

Wednesday Readings
Love Your Enemies

Bible (ESV unless noted)

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 the

...the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Proverbs 3:25-26

Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the storm of the wicked, when it comes, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.

2 Kings 6:8-23

Once when the king of Syria was warring against Israel, he took counsel with his servants, saying, "At such and such a place shall be my camp." But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are going down there." And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God told him. Thus he used to warn him, so that he saved himself there more than once or twice.

And the mind of the king of Syria was greatly troubled because of this thing, and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me who of us is for the king of Israel?" And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." And he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and seize him." It was told him, "Behold, he is in Dothan." So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Please strike this people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness in accordance with the prayer of Elisha. And Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he led them to Samaria.

As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, “O LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see.” So the LORD opened their eyes and they saw, and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. As soon as the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I strike them down? Shall I strike them down?” He answered, “You shall not strike them down. Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.” So he prepared for them a great feast, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the Syrians did not come again on raids into the land of Israel.

Psalms 37:1 (to 37:8), 8

Fret not yourself because of evildoers; Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.

Matthew 5:43-48 (MSG)

“You’re familiar with the old written law, ‘Love your friend,’ and its unwritten companion, ‘Hate your enemy.’ I’m challenging that. I’m telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.

“In a word, what I’m saying is, *Grow up*. You’re kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.”

John 8:1-11 Jesus

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” And once more he bent down and

wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

Galatians 6:1-8 friends (MSG)

...friends. If someone falls into sin, forgivingly restore him, saving your critical comments for yourself. *You* might be needing forgiveness before the day's out. Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens, and so complete Christ's law. If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived.

Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.

Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life.

Hebrews 12:1-4 *let*, 12-15 (to ;)

... let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith...

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;

2 Corinthians 4:16 (to 1st .), 18 we

So we do not lose heart. . . we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures (unless noted)

312:1

How true it is that whatever is learned through material sense must be lost because such so-called knowledge is reversed by the spiritual facts of being in Science. That which material sense calls intangible, is found to be substance. What to material sense seems substance, becomes nothingness, as the sense-dream vanishes and reality appears.

95:12-15

This material world is even now becoming the arena for conflicting forces. On one side there will be discord and dismay; on the other side there will be Science and peace.

Mis 362:25-28

We all must find shelter from the storm and tempest in the tabernacle of Spirit. Truth is won through Science or suffering: O vain mortals! which shall it be?

248:15

What is the model before mortal mind? Is it imperfection, joy, sorrow, sin, suffering? Have you accepted the mortal model? Are you reproducing it? Do you not hear from all mankind of the imperfect model? The world is holding it before your gaze continually. The result is that you are liable to follow those lower patterns, limit your life-work, and adopt into your experience the angular outline and deformity of matter models.

353:7-10

How can a Christian, having the stronger evidence of Truth which contradicts the evidence of error, think of the latter as real or true, either in the form of sickness or of sin?

Mis 8:9-16, 21

Who is thine enemy that thou shouldst love him? Is it a creature or a thing outside thine own creation?

Can you see an enemy, except you first formulate this enemy and then look upon the object of your own conception? What is it that harms you? Can height, or depth, or any other creature separate you from the Love that is omnipresent good, — that blesses infinitely one and all?

Mis 9:9

“Love thine enemies” is identical with “Thou hast no enemies.” Wherein is this conclusion relative to those who have hated thee without a cause? Simply, in that those unfortunate individuals are virtually thy best friends. Primarily and ultimately, they are doing thee good far beyond the present sense which thou canst entertain of good.

Mis 11:4-7, 14 only, 21-26,

I used to think it sufficiently just to abide by our State statutes; that if a man should aim a ball at my heart, and I by firing first could kill him and save my own life, that this was right. Love metes not out human justice, but divine mercy.

To mete out human justice to those who persecute and despitefully use one, is not leaving all retribution to God and returning blessing for cursing. If special opportunity for doing good to one’s enemies occur not, one can include them in his general effort to benefit the race.

13:1

The only justice of which I feel at present capable, is mercy and charity toward every one, — just so far as one and all permit me to exercise these sentiments toward them, — taking special care to mind my own business.

234:31-3

Evil thoughts and aims reach no farther and do no more harm than one’s belief permits. Evil thoughts, lusts, and malicious purposes cannot go forth, like wandering pollen, from one human mind to another, finding unsuspected lodgment, if virtue and truth build a strong defence.

Mis 369:7-9 (to effects), 10-15

Metaphysics, not physics, enables us to stand erect on sublime heights, surveying the immeasurable universe of Mind, peering into the cause which

governs all effects.... There is “method” in the “madness” of this system, — since madness it seems to many onlookers. This method sits serene at the portals of the temple of thought, while the leaders of materialistic schools indulge in mad antics.

Mis 370:4-7 (to abroad)

When the Pharisees saw Jesus do such deeds of mercy, they went away and took counsel how they might remove him. The antagonistic spirit of evil is still abroad; but the greater spirit of Christ is also abroad...

447:20-22

Expose and denounce the claims of evil and disease in all their forms, but realize no reality in them.

471:13-17, 18-19

The facts of divine Science should be admitted, — although the evidence as to these facts is not supported by evil, by matter, or by material sense, — because the evidence that God and man coexist is fully sustained by spiritual sense. God is infinite, therefore ever present, and there is no other power nor presence.

248:25-9 we

...we must first turn our gaze in the right direction, and then walk that way. We must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually, or we shall never carve them out in grand and noble lives. Let unselfishness, goodness, mercy, justice, health, holiness, love — the kingdom of heaven — reign within us, and sin, disease, and death will diminish until they finally disappear.

Let us accept Science, relinquish all theories based on sense-testimony, give up imperfect models and illusive ideals; and so let us have one God, one Mind, and that one perfect, producing His own models of excellence.

Let us feel the divine energy of Spirit, bringing us into newness of life and recognizing no mortal nor material power as able to destroy. Let us rejoice that we are subject to the divine “powers that be.”

495:20

Let Christian Science, instead of corporeal sense, support your

understanding of being, and this understanding will supplant error with Truth, replace mortality with immortality, and silence discord with harmony.

97:7-12 (to appear)

According to human belief, the lightning is fierce and the electric current swift, yet in Christian Science the flight of one and the blow of the other will become harmless. The more destructive matter becomes, the more its nothingness will appear...

322:26-29, 32

The sharp experiences of belief in the supposititious life of matter, as well as our disappointments and ceaseless woes, turn us like tired children to the arms of divine Love.

Mortals may seek the understanding of Christian Science, but they will not be able to glean from Christian Science the facts of being without striving for them. This strife consists in the endeavor to forsake error of every kind and to possess no other consciousness but good.

570:30-21

At all times and under all circumstances, overcome evil with good. Know thyself, and God will supply the wisdom and the occasion for a victory over evil. Clad in the panoply of Love, human hatred cannot reach you. The cement of a higher humanity will unite all interests in the one divinity.

450:19

The Christian Scientist has enlisted to lessen evil, disease, and death; and he will overcome them by understanding their nothingness and the allness of God, or good. Sickness to him is no less a temptation than is sin, and he heals them both by understanding God's power over them. The Christian Scientist knows that they are errors of belief, which Truth can and will destroy.