

A Lecture on Christian Science

Entitled Christian Science: The Realization of Humanity's Hope by

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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, as well as our 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. To those listening to a Christian Science lecture for the first time, let me say that 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 and something of Christian Science, so we shall tell you just a little about the hope which Christian Science offers, and let you do with it as you will.

It is perfectly normal and natural for human beings to desire and to expect 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 there are who 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 and all-powerful 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 concept 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." To-day 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 He is described by the Psalmist, as One "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 is 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 witnesses to 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, and perfect, for nothing less could create and maintain 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 comprehend 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 was supposed to keep a record of our good and bad deeds in a great book and from which He passed 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; that Love which is impartial, universal, and eternal; that Love which 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 something of this Love and express it more when we love our neighbor as ourselves 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, hourly, and constantly by thousands of Christian Scientists who are successfully asserting man's God-given dominion over circumstances of birth, environment, and the sins of 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 or convey a sense of 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 suc-

cessfully resisted; You positively can do this just as you can refuse to accept a mutilated or a counterfeit coin.

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. Jesus 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 hillside, 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 demonstrated.

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 to 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 result. 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 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 and encourage our fellow-man 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, cannot 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 clearer unfoldment 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 woman who was "last 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 revealer 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 reneate 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 sixty 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 prove 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 inconsis-

tencies with which these books have been regarded. Then follows a Glossary of terms commonly used in Christian Science, and finally, the chapter on Fruitage, which contains the testimonials of many who were healed through reading the textbook.

Christian Science is a clear, comprehensible revelation of the truth. It is demonstrable, for it is the only religious teaching which is solving the problems of mankind and overcoming the beliefs of evil and matter scientifically.

If you wish to know what Christian Science is and how it operates, let me earnestly commend you to a study of this book. In order to appreciate its full meaning, read it carefully, ponder its statements, apply them to your problems, and in the degree that you are receptive to the truth elucidated in this book, you will find yourself experiencing freedom from whatever has seemed to distress you. Moreover, you will be found entertaining a different and more loving attitude toward God and your fellow-man. Science and Health is not a book one can read through quickly and lay aside as one would a novel. It can be thoroughly perused from cover to cover times without number, and each reading unfolds new and clearer meanings of passages which may have seemed obscure on a previous occasion.

This textbook not only sets forth Christ Jesus' method of the treatment of disease and sin, but, as its title indicates, it is a "Key to the Scriptures." With this key we unlock the door to a vast storehouse of hitherto hidden treasure of spiritual illumination. The Bible is full of passages of exquisite beauty, and when illuminated by the light of spiritual understanding, these divinely inspired utterances become our refuge from evil, our assurance of heavenly protection, our strength in times of stress, and our consolation in the hour of sorrow.

THE BIBLE
The claim is sometimes mistakenly made that Christian Scientists have a Bible of their own, a different Bible from that generally used in Protestant churches. The Bible always used in our churches is the same King James Version which has been studied and expounded by Bible students since the days of the Reformation. It was to this Bible that Mrs. Eddy turned in her search for the great discovery which later she denominated Christian Science and to which she makes reference on page 126 of the textbook as follows: "I have set forth Christian Science and its application to the treatment of disease just as I have discovered them. I have demonstrated through Mind the effects of Truth on the health, longevity, and morals of men; and I have found nothing in ancient or in modern systems on which to found my own, except the teachings and demonstrations of our great Master and the lives of prophets and apostles. The Bible has been my only authority. I have had no other guide in 'the straight and narrow way' of Truth. And in the tenets of Christian Science we read: 'As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal life' (Science and Health, p. 497). At every service in Christian Science churches, the congregation listens to passages from the Bible, followed by correlative selections from the Christian Science textbook.

Although many books have been written attacking the Bible, and many efforts have been made to destroy it and to prevent people from reading it, the Book of books has not only survived all opposition, but it is to-day the most popular book in the world. Christian Scientists have contributed not a little to the steadily increasing popularity of the Bible, for there are no people more devoted to the daily study and contemplation of its sacred pages, and who depend more upon its promises for spiritual food and guidance.

HEALING
The healing which takes place in Christian Science is a mental process whereby our erroneous belief that life, substance, and intelligence exist in matter gives place to the understanding that man is spiritual and therefore subject alone to divine control. We have been mistakenly led to regard man as possessing a material body made up of hands, feet, eyes, ears, internal organs, and so on, including a mass of cells located in the cranium where he is supposed to do his thinking, in spite of the Scriptural assurance that God made man in His image and likeness. Now chemists tell us that the human body is composed of chemical elements such as water, lime, salt, iron, sulphur, and so on. When a sense of pain or inflammation has appeared, we have been taught to pour something disagreeable into the material body, or to rub something upon it, in order to make it more comfortable, not realizing that it actually has no more sensation or intelligence than a log of wood or a bag of meal, excepting for the so-called mind of which the material body is the externalization. In other words, a mortal body is only the manifestation of mortal mind. Now as nearly all of you know, the word "mortal" is derived from the Latin *mors*, *mortis*, death,—from *mori*, to die; hence it is the erroneous, mortal

concept of body which gives us so much concern and which is said to finally return to the dust of which it was made. It is from this false concept that proceeds all the pain, sickness, and distress from which mankind cries out for deliverance.

If the expected relief from bodily discord is not forth-coming as the result of the use of drugs or other material remedies, it not infrequently happens that change of climate is recommended, as if geographical location could have any more effect upon the elements contained in the physical body than if they were contained in a bottle. In every such case, the cause and effect are predicated upon the same fallacy of intelligent matter, but, may I ask, how would the drugs or medical treatment affect the same matter after the so-called mortal mind had left it?

We have no evidence that Jesus ever employed drugs in order to effect a cure; yet he healed countless cases without the aid of any material means. Paul said, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," therefore it is the human mind that must be educated out of its false beliefs, and that is the basis upon which Christian Science operates.

Shakespeare uttered a truism when he said that "there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." If our premise is wrong, it naturally follows that our conclusions and results will likewise be wrong. If the patient who believes in the efficacy of drugs and the physician who depends upon drugs fail to accomplish the anticipated results, the discouraged patient wonders if there is any relief possible in some other direction. Here enters Christian Science with its message of hope, declaring that there is a way out; that the way of salvation which Jesus made clear is still open and unobstructed, and that the promises he made—with which the Scriptures abound—were not limited to his immediate hearers but to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Mrs. Eddy tells us in her book "Retrospection and Introspection" that "the mortal body being but the objective state of the mortal mind, this mind must be renovated to improve the body" (p. 34). When the afflicted one begins to realize that the promises are true and applicable specifically to him, the shackles of fear and doubt begin to loosen, he ceases the mesmeric contemplation of material, bodily conditions, and there dawns in his consciousness a gleam of hope which expands into spiritual understanding which sets him free. Neither human will power, suggestion, nor the hypnotic control of one human mind by another has brought about this demonstration.

How can we doubt that the same God who led the children of Israel through the Red Sea and guided them through all the years of their pilgrimage to the promised land, who delivered Daniel from the lions' den, whose protective power enabled the Hebrew children to walk unscathed through the burning, fiery furnace; how can we doubt that this same God is able to deliver His children to-day from the mental, moral, and physical discords with which they seemingly have to contend?

Christian Science is proving hourly that all things are possible with God, and therefore there is a very lively hope for the so-called hopeless. The healings which Jesus accomplished are beautifully described by Mrs. Eddy in Science and Health (pp. 476, 477) as follows: "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Savior saw God's likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick." Christian Scientists are striving to follow the example of Jesus by healing the sick in this same way, and the opportunity for such an attainment is open to all.

SALVATION
The salvation of which mankind is to-day so sorely in need is to gain the right idea of God and man. Salvation includes understanding, demonstration, and deliverance from sin, sickness, and death and is accomplished through spiritualization of thought. All that needs to be healed or reformed is erroneous, sinful thinking, so when the odiousness of sin becomes apparent,—in other words, when we see sin for what it actually is,—we turn from it with loathing. Thus as thought is purified we stop sinning, and we find that discordant bodily conditions are also healed. For centuries we have accepted as real and inescapable all sorts of mischievous, sinful suggestions which, after once gaining entrance into thought, are very apt to breed a lively swarm of attendant evils, until we have become so filled with sin in such forms as envy, jealousy, hatred, malice, resentment, and the like, that it is small wonder we have suffered physically. It is your divine right to exercise your God-given dominion over these arguments which would rob you of your peace and freedom. It matters not whether the argument takes the form of sin, sorrow, or disease, you can successfully resist every effort of evil to invade the harmony of your being. God's child is