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LECTURE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

(Continued from page 3)

out a very simple method of discovering a true Christian? The directions are to be found in the sixteenth chapter of Mark, and follow immediately the well-known command to "preach the gospel to every creature."

"And these signs shall follow them that cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Christians, are we measuring up to this standard? Suppose we are traveling in a distant land, and a world-behind converts us to say, "Are you a Christian?" And upon receiving an affirmative reply, suppose he next says: "Oh, how glad I am that you came! I see by your Bible that signs are to follow the true believers. Now I am possessed by a veritable devil. I am a victim of the opium habit. Do, I beg of you, through your beautiful religion, cast this devil out!" What would we say? Would we recommend a well-known sanitarian famed for its treatment of the drug habit, or what would we do? Suppose he then says: "My old mother is very ill. I see by your book that a Christian, understanding the great power taught by Jesus, can cause her to recover. Come, I pray you, and heal her!" What would we now say? Would we suggest a change of doctors, or recommend a new diet or climate—or would we undertake to put our faith to the test? And if by chance we say to this hungry thought: "Ah, my dear sir, that was not meant for our time! The days of healing are past!" —to be surprised if he closes the Bible and hands it back with this statement: "Very well! I have a religion to die by that is older than yours!"

Christians Must Heal the Sick

A visitor at an insane asylum was once attracted to a man who behind the bars of his room was seen poring over the pages of a small Testament. Seeing the visitor, the patient beckoned him to come nearer. He had opened the book to the tenth chapter of Matthew, and pointing to the first verse, said, "Read that!" The visitor read:

"And when he had called unto him

his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

When he had finished the reading, the inmate caught at his hand. "Send me one of those men! Send me one of those men!" he pleaded. But the doctors smiled, shook their heads, and murmured that it was a sad case.

Let each one of us who dares to name the name of Christianity, seriously ask himself this question: Am I trying to be one of those men? Had I been approached as was this visitor, could I have said to the unfortunate one, "Whr, friend, I believe in Christian healing! I am trying to be one of Jesus' disciples,—one of those men,—and the power that banished devils in the days of the Master can free you now!" If we are unable honestly to face the situation thus, let us go forth resolved to sit at the feet of the Christ and meekly learn of that power; the possession of which alone entitles us to the sacred name of Christian.

The Power Imparted by Jesus

What was the power which Jesus imparted first to the twelve and later to the seventy disciples? It could not have been a mysterious magnetic current flowing from the personality of Jesus to those about him, as some would aver, for, as has been stated, Jesus insisted that of himself he could do nothing, and that it was the Father dwelling in him that did the works. Again, in the well-known passage from the fourteenth chapter of John, he states that his mighty works shall be done by those who believe on him, or in other words, those who understand his great mission and the divine Principle thereof. Thus we see that the power given by Jesus to his followers was a spiritual understanding, just as a teacher in school gives his pupils power to solve problems in arithmetic when he shows them the rule and principle basing arithmetic. But apparently no definite rule was left by Jesus whereby this vital teaching was discernible. Here let us offer up psalms of thanksgiving! In this wonderful volume, Science and Health, has been revealed that treasure which to the enlightened sense remained lost in the pages of the Bible for centuries. And today a Christian is without excuse who, when asked to heal the sick and cast out demons, turns his back and says, "I am not one of those men."

The Truth Shall Make You Free

Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The all-important question, therefore, is What is truth? What is the truth which Jesus taught, the understanding of which will enable us to restate primitive Christianity with signs and power? Answering this stupendous question, Mrs. Eddy directs thought to the first chapter of Genesis.

The truth revealed in the opening chapter of the Bible, like all great things, is infinitely simple. Here we see a record of creation depicting successive steps of unfoldment, symbolized by the appearing of light, the heavens, the earth, the growing things up in the earth, the heavenly bodies, the soul of the air, the fish of the sea, the creatures that move upon the earth, and lastly, the highest creation, man. He is made in the image and likeness of God and is given dominion over all the earth. At the close of each step in the progression we read: "And God saw that it was good." Then at the conclusion of the chapter appears that mighty statement basing all truth, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." The second chapter opens with this statement: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Could words be more plain? Creation is finished, and it is good, yes, "very good." No evil has been created, no sickness, sin, or death. Man is spiritual, made in the image and likeness of God, and so is not subject to frailty, or error, but is endowed with dominion and power.

Remarkable Discovery of Christian Science

Now comes the remarkable and revolutionary discovery of Christian Science. The second chapter of Genesis, containing the Adam and Eve narrative, is seen to be a new and different record of creation, separate and distinct from that covered in the preceding chapter. Heretofore religiousists have regarded the record of the creation of Adam from the dust, and of Eve from Adam's side, as an amplification of that statement in the first chapter: "So God created man in his own image." But revelation plainly shows the error of this. To begin with, the two records are distinctly separate documents, called the Elohistic and the Jehovahistic, because in the first chapter the creator is called Elohim, God, and in the second, Jehovah or Lord God, the Jewish tribal name for Deity.

The first record is positively closed. God's work is done. His creation is good, and eternal harmony reigns. Do we find that God ever changed His perfect handiwork? Is there any record of His having created evil? No. Then whence came the evil, the sickness, and the sorrow, the discord, and the imperfection, which are visible on all sides? The sixth verse of the second chapter solves the problem. We read: "But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

The Mist

What does a mist do? Does it destroy, or demolish, or does it only obscure? Is it not possible then that the universe today is as perfect as "when the morning stars sang together," and that its prefectness is hid from our gaze by reason of some obscuring sense—some "mystification," as Science and Health puts it? (p. 523). Material man with his sinful tendencies comes not upon the scene until the mist appears. It follows, therefore, that the evils and inharmonies which cannot belong to the kingdom of good must be the product of the realm of mystification. Mystification is ever the polar opposite of understanding. Therefore mystification means just this: ignorance. Ignorance of the facts of creation; ignorance of spiritual sense.

This is the mist that seems to go up from the earth and hide from our sight the man and the universe made and seen by God; and from this ignorance springs the material view of creation which depicts man as sick and sinning and the universe as discordant and destructive.

Garden of Eden Allegory

The Adam and Eve narrative, symbolizing as it does materiality, sin, and sin's unhappy consequences, is called in the text-book only "an object-lesson for the human mind" (Science and Health, p. 214), in which you and I are shown the sad results of a departure from the spiritual sense of things recorded in the first chapter. That the story is a fable, is self-evident. The references to the "tree of life" in the garden, and the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," stamp it as allegory. Then, too, the introduction of a talking serpent further indicates a fiction. A serpent able to converse in the simplest of languages would indeed be a marvel, but one speaking the ancient tongue of Adam and Eve could be nothing short of a myth!

Man's True Ancestry

How has the suffering human family been imposed upon? Handed down from generation to generation has been the mischievous fallacy that this second record of creation is an historical fact! How have we been deceived into calling ourselves descendants of these fictitious beings, made of mist and dust, and prone to every known mortal weakness! The mission of Jesus was to acquaint humanity with man's true heritage. His teachings prove that the first chapter of Genesis, and not the second, contains the truth of being and sets man's real origin.

Ye Must Be Born Again!

One of the first of Jesus' teachings was this: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Can there be an atom of doubt as to the meaning of this passage? If the material, the Adam-sense of things, constitutes God's creation, why should the Master have declared that in order to see this creation, or kingdom, a man must be born again—in other words, must gain a radically different point of view?

Paul makes it plain that this material, fleshly sense of things is not of God's creation, when he writes in Romans: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." And Jesus drives home this fact with even greater clearness when he says, speaking of material man, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

Evil not Power

Now we have learned that the Adam-view, or material concept, is a product of the mist, or mystification which ever goes up from the earth, from material premises, and we have further endeavored to show the mist to be synonymous with ignorance. Thus we arrive at another discovery teeming with good for the blind and fettered of earth. The devil that terrifying element of the whole world's religious belief, that monstrous figment of the false teaching of the ages, against whose seeming power the sons of men have vainly striven, and who apparently has been able to outwit even the Most High—this devil is ignorance, nothing more! Is ignorance a great forbidding monstrosity, with horns, hoofs, and a spear? Is it a mighty presence, an entity which has being and action and power? Or is it only an absence—the absence of knowing? What peace may be ours when we banish the belief that there is power in evil! With what courage can we face our problems when we realize that no subtle, destructive force is pitted against us, and that the only power evil can seem to have is that which we ourselves bestow upon it.

This truth is stated with great clearness in a letter which Mrs. Eddy once wrote to a friend, which was quoted in *The Christian Science Journal* of August, 1912 in an article entitled "No Evil Power." "Did you but know the sublimity of your hope: the infinite capacity of your being; the grandeur of your outlook, you would let error kill itself. Error comes to you for life, and you give it all the life it has."

How Jesus Healed the Sick

We are now ready to consider one of the most important paragraphs in Science and Health, for it may be said to contain the "pearl of great price." It tells us in the simplest of words how Jesus healed the sick.

"Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where shining mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Savior saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick. Thus Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is intact, universal, and that man is pure and holy" (Science and Health, p. 470).

This then must have been the understanding which Jesus imparted to his disciples, which enabled them to duplicate his wonderful healing work. This is the understanding which today is enabling Christian Scientists to stand front undismayed, the appearance of disease and vice, and to rescue the unfortunate in bondage thereto.

Sense-Testimony Unreliable

At this point some of you may ask, "Does this mean that I am not to accept as real the evidence of my senses when I see before me sickness, or sin, or discord?" It means just that, just that! And should we not rejoice in such a revelation? If the material senses report the truth of being, there is no good or just God, no law or Principle in the universe; for on all sides we see injustice, lawlessness, disease, disturbances of nature, hate, poverty, and death—a sorry picture indeed! Do we want these evils to be true? If you find yourself in the throes of a nightmare, what greater joy and peace can come than the awakening consciousness that after all it was only a dream!

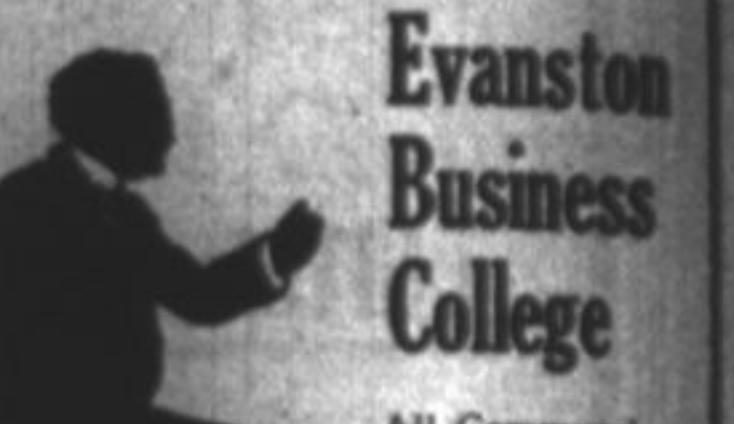
Was ever a message more vital to a stricken individual, nation, or race, than the understanding brought by Christian Science, that materiality with its host of discords and ills is but another name for the Adam-dream, and that it is possible for suffering mortals to awaken thereto? We may waken from a dream, but we can be needed for that. Our lives should be created a better use. To-day a over our

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