

GIVES LECTURE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

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Subject Christian Science: Its Discovery and Demonstration; Delivered Tuesday Evening

In approaching a consideration of this great subject of Christian Science, let us briefly trace the footsteps of its Discoverer and Founder, Mary Baker Eddy. A consideration of Mrs. Eddy's experiences, deductions, and demonstrations will assist us in gaining an apprehension and appreciation of her wonderful spiritual discovery.

The availability of God's law to heal and save had long been lost sight of; the way of right thinking and living trod by our Master, Christ Jesus, and designated by him as the one and only way to find God, good,—this way had for centuries been hidden by the entangling growth of creeds, dogmas, human theories, and limiting material beliefs. This spiritual pathway needed to be discovered, cleared of the confusing, ensnaring undergrowth, and made plain so that all might discern this Christ way, walk therein, and share its blessings.

Mrs. Eddy

Mrs. Eddy was of a deeply religious nature, inclined even as a child to contemplation and study of spiritual things. She was reared in a sincere religious atmosphere, where the Bible was reverently regarded as the chart of life for all. As a child she was so frail that she was unable to attend school regularly, and private tutoring was largely under private tutors. This condition of ill health continued for many weary, long years; in fact she was never well and strong until after her remarkable healing by spiritual power and means, which in turn led to her discovery of Christian Science. In addition to physical discomfort and disease Mrs. Eddy suffered many trials, tribulations, and sorrows, all of which, however, only served to turn her thought away from dependence upon material things, and to turn her more to God and the Bible. During these years of invalidism Mrs. Eddy not only availed herself of every means and method that offered any hope of healing, but she carried on medical experiments as well, the ultimate effect of which was to prove to her the utter futility of dependence upon material means for healing. These medical experiments also served to prove to Mrs. Eddy the mental nature of all things, and from these experiments she also learned that material medicine has no intrinsic power, but seems to operate solely because of human faith in it. This is a fact which has since been verified by many physicians, some of whom are sufficiently candid to acknowledge it. Early in her search for health Mrs. Eddy appealed for help to a mesmerist, who, some misguided critics have said, gave the ideas of Christian Science to Mrs. Eddy. The absurdity of this claim will be seen and acknowledged by all when it is known that this mesmerist was not religious, and in fact disavowed any belief in God. Christian Science is religion, that and nothing else, and has nothing in common with mesmerism, as we shall see more definitely a little later.

The Discovery

In the year 1866 Mrs. Eddy suffered a severe accident, which is deemed might prove fatal. Calling for her precious Bible Mrs. Eddy asked to be left alone, and then opened to the ninth chapter of Matthew, and read the second verse. What she spiritually discerned that she was instantly healed, and to the utter astonishment of waiting friends walked forth and told them that God had healed her. Mrs. Eddy speaks of this experience as the falling apple that led her to the discovery of how to be well herself, and how to make others so. (Retrospection and Introspection, p. 24). We do not know, of course, just what impressed Mrs. Eddy so powerfully in this Bible verse, but we may well pause a moment to see what it has for us of spiritual and practical import in connection with our consideration of Christian Science. First, we note that Jesus observed the mental state of patients instead of the physical; he saw their faith. Then the Master said to the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer." What a wonderful antidote for and rebuke to the fear, discouragement, and condemnation under which this man was laboring! And let us remember that the Christ is ever voicing that same liberating, healing message to all who are burdened by fear and bowed down with condemnation, for the writer of the epistle of the Hebrews speaks of Christ as "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Therefore this word of cheer has not been silenced nor has the power of God which vitalized and enforced the message diminished in the least. When Jesus next said to the sick man, "thy sins be forgiven," he definitely indicated the relationship between sickness and sin, and he also plainly showed that they are both healed or destroyed by the same spiritual means and method. In other words, to Christ Jesus sickness was as clearly a state of thought, objectified on the material body as was sin; and both sickness and sin were overcome, nullified by the spiritual mindedness which characterized Christ Jesus.

Mrs. Eddy's first work following her healing is best described in her own words found on page 108 of her book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," where she says: "For three years after my discovery, I sought the solution of this problem of Mind-healing, searched the Scriptures and read little else, kept aloof from society, and devoted time and energies to discovering a positive rule. The search was sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope, not selfish nor depressing. I knew the Principle of all harmonious Mind-action to be God, and that cures were produced in primitive Christian healing, by holy, uplifting faith; but I must know the Science of this healing, and I won

my way to absolute conclusion through divine revelation, reason, and demonstration."

The Text-book

It was not until 1875 that Mrs. Eddy issued the Christian Science text-book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures." During the nine years following her healing she had proved the propositions stated in Science and Health by healing all manner of sickness, raising the dying, and reforming the sinner, all in accord with and in verification of Jesus' promise, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." Just as a person who prepares a book on arithmetic must prove every problem and rule stated therein in order that his book may rightly be termed a scientific textbook, so Mrs. Eddy earned for her book the title of the textbook for Christianly Scientific practice, because of her demonstrations which served to verify and authenticate its teachings. This book, as its title indicates, the "key to the Scriptures." By means of which the Bible storehouse of spiritual truths has been opened so that all may enter and avail themselves of the bounteous blessings of health, happiness, and harmony, which are prepared by God for all His children.

Through the study of "Science and Health," great numbers of people have been healed of physical disabilities, while many others have gained freedom from and dominion over sin and its debasing tendencies and demoralizing effects. It has been my privilege to know of many such cases, and for the purpose of illustration will relate one instance to you. A young man, whose home was in the Mississippi valley, was placed under the care and direction of physical culturists when he was a mere lad with the hope that he might thereby be so developed physically as to ward off a disease called tuberculosis, which had prevailed among the members of his family. Apparently they had succeeded in their endeavor, for by the time this man had reached maturity and was ready for business he was a fine specimen of physical manhood, and passed an examination for insurance. However, the physical culturists had not eliminated the fear of disease, for the dreaded trouble later made its appearance, and in spite of all that the faithful family physician could do the young man became bed-ridden, that he was finally placed on a stretcher and sent to Colorado with the forlorn hope that the climate might be of some benefit. Just when the Colorado doctors had pronounced the death sentence upon him his sister appeared, bringing with her a copy of "Science and Health." She, a physician's wife, had been healed through Christian Science treatment of a chronic and severe case of rheumatism. She joyfully announced to her brother that "Science and Health" explained the spiritual law of God which Christ Jesus understood and applied in his healing work, and that he could gain an understanding of this same, ever-present, ever-operative spiritual law, and be healed thereby. Immediately he began to study to gain this understanding; and within a remarkably short space of time he was up, and resumed his business activities. Some time later this man applied for additional insurance, and was referred to his old family doctor for examination. Before making the examination this doctor and another physician reviewed the charts which had been made before this man had been sent to Colorado and which indicated the bad condition of his lungs at that time. The doctors then examined him, and to their utter amazement they could find no trace of the old trouble, nor even a scar to indicate that it had ever been present. Please note that this man studied "Science and Health" with the prime motive of attaining spiritual understanding, and not merely to gain physical ease. If you were in a dark room, and desired to be rid of the disturbing shadows you would not work against the darkness, but you would work for the light, knowing that the light would nullify the darkness. Thus this young man found that the distressing shadows of disease were dispelled by the incoming

of the light of spiritual understanding. The Bible states that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Since "God is light," we are certainly justified in classifying as darkness whatever is unlike God, such as sickness, sin, sorrow, death, and all discord. The light of spiritual understanding, and that alone, will dispel all shadows, no matter how real, substantial, and terrifying they may seem. The light of spiritual understanding imparted by Christian Science will displace whatever appears to darken or becloud our sense of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God, good, whether that beclouding sense be called a fear of and sense of sickness or a tendency to sin. Let us not, as we consider one more point in connection with this case of healing. Although his illness appeared to be physical this young man was healed through the study of "Science and Health," which study, of course, served to change and correct his thinking. Certainly this was what Paul meant when he says, "Be transformed, and do not conform to the world (that is, do not conform your thinking to material theories and beliefs), but be transformed (formed anew) by the renewing of your mind."

Now let us turn our attention to the teachings in "Science and Health" in order that we may learn what of that which Mrs. Eddy saw and stated so clearly that the sick are healed by its study. All of the Christian Science precepts and its practice are predicated on the right concept of God; therefore we should naturally begin with the study of this most important subject. You will find, with this, as with all other subjects, Christian Science makes its appeal to your sense of reason and justice, rather than to any emotional instinct.

We know that one primal Cause and Creator of the infinite eternal universe must be good,—good in nature and good in expression. Evil is not creative, but is ever destructive in its very nature and effect; therefore God must be and is good. God, the source of all that is real and true, must be infinite, all-wise and all-knowing Father-Mother of the universe is the one infinite Mind, the source then, of every true thought or idea. Since God is good in His expression of all that is real and true, that God's thoughts, true, will find their way for it to be dispelled or displaced; for if evil were true we could never be rid of evil, and our plight would indeed be hopeless. The Psalmist sings of God's everpresence in these words, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Ps. 139:7-10). Surely it is impossible to conceive of such omnipresence except as infinite Mind or all-pervading Spirit.

It was quite natural and appropriate that John, the beloved disciple, who was much loved because he loved much, should state his highest concept of God in the simple, though profound words, "God is Love." Christian Science accepts this, as it does all of the Scriptural designations for God, pointing out that God must be Love, because He is ever giving of His goodness, abundantly and impartially, to all of His children. Christian Science also teaches that we can become acquainted with God, Love, only as we reflect Love by expressing to our neighbor such qualities of Love as gentleness, compassion, purity, forgiveness, and unselfishness. Because the Bible teaches that God is the source of all reality, is the one infinite law-creating and law-governing power, finding expression in harmony, and controlling all things harmoniously,—because of this, Christian Science defines God as di-

vine Principle. To insure the right apprehension of this spiritual concept, and also because the terms are perfectly synonymous, Mrs. Eddy frequently employs the definitions divine Principle and Love together. For instance, in her explanation of Jesus' atonement as the reconciling of man to God, instead of reconciling God to man, or placating God, Mrs. Eddy writes, "Jesus aided in reconciling man to God by giving man a truer sense of Love, the divine Principle of Jesus' teachings, and this truer sense of Love redeems man from the law of matter, sin, and death by the law of Spirit, the law of divine Love." (S. & H. 19). These, although very briefly and inadequately stated, are some of the basic teachings about God which are to be found in Science and Health.

Man

The Bible states that God made man in His own image and likeness, from which we naturally and necessarily deduce the fact that man is like God, like Mind, Spirit, Love, Truth. St. Paul recognized this spiritual, eternal fact about man; and so when he was addressing the Athenians, who evidently believed man to be a physical entity dwelling in a material body, he said to them with the desire to correct their false concept, that man lives, and moves, and has his being in God, in Mind, Now, since you live in Mind, in Spirit, as

the Bible states, you must be and are a spiritually mental being, and individual consciousness. If you will but admit that you are an individual consciousness you can perceive when you recognize its real nature or rather its unreal nature. Christian Science makes it plain that any thought that speaks contrary to the omnipotence of God, good, contrary to harmony, peace, and right activity, is not from divine Mind, Truth, and is therefore a lie. Mrs. Eddy had the direct authority of Christ Jesus for this teaching, because he defined the devil or evil as a liar and the father of lies. Let us suppose, for instance, that you have been accepting the thought of worry as your own, perhaps for so long that you have pinned on you a mental tag which indicates that you are a natural worrier and an expert at it. You probably do not enjoy worrying, and it is certain that those around you

derive no pleasure, profit, or peace from it. Now the next time you are tempted to worry about anything stop right there and challenge that wrong thought. Ask yourself, whence is this thought of worry? Is it from God, Truth, or is it from Satan, the liar? Does this thought speak to you of the omnipotence and everpresence of God, good, or does it claim that evil is mightier than God? You need not yield to the temptation to worry any more than you need yield to the temptation to steal. When you worry you distrust God, because worry is predicated on the false assumption that God is not ever present and omnipotent.

Mental Nature of All Things

As a result of her investigations and experiments together with spiritual revelation and demonstration Mrs. Eddy was led to the inevitable conclusion that the material human body is but a mental concept of the so-called human or carnal mind; that the material body is never self-acting or self-governed, but is always the servant of the thought in which it is embraced. This, too, was verified to Mrs. Eddy by the words and the works of Christ Jesus. You will recall that he said plainly that it is not what a man eats that defiles (or disturbs) him, but rather is his trouble due to the thoughts of evil or the evil thoughts which he believes in, accepts as true, and then either

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