

Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist – Chicago IL (USA)
Wednesday, June 20, 2018
Subject: ***The Permanence of Joy***

Media reports can seem troubling and aggressive today. News of sadness, separation, depression, even suicide seem prevalent. But accounts in the Holy Bible remind us of the permanence of the qualities of God, One Mind, including Joy. These readings explore this subject further.

Hymns: 57 425 58

Holy Bible

Psalms 66:1-2, 4 (to 1st.), 8-9, 20

Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name.

O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Acts 15: 1-2, 22, 25-27, 32-41

And certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Acts 16: 4-6, 9-10, 12, 14-36, 40

And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go.

And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

Romans 8: 35, 37-39

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.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Philippians 4:1, 4, 13

Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Luke 8:40

And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

Luke 15:1-7

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

James 1:2-4

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Psalms 30:1-5

I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy

304:3

It is ignorance and false belief, based on a material sense of things, which hide spiritual beauty and goodness. Understanding this, Paul said: "Neither death, nor life, . . . nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." This is the doctrine of Christian Science: that divine Love cannot be deprived of its manifestation, or object; that joy cannot be turned into sorrow, for sorrow is not the master of joy; that good can never produce evil; that matter can never produce mind nor life result in

323:28-5

The effects of Christian Science are not so much seen as felt. It is the "still, small voice" of Truth uttering itself. We are either turning away from this utterance, or we are listening to it and going up higher. 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.

76:22

The sinless joy, — the perfect harmony and immortality of Life, possessing unlimited divine beauty and goodness without a single bodily pleasure or pain, — constitutes the only veritable, indestructible man, whose being is spiritual. This state of existence is scientific and intact, — a

perfection discernible only by those who have the final understanding of Christ in divine Science. Death can never hasten this state of existence, for death must be overcome, not submitted to, before immortality appears.

377:3

If grief causes suffering, convince the sufferer that affliction is often the source of joy, and that he should rejoice always in ever-present Love.

265:23

Who that has felt the loss of human peace has not gained stronger desires for spiritual joy? The aspiration after heavenly good comes even before we discover what belongs to wisdom and Love. The loss of earthly hopes and pleasures brightens the ascending path of many a heart. The pains of sense quickly inform us that the pleasures of sense are mortal and that joy is spiritual.

66:6

Trials teach mortals not to lean on a material staff, — a broken reed, which pierces the heart. We do not half remember this in the sunshine of joy and prosperity. Sorrow is salutary. Through great tribulation we enter the kingdom. Trials are proofs of God's care. Spiritual development germinates not from seed sown in the soil of material hopes, but when these decay, Love propagates anew the higher joys of Spirit, which have no taint of earth. Each successive stage of experience unfolds new views of divine goodness and love.

14:12-18

Become conscious for a single moment that Life and intelligence are purely spiritual, — neither in nor of matter, — and the body will then utter no complaints. If suffering from a belief in sickness, you will find yourself suddenly well. Sorrow is turned into joy when the body is controlled by spiritual Life, Truth, and Love.

298:19-20

When the real is attained, which is announced by Science, joy is no longer a trembler, nor is hope a cheat.

21:9-14

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. If honest, he will be in earnest from the start, and gain a little each day in the right direction, till at last he finishes his course with joy.

From Concord Express - A Christian Science Study Resource: The King James Version of the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's published writings