

Ye have been called
unto liberty.

—Galatians 5:13



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

Spirit

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from the Golden Text

II Corinthians 3:17

... wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

—New Living Translation

To Paul, liberty goes beyond release from physical bondage, Roman occupation, and the restrictions of Jewish law to the freedom of serving God. As a Bible authority explains, “True liberty is not the freedom to do as we like; it is the power to do as we ought.... [U]nless we use our liberty for the purpose of service,... in the interests of love, we shall find ourselves in a deeper bondage, the bondage to the flesh.”

from the Responsive Reading

Romans 8:19

The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Earnest expectation (Greek, *apokaradokia*) is a dramatic phrase, employed to convey intense anticipation. *Waiteth*, translated here from another Greek word portraying eager expectation (*apekdekhomai*), underscores this outlook. A commentary describes this scene as “the whole creation ... on tiptoe with excitement, waiting for God’s children to be revealed as who they really are.”

Romans 8:31

If God be for us, who can be against us?

A series of rhetorical questions concludes Paul’s bold case for God’s saving love (see

vv. 31–35). Though beginning with the conditional “If,” this one conveys certainty. The strongly implied “No one!” is confirmed with his final statement: Nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God” (vv. 37–39).

from Section 1

1 | John 4:24

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Since the original Greek can be understood to mean either spirit or a spirit, most translations omit the article *a*—making clear that God is Spirit itself rather than a personality. One source notes, “Spirit connotes reality, or absolute being.... [I]t is reality as living, powerful, life-giving.”

from Section 3

7 | Isaiah 11:1–9

There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.

Restoration of the house of David is seen in terms of an ideal king, one whose characteristics—illustrated here by three pairs of qualities—would usher in a new era of peace (see vv. 6–9).

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

Messianic prophecy can be traced throughout the Hebrew Bible (see other examples in Numbers 24:17; Deuteronomy 18:18). The writings of Isaiah employ the image of a shoot springing from a tree stump to link the promised Savior to the royal house of Jesse’s son David.

Scholars point to Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew as confirmation of this oracle (see Matthew 1:1–16). And Revelation 22:16 records Jesus’ own words, “I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

from Section 5

11 | Acts 8:27

[Philip] arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians

Saul’s persecution of Christians had driven many of them from Jerusalem, with the unintended effect of spreading the teachings of Christ (see v. 1–4). Philip the Evangelist, a different man from Philip the Apostle (see Acts 6:1–5), is among the scattered believers who bring the gospel to Samaria. The term *Ethiopian* was commonly used to describe dark-skinned people from the remotest areas south of Egypt. *Candace* or *Kandake* is a title, not unlike the Roman title *Caesar*.

As a foreigner and a eunuch, Candace’s treasurer typified people rejected by the Jews. Although he was returning from worship in Jerusalem, the eunuch would not have been allowed in the Temple. Some scholars see this account as fulfilling the prophecy that God would gather “the outcasts of Israel” (see Isaiah 56:8). “The promise of full inclu-

sion among God’s people of foreigners and eunuchs,” one notes, “finds its fulfillment not in Jerusalem and the temple,... but in his hearing and receiving of the gospel.”

from Section 6

14 | II Timothy 1:14

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

“That good thing” entrusted to Timothy is the Christly teaching he’s been given. Here the Greek word *parathēkē*, referring to a deposit of goods given into someone’s keeping, is used to remind the young worker of his sacred duty.

Parathēkē also appears in the admonition “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust [*parathēkē*], avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (I Timothy 6:20). A scriptural authority interprets these charges this way: “You are the guardian of a deposit. A trust has been committed to your keeping. Guard it scrupulously.”

Resources quoted in this issue

GT: New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved; Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds. *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 10, *Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57.

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"It is the spirit that quickeneth"

By Mark Swinney

From the July 2000 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

Christ Jesus' commitment to living what he taught was radical. His actions and healing works gave vivid proof of his statement, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63).

An examination of the life of Jesus, and of the people who have followed him closely, shows that the practice of spirituality means swimming upstream. Instead of drifting along with current opinions as to the material nature of things, Christ's followers embrace wholeheartedly the spiritual nature of life and reality. While many people are certainly reaching out for something more than what conventional lifestyles offer, and in some places the number of people committed to Christianity's healing message is growing, still, materialism needs to be reckoned with. It promotes an endless search for stimulation through the senses, an expansion of theories of ourselves as biochemical beings, and ever-multiplying chemical strategies for cure. It would make one question one's own commitment to the effective practice of spiritual healing, which [Jesus] instituted.

If we are praying for spiritual healing for ourselves or for another, do we feel a great weight? If we are afraid that we are under such a burden or that we will be beaten by it, it may be well to cast out of our thoughts *thoroughly*, radically, the claim of materialism: the belief that there exists something besides divine Spirit, God, and God's spiritual creation.

Jesus' commitment to the fact of Spirit's allness was complete. In the hours before his crucifixion, he was alone with God in the garden of Gethsemane. After he was taken down from the cross, again he was alone for three days in a tomb. Even a huge

stone, which might be said to represent materialism's endeavor to bury forever the message of the Christ, was rolled in front of the tomb.

But the Bible proclaims, "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it" (Matthew 28:2). An angel, what *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy describes as "the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality" (p. 581), sat on the barrier materialism would have imposed. Jesus rose from the dead and left that tomb; and about six weeks later, his triumph over materialism was fully evident with his ascension.

Today, God's angel message—"the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality"—is still sitting triumphantly on the cold stone that materialism would roll over the door of our lives. It is with you as you are praying, enabling you to look away from what seems to be life in matter and to respond wholeheartedly to the ever-presence and allness of divine Spirit, God.

Materialism cannot assign to itself the authority to decide the future prospects of humanity. God, Spirit, is the only true authority, forever revealing and governing His spiritual creation. Eventually, history may admit this. But we don't need to wait for history to catch up.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/it-is-the-spirit-that-quickeneth.