Bible Lens

NEW: Expanded edition

Bible Lens—June 22–28, 2020

Subject: Christian Science

From the Christian Science Sentinel - June 22, 2020

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

—Psalms 119:105

Exploring Bible Verses

An exploration of Bible citations from the Christian Science Quarterly® Bible Lessons

“. . . a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.”—Mary Baker Eddy

from the Responsive Reading

Psalms 119:89

For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.

God’s Word is understood to be both divine utterance and the creative force that brings things into being—portrayed in the Genesis 1 creation account by the refrain “and God said.” One scholar offers this paraphrase: “What you say goes, God, and stays, as permanent as the heavens.”

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Paul’s refusal to apologize for preaching the good news of the risen Christ, according to one Bible authority, isn’t mere pride or optimism. This source suggests, “Paul has discovered in practice, in city after city, that announcing the good news ... is in itself powerful and that the power is all God’s.”

from Section 1
Translation

1 | Psalms 33:11
The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

... the Lord's plans stand firm forever;

his intentions can never be shaken.

—New Living Translation

3 | I Corinthians 2:10
The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Commentators agree that searcheth here does not imply ignorance but omniscience. One describes it as “the ever active, accurate, careful sounding of the depths of God by the Spirit.” God’s active knowing of His creation is recorded by Jeremiah: “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways” (Jeremiah 17:10). And Romans 8:27 explains, “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.”

Translation

3 | I Corinthians 2:9–11
Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

... What no one ever saw or heard,

what no one ever thought could happen,

is the very thing God prepared for those who love him.”

But it was to us that God made known his secret by means of his Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, even the hidden depths of God’s purposes. It is only our own spirit within us that knows all about us; in the same way, only God’s Spirit knows all about God.
Definitions from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*  
by Mary Baker Eddy

2 I 147:24–29

*Our Master healed the sick, practised Christian healing, and taught the generalities of its divine Principle to his students; but he left no definite rule for demonstrating this Principle of healing and preventing disease. This rule remained to be discovered in Christian Science.*

**generalities**: main points, without a detailed explanation

3 I 107:1–14

*In the year 1866, I discovered the Christ Science or divine laws of Life, Truth, and Love, and named my discovery Christian Science. God had been graciously preparing me during many years for the reception of this final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing.*

*This apodictical Principle points to the revelation of Immanuel, “God with us,”—the sovereign ever-presence, delivering the children of men from every ill “that flesh is heir to.” Through Christian Science, religion and medicine are inspired with a diviner nature and essence; fresh pinions are given to faith and understanding, and thoughts acquaint themselves intelligently with God.*

**apodictical**: proven; absolutely true

**pinions**: wings

4 I 140:25–27

*The Christian Science God is universal, eternal, divine Love, which changeth not and causeth no evil, disease, nor death.*

**universal**: including everyone; existing everywhere

**from Section 2**

6 I Matthew 4:23

*Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues.*

Jesus’ teaching departed from the usual practice of Jewish rabbis, who didn’t seek students but were approached by them. The Master called disciples directly (see *Matthew 4:18–22; John 15:16*) and taught multitudes outside the educational structure of the synagogue. During his ministry, disciples were sent out to heal and preach, but Jesus was the sole source of Christian instruction.

After Jesus’ ascension, teaching became a central part of the work of his followers—and a means for building up the Church. Paul, for example, exhorts believers, “Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church” (*I Corinthians 14:12*).
Matthew 9:2, 3

They brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

Blasphemy was a serious charge in ancient Israel. Under Mosaic law, defamatory language directed against God was punishable by stoning (see Leviticus 24:16). The Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy and threatened to stone him when he stated, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). A few years later, Stephen was stoned for speaking “blasphemous words against Moses, and against God” (Acts 6:11).

Paul uses a related word in his charge to the Romans, “Let not then your good be evil spoken of [blasphêmeo]” (Romans 14:16).

Translation

8 I II Corinthians 3:4–6

Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

... We are sure about all this. Christ makes us sure in the very presence of God. We don’t have the right to claim that we have done anything on our own. God gives us what it takes to do all that we do. He makes us worthy to be the servants of his new agreement that comes from the Holy Spirit and not from a written Law. After all, the Law brings death, but the Spirit brings life.

—Contemporary English Version

Definitions from Science and Health

8 I xi:9–15

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. Now, as then, these mighty works are not supernatural, but supremely natural.

reformation: improvement in thinking, character, and behavior; spiritual transformation
supernatural: departing from laws of nature; unexplainable by physical science

9 I 423:8
The Christian Scientist, understanding scientifically that all is Mind, commences with mental causation, the truth of being, to destroy the error. This corrective is an alterative, reaching to every part of the human system. According to Scripture, it searches “the joints and marrow,” and it restores the harmony of man.

**alterative**: something that has power to restore the healthy functions of the body

10 I 454:29

The superiority of spiritual power over sensuous is the central point of Christian Science. Remember that the letter and mental argument are only human auxiliaries to aid in bringing thought into accord with the spirit of Truth and Love, which heals the sick and the sinner.

**superiority**: the quality of being higher or greater

**sensuous**: relating to the physical senses

**auxiliaries**: sources of help

**from Section 3**

9 I John 12:44, 46

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me…. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

John 1–12 has been called the Book of Signs—a recounting of seven of Jesus’ works, chosen as proof of his Messiahship. Throughout this Gospel, the writer repeatedly focuses on a deep faith in and understanding of Christ, including dozens of references to this kind of belief.

The concluding verses of chapter 12 (vv. 44–50) mark the end of Jesus’ public ministry. His final days will be spent with his closest followers.

10 I John 14:6

*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

“The way, the truth, and the life” represents three concepts central to Jewish theology. **Way** appears repeatedly in Hebrew Bible texts—for instance, in the Psalmist's plea “Teach me thy way, O Lord” (Psalms 27:11) and Isaiah’s words “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it” (Isaiah 30:21). Yet one scholar notes that Jesus “does not tell us about the way; he is the Way.”

**Truth** is found in many early texts about God as well. The psalms include such affirmations as “I have walked in thy truth” and “The word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth” (Psalms 26:3; 33:4). Jeremiah writes, “The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness” (Jeremiah 4:2). The scholar adds that while many people could claim to have taught the truth, “only Jesus could say: ‘I am the Truth.’”

**Life** is associated with God from the first record of creation (see Genesis 1). Job asserts, “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4), and Psalms 27:1 calls God “the strength of my life.”
10 | **John 14:16, 17**

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.

Paraklētos, the Greek word rendered Comforter, means advocate or intercessor. In some translations it appears as Helper—one who aids, counsels, or defends. Jesus’ promise is for spiritual advocacy and enlightenment through all time. Later, First John affirms, “If any man sin, we have an advocate [paraklētos] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (2:1).

**Translation**

10 | **John 14:16–18**

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

... I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby), to be with you forever—the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive [and take to its heart] because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He (the Holy Spirit) remains with you continually and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans [comfortless, bereaved, and helpless]; I will come [back] to you.

—Amplified® Bible

**Definitions from Science and Health**

11 | **112:16**

From the infinite One in Christian Science comes one Principle and its infinite idea, and with this infinitude come spiritual rules, laws, and their demonstration, which, like the great Giver, are “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;” for thus are the divine Principle of healing and the Christ-idea characterized in the epistle to the Hebrews.

characterized: illustrated; described

epistle: letter

13 | **146:31**

Divine metaphysics is now reduced to a system, to a form comprehensible by and adapted to the thought of the age in which we live. This system enables the learner to demonstrate the divine Principle, upon which Jesus’ healing was based, and the sacred rules for its present application to the cure of disease.
comprehensible: understandable
adapted: fitted
application: use for a particular purpose; relation or connection

16 | 496:15
Hold perpetually this thought,—that it is the spiritual idea, the Holy Ghost and Christ, which enables you to demonstrate, with
scientific certainty, the rule of healing, based upon its divine Principle, Love, underlying, overlying, and encompassing all true
being.

perpetually: constantly; continuously

from Section 4
12 | Romans 6:16
Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death,
or of obedience unto righteousness?

Servant (Greek, doulos) commonly referred to slaves in ancient times. Believers would have understood the slavery image as one
that described absolute subjection. “Freedom from sin,” notes a scriptural authority, “is to be found only in a ‘slavery’ to
righteousness and to God.”

In the New Testament, righteousness signifies more than being right legally or ethically; it alludes to a right relationship with God,
expressed in Christly thought and behavior.

Translation
Don’t you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to
death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.

—New Living Translation

13 | Romans 8:7
The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
carnal: fleshly; related to the physical body
enmity: hostility; hatred

Translation
13 | Romans 8:7–9

The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

• • •

The mind ruled by the power of sin is at war with God. It does not obey God’s law. It can’t. Those who are under the power of sin can’t please God. But you are not ruled by the power of sin. Instead, the Holy Spirit rules over you. This is true if the Spirit of God lives in you....

—New International Reader’s Version

14 I Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Sacred songs found in the Bible were written over hundreds of years, and many were part of oral tradition for centuries before that. Psalms and hymns were sung to praise God, to seek forgiveness, to ask for wisdom—and, just as we teach our children through singing, to convey basic religious precepts.

Paul includes psalms in a list of teaching tools shared with the Corinthian church: “Every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying” (I Corinthians 14:26).

admonishing: warning gently; counselling

Translation

14 I Colossians 3:16, 17

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

• • •

Let Christ’s word with all its wisdom and richness live in you. Use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to teach and instruct yourselves about God’s kindness. Sing to God in your hearts. Everything you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

—GOD’S WORD Translation
Definitions from *Science and Health*

18 | 359:29–12

A Christian Scientist and an opponent are like two artists. One says: “I have spiritual ideals, indestructible and glorious. When others see them as I do, in their true light and loveliness,—and know that these ideals are real and eternal because drawn from Truth,—they will find that nothing is lost, and all is won, by a right estimate of what is real.”

The other artist replies: “You wrong my experience. I have no mind-ideals except those which are both mental and material. It is true that materiality renders these ideals imperfect and destructible; yet I would not exchange mine for thine, for mine give me such personal pleasure, and they are not so shockingly transcendental. They require less self-abnegation, and keep Soul well out of sight. Moreover, I have no notion of losing my old doctrines or human opinions.”

- **estimate**: judgment
- **transcendental**: beyond common experience or knowledge
- **self-abnegation**: denial of one’s own interests in favor of the interests of others

19 | 495:25–31

Question. — *How can I progress most rapidly in the understanding of Christian Science?*

Answer. — *Study thoroughly the letter and imbibe the spirit. Adhere to the divine Principle of Christian Science and follow the behests of God, abiding steadfastly in wisdom, Truth, and Love.*

- **imbibe**: drink in; receive into thought
- **adhere to**: stick to
- **behests**: commands

*from Section 5*

16 | Romans 12:2

*Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

- **conformed**: shaped; made to fit with something
- **transformed**: thoroughly changed in nature, form, or appearance

**Translation**

*So then, my friends, because of God’s great mercy to us I appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer.*

—Good News Translation
Definitions from *Science and Health*

20 | 382:24

One whom I rescued from seeming spiritual oblivion, in which the senses had engulfed him, wrote to me: “I should have died, but for the glorious Principle you teach,—supporting the power of Mind over the body and showing me the nothingness of the so-called pleasures and pains of sense. The treatises I had read and the medicines I had taken only abandoned me to more hopeless suffering and despair. Adherence to hygiene was useless. Mortal mind needed to be set right. The ailment was not bodily, but mental, and I was cured when I learned my way in Christian Science.”

- **oblivion**: unconsciousness; complete extinction
- **treatises**: lengthy written explanations
- **hygiene**: material systems of maintaining health

21 | 428:19

We must realize the ability of mental might to offset human misconceptions and to replace them with the life which is spiritual, not material.

- **offset**: counteract; cancel out
- **misconceptions**: mistaken or inaccurate viewpoints

*from Section 6*

17 | Revelation 21:2

*I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

New Jerusalem is celebrated not as a national shrine but as the spiritual representation of God’s presence. Its bridal imagery stands in stark contrast to the writer’s earlier metaphor of Babylon as a harlot (see Revelation 17:1–5, for instance)—just as the actual cities of Jerusalem and Babylon represented contrasting characteristics to the Hebrew people.

Centuries earlier, the author of Isaiah 52 wrote, “Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean” (v. 1).

17 | Revelation 21:5, 6

*He that sat upon the throne said,… It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.*

*Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Revelator employs them four times (see also 1:8, 11; 22:13) to indicate the infinitude of God and His Christ.

Thrones are familiar symbols of power in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament (see Psalms 47:8, for example). The Revelator employs this metaphor over thirty times, far more than any other biblical writer—often, as in this verse, to signify divine might.

18 | Peter 4:10
As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

**minister**: give; supply

**stewards**: people who oversee and provide goods

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Translation

*Each of you received a spiritual gift. God has shown you his grace in giving you different gifts. And you are like servants who are responsible for using God’s gifts. So be good servants and use your gifts to serve each other.*

—International Children’s Bible

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Definitions from *Science and Health*

**25 l 573:3–5**

*The Revelator was on our plane of existence, while yet beholding what the eye cannot see,—that which is invisible to the uninspired thought.*

**plane**: level of thought

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**Resources quoted in this issue**


Related Healing Ideas

The ultimate comfort

By Jenny Sawyer

From the November 10, 2016, issue of the Christian Science Sentinel

As I lay on my bed in despair, there was one thing I wanted more than anything: comfort. I felt sad, lost, hopeless. I needed someone to tell me that everything was going to be OK.

Then, to my surprise, I felt something within me rise up and turn on those despairing feelings. Through a power that didn’t feel like my own, I suddenly realized that what I really wanted was the strength to face these suggestions of darkness and to face them down.

A few days before this incident, I’d had a conversation with a friend in which she reminded me that the word comfort has Latin roots which mean “with strength.” I’d smiled at the time and half-jokingly told her that that wasn’t really the comfort I was looking for.
But I was wrong. As I lay on my bed, it clicked with me that in spite of the hopelessness I was feeling, I didn’t actually want to shove my head under my pillow and pretend that the bad stuff that was upsetting me wasn’t really happening. I wanted the strength to think differently—to stand up to the crashing emotions, to the clamor of the world around me, to everything that pointed to darkness, fear, and loss, and to say, “I refuse to believe it.”

Now some people might say that’s the same thing as putting your head under your pillow or plugging your ears with your fingers while you sing, “La la la!” But there’s a big difference between pretending something isn’t going on and the kind of denial I’m talking about. To be effective, to heal, the strength to face down darkness has to spring from an understanding of what’s true, based on what we know about God.

Depending on the circumstances you’re facing, the spiritual facts about God that will be most helpful may be different from the ideas that occurred to me. But two basic ideas that apply to almost every circumstance are that God is good, and that God is all because He is infinite. Think about what that actually means! If supreme good is all, then that must mean that good is law, that it governs, supports, and defines everything about us and our lives. It means good is substance. Power. It means good is unchanging and operates unopposed at every moment. It means that we actually live in the good that is God—cared for, lacking nothing, safe.

This truth is actually the Comforter that Jesus promised to us when he said, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth” (John 14:16, 17).

Lying there on my bed, I felt despair begin to give way to hope as I realized the Comforter was operating on my behalf, strengthening me to feel more of God’s presence and power. And as my own feelings of hopelessness and helplessness receded, I was even able to help a friend who was feeling the same way.

When you stop and think about it, isn’t that the comfort we all really yearn for? The comfort of knowing so clearly what’s true that we can comfort and strengthen others? It’s called being a healer. And I’m comforted to think that I have the strength to be a healer in any situation—and so do you.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/the-ultimate-comfort.

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