

**March 6, 2006 – Subject: Substance.**

Dear Friends: Mary Baker Eddy gave her students 26 subjects for weekly Bible Lessons, to be covered twice yearly. Flowing through the year in her order of the subjects, we hereby present fresh views of each one by outstanding Christian Scientists. In this way, we hope to partake with you of new unfoldments of her infinite revelation.

Our selection this week is from: John Morgan's book THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Second Beatitude: Spirit

Matthew 5:4. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

The human mind mourns when it has to separate itself from beliefs that have been dear to it. This mourning doesn't mean that we have to suffer human loss in order to achieve spiritual gain; that would be a cruel law. It is really a very lovely precept, because it indicates that something unworthy has passed out of our experience and our true self rejoices. All that happens is that as we choose more spiritual values material values pass away. But if we are not willing to relinquish material loves and purposes, Spirit is sooner or later going to separate us from those things willy-nilly, for we are not allowed to hold onto unreality.

Blessed are they who are glad to detach themselves from material affections and aims, for if they are no longer allying themselves with that which is material they are beginning to touch the comfort, the substance and the reality of Spirit. This is not to say that if we cut off all that is normal and lovely in the human we thereby gain the spiritual. The old monk who whips himself to mortify the flesh does not thereby lose his sense of flesh as substance. The Scientist who denounces human love has a warped sense of Christian Science; he needs to understand that the best human virtues are *symbols* of Spirit not *counterfeits*. With a symbol we need always to be aware of the reality, which it represents, and we are not then bereft if we lose its outward form.

In the second day of creation, Spirit separates the human concept from Truth only because at the same time it is uniting our

understanding to eternal harmony. (S & H 505:7 - 506:11). We sometimes put far too much emphasis on this separating office of Spirit and forget that it is in order to unite us with the true.

“Willingness to become as a little child and to leave the old for the new, renders thought receptive of the advanced idea. Gladness to leave the false landmarks and joy to see them disappear, - this disposition helps to precipitate the ultimate harmony. The purification of sense and self is a proof of progress” (S & H 323:32). What a clear sense of Spirit! Progress separates man from his false landmarks, and spiritual achievements become our true milestones. As we have progressed in Christian Science, many things have faded out of our human make-up, most of them quite unnoticed, and have been replaced by more divine qualities. That sort of evolution is just as much a demonstration as the more obvious kind; whether we learn it positively or negatively, Spirit is spiritualizing our conception of all things.

“When a false sense suffers, the true sense comes out, and the bridegroom appears. We are then wedded to a purer, higher affection and ideal” (Mis 276:20). The first Beatitude bade us be open to Mind and Mind’s ideas. Now the second one is the comforting realization that Mind’s ideas are real substance, and therefore we can happily afford to give up what is unspiritual. The things which we used to think we loved or needed so much slip away or evolve to higher forms.

Spirit asks not merely, ‘Do you want the spiritual?’ but do you really love the spiritual?’ When we do, the spiritual will take hold of us and propel us gently through the maze of human experience, so that we come clean through the baptism. Let us then rejoice rather than mourn, and willingly wean ourselves from materiality. Mrs. Eddy says, “Marvels, calamities, and sin will much more abound as truth urges upon mortals its resisted claims” (S & H 223:28). So why resist? We learn here that Spirit is man’s real nature and his true values, his substance and his understanding. The nature of Spirit, through its function as a firmament, is forever separating from man the worthless mortal concept. So let us be glad mourners. Let Spirit baptize and cleanse us of the negative and unpleasant thoughts, and then we shan’t have a sense of loss; at the same time, “all of

good the past hath had remains to make our own time glad” (C.S. Hymnal No 238).

Why should we look back? Good is ever present, and evil has no history or continuity save what we give it. Lot’s wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt: she looked back at past events without translating them; holding onto the material sense of yesterday petrified her progress. The Scripture says, “God requireth that which is past” (Eccl 3:15). The good in the past has to be lifted out of personal events and seen for what it is as spiritual ideas, and then it is always present. God also requires that we try to discern the truth about our bad experiences, - for God can only know them in their redeemed aspect, and then they no longer haunt us. Truth has no record of error. For all of us, things have happened in the past, which we deplore, but remorse or holding onto hurts impedes our growth, so the past must be treated and healed by Spirit in the now. Let us be grateful for the spiritual fact we have learned through every experience and resolve to live in the present, for the comfort of Spirit is that material loss is translated into spiritual gain.

“If the disciple is advancing spiritually, he is striving to enter in. He constantly turns away from material sense, and looks towards the imperishable things of Spirit” (S & H 21:9). The strength and purity of Spirit impels us to want to align ourselves with the one fact, to respond always to the one attraction. Behind this apparently human effort is the law of Spirit: there is only one reality, and this reality can be understood and demonstrated. It is theoretically possible to learn everything in mathematics without ever making a mistake, although in practice perhaps no one ever does. And it is just the same in Science, - it is possible to learn through Science rather than through suffering, and more certainly so today than ever before, for we have begun to touch the divine system of Christian Science. Even when we appear to be learning through the suffering way, the comfort of Spirit is still at work, leaving a residue of blessing. The lessons learned the long way round can sometimes be the best.

“Emerge gently from matter into Spirit. Think not to thwart the spiritual ultimate of all things, but come naturally into Spirit through better health and morals and as the result of spiritual growth” (S & H 485:14). Spirit is natural, gentle and orderly, and we cannot short-circuit the

divine processes. We cannot hasten our new birth by missing out some of the steps, nor can it be retarded in reality.

That which comforts is the Comforter or the Holy Ghost, which is defined as “Divine Science; the development of eternal Life, Truth, and Love” (S & H 588). The Comforter is thus allied with the idea of development, and appears in the form of our perpetual spiritual birth going on hourly. Development in Christian Science, means unfoldment of what already is, not accretion or acquisition in the human, nor improvement of a mortal.

“As God is substance and man is the divine image and likeness, man should wish for, and in reality has, only the substance of good, the substance of Spirit, not matter” (S & H 301:17). Often we wish for, or mourn after, things we think we haven’t got. Yet we always do have, by reflection, the spiritual fact and actuality of the blessing we are looking for humanly. I remember a young woman being healed of consumption through this truth. She felt deprived and empty and was consumed by mourning and wishing for what she thought she lacked. Yet man “in reality has” all the substance of real affection, real companionship, real worth, and as we saw this truth it not only restored the so-called lost substance of the physique, but brought her satisfying human love and friendship too.

Finally here are a few references for this second Beatitude:

Isa	61 : 1-3	John	14 :16-18, 26	S& H	264 : 20,21
Jer	15 : 17-19		16 : 7,13		265 : 23-30
Matt	9 : 16,17	S&H	66 : 6-16		266 : 6-15
Mark	10 : 28-30		263 : 32-3		480 : 1-5

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*The Mary Baker Eddy Science Institute will hold a workshop entitled “The Seven Days of Genesis Today” in Houston, Texas, March 24th through the 26th 2006.*

*Those interested in attending please contact the Institute at 239-656-1951.*

