

September 6, 2004 - 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 GOD IS DOING IT BY Wentworth Byron Winslow.

MAINTAINED BY THE ALL-MIGHTY

One often hears in many churches the announcement that, "This church is maintained by the voluntary contributions of the members and attendants." To human sense this may be true, yet it is not a fact; nor is it scientific to make such a statement. The church, as a matter of fact, is sustained by God and He it is who answers its every call, just to the extent that it is recognized that HE and HE alone is the sole fountain or support.

Occasionally we hear churches making calls for money from the rostrum. In nearly every instance the call is answered by a sum forthcoming, but this is merely temporary, a sop to Cerberus, for soon another call shall become necessary, and so on ad infinitum.

The better and the ultimate way is to feel the living ever-presence and power of God, at which time the expression of "God with us" (Mat. 1:23) is scientifically forthcoming. To employ the method of stating that the church "is maintained solely by the voluntary contributions of the members and attendants," is to look directly to mortal man, with little or no reference to God; whereas, to recognize the omnipresence of God and HIS qualities and attributes, is to look to God as the only fountain, the only support — our staff (that on which we lean).

How would those who read and hear such notices feel if, like Moses, we were in the midst of a great wilderness with naught else than sandy waste, hot burning air and scorching sun, with no persons (members or attendants) to look to for help, with perhaps no money to buy, and nothing to buy if the money was there? Moses was not only confronted with such a situation, but there were over three million people relying on him for food and water, and this sustenance must come speedily or they would die of hunger and thirst!

To turn to God with HIS omnipresent health, life, abundance, plenty and affluence was the only thing left for Moses to do. This is just what Moses did, and as a result there was given to the children of Israel a food of which they had never known before, and of which none have known since; the very name of which signified an unknown substance and origin. It was called, "Manna," which means, "What is it?" Or, as a modern translator puts it in a moment of spiritual insight, "What is man?" Whereby, it would seem that the supply came as a result of knowing what man is.

Think for a moment of this wonderful expression of Spirit! Of this Spirit being

supreme, omnipresent and omnipotent, and the fountain of all GOOD! Food enough for over three millions of people, and for forty years too, whenever and wherever they might be in this vast wilderness! When these people became impatient and cried for other food, there was delivered right at their door enough quail to feed this great multitude for some thirty days!

It is interesting to note, right here, that in the many instances of so-called miraculous appearance of the abundance and plenty of Infinity recited in the Bible, in practically every case this abundance of God was manifest in an extremity, when no possible help could come from man or other like human agencies.

The foregoing is an excellent instance of this, as was also the experience of Elijah, who, through the utilization of spiritual sense only, was able in a time of famine (always a refusal to turn to God) to be fed by the ravens at the brook Cherith (I Kings 17). Afterward, when the brook dried up by reason of drought (no vision or no reliance on the ever-present Supreme Being) he was divinely directed to seek out a certain widow (one bound to Truth and not to the earth) who, when found, was about to use the last portion of her remaining food, a little meal and oil (revelation and inspiration), to bake one last cake for herself and only son (the risen consciousness), after which (as she believed because she was taking the testimony of the material senses) death by starvation stared them in the face.

Elijah asked her to give to him first (one must always give to God of the first fruits, the fruits of the Christ, faith and reliance on HIS WORD), which she did, and by reason of her evident rising to a higher condition of confidence in that SPIRIT, or the means of support, unless all other hope was eliminated.

We, too, must rely upon God sooner or later, and not upon men or the ways of men. Early and late, the law of God is always operative, so why not USE IT NOW? Why wait for the time when **We** are in our extremity? Why delay it? Delay makes things worse and each passing moment makes it just that much more difficult to ARISE from the lethargy and apathy of the darkened senses.

It is not as though WE had to produce a certain amount of money, or food, or whatsoever it may be that is required. The required care is already present; the manifest abundance is here NOW. "When will mankind awake to know their present ownership of all good?" (First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany, p. 356). Just as it is a fact that the sun never revolves around the earth, but is always stationary in its relationship to the earth; the claim that it did revolve around the earth was only the distorted vision of a material sense, or the personal senses. If one ponders for a moment he will see that the world did not have to be healed of a revolving sun, but that those who relied on personal sense testimony, and mayhap suffered because of this false and unstable reliance, had to be educated out of their ignorance of the TRUE STATE OF AFFAIRS. The normal sun was stationary in its relation to the earth all the time, and, being normal, was not revolving. That is, the sun was stationary in its relation to the earth and was not and never had been a revolving sun. The earth revolved, and not the sun. There is, as a matter of fact, no material sun or material earth for there is no matter, and it is for each one to ARISE

to that higher spiritual sense where the TRUTH OF BEING is clearly cognized. We arrived long ago, however, at the point where we recognized and accepted the fact, or the truism, that the sun was not revolving around the earth but that the earth revolved around the sun; and now in our ONWARD march (always away from human consciousness) we should begin to so magnify Him in our human apprehension of this divine ever-presence, as to recognize that there is but One, and only One, to sustain and support, and that One is God.

As the sun does not revolve around the earth, so in the spiritual universe there does not exist any such thing as disease, sin or death; for it is true that God, Spirit, is ever-present, and this omnipresence precludes the possibility of aught else being present. Therefore, we do not try to heal sin, disease or death, or depend on "members and attendants" for sustenance, any more than we would try to heal a sun, but our endeavor is to become conscious of the unalterable TRUTH OF BEING, and, to the degree that we do this, we dispel all false viewpoints.

Becoming conscious of the everlasting TRUE BEING, of the presence of health, Life, peace, abundance, affluence and plenty, the false sense of church (Christ consciousness) being dependent on "members and attendants" for its support is completely obliterated.

There exist today many great plants called radio broadcasting stations. Any one of these stations is constantly sending forth power manifest as messages of various kinds. These messages are present with us at this moment, wherever we may be. We do not hear them because we do not "listen in." Our consciousness is so coarse, or so little attuned to the delicate ethereal waves which convey, these sounds, that we do not hear or use them. So we go outside of our human organization and have, what is called, a receiving station; thus we bring these already present things to our ken. We are trained normally to hear a lot of things, of course; we can hear the trolleys go by, we can hear any amount of gossip, and a great deal about sin, disease, death and money, but we do not yet hear the things which come to us on the more delicate waves. When we "listen in" to the broadcasting station we hear and receive the messages, and if we wish, we may attach an amplifier to the instrument which delivers the messages to all who may be in the room; we can listen, also, if we desire to sweet music, good news, uplifting lectures, or whatever we wish.

Similarly, there is the great white Christ constantly and continuously broadcasting the power of God to the whole universe. "The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound. The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind, 'as when a lion roareth.' It is heard in the desert and in dark places of fear" (S & H 559).

When we do not hear this broadcast message from the Christ, or when we do not receive the benefit of God's power, it is not because it is not present with its health, peace, abundance, plenty, joy, activity, strength, beauty, color, for it is always present. When we thus fail to receive it, it is because we have not "listened in," or, as Jesus said: "Thou hearest with one ear [but the other thou hast closed]" (The "Logia"

1897). In fact, then, just to the degree that we do “listen in” to the Christ and receive this message of God, just to that extent do we become practitioners of God, Truth, or the true Science of Being, even as Elijah and Elisha, and other of the prophets.

‘When we do hear this message we can become, if we will, amplifiers and send forth the message to others who may come to us for help, and we can do this either present or at a so-called distance. Likewise, to the measure of their child-likeness do they, too, “listen in,” and in turn, they become amplifiers and send forth messages of the Word of God, even as the two widows and Elijah, and as Jesus fed the multitudes.

The question is, then, “How shall we ‘listen in’?” Solomon tells us distinctly how to do it. He says, “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine [inspiration]” (Prov. 3:9). Or honour the Lord by turning to HIM and doing HIS WILL, and let this “doing HIS WILL” be first forever, and always in our consciousness. Then that consciousness will be filled full with the plenty of spiritual ideas and shall “burst out” with newly inspired revelations and unfoldments of HIS PRESENCE; these in turn give us confidence in HIS WORD, in HIS promises, manifest as the requirements for our daily life.

The prophet Malachi, in similar terms, tells us how to scientifically “listen in” by the utilization of spiritual sense only, or that “tree of life” which we are told to eat of without stint. Thus do we multiply, or broadcast, spiritual ideas; or “listen in” by recognizing spiritual sense only and acknowledging no other.

Then, we become conscious of the omnipresence of God’s riches, which are our riches too; we become conscious of the omnipotence of God, of the Life which is God, of the Love which is God, of the peace which is God, of the joy of God, of the health of God, of the activity of God; all of which were here all the time and which throughout all eternity will continue to be here. They were here for us to use even at the time we were listening to the personal senses, or the opinions of men, which said they were not here.

To illustrate: There was a practitioner who had that spiritual sense to “listen in” to the great, white-Christ radio which is broadcasting the word or power of God throughout the whole universe. To this practitioner came a man who was in trouble; the trouble matters not in this work, but in this instance I will say that it was financial distress, which led him to the practitioner. The latter prayed, or “listened in.” To the measure that he heard the voice of the Christ, to that measure he well knew that the call was answered. As expected, in a little while word came that the work had been done. Now, what happened was this: The practitioner received the broadcast message of Truth, and, as it came to him, he amplified it. The applicant for help heard the message and he, too, amplified it throughout his consciousness; thus the word came to the delinquent debtor and he, too, amplified the message by doing the Word of God—“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another [rely on God, and God only]” (Rom. 13:8).

It is ever the same under all circumstances; we should each one of us “listen in” to the great, white-Christ which is unceasingly broadcasting the Truth, manifested to us as health, power, light, peace, Love, Life, beauty, color, harmony, happiness, abundance, plenty, affluence—with no borders, a limitless universe. We must let this Christ-power and light come into the darkness of our human consciousness and it will obliterate entirely the so-called mortal, or carnal mind, with its false viewpoints.

To the degree that this is done, does the darkness of mortal mind with its false standpoints disappear, and just to that degree is the multitude in the churches fed and the bills paid; the support resting on HIS WORD, and not on the “members or attendants” who have come for that same food which Jesus gave out to the multitudes—spiritual uplift, or the “Come up hither” of Revelation.

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