

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 211

**SUBJECT: Probation After Death —
April 24th, 2022**

Liberate

“Probation”, according to the Webster’s 1828 Dictionary – any proceeding designed to ascertain truth. It is the continual state of eliminating human theories and false education.

John 8:51: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.”

Conquerors

Romans 8:35, 37: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

Webster's 1828 Dictionary – Conquer: To subdue opposition or resistance of the will by moral force; to overcome by argument, persuasion, or other influences.

We have been taught here at Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent, that by following the teachings of the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to The Scriptures*, by Mrs. Eddy, that we must oppose anything unlike God. This is our privilege and duty. Nothing, if handled correctly, can separate us from the Christ Truth.

“We acknowledge your claim, but denounce your power.”

Thus Progress Will Finally Destroy All Error

“Being is holiness, harmony, immortality. It is already proved that a knowledge of this, even in

small degree, will uplift the physical and moral standard of mortals, will increase longevity, will purify and elevate character. Thus progress will finally destroy all error, and bring immortality to light.” *Science and Health*, p. 492:7-12

“...we may read a lot, listen to many splendid lectures; we may vision harmony and good; and yet live in discord and sickness and limitation, ... How often we finish our mental work, close the book, only to return immediately to our inharmonies. ... The science of our perfect being is of practical value only as we are expressing increased, concrete health, wealth, and longevity. The science of our Divinity should be practical in overcoming worry and ignorance, sin, sickness, and death. The Kingdom is ‘come in earth as it is in heaven.’”

Addresses by Martha Wilcox, pp. 414-415

I came across this second paragraph a few days ago that I thought corresponded with the above citation from *S&H*. All we need is “knowledge of this, even in small degree” to progress and make this Truth practical. Mrs. Wilcox writes in detail about making the Truth practical in the chapter, ‘The Word Made Flesh’. She stresses that we must make practical / prove what we are saying and reading as instructed weekly here. The step-by-step process, taking each opportunity in even little things to prove God’s allness, brings great comfort and confidence. Sometimes it is so easy to read a lot and not truly absorb it so it becomes practical in daily living, or to go about our day, mindlessly doing our tasks.

Science and Health, P.76: 32-18

“Death will occur on the next plane of existence as on this, until the spiritual understanding of Life is reached.”

Question: does this mean that we will continue or be reborn? Until we get it?

And, “Then, and not until then, will it be demonstrated that ‘the second death hath no power.’”

Question: what is the second death this sentence is alluding to?

Unity of Good by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 2: 28-7: “Those who reach this transition, called *death*, without having rightly improved the lessons of this primary school of mortal existence, — and still believe in matter’s reality, pleasure, and pain, — are not ready to understand immortality. Hence they awake only to another sphere of experience, and must pass through another probationary state before it can be truly said of them: ‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.’”

I was praying about your questions, Pilar, and after reading a few things from Mrs. Eddy, including this last quote, I realized it does us no good to try to uncover what forms the illusion may take if we fail to learn what we need to learn here and now. Let’s all take this time we have to study and live Christian Science as fully as we are able, and hold no doubts that God is on our side and wants us to succeed!

‘Essays and Other Footprints’, (the *Red Book*), by Mary Baker Eddy, page 70:

“Keep the joy of Christian Science, and a well-grounded hope in your success. Remember as Truth progresses, error grows more subtle and aggressive, but it does not become something. It always remains an illusion, and is always met and destroyed with the understanding that divine Love is the only power. Stand guard against the effort of evil to cause things to happen that will fill you with grief, wrath, or fear, and thus shut out your sense of the allness of God.”

The Second Death

“Death will occur on the next plane of existence as on this, until the spiritual understanding of Life is reached. Then, and not until then, will it be demonstrated that ‘the second death hath no power.’” (*S&H*, p.77)

In an effort to better understand what is meant by “the second death,” as we are all striving to do, I did a bit of digging, and share the below relevant quotes from our beloved Leader, and from a CS periodical, in hopes that others may benefit thereby:

“. . . until the belief in materiality and death is overcome – the ultimate reached – man on the other side of the grave as on this will continue to be shackled by a belief in a dying material body. It is only when the Mind that was in Christ Jesus reigns in us that we are numbered among those upon whom ‘the second death’ hath no power” (Edith Fullerton Scott, “Soul not in body,” 5/11/1912, CSS).

“If the Principle, rule, and demonstration of man’s being are not in the least understood before what is termed death overtakes mortals, they will rise no higher spiritually in the scale of existence on account of that single experience, . . . To the spiritual class, relates the Scripture: ‘On such the second death hath no power.’” (*S&H*, p. 290: 3-15)

“. . . in divine Science, the dying – if they die in the Lord – awake from a sense of death to a sense of Life in Christ, with a knowledge of Truth and Love beyond what they possessed before; because their lives have grown so far toward the stature of manhood in Christ Jesus, that they are ready for a spiritual transfiguration, through their affections and understanding.” (*Unity of Good*, p. 2: 20-27)

SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment — May 1st, 2022

Saint Paul's Experience

I consider Saint Paul's experience of Light is evocative and full of promise and hope. (Acts 9)

It is inspiring to know, between 33-46 AD, a period of fourteen years, Saul was transformed into Saint Paul, aided by Prophet Ananias, "on God's orders." That transformation came from a dramatic reversal of Saul's beliefs. Understanding that personal sense was all there was to the "carnal creature" transformed Paul into a Christ Aware Man, who before had been but a fool, a buffoon, a personality masquerading as Saul the great soldier. (*S&H* 1875, Ch.1: Natural Science)

I am grateful to Soul for Its guidance as I opened pages of *Science and Health* 1875 to comprehend this lesson. Thank you lesson writer for a thought-provoking lesson.

Mind > mind

"All that mortal mind can do is to believe, and all its believing is a lie." — Edward A. Kimball

"Don't be fifty or sixty years breaking the claim of false laws. Be exact, expansive, progressive and go ahead."

Do it today, this very minute.

Golden Text

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)

I searched for a definition of the word redeemer and jotted some brief notes in my lesson. I found them very helpful.

biblestudytools.com/redeemer/redemption

- deliverer from all evil, sin, guilt, anything that binds man or lets him down.

- brings men to their fullest use.

- relieves man from selfishness.

- brings men to largest and fullest life, made men like Christ. "...ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3)

The disciples are cleansed as a vineyard by pruning away branches so others can bare fruit.

- redemption is a method of Christ, redeeming love of God.

- redemption continues till every man is brought into the kingdom.

What of Everlasting Punishment?

Text: Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

What does the term "everlasting punishment," the topic of this week's lesson, signify?

Science and Health says error vanishes into its own nothingness once its nature is understood. Error is punishment on face value, but is corrective. The correction of error is everlasting when it takes place in Soul through understanding the Truth: there is no error, or the effects of error, in the Reality of Spirit. (*S&H* 1875, Ch.3: Spirit and Matter)

Jesus of Nazareth declares whatsoever a mortal sows in error, that shall he or she also reap.

Vindicate

Sin, disease, and death are not immortal, therefore, there isn't any everlasting punishment, when one forsakes his misunderstanding of God's creation and realizes his true heritage.

I Corinthians 2:12: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5: “But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, ... But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

Webster's 1828 Dictionary:

Temperance: moderation, patience, calmness, sedateness; Longsuffering: not easily provoked, patient.

This is one of my favorite citations in the Bible ...
AGAINST SUCH THERE IS NO LAW.

Put Faith In God

“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (I Corinthians 2:5)

“I would do many things to please my friends, but to go to hell to please them is more than I would venture. It may be very well to do this and that for good fellowship, but it will never do to lose the friendship of God in order to keep on good terms with men.”

Charles H. Spurgeon, All of Grace

This whole lesson shows what a blessing and grace God's friendship is. Taking time to cultivate a connection with God is the pearl of great price. People pleasing is a sure recipe to everlasting punishment.

Predestination – Horrible Decree – Endless Punishment

The subject of “Everlasting Punishment” most surely meant a great deal to Mrs. Eddy, as the concept was such a major part in the development

of her understanding of God, especially at the tender age of 12, when she took issue with her father, Mark Baker, and his Congregational church – making her stand, and not backing down. Imagine our beloved Mrs. Eddy being so courageous to stand by her convictions on this controversial subject when just a child!

This is referred to in Doris Grekel's biography of Mrs. Eddy, ‘Discovery of the Science of Man’, Vol. I, pp. 7-8, as the “culmination” of Mrs. Eddy's “religious experience,” and it was the day when a “celestial phenomenon” occurred over Boston that was described as “an exhibition. . . which was probably more extensive and magnificent than any here-to-fore recorded.” (see Forum Highlights, Issue 202, Dec. 2021)

It's hard to not also be welled up with tears upon re-reading this account (in ‘The Life of Mary Baker Eddy’ by Sibyl Wilbur) of such a pivotal point in Mrs. Eddy's young life. It brings to mind when Jesus, also at age 12, was found back in Jerusalem by his parents, “in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, . . . And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.” (Luke 2:46, 47) This scene is so clearly portrayed by the author, and the fact that she obviously had her “face set like a flint” is so apparent, as to cause one to stand in awe, while simultaneously being on bended knee in gratitude for our dear Leader's courage and conviction! She replied as Jesus did when he was tempted of the devil – by quoting Scripture – always one's best defense. I can imagine that she possibly also had this in mind as she faced her pastor's questions: “For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.” – Isa. 50:7 (See Plainfield Website – Instructive Testimonies from Mrs. Singleterry, CS – “Set your face like a flint”)

Paul / Saul Conversion

It is always inspiring and refreshing to read about Paul's conversion from actively persecuting

Christians to becoming an ardent follower and apostle. His journey of conversion gives hope to those of us that at some point in our lives have failed to live up to human standards and punish ourselves for past mistakes. What a relief to know that as with Paul, God has a unique niche, place, for each one of His children, regardless of our past no matter how dark and dreary, if we only yield to His will and obey Him!

There Is Only One "You"

Miscellaneous Writings by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 280: "There are not two, — Mind *and* matter. We must get rid of that notion."

Essays and Other Footprints, (the *Red Book*), by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 74:
"God's dear love for His children is so deep and far-reaching that He does not afflict us. It is our mistaken sense of Life that brings pain and sorrow."

Science and Health, by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 369:
"[Jesus] understood man, whose Life is God, to be immortal, and knew that man has not two lives, one to be destroyed and the other to be made indestructible."

Science and Health, p. 591:
"MAN. The compound idea of infinite Spirit; the spiritual image and likeness of God; the full representation of Mind."

Science and Health, p. 253:
"If you believe in and practise wrong knowingly, you can at once change your course and do right. Matter can make no opposition to right endeavors against sin or sickness, for matter is inert, mindless."

Hymn 324

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,
1932 edition*

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my every thought, to use
In the way that Thou shalt choose.
Take my love; O Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
I am Thine, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.