

# HEAR LECTURE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

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Many Hear Interesting Lecture at Church Edifice Thursday Evening, April 28

Let us first of all look into the meaning of these two words, "Christian" and "Science." The words "Christian" and "Christianity" stand for the religion founded in the first century, A.D. Christian Science is based on the inspired Word of the Bible, and stands squarely on the pure teaching and the all-satisfying, redemptive, healing works of Christ Jesus, the Way-shower.

The word "science" is defined, in part, by Webster, as: "knowledge or fact." Properly and, comprehensive knowledge made available in work, life or the search for truth."

Christian Science is, therefore, the demonstrable knowledge of God, divine Truth, brought to bear on the human problem of poverty, sin, sickness, and discord of every name and nature.

In her work "Retrospection and Introspection" (p. 25), Mrs. Eddy tells us that she named this Science "Christian" because it is compassionate, helpful, and spiritual.

Mary Baker Eddy You will naturally want to hear something about the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science. Since her earliest childhood, Mary Baker Eddy loved the Bible and lived close to God, good. Up to the time of her discovery of Christian Science, she was frail, delicate, and intellectually gifted, and she had a wide outlook on life. At about the age of forty-five, she met with an accident which the doctors pronounced fatal. In her extremity, this spiritually-minded woman begged the friends at her bedside to leave her alone with the Bible. As she read, in the ninth chapter of Matthew, of the instantaneous healing of the man sick of the palsy, the revelation of God's will so illumined her consciousness that she, too, rose from what was expected to be her death-bed, and walked, instantaneously healed. Awed by this miracle, and impelled by her deep love for God and humanity, she then withdrew entirely from society, and, for three years, alone with the Bible, in her modest home in the town of Lynn, Massachusetts, she studied and pondered the great facts of spiritual being and spiritual law, to which alone the marvel of the healing could be attributed. Thus, in quietude and spiritual communion with God, she discovered the Science of His perfect creation, and wrote the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures."

For some years before publishing this immortal work Mrs. Eddy proved the truth of its teachings by healing all kinds of sickness by spiritual means. Mrs. Eddy then entered upon a life of almost unparalleled spiritual and human activity, until, in the year 1910, she passed on in her ninetieth year. It is not too much to say that every waking hour of these forty-five years was spent in highest, humblest service to God and humanity. The Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science was rarely seen, but this revelation has shed the light of God, good, broadcast over all the earth. Confronted with the superhuman task of spreading, and establishing, the knowledge of Christian Science throughout the world, Mrs. Eddy wrote in one of her hymns (Poems, p. 14):

"Shepherd, show me how to go  
O'er the hillside steep,  
How to gather, how to sow,—  
How to feed Thy sheep;  
I will listen for Thy voice,  
Lest my footsteps stray;  
I will follow and rejoice  
All the rugged way."

The way was often rendered very rugged, but with tireless fidelity, wisdom, moral courage, and unselfed love she held the great truth of Christian Science before the hungry, doubting, hostile gaze of the whole world. She trod the way rejoicingly, assured that it was the way of primitive Christianity, revealed by Christ Jesus, the Way-shower.

Mrs. Eddy was also led to establish the vast organization of The Mother Church and its branches, daily increasing in number, power, and influence, and forever safeguarded by the flawless wisdom of the By-laws in her Church Manual.

Uncertainty About Prayer The particular aspect of Christian Science which has been chosen for today is: The Science of Demonstrable Prayer.

This question of prayer is one about which there is much uncertainty, much controversy, doubt, confusion, and disappointment. So much so that some discouraged persons have altogether ceased praying. Mankind is puzzled to know how to cope with its problems of poverty, sickness, sin, sorrow, and all their sad consequences, and skepticism and atheism have almost stifled humanity's best hopes. The "I don't understand" attitude, or agnosticism, is in fact held by many today. Yet every one still longs for, and looks for, the betterment of human conditions. To understand God, and the true nature of prayer is, therefore, humanity's most vital need, and the sure key to the solution of all its troubles. Has not prayer remained unanswered because the true nature of God has been so little understood? Does mankind in general understand God as Jesus did?

## Obscured Views of God

We know that Christians do not worship carved images, but I invite you to consider whether the religious views of modern Christians are not obscured by many superstitions. For instance, have you not met people who, "disregarding" God, believe in good and bad luck, seek to read their fate through palmistry, astrology, and even through a pack of cards? In other words, through some human superstition? Again, do not others resign themselves to sickness, and to other afflictions, because they believe them to be the will of God? And do not insurance agencies, even in this supposedly enlightened age, designate earthquakes and other wholesale disasters as "acts of God"?

## God As Love

Now, the complete and final revelation of God has come through Christian Science with its clear, practical message on the subject of demonstrable prayer; that is to say, prayer bringing to mortals definite proof that God is infinite Truth, Life, and Love, whom none need fear, but whom all must obey—tho' God to whom all may find access, through whom all may find redemption from every phrase of evil here and now.

God, the giver of all good, and of good alone, is unceasingly pouring forth life, holiness, health, intelligence, and joy on all His spiritual creation, and Christian Science teaches us exactly how to perceive, to receive, and to manifest these practical tokens of divine Love.

## Prayer

The Christian Science text book opens with seventeen wonderful pages in the first chapter, entitled "Prayer." Within these pages, every unbiased reader finds much to ponder, much to rejoice in, much to learn, and much that may cause him to revise his old concept of prayer.

It is the mission of prayer to silence fear, and spiritually attune the ear to the infinite harmony of God's creation, which is totally free from fear, sickness, sin, materiality, and mortality. As God is revealed, humanity is healed.

I should like to quote you a few lines from a well-known hymn which indicates the different stages of prayer (Christian Science Hymnal, p. 91):

"Prayer is the heart's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed;  
Prayer is the simplest form of speech,  
That infant lips can try;  
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach  
The Majesty on high.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
The Christian's native air;  
His watchword overcometh death—  
He enters heaven with prayer."

## Jacob's Ladder

Prayer might be likened to Jacob's ladder, of which we read in Genesis that it was "set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

Note that this ladder was set up on earth, which indicates that God, good, is not remote but ever-present, and that heaven is not a distant place to be reached after death, but a divine state of consciousness which is, in ever-increasing measure, attainable here and now. And what are the "angels" ascending and descending this ladder of thought? Angels are not fancy, winged figures. On page 581 of the Christian Science textbook we find this simple and appealing definition of angels: "God's thoughts passing to man; spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect; the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality."

## Teachableness

Perhaps the very first rung in this ladder of prayer is indicated in Job's humble desire: "That which I see not teach thou me." This desire indicates the teachable, humble, listening attitude, whereby a mortal does not seek to gain God's ear for the purpose of pouring out his mortal woes, but seeks to incline his own ear in order that, through spiritual sense, he may catch the pure, healing, reassuring messages of Truth and Love. This willingness to learn more about God, and God's image, humbles intellectual vanity, pride of opinion, pessimism, and leads up to the next rungs of hope, faith, expectancy of good.

Mountaineers find that their range of view widens as they leave the valley; so true thoughts and right desires grow stronger as they ascend above the valley of materialistic thought and aspire to the heights of spiritual perception. It may seem a long way to the top of the ladder of prayer,—to the summit of spiritual understanding,—but Christian Science teaches that from the start joy is added to joy, and that with every rung attained, conditions of health and character are improved.

## Obedience

Another rung in this ladder of ascending thought is the ripening desire to understand and obey God's will rejoicingly, knowing it to bestow only holiness, health, and perfect purity. This resolve always to obey every call of God, good, leads to the rung of obedience, on which we meet the angels, or thoughts, of courage, perseverance, and peace. It is, therefore, the rung on which mortals learn to drop discouragement, worry, and self-will. Christian Science teaches the great necessity for understanding the statement in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done."

## God's Will

These words, so full of blessedness, "Thy will be done," have been strangely misconstrued. By many, God has been regarded as exacting, almost cruel, and sad events have been attributed to His jurisdiction. In considering this question of God's will, the words and works of Christ Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, shall be our guide.

All professing Christians will agree that Christ Jesus, the Way-shower, understood and obeyed the will of his heavenly Father, so that every time he healed the sick, cleansed the sin-

ner, and raised the dead, he was obeying God's will. This being so, it is logical to admit that these evils were then—and are today—in every case directly contrary to God's will. They will also agree that God, whom Christian Science designates as divine Principle, has one uniform purpose, beneficent towards all, and the same in all ages.

Disease, then, as well as sin, is unchristian, contrary to God's will, or Christ Jesus would not, and could not, have healed it, and Christian Science would not be healing sickness all over the world as it is doing today. This recognition of God's good-will and its practical results whenever it is understood, and obeyed, brings us to a wonderful rung in the ladder of prayer. We meet here the most cheering, strengthening, indispensable comrade in daily life—the angel of gratitude.

## Gratitude

"But," one may say, "gratitude is quite natural when everything is going well, but here am I ill, worried, afraid, anxious about my loved ones, and about the future, so how can I possibly be expected to feel any gratitude?" Real gratitude is much more than a personal matter, and I invite you to consider gratitude from a

somewhat wider standpoint. If there were only matter, brain, and the five senses—and no God, that is, nothing to guide, and to guard mortals from their own undoing—there would be no moral standard, no kindness, no justice, no honesty, no capacity to distinguish right from wrong, for there would be no right, and therefore no ability whatever to resist temptation. In short, but for the invisible, potent influence of God, good, counteracting evil in the measure in which it is obeyed, mankind would speedily be engulfed in a morass of materialism from which there would be no escape.

Through Christian Science, one learns to know God as perfect, operative, divine Principle, Love, available to mortals in their every need, and therefore gratitude is boundless and unwavering. This gratitude abides in spite of the discordant evidence of the physical senses, for spiritual gratitude, which is allied to spiritual understanding, is fed from the deep, everlasting wells of divine Love. Through steadfast gratitude, courage is maintained, discouragement is banished, and even under trying circumstances the prayer of spiritual gratitude looks Godward and cries: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." An

understanding of God's beneficent law heals sick minds and bodies. It is in the darkest hour that the Christian Scientist clings most firmly to gratitude, which banishes dismal despair, resentment, and fear; for gratitude is one of those transparent, spiritual qualities through which divine Love shines with healing light.

## Healing Sickness

There is a question which some of you may be asking yourselves, namely: How can prayer heal a sick body without the additional use of material means? Christian Science diagnoses disease as primarily mental, and only secondarily made apparent on the body as an image of mortal thought. To illustrate: If some object were throwing a dark shadow on the floor, and you wanted to remove the shadow, would you scrub the floor? No, you would remove the object which was casting the shadow, without touching the floor; and the shadow would vanish.

So Christian Science deals directly with the fear and the mental discord expressed on the body as sickness, and as harmony is restored in the mind of the patient, the sickness, which was only a physical effect or shadow of a so-called mental cause, disappears. I say "so-called" mental

cause, because God, the one perfect Mind, is the one perfect Cause; so, in absolute Truth, God, there is neither a physical nor a mental cause for sickness.

The doorway of health, God-given, unchanging health, stands wide open in front of every person in this world today. There is one universal health, here for all to enjoy—the "health of his countenance." Health can neither be gained through matter, nor can it be lost through matter; health is a spiritual fact, based on Spirit, and sustained by spiritual law; health is the natural fruit of spirituality, and as such, no matter how desperate the physical condition may seem to be, health is available to all, through spiritual understanding, which regenerates mind and body. Every physician will tell you that fear is one of the worst foes of health, and it is obvious that fear is a mental state which material medicine cannot alleviate. Fear is contrary to divine Love, contrary to God's good-will, contrary to His beneficent omniscient laws of health, holiness, and immortality.

## Light Blots Out Darkness

Through the study of Christian Science, fear and all the ignorant beliefs of the human mind begin to disappear

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