

Background: *Wednesday evening meetings in Christian Science churches include readings from the King James Version of The Bible and passages from "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy. Then, the congregation is invited to participate and share accounts of healing and spiritual insights. The meetings also include prayer and hymn singing from the "Christian Science Hymnal."*

The Bible is central to Christian Science. "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" is a companion to the Bible that explains the scientific system of Christian healing. You can find out more about Christian Science and spiritual healing at <http://www.christianscience.com>, a website of The Christian Science Publishing Society, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Readings Topic: The Prayer that Heals

The Bible

1. Matt 4:23 Jesus, 24

23 Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

2. Luke 18:27

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

3. Luke 6:12

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

4. Ps 42:8 the Lord

8 the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

5. Ps 5:3

3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

6. Matt 6:5 when, 6-13

5 when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. 6 thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut

thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

7. I Thess 5:17

17 Pray without ceasing.

8. James 5:15 the prayer (to ;), 16 pray

15 the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up;

16 pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

9. John 11:1, 4, 17, 41-44

1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

10. Ezek 18:32 I have

32 I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

11. Gen 21:9-20 Sarah

9 Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

12 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

12. Matt 7:7-11

7 ¶ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

13. Ps 5:11 *let (to 2nd :), 12*

11 let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them:

12 For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.

14. I Kings 8:23 *Lord, 28 have, 37, 45 hear, 60*

23 Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:

28 have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day:

37 If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;

45 hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

60 That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else.

Science & Health with Key to the Scriptures

1. 1:1-4

1 The prayer that reforms the sinner and heals the sick is an absolute faith that all things are

3 possible to God, — a spiritual understanding of Him, an unselfed love.

2. 2:4, 15-16, 17-30

Are we benefited by praying? Yes, the desire which goes forth hungering after righteousness is blessed of our Father, and it does not return unto us void.

15 Prayer cannot change the Science of being, but it tends to bring us into harmony with it.

A request that

18 God will save us is not all that is required. The mere habit of pleading with the divine Mind, as one pleads with a human being, perpetuates the belief in God as humanly circumscribed, — an error which impedes spiritual growth.

24 God is Love. Can we ask Him to be more? God is intelligence. Can we inform the infinite Mind of anything He does not already comprehend?

Do we expect to change perfection? Shall

27 we plead for more at the open fount, which is pouring forth more than we accept? The unspoken desire does bring us nearer the source of all existence and blessedness.

3. 3:4

Who would stand before a blackboard, and pray the principle of mathematics to solve the problem? The rule is already established, and it is our task to work out the solution. Shall we ask the divine Principle of all goodness to do His own work? His work is done, and we have only to avail ourselves of God's rule in order to receive His blessing, which enables us to work out our own salvation.

4. 4:3-5, 12-13, 27-30

3 What we most need is the prayer of fervent desire for growth in grace, expressed in patience, meekness, love, and good deeds.

12 The habitual struggle to be always good is unceasing prayer.

27 Audible prayer can never do the works of spiritual understanding, which regenerates; but silent prayer, watchfulness, and devout obedience enable

30 us to follow Jesus' example.

5. 7:8, 21

Audible prayer is impressive; it gives momentary solemnity and elevation to thought. But does it produce any lasting benefit? Looking deeply into these things, we find that "a zeal . . . not according to knowledge" gives occasion for reaction unfavorable to spiritual growth, sober resolve, and wholesome perception of God's requirements. The motives for verbal prayer may embrace too much love of applause to induce or encourage Christian sentiment.

A self-satisfied ventilation of fervent sentiments never makes a Christian. God is not influenced by man. The "divine ear" is not an auditory nerve. It is the all-hearing and all-knowing Mind, to whom each need of man is always known and by whom it will be supplied.

6. 10:5-6

The world must grow to the spiritual understanding of prayer.

7. 351:8-13

The author became a member of the orthodox Congregational Church in early years. Later she learned that her own prayers failed to heal her as did the prayers of her devout parents and the church; but when the spiritual sense of the creed was discerned in the Science of Christianity, this spiritual sense was a present help.

8. 12:1

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick," says the Scripture. What is this healing prayer? A mere request that God will heal the sick has no power to gain more of the divine presence than is always at hand. The beneficial effect of such prayer for the sick is on the human mind, making it act more powerfully on the body through a blind faith in God. This, however, is one belief casting out another, — a belief in the unknown casting out a belief in sickness. It is neither Science nor Truth which acts through blind belief, nor is it the human understanding of the divine healing Principle as manifested in Jesus, whose humble prayers were deep and conscientious protests of Truth, — of man's likeness to God and of man's unity with Truth and Love.

9. 16:2-5, 7-11, 20

The highest prayer is not one of faith merely; it is demonstration. Such prayer heals sickness, and must destroy sin and death.

Our Master taught his disciples one brief prayer, which we name after him the Lord's Prayer. Our Master said, "After this manner therefore pray ye," and then he gave that prayer which covers all human needs.

Only as we rise above all material sensuousness and sin, can we reach the heaven-born aspiration and spiritual consciousness, which is indicated in the Lord's Prayer and which instantaneously heals the sick.

10. 12:27

Does Deity interpose in behalf of one worshipper, and not help another who offers the same measure of prayer? If the sick recover because they pray or are prayed for audibly, only petitioners (per se or by proxy) should get well. In divine Science, where prayers are mental, all may avail themselves of God as "a very present help in trouble." Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals. It is the open fount which cries, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

11. 14:12-16

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.

12. xi:9-14

The physical healing of Christian Science results now, as in Jesus' time, from the operation of divine Principle, before which sin and disease lose their reality in human consciousness and disappear as naturally and as necessarily as darkness gives place to light and sin to reformation.

13. 459:24-26

To mortal sense Christian Science seems abstract, but the process is simple and the results are sure if the Science is understood.

14. 144:27

When the Science of being is universally understood, every man will be his own physician, and Truth will be the universal panacea.

15. 459:27-31

Guided by divine Truth and not guesswork, the theologian (that is, the student — the Christian and scientific expounder — of the divine law) treats disease with more certain results than any other healer on the globe.

Hymns

Hymn 341

Oliver Holden

PEACEFIELD

Ancient Irish Melody

They who seek the throne of grace,
Find that throne in every place:
If we live a life of prayer,
God is present everywhere.

In our sickness, in our health,
In our want, or in our wealth,
If we look to God in prayer,
God is present everywhere.

Then, my heart, in every strait,
To thy Father come, and wait;
He will answer every prayer,
God is present everywhere.

Hymn 151

Ellen J. Glover

RUTHERFORD

Arr. from Chretien Urhan

In speechless prayer and reverence,
Dear Lord, I come to Thee;
My heart with love Thou fillest,
Yea, with humility.
My bread and wine Thou art,
With Thee I hold communion;
Thy presence healeth me.

To do Thy will is greater
Than sacrifice can be;
O give me needed courage
Sweet with sincerity.
From earthly thought released,
In speechless prayer and reverence,
Dear Lord, I come to Thee.

Hymn 410

Samuel Greenwood

DALEHURST

Arthur Cottman

No mortal sense can still or stay
The flight of silent prayer,
Unceasing, voiceless, heart desire
That seeks God everywhere.

The heart's own longing lifts it high
Where words can never reach,
Though human lips may never form
That glory into speech.

The voices that are worldly wise,
With mortal modes in tune,
Are mute in that transcendent hour
When God and man commune.