

FREE LECTURE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

BY CHAS. E. JARVIS, C. S.

Given Monday Evening, Dec. 5, at Gorton School, Lake Forest; Many in Attendance

If a Christian Scientist could reply to Jeremiah's sorrowful question, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" it would be with the assurance that there is balm in Gilead; that there is a Physician at hand; and that the health of our sons and daughters is recovered. To a weary, disappointed, suffering, sinning world, Christian Science says: Look up! for "the night is far spent, the day is at hand." There is no condition of moral, mental, or physical distress which cannot be healed through the application of the teachings of Christian Science. The process is neither abstruse nor mysterious. It is so simple that when we gain even a faint glimpse of the glorious import of our real oneness with God, and of His tender, merciful, compassionate relationship to all His children, we rightfully wonder how we have shut ourselves out of the kingdom so long. We do not urge you to abandon your preconceived beliefs, or exhort you to accept the teachings of Christian Science, but it is safe to assume that you are here to learn more about God, so we shall tell you something about the hope which Christian Science offers, and let you do with it what you will.

It is perfectly normal and natural for human beings to desire happiness, contentment, and freedom from bodily ills. During a considerable portion of our waking hours we devote our best efforts to a form of service so that others as well as ourselves can enjoy a measure of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Too often do our efforts become tragic struggles for a mere existence, for the reason that we do not understand God or look to Him for guidance. Try as we may, many of our best endeavors apparently fail, and in desperation we look about us for a way of escape, or we hope for some door of opportunity to open, through which relief may come to us. To such a one, burdened with fear, discouragement, or despair, Christian Science comes with a message of glorious hope. If you doubt this, look about you and see how many of your friends and neighbors have, through the ministrations of Christian Science, been delivered from every conceivable form of misery, sorrow, and adversity; and some of them have literally been snatched from open graves.

The trouble with many of us has been that we have failed to realize that the infinitely good God is everywhere, and consequently, He is with us right now. We have either failed to regard God as a factor in our lives, or we have entertained a false conception of Him. I do not mean to say that he who has been faithful to his highest Christian concept of God has not expressed a better belief than the agnostic or the atheist.

When Paul visited Athens and saw an altar erected "to the unknown God," he realized that those who were responsible for that inscription really wanted to know the true God, and later, when they were gathered on Mars' hill, Paul said to them, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Today people need to know more about the God they are ignorantly worshipping, and Christian Science reveals to us a God of love who never fails to answer our prayers when we pray to Him aright.

Throughout the Bible we are taught the oneness, goodness, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence of God, and we are also taught that man is made in His image. God is the only creator, He has created all things like Himself; therefore, all that really exists is that which God has made, and it must be good as He created it.

When the truth as revealed in Christian Science dawns in our consciousness, we begin to know God as described by the Psalmist, as He "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." Is it not utterly unthinkable that such a God should visit grief, disaster, or disease upon His children? Even a human father would not do this. One of the sublime things in human experience is the faith of a child in its parents. Amplify that faith to the point of spiritual understanding where we realize that we are actually the children of a tender, loving, heavenly Father, and we find that this understanding enables us to rely upon God with an absolute confidence that He will guide our footsteps and deliver us from all evil. There are many in this audience—possibly the majority of us—who were utterly without hope, for we did not know there was or could be such a God. In our desperation we reached out as a drowning man would clutch at a straw, and through this spiritual understanding of God were rescued from the depths of ignominy and despair. Many of us who turned to Christian Science in our darkest hour of seemingly hopeless invalidism, or as victims of habit, are to-day living new lives, in the great fact that "the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

Many are willing to concede that God is infinite, eternal, perfect, for nothing less could create and sustain the universe. Mary Baker Eddy defines God in the Christian Science

textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 587), as "The great I AM; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all substance; intelligence." As we study this definition there is revealed to us a new and constantly unfolding concept of God, which enables us to perceive His power and infinitude.

This God of infinite, all-embracing love is ever at hand. We no longer entertain our childhood concept of God as we thought of Him in a far-off, nebulous heaven where He keeps a record of our good and bad deeds in a great book and from which He passes judgment upon His children. Mary Baker Eddy has given us a new and broader sense of Deity as our Father-Mother God who expresses the tenderness, the love, and the compassion of motherhood, combined with the strength, the justice, and the firmness we naturally attribute to fatherhood. It is to such a God that we turn for release from our troubles, and we have proved that He does not give us a stone when we ask for bread. The highest sense of God is Love, our Father and our Mother, ever present with us, ever conscious of us, ever caring for us; that Love which never changes and never fails, which is impartial, universal, and eternal. It is incorporeal or spiritual and bestows its blessings alike upon all, as the sun shines upon the whole earth, irrespective of time, person, place, or thing. We shall know somewhat of this Love and express it more when we love our neighbor as ourself and our neighbor's child as our own. What human father in his right senses would deny his children anything that would contribute to their welfare and happiness? When we learn that God has nothing in store for us but good, how much greater, infinitely greater, should be our trust in His ability to give us all and more than we can possibly receive!

In the opening chapter of Genesis we are told that God created man in His image and likeness and gave man dominion over all the earth as well as over everything above and beneath the earth. Has it ever occurred to you that this is literally and demonstrably true? Do you realize that the truth of this statement is being proved daily by thousands of Christian Scientists who are successfully asserting their dominion over circumstances of birth, environment, and the sins of the flesh through an understanding of God and of man's relationship to Him? The freedom which follows this overcoming of discord is an inherent right of every child of God. This surely does not imply a manlike God but, on the contrary, begins to unfold the idea of a Godlike man. This unfolding takes place through the ever present, always enforceable power of God operating as law. The affairs of men, as well as the rotation of the planets, are governed by this same infinite, unerring, immutable law of which God alone is the author. All the trouble and discord in the world is due to ignorance of or disobedience to God's law. We find this to be true as we turn away from our sinful habits and false beliefs and, through a consciousness awakened to spiritual understanding, claim our right to freedom and harmony under the law of divine justice.

If there is a creator of the universe, including man, and there is; and if this creator is good, His creation must be and is like Him. Then we, in reality, are the perfect offspring of a perfect God right now, and the human belief in evil and matter is a falsity and no part of us as God's offspring. If the beliefs in sin, sickness, disease, death, envy, jealousy, hatred, and so on are not of God, who or what then is the creator of these vicious beliefs? They have no creator, no source or origin, any more than the belief that the earth is flat has a creator, a source, or an origin. False beliefs are not of God, so we do not have to accept them, be subservient to them, or afraid of them. They only come to us as arguments and we are at all times master of the situation, because God gave man this dominion.

Christian Science, then, holds out the hope—yes, the absolute assurance—that these delusions can be successfully resisted. You positively can do this just as you can refuse to accept a counterfeit coin or government note.

Jesus
Christ Jesus demonstrated the truth about God to his age. His divine origin and the human conditions surrounding his birth enabled him to understand and appreciate to the full the problems of those he came to seek and to save. He was fully conscious of his oneness with God. Thus endowed, he met and mastered sin, disease, and death. He was a true way-shower because he not only preached the gospel, but over and over again he proved his statements by his demonstrations. Then he gave us—that is, all who believe in him—this wonderful assurance that the works he did we should do also; and even greater works. He gave to mankind the greatest message the world ever received. His only means of communication was by the spoken word to single individuals or to groups of people, by the sea, on the hillsides, or in their simple homes. Our only record of his sayings is through the reports of others, yet the message he gave has endured through the centuries, and its potency and availability to the needs of to-day are as provable now as when first uttered.

The Christianity that Christ Jesus taught is not complete without the healing of sin and disease. The healings which have occurred since Mary Baker Eddy gave her discovery to the world are proof conclusive that the truths uttered by Jesus were not limited in their application to his immediate hearers or to the people of his generation, but were addressed to every individual throughout all time. Truth is eternal. It is without beginning or end. Truth has appeared

through Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and other prophets, or whenever the human race reached the place where it realized its own impotence and cried out to God for deliverance. When Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am," he did not, of course, refer to his human selfhood but to the eternal Christ, or Truth, which he reflected.

Jesus did not come to destroy but to fulfill the law—the eternal law of Christ, which had its earlier expressions in the experiences of the prophets, some of whom foretold the Messiahship of Jesus. Jesus did not upset anything except evil; he came to establish law and order, to point the way of salvation, and to prove that God is the author of our being and the healer of all our diseases. Jesus took no credit to himself, but made it clear that it was God working through him that accomplished the results. Quietly, lovingly, Jesus went about his Father's business, never refusing a call for aid, and without the record of a single failure in all of his experience. His was the sublime example for all time of what God will do through man when man reflects the Mind of Christ.

Christ
It is this same Christ, Truth, which unfolds in our consciousness and enables us to recognize God as the author of man's being. When this revelation comes to us and we are transformed by the renewing of our mind, the fear, sickness, pain, sin, sorrow, and discouragement which we have hugged to our bosoms begin to melt away as mist before the morning sunshine and we realize that, as one of our hymns says, "Man does stand as God's own child, The image of His Love."

(Christian Science Hymnal, p. 99)
It was the Christ or divine idea which enabled Jesus to make his supreme demonstration over death, thereby proving forever the nothingness of the belief which we have been falsely educated to regard as inevitable, but which Jesus tells us is an enemy to be overcome. Moreover, he assured us that if we believed on him, and understood him and his mission,—which was to reveal the Christ,—we should never see death. It is the Christ, or divine idea, which enables us to help our neighbor in times of sickness or stress; which inspires to deeds of heroism in the face of apparently insurmountable obstacles, and which enables us to meet and overcome the arguments of fear. Fear is the arch-enemy of the human race, and is to be resisted as the chief torment of mankind. It is the greatest hindrance to our freedom. Fear is at the bottom of all the devastating beliefs of war, pestilence, contagion, disease, death. We rise out of all error as fear is overcome.

Material sense, which is incapable of grasping anything beyond itself, does not comprehend the Christ; but it is possible for the human mind to become so imbued with a holy desire to know God that it can perceive the Christ-idea. This is the teaching of Jesus and it is the teaching of Christian Science. Those who have been studying Christian Science the longest are most conscious of how much there is yet to be learned about infinite Truth, but having named the name of Christ and having seen marvelous works accomplished in Christ's name, we have a reason for the hope that is in us and are constantly expecting fulfillment as we strive to demonstrate more of the Christ with which Jesus was endowed without measure. This is our prayer and our unceasing hope.

Discoverer and Founder
Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." This was God's message to humanity which He gave through His blessed Son, Christ Jesus, and it is the same message, revealed to this age through Mary Baker Eddy, which comes to you through Christian Science. God never fails to raise up a deliverer when a crisis arises and mankind is ready for emancipation and progress. This time it was a woman who was chosen to lead the modern children of Israel out of the chaotic darkness of materialism. Some have objected to Christian Science and refused to accept its teachings because the revelation came through a woman. Such a position is inconsistent, especially if the objector accepts Jesus, who was born of a woman. It was a woman who was "laid at the cross and first at the sepulchre" of Jesus after his mighty demonstration. All through the centuries woman has filled an important place in the development of human history, so it was befitting the time and circumstances that God should choose, as His revelator to this age, a woman through whose pure and exalted consciousness came the truths which Jesus said we should know, and which have literally set countless thousands free.

Born of devout Christian parents, Mrs. Eddy became, even as a child, an earnest student of the Bible. After reaching womanhood, she experienced an accident which so seriously incapacitated her that her life was despaired of. In her extremity, she turned to her Bible and as she read of the cures performed by Jesus it dawned upon her that the same power which made possible the healing in that day is available to God's children now. The revelation was so clear and positive that she realized her freedom, arose and joined the members of her household, and thereafter enjoyed better health than before. Having demonstrated for herself that the healing Principle was operative in her case, she set about to discover the definite rule which could be applied and proved by others. As the result of three years' intensive study of the Bible, during which period she did little other reading, and gave but little time to other pursuits, God revealed to her the truths contained in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" which is the textbook of Christian Science. So potent are the statements contained in this volume that cures

without number have resulted from the study of its inspired pages.

Picture, if you can, this lone but courageous woman who realized that she had brought to light a tremendous spiritual fact which had been lost to the world for sixteen or seventeen centuries. How to share the message with others and convince them of its positive efficacy was her problem. Slowly and patiently she labored with those who would give her audience, until here and there one would catch a faint gleam of the vision. Gradually these men and women were in turn able to help others. Finally, Mrs. Eddy was led to establish her church, which she tells us was "designed to commemorate the word and works of our Master, which should restate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing" (Church Manual of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, p. 17). As the Discoverer and Founder of one of the greatest religious movements the world has ever known, is it any wonder that multitudes who have been redeemed from sin, sickness, and death itself rise up to call her blessed? It is only a little over fifty years since Mrs. Eddy gave her message to the world, but as the perspective lengthens, the magnitude of her discovery and the import of its mighty achievement will be more fully appreciated until she will be accorded her proper place as one of the greatest characters of all human history.

Textbook
The Christian Science textbook contains seven hundred pages, including one hundred pages of authenticated testimonials of healing by Christian Science, and sets forth with scientific exactness the rules and methods by which the healing results are accomplished. It is written so simply that a child can comprehend and apply its teachings, and yet it is so profound that the philosopher and scholar find its logic irrefutable. It covers a wide range of pure metaphysics; it sets forth the tenets of a true religion which is capable of being lived and practiced every hour, under all circumstances and conditions.
Let me give you the chapter headings of this marvelous book so that you may gain an idea of the scope of the subjects covered: "Prayer"; "Atonement and Eucharist"; "Marriage"; "Christian Science versus Spiritualism"; "Animal Magnetism Unmasked"; "Science, Theology, Medicine"; "Physiology"; "Footsteps of Truth"; "Creation"; "Science of Being"; "Some Objections Answered"; "Christian Science Practice"; "Teaching Christian Science"; and, "Recapitulation." Then the author gives us an interpretation of the books of Genesis and Revelation or the Apocalypse, which clears away many inconsistencies with which these books have been regarded. Then follow—
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