

Quarterly Fruitage Report



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE *joint* INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE *of* missouri

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***“If we would open their prison doors....we must first learn to bind up the broken-hearted.”
(Science & Health with Key to the Scriptures, 366: 30-31).***

The mission of this committee, as stated in its Bylaws, is: “...to share the healing and regenerating truths of Christian Science with inmates and/or patients in local, county, state, and federal penal, correctional, juvenile, mental health, veteran, and other institutions in the state of Missouri” (Article II.1).

Excerpts from Institutional Committee Weekly Fruitage Reports:

"Truth Makes a New Creature"

The gentleman who attended the conference today had found a copy of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* in the pod; he stated that once he started reading it, he had not been able to stop. This is his second time being incarcerated. He said the first time he was in jail, he was full of anger and resentment until another prisoner encouraged him repeatedly to start reading the Bible. He recounted how the Bible transformed him--replacing his anger with faith, and stated that he has read it through many times. What he loves about Mrs. Eddy's book is that it has so many Bible passages woven into it, and that it “translates” those passages so that he can even better understand them. The statement, “Truth makes a new creature, in whom old things pass away and “all things are becomes new” (201) really stood out to him because he said that helped him understand more fully how Biblical truths changed his life. The issue he still struggles with is addiction; we read through the spiritual interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, applying it specifically to that issue and then turned to several passages in the Bible lesson as well. He loved the idea of the Bible lesson--that everyone studies the same thing each week--and asked to keep his copy of the *MyBibleLesson*.

The Holy Spirit at Work

In spite of a lot of people urging her to go to another meeting held at the same time, a woman felt drawn to our conference. She shed a lot of tears during it, but later told me that she had been feeling she had lost her faith when, in spite of her prayers, her father had died of cancer and that this evening she felt it had been restored. Another woman with a strong background in the Bible said she wasn't sure if she would like Christian Science but was willing to listen. She wasn't going to take a copy of the textbook unless she wanted to read it. By the end she was taking notes in her copy. Two spoke of drug addiction and were really feeling that what they learned tonight could help them overcome it. Everyone, including the one who left early, wanted a copy of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* and a copy of the Bible lesson. I could really feel the Holy Spirit at work this evening. . . . I had felt so weary earlier that I didn't see how I could be a help to others that late in the day, but the emphasis on strength in our Bible lesson was a huge support to me, and I was able to facilitate this very active and deep discussion without any difficulty.

Virtuous Women

Both women who attended were cell mates; they said God had put them together to support each other.

They had just received news that they were going to serve another nine months. They shared how they had prayed and realized it meant they needed more time to learn about God and turn their lives around before going back out. They spoke of being afraid of going back to bad relationships and wanting a fresh new start away from men who had been a bad influence and who had hurt them. We spoke of our relationship with God as our only relationship, looked up Mrs. Eddy's definition for God in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (p. 465), and made a list of all the qualities that come from God. The women looked at the list and were in awe saying they never knew they could be in a relationship with all these good qualities. They said they had always just settled for one or two of them. We saw how all those thirty-plus qualities we had come up with were all in God and therefore all in them--and this is what constituted their true relationship with God. We read from the chapter "Marriage" about spiritual unity. We saw how giving all our attention and devotion to God gives us true affection, joy, health, satisfaction. The women loved this idea. We finished by reading about the "virtuous woman" in Proverbs and took each line to identify her qualities and saw how the prophet was bringing to light these qualities as essential to a prosperous woman full of virtue. They saw this was who God made them to be. One of them, had tears in her eyes and said she had never read anything so beautiful. They both shared how they wanted to break the cycles of addiction to bad relationships for their daughters' sakes and saw this was for the first time a possibility.

Transformation Recognized

One of the women who is a regular was beaming with gratitude for all the Bible classes and for the Christian Science conferences. She says that her transformation is starting to show and people are noticing the change in her since she has been reading her Bible and turning to God all day long in prayer. She says that all these blessings keep happening all the time and she knows they are the direct result of turning her life to God. She says that her two friends have noticed her transformation and wanted to come in because they want to change like she is changing.

Seeing the "Face of God"

I spoke with two men who had been identified to me as dangerous men to be avoided. Instead they have become sincere seekers for Truth, asking very good questions and demonstrating a good familiarity with the lessons of the Bible. Today the nature of our talk was about how amazing it was that Joseph was able to endure unkindness and injustice from family members, employers and others --to actually be thrown in jail when he was not guilty, yet he was unwilling to complain or blame others. One man, in particular, who has himself been put in jail for an extremely heinous crime, was touched by that forgiveness. We also talked about Jacob and Esau and how Jacob wrestled with a false concept of Esau all his life, and when this concept actually looked life-threatening, he said to him: "I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God," and was pleased with him (Genesis 33:10). Both fellows could see how that enabled a healing to take place and how it was such an important spiritual point to Jacob that his name was forever changed as a result. I have known these men through another volunteer activity at the jail, and have witnessed firsthand how their characters are changing just from the contact they have been having with Christian Science in conferences and in the few services they have attended.

Challenging the Corporeal Senses

After the service, one man brought up some of the struggles he had encountered--essentially questioning whether God had brought those events about. Although we joined the conversation to some extent, the men were really reasoning it out for themselves based on the Bible lesson. The long time attendee was especially clear in explaining why the "corporeal senses"--the term he used-- should be challenged, pointing out that man is really an idea held in Mind. The man who had raised the question had attended for the first time last Sunday; he took a copy of the textbook, stating that he had grown up in a family that attended church regularly, but that he had never felt like religion was something that he could understand until he came to the service last week.

Christ Awakening Thought

I had barely arrived when nine women from three different pods came in--some of them clearly on a mission. What they were actually looking for was comfort, but they were not willing to listen, at least not for the first hour. The women who had come in purely to receive help and healing were listening and waiting their turn. I shared with them several times that I did not know everything and could only speak from experience. I explained how the word Christian and Science related to one another. I explained how Christian Science is based wholly on the Bible and the teachings of Christ Jesus. Every major question they had I responded with an example of a healing I had had. This took great patience as they would interrupt my every word with questions and mocking some of what I was sharing. I felt incredibly calm and unimpressed and “pressed on” through prayer and perseverance. After many debates from those who were agitated, one of the ladies who was quietly listening spoke up above the chaos and said she could not believe how gracious I was acting as she would have wrung their necks if she were in my place. She told them to stop talking Then one of her friends asked about the possibility of being healed from epilepsy. There was a calming when I shared a healing of a lump on a breast. The ladies who were agitated started to express gratitude for my willingness to answer their questions and especially for knowing my Scripture and having an obvious love for the Word of God. Their tone softened and we had a better exchange. Then at one point one of the aggressive women said she was really glad she had come in as she felt she needed to hear Christian Science was actually following Jesus Christ the Savior. Then all the questions started to shift from theology to personal challenges they had. Then one who had asked about being healed of epilepsy told all the women she didn't care what they thought, she knew God had brought her in for healing and knew in her heart that Christian Science was what she was looking for. She took a copy of the textbook, and said she would read it and asked me how to read it to understand how to find healing. I invited all the women to read the chapter on prayer and see if they found anything in it that would be against the teachings of the Bible or Christ Jesus, suggested they read the fruitage in the back, and invited them to read the

book as one should read the Bible from cover to cover and get the full message rather than pulling sentences out of context. We ended our last thirty minutes with a peaceful exchange answering many of their questions relating to issues close to their hearts. I could feel the Christ had awakened thought and brought forth humility, receptivity, and the first steps of healing.

Turning to the Ninety-First Psalm

At the end of the service, the two new-comers talked about what had prompted them to attend. They explained that they had initially been cell-mates and had both been struggling with withdrawal symptoms. Because one had had a religious upbringing, he decided to turn to the Bible, especially Psalm 91, to help him with the symptoms. After turning to the Psalm several times, he felt the symptoms drop away; he then offered to help his cell-mate who also experienced a healing. Since they had both suffered through withdrawal symptoms for months in the past, the immediate relief they had experienced was compelling to them. Then they found a *Christian Science Sentinel* in the pod. The healings in it, they decided, explained what had happened to them, which prompted them to find out when the Christian Science services were held on sixth floor. They clearly felt blessed by the fact that Psalm 91 was central to the responsive readings as well as two of the hymns we sang (99 and 207); we felt blessed to learn about their healing. They each took a full array of literature before leaving.

Angry No More June Lecture Sponsored by First Church of Christ, Scientist, Valley Park

Michelle Nanouche, CSB, presented her lecture to five women at the Clayton Justice Center. They listened intently as Michelle talked through her lecture points in a very natural and conversational way. One appeared to be brushing away tears at some points; others nodded in agreement when statements like “you can't have fear and love in the same space” hit home. At the end, one (who had been the first to arrive, with great anticipation) asked many questions about the anger she held for a family member, and another brought up the issue of a podmate. Michelle spoke to each of the women, wanting to make sure there was a specific “take away” in each case. Their responses made it clear that the healings presented in the lecture had resonated deeply with each of them.

How Christian Science Answers the Riddle of Evil
April Lecture Sponsored by

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Town and Country

Kari Mashos, CSB, gave a Christian Science lecture to eighteen women at the Hall Street Medium Security Prison. She began by saying that she asked God what message to bring to the women that day, and the answer was for them to always remember their dignity. This statement was expressed with such tenderness and authority; it felt as though there was one simultaneous, collective sigh as each heart took in the divinely inspired message with reverence. Kari's topic was entirely appropriate. She told of her own experience of being healed of abuse; this resonated deeply with the women. With each new section of the lecture, the women had thoughtful and relevant questions (such as: "Did God create evil? If not, where did it come from?" and 'How do you pray when you are surrounded by evil; i.e., if your circumstances press evil in all around you?") that served to move the talk naturally forward. Kari emphasized that God's nature is good, that the nature of evil is 'a lie,' as Jesus pointed out, and that the women had dominion over their own thinking. It was truly a consecrated and holy time with this precious group. Some of the women are already reading *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and in fact, one woman was so excited that we were there with "Christian Science", because she "LOVES this book" (pointing to *Science and Health*). Those who didn't already have the textbook took one, and several took Bibles as well. Kari said she had never had an institutional lecture quite like this one because there was absolutely zero resistance.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK:
Presentation at Missouri Hills Home

This is a medium security correctional facility for youth ages 13-17 with over 200 youth. I addressed the whole group for the first hour on spiritual lenses or spiritual sense, based on readings from Psalms and Mark about seeing beyond the surface and also Mrs. Eddy's "three degrees" from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. We watched two videos to give us ideas on how to see in the second and third degree. They had great questions such as "Why is it so hard to see myself in the second and third degree?" We created a portrait of ourselves to show our true nature, listing spiritual qualities. I left the group with their project and invited anyone who wanted to dig a little deeper to join me on the other side of the room. Three girls came. One of them was agitated and after a little nudging on my part shared that this was her third time to be in detention and her family has now turned their backs on her. She says she doesn't exist, and no one sees her or knows she exists. I shared an experience I had when I felt that way and how God came to pull me out through showing me my qualities and worth. We looked up passages in the Bible to show God's love for each of us. The other two shared how they listen to God and have seen how he does know us and understand us and gives us just what we need, when we need it. The girls were very attentive and had wonderful ideas to share with the first girl to reassure her. She had been very agitated in the beginning but became quiet and attentive. A fourth girl pulled me aside as I was heading out sharing some of her fears for her future. I shared some truths with her about her inseparability from Love and how trusting God would reveal to her every step forward when she needed it. She thanked me with tears and said she would not give up.



Christian Science Joint Institutional Committee of Missouri - Institutions Served

***St. Louis City Medium Security Institution (MSI) - 7600 Hall Street, Saint Louis, MO**

Men: Church service weekly Mondays 3:30 & **Women:** Conference 2nd Thursday each month

***St. Louis County Justice Center (Clayton Justice Center) - 100 S Central Ave, Clayton, MO**

Men: Church service 6th floor: 1st, 2nd, 4th Sun & 3rd Sat 1-2:45 & Conference Thursdays 9-10:45
Church service 7th floor: 1st & 3rd Sundays 1-2:45 & Conference Tuesdays 9-10:45

Women: Conference Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm

We work with approximately 1,500 attendees a year, with 10 volunteers needed weekly.

***Youth Development Work- Missouri Hills Home & Hogan St. Medium Security for Boys**

***Missouri Dept of Health Psychiatric Center -weekly visits**

How can I help?

Branch Churches:

- *Please consider appointing a CSJIC Rep from your branch church if you have not already done so.
- *Budget a monthly contribution to CSJIC to help cover costs of distributing copies of *Science and Health*, the Bible, Christian Science Periodicals, and the weekly *MyBibleLoness* study guide.
- *Consider hosting a Christian Science lecture in a jail
- *Donate new *Science and Healths*, or *Quarterlies*
- *Collect newer used periodicals for distribution - preferably less than 1 month old.

Individual members:

- *Purchase *Science & Healths* to donate to our CSJIC
- *Prayerfully support our work, and check out our website: www.ChristianScienceMissouri.com
- *Not sure that you are ready to volunteer in the jail? Come support the work through special projects
- *Talk to your branch church representative and consider serving as a volunteer! (Once a month helps fill our current commitments and we are opening doors to work with additional Institutions. We just began working with the women in both facilities and hope to open doors with the youth!)



We encourage you to participate in this rewarding and far-reaching work that blesses all.

Please go to www.ChristianScienceMissouri.com or contact your local Rep for more information

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