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Wednesday Evening Selections

January 26, 2011

Subject: Extravagant Love

The following selections from the Bible and from Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures will be read at 7:30 PM on January 26, 2011 as part of the Wednesday evening service of the Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist, Jacksonville, Florida in accordance with Article III, Section 3 of the Manual of the Mother Church, The First Church of Christ Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, by Mary Baker Eddy.

In addition to the selected readings, those in attendance are encouraged to share experiences, remarks, and testimonies of healing in Christian Science. As noted in Article VIII, Section 24 of the Manual of the Mother Church, "Testimony in regard to the healing of the sick is highly important. More than a mere rehearsal of blessings, it scales the pinnacle of praise and illustrates the demonstration of Christ, "who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3). This testimony, however, shall not include a description of symptoms or of suffering, though the generic name of the disease may be indicated."

If for any reason you are unable to present your own testimony to the congregation during our Wednesday evening service, but would like to have it read aloud from the desk during the service, please feel free to forward your remarks in writing to: n.mike.jackson@comcast.net or by mail to the Clerk of Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist, 8327 Beach Boulevard, Jacksonville, Florida 32216-3172. Requests for anonymity will always be lovingly honored and respected.

The members and guests of the Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist are grateful for your prayers. As further noted in Article VIII, Section 5 of the Manual of the Mother Church, "The prayers in Christian Science churches shall be offered for the congregations collectively and exclusively." Thus, our Sunday and Wednesday evening meetings are healing services in which all who gather and share in Spirit are blessed. Thank you for your prayerful support of this loving mission!

"There is but one real attraction, that of Spirit. The pointing of the needle to the pole symbolizes this all-embracing power or the attraction of God, divine Mind. " (Mary Baker Eddy)

The Bible

Luke 6:27-36

- 27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
- 28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.
- 29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.
- 30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.
- 31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
- 32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.
- 33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.
- 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.
- 35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
- 36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 7:1-50

- 1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.
- 2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.
- 3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.
- 4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:
- 5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.
- 6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:
- 7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.
- 8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.
- 9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.
- 10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.
- 11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.
- 12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.
- 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 ¶ And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 ¶ And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

John 13:1-17

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

- 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.
- 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.
- 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Science and Health

57:23-24

Love enriches the nature, en-
 24 larging, purifying, and elevating it.

473:18-3

18 In an age of ecclesiastical despotism, Jesus introduced
 the teaching and practice of Christianity, affording the
 proof of Christianity's truth and love; but to
 21 reach his example and to test its unerring Sci-
 ence according to his rule, healing sickness, sin, and
 death, a better understanding of God as divine Prin-
 24 ciple, Love, rather than personality or the man Jesus, is
 required.

Jesus not
 God

Jesus established what he said by demonstration,
 27 thus making his acts of higher importance than his
 words. He proved what he taught. This
 is the Science of Christianity. Jesus *proved*
 30 the Principle, which heals the sick and casts out error,
 to be divine. Few, however, except his students un-
 derstood in the least his teachings and their glorious
 1 proofs, — namely, that Life, Truth, and Love (the Prin-
 ciple of this unacknowledged Science) destroy all error,
 3 evil, disease, and death.

Jesus not
 understood

192:21-31

Your in-
 fluence for good depends upon the weight you throw into
 the right scale. The good you do and embody gives you
 24 the only power obtainable. Evil is not power. It is a
 mockery of strength, which ere long betrays its weakness
 and falls, never to rise.

27 We walk in the footsteps of Truth and Love by follow-
 ing the example of our Master in the understanding of
 divine metaphysics. Christianity is the basis of true heal-
 30 ing. Whatever holds human thought in line with unselfed
 love, receives directly the divine power.

362:1-364:31

1 It is related in the seventh chapter of Luke's Gospel
that Jesus was once the honored guest of a certain
3 Pharisee, by name Simon, though he was quite unlike
Simon the disciple. While they were at meat, an unusual
incident occurred, as if to interrupt the scene
6 of Oriental festivity. A "strange woman"
came in. Heedless of the fact that she was debarred from
such a place and such society, especially under the stern
9 rules of rabbinical law, as positively as if she were a Hin-
doo pariah intruding upon the household of a high-caste
Brahman, this woman (Mary Magdalene, as she has
12 since been called) approached Jesus. According to the
custom of those days, he reclined on a couch with his
head towards the table and his bare feet away from it.
15 It was therefore easy for the Magdalen to come behind
1 the couch and reach his feet. She bore an alabaster jar
containing costly and fragrant oil, — sandal oil perhaps,
3 which is in such common use in the East. Breaking
the sealed jar, she perfumed Jesus' feet with the oil,
wiping them with her long hair, which hung loosely
6 about her shoulders, as was customary with women of her
grade.

A gospel
narrative

Did Jesus spurn the woman? Did he repel her adora-
9 tion? No! He regarded her compassionately. Nor was
this all. Knowing what those around him
were saying in their hearts, especially his host,
12 — that they were wondering why, being a prophet, the
exalted guest did not at once detect the woman's immoral
status and bid her depart, — knowing this, Jesus rebuked
15 them with a short story or parable. He described two
debtors, one for a large sum and one for a smaller, who
were released from their obligations by their common
18 creditor. "Which of them will love him most?" was the
Master's question to Simon the Pharisee; and Simon re-
plied, "He to whom he forgave most." Jesus approved
21 the answer, and so brought home the lesson to all, follow-
ing it with that remarkable declaration to the woman,
"Thy sins are forgiven."

Parable of
the creditor

24 Why did he thus summarize her debt to divine Love?
Had she repented and reformed, and did his insight
detect this unspoken moral uprising? She
27 bathed his feet with her tears before she
anointed them with the oil. In the absence of other
proofs, was her grief sufficient evidence to warrant the
30 expectation of her repentance, reformation, and growth

Divine
insight

in wisdom? Certainly there was encouragement in the mere fact that she was showing her affection for a man of undoubted goodness and purity, who has since been rightfully regarded as the best man that ever trod this planet. Her reverence was unfeigned, and it was manifested towards one who was soon, though they knew it not, to lay down his mortal existence in behalf of all sinners, that through his word and works they might be redeemed from sensuality and sin.

Which was the higher tribute to such ineffable affection, the hospitality of the Pharisee or the contrition of the Magdalen? This query Jesus answered by rebuking self-righteousness and declaring the absolution of the penitent. He even said that this poor woman had done what his rich entertainer had neglected to do, — wash and anoint his guest's feet, a special sign of Oriental courtesy.

Penitence or
hospitality

Here is suggested a solemn question, a question indicated by one of the needs of this age. Do Christian Scientists seek Truth as Simon sought the Saviour, through material conservatism and for personal homage? Jesus told Simon that such seekers as he gave small reward in return for the spiritual purgation which came through the Messiah. If Christian Scientists are like Simon, then it must be said of them also that they *love* little.

On the other hand, do they show their regard for Truth, or Christ, by their genuine repentance, by their broken hearts, expressed by meekness and human affection, as did this woman? If so, then it may be said of them, as Jesus said of the unwelcome visitor, that they indeed love much, because much is forgiven them.

Genuine
repentance

140:9-12

We shall obey and adore in proportion as we apprehend the divine nature and love Him understandingly, warring no more over the corporeality, but rejoicing in the affluence of our God.

17:6-7

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And Love is reflected in love

Hymns

Hymn 458

The Voice of Love
Fenella Bennetts
Based on I Corinthians 13

O WALY, WALY
Scottish folk song
Arranged by Fenella Bennetts
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Though I may speak with moving words,
Which can inspire the heart of man,
But have no love to seal their worth,
They are but emptiness and sham.

Though I may give my worldly goods
Without a thought of self or gain,
Unless they bear the fruits of love
They are as clouds without their rain.

Though I may search the deepest books,
Companion with the wisest men,
God's loving voice still calls to me,
It bids me turn and look again.

Now I would learn to know this Love
Through meek and patient ministry,
Until my life has grown anew
And Love is All-in-all to me.

Hymn 30

Love
Mary Baker Eddy

LOVE
Walter E. Young

Brood o'er us with Thy shelt'ring wing,
'Neath which our spirits blend
Like brother birds, that soar and sing,
And on the same branch bend.
The arrow that doth wound the dove
Darts not from those who watch and love.

If thou the bending reed wouldst break
By thought or word unkind,
Pray that his spirit you partake,
Who loved and healed mankind:
Seek holy thoughts and heavenly strain,
That make men one in love remain.

Learn, too, that wisdom's rod is given
For faith to kiss, and know;
That greetings glorious from high heaven,
Whence joys supernal flow,
Come from that Love, divinely near,
Which chastens pride and earth-born fear,

Through God, who gave that word of might
Which swelled creation's lay:
"Let there be light, and there was light."
What chased the clouds away?
'Twas Love whose finger traced aloud
A bow of promise on the cloud.

Thou to whose power our hope we give,
Free us from human strife.
Fed by Thy love divine we live,
For Love alone is Life;
And life most sweet, as heart to heart
Speaks kindly when we meet and part.

Hymn 448

Lo! They That Follow After Good
Violet Hay

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Geistliche Kirchengesang, 1623; alt.

Harmonized by R. Vaughan Williams

Music LASST UNS ERFREUEN arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) from the English Hymnal.

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Lo! they that follow after good,
By them God's word is understood,
So they prove Him,
Praise and prove Him!
Through them He doth perform His will,
To them His promises fulfil,
For they love Him!
Laud and love Him!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

O ye to whom God's word is known,
Make you His promises your own,
Rise and prove Him,
Praise and prove Him!
His mighty love and holy power
Are here to bless us every hour,
Let us love Him!
Laud and love Him!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!