralizes this wrong receptivity, by knowing that God's child is open only to God's thoughts, will the latter be established as man's native and natural state of consciousness. The only way to be certain that your radio would never again receive anything from an undesirable station, would be to fix it so that it could never again be tuned to that particular wave length." (500 Watching Points, Watch 63, by Gilbert Carpenter)

These lessons we need to learn are at times painful but necessary to progress in Christian Science. I am grateful to be here where how to face these challenges and be grateful for them is taught and modeled. In the organization, the message I found was avoid the painful things, make yourself as comfortable as possible, and if you have problems, then you don't understand Christian Science.

Better to start these life lessons today and keep at it. Thank you Lesson writers!

Following Christ Jesus

Science and Health, p.291:12-18: “Universal salvation rests on progression and probation, and is unattainable without them. Heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there and man is found having no righteousness of his own, but in possession of ‘the mind of the Lord,’ as the Scripture says.”

“Jesus said (John viii. 51), “If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.” (*Ibid* p.429).

In working with the Lesson this week, Probation After Death, it came to me that the only way is with the Christ, his teachings, and Mary Baker Eddy who teaches us how to follow Christ in all we do, think, and say. This is a deep Lesson and deserves great attention. The writings from Ephesians are a wonderful guide and comfort because God is right with us while we ‘hold the line’ and ‘work out our salvation.’ “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you [us] the kingdom.”

Hymn 399

From The Christian Science Hymnal, 1932 edition

Ye timid saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
In blessings on your head.

His mighty purpose ripens fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

God Lovingly Blesses

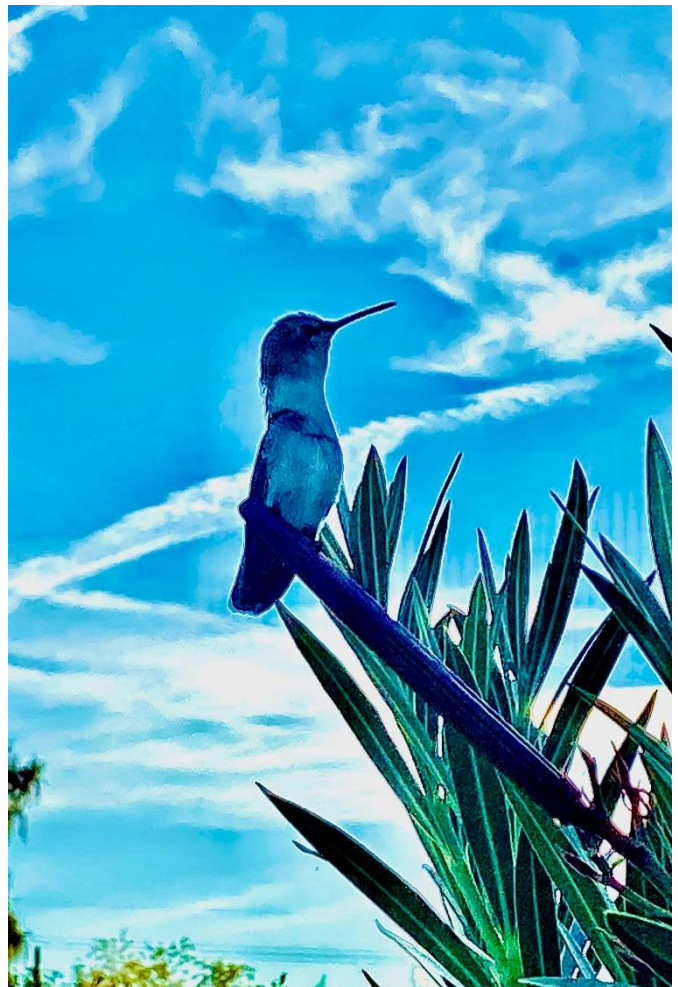


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