

A LECTURE on Christian Science

Entitled
Christian Science and the
Law of Divine Provision
by
Paul Stark Seeley, C. S. B.
of Portland, Oregon
Member of the Board of Lectureship
of The Mother Church, The First
Church of Christ, Scientist,
in Boston, Massachusetts

In a book written by Professor Charles F. Kent of Yale and Professor Jeremiah W. Jenks of New York University, the authors refer to the thoughts of God as more potent than gravity and dynamite. Christian Science is making practical use of these divine thought-forces, and with most beneficial results.

Many persons have come to believe that a certain amount of trouble is inevitable. In the material concept of existence this is true. Trouble is woven into the very warp and woof of material existence. Painful birth, untimely death, and many trials in between; such is often the tale of mortal life. There is nothing in material thinking that can avert trouble for any length of time.

But there is no reason why we should go on wearing indefinitely the garment of material consciousness with its trouble-making patterns. Jesus realized this. He was clothed with a different state of mind. He had a better point of view. He was clothed with the Mind of Christ, or spiritual consciousness. He used God's thoughts to overcome all human trouble. So can we.

Some time ago Henry Ford was quoted as saying: "You cannot conquer the material plane from that level; you must go up one step into the plane of mind. The conquest is always from above." We cannot rid ourselves of material troubles while thinking materially, thinking the thoughts of depression, fear, selfishness, sin, and sickness, but we can get rid of them as we think from a higher plane of thought, think the thoughts of the Mind which is God, good. That is what Christian Science is teaching us to do.

Christian Science teaches that the real individuality of man exists as the effect of a power and intelligence which it defines as divine Mind. The power and intelligence which gives man being, it reasons, is capable of sustaining and providing for man and is always willing to do so. As we learn to turn thought to God, the one intelligent cause, first, and let our thinking express more of the thoughts of real Mind, we find our life's work is directed into constructive channels and our needs intelligently provided for. Jesus said, "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?"

GOD CARES FOR MAN

Fear of lack and the feverish struggle to provide against it is a state of thought which does not evidence an understanding of God's care for man. Jesus, it is very evident, had no such outlook. He had no bank account or accumulation of material possessions and yet he was the richest man who ever trod the globe. He knew and he proved that Mind will supply the needs of men in ways which mortals never would have thought of. "My ways (are) higher than your ways," says Isaiah. He showed that the arguments of material limitation lack the sanction of the divinely intelligent cause and are overthrown through an understanding of that cause. He proved the superiority of divine intelligence over the false sense that there is not enough work, not enough supply, not enough provision for everyone.

The trouble with us as mortals is that we have allowed erring material thinking to substitute itself for an understanding of our true individuality and our individual unity with God and so hide from us the fact of His loving control and constant provision for His own.

Christian Science is restoring to us a realization of man's spiritual unity with God, supreme intelligence, and enabling us to see that God, divine Mind, has provided and will forever provide for us if we but recognize this Mind in our thoughts and lives. Instead, however, of recognizing that over all there is an intelligence governing and providing for man, we have been accepting as a superior power the false material mind, with arguments of lack, inactivity, fear, unhappiness, and failure. Says Solomon: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

TRUST IN GOD ESSENTIAL

When we deny matter and evil as real and affirm the reality of God, good, we do so because we are willing to place more trust in God than in matter and evil. Trust is a most important factor in the lives of all of us. Just think how much you trust others. You trusted your parents and teachers. When you travel on trains you trust your safety to

hundreds of men. If an employer, you trust your employees with important duties, or if an employee, you trust your employer for intelligent direction. When you shop you trust manufacturer and retailer. You could have no credit at the bank or the store if someone did not trust you. Trust is a vital element in every important relationship between men and nations. Without trust business relationships, family relationships, and relationships between nations would crumble.

But the important question is, How much are we trusting the cause of our being, God, with our lives and destinies? On certain coins of the United States is the worthy motto, "In God We Trust." But do we? In some measure we do, but we can do much more. If you really understood God to be supreme in power, and only loving and good, would you not trust Him? It is ignorance of God that makes trust in Him difficult. Christian Science is removing this ignorance.

TRUST IN GOD NATURAL TO MAN

A Christian Scientist was once confronted with the necessity of making certain decisions to determine a business policy. He was very fearful that he might not make those decisions wisely and that serious consequences might follow a mistake. He realized that fear was that from which he most needed to be free, he saw that the fear was the result of a blind, unreasonable belief that there was an evil power which could make him think erroneously. Trust in God and in God's power, he reasoned, was what he needed to rid himself of that fear. But how could he get trust in God when he was so filled with fear?

He was reading on page 579 of Science and Health, and came to Mrs. Eddy's exposition of the spiritual qualities of Abraham and there read his statement, "This patriarch illustrated the purpose of Love to create trust in good." That was what he needed, "trust in good," in God. It was Love's, God's, purpose, then, to create trust in good. That purpose must be accomplished, for Love's work was done, he reasoned. But just where had Love created trust in good? It must have been created within God's creature, the individual consciousness, called man.

Trust in good, he began to see, was inherent within his true consciousness. God, his Mind, had put it there. By trust thought is united to God. It was the bond of unity between God and His son, His expression. He did not have to go outside of himself to get trust in God. It was no far-off treasure. He had but to realize that it was naturally his, as natural to him as life and thought. He saw that his only real self was trusting God then and always, regardless of what negative fear claimed. It was not his fear. As he realized this the fear dissolved. When he saw himself as a God-trusting man the misconception of himself as an evil-fearing man was displaced. The two concepts were mutually exclusive. With the fear gone, his thought was open for God's intelligent direction and control, and the solution of the problem quickly appeared.

"My friends, cherish your trust in God, not in an unknown God, but in the intelligent concept of God as the divine Mind, which originates and animates the true consciousness of you and all. Human philosophy, psychology, skepticism, often tend to deprive men of this priceless possession—trust in the power of God, good—and to leave them with no link between themselves and the intelligent cause of their being. Trust in God is no blind superstitious belief for the young and the aged. It is the living thought-link between man and his cause, between Mind and its idea. Distrust of God leaves men without a rudder, on the uncharted sea of human ignorance. Distrust dissolves the cement of normal friendship between men and nations. It imperils business, undermines unity in church and home, and leaves those who accept it in the solitude of uncertainty."

TRUST LINKS MAN TO GOD

Trust God because He is worthy of your trust, because He is the all-powerful Mind that is everywhere, the Spirit that animates all, the Love that unites and preserves all, the Truth that heals and saves all from the mire of material thinking. Trust God in the morning when you awaken, trust Him in the busy hours of the day, trust Him all the night. Turn trustfully to Him to guide you in your domestic and business judgments; trust Him with your destiny and your health. He has united you to Him with the bond of eternal truthfulness. Utilize this vital life-link with His presence and it will keep you under His mighty wing of universal love. Says the Psalmist, "None of them that trust in him shall be desolate."

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

In the world of business the most common form of agreement is a contract or covenant between two or more parties. One may agree to buy, the other to sell, or one may agree to perform certain services, the other to pay for the same. The covenant represents an agreement for the ac-

complishing of a common purpose. The Scriptures refer to a covenant which is designated the "everlasting covenant." In Genesis we read, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee . . . for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee." Isaiah was mindful of the covenant and wrote, "This is my covenant . . . My spirit that is upon thee, and my words . . . shall not depart out of thy mouth . . . for ever." Christ Jesus was named by Malachi as "the messenger of the covenant." He told men of the covenant, the living and working agreement between Mind and its representative, and gave in his daily experience a living example of its operation.

What is the purpose of the covenant? That God, true Mind, shall be expressed and that man, the idea of divine Mind, shall be sustained and provided for. How long does the covenant run? It is perpetual. It coexists with God and represents the eternal relationship between God and His man. When we speak of the everlasting covenant we are referring in human terms to a divine fact, the at-onement between God, Mind, and His idea, or creature, man. What are its terms? God, eternal Mind, provides for man life, intelligence, health, joy, permanence, by continually imparting to his consciousness thoughts of life, hope, faith, health, understanding. Such is God's undertaking. What is man's part? To reflect only the Mind which is God. Has the everlasting covenant ever been broken? No, it has not. God, Mind, always is filling the consciousness of His man with the ideas which go to make up his individuality, and the true man, as the creature of God, has no desire or capacity to express the ideas which are of God. But, someone says, there seems to have been a violation of the covenant. Many people surely do not think the thoughts of God. And then again there are times when God does not seem to impart only good to men, for disease and disaster often appear for their lot. What is the answer to this?

EVIL A FALSE SENSE OF MIND

The material sense of selfhood and all its unhappy conditions are the outcome of what Christian Science calls mortal mind, which is the very opposite of God, true Mind, and all His intelligent work. This mortal mind really is not Mind, for it lacks intelligence. This is apparent when we look at its products, fear, hate, greed, cruelty, failure, poverty, sin, disease. Can you associate any of these with intelligence? Of course not. Whatever lacks intelligence as its cause Christian Science teaches is negative and lacks true substance. It does not belong to God's order or to His man. How is this negative mortal mind and its mortality to be gotten rid of? By persistently denying it place or power in thought, refusing to accept its false thoughts or to give them influence over us, but letting into our consciousness only the thoughts which honor God, divine intelligence. Thus we accept little by little the government and control of real Mind and demonstrate our immunity from the influence of any other. This is not done in a moment, but it can be done. Denying evil and affirming good we find that we have an everlasting covenant with God, true Mind, and that it is in effect, that God is fulfilling His part and also enabling us to fulfill ours.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PRACTICAL

The method of applying Christian Science might be illustrated by your defense in a lawsuit brought against you on a claim that was totally false. What would be your defense? The truth. You would show the facts, and the claim against you would fail. The truth would be your complete protection and defense. But if because of ignorance, or fear, or negligence you failed to make a defense against the false claim, what would happen? Judgment would be taken against you by default and you would suffer damage the same as though the claim were true. You would suffer not because the claim was true, but because of your ignorance, fear, or negligence, all negative states of thought. So with the sufferings of mortals: All are due to the fact that we do not defend ourselves against the false claims of a material mind. Because of ignorance of our divine rights, or because of fear, or negligence, we have failed to make a proper defense, with the result that the claims have gone to judgment and we have been suffering the same as though the claims were true.

Christian Science shows men their rights under the everlasting covenant to all that intelligence or God has given them and then shows them how to defend their rights against every false claim of a material mind. Our defense against sickness is the realization that intelligence bestows only health; our defense against unhappy relationships, that God, divine Mind, governing all men, relates them all to one another harmoniously; against poverty, that the intelligence which is Love provides wisely and continually for its own. It is not enough to state or repeat these statements. They must be seen as the law of omnipotent Mind against which a negative mortal mind is impotent to project its conditions of disease, discord, want, and woe.

LOSS NOT OF GOD

In that order of living and thinking which evidences the mortal or so-called material mind there is almost continuous loss and waste. Hundreds of millions are lost to industry by labor disputes; by the illness of men, by mistakes made through ignorance and fear. All these losses are traceable to mental causes and will disappear as an erring mortal consciousness surrenders to the unerring eternal consciousness of real Mind. In our individual experience we can doubtless recall many kinds of losses. Material life is filled with them—loss of hope, loss of ambition, loss of strength, loss of employment, loss of health, loss of life. There is a long list.

But loss is negative. It is predicated on some destructive disintegrating power or influence operating against man's continuing well-being. Supreme intelligence does not evolve aught that can cause loss or be lost. The divine intelligence does not permit another power to subtract from the continuing wholeness and integrity of its universe or man. To divine Mind nothing is ever lost, for all that exists for a purpose, is essential, indispensable, to the wholeness of creation. To material thinking anything may be lost, for mortal mind appears to make, then to lose or to destroy what was made. What God creates God maintains.

WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN

In the sixth chapter of John, Christ Jesus tells of the purpose of his life-work. He says, "I came . . . not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Then he proceeds to explain what God's will is, and he continues, "And this is the Father's will . . . that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again." It becomes of first importance to know what it is God has given to man. Christian Science shows that God has given man life, health, happiness, useful activity, intelligence, understanding, right relationship with his fellows. Christ Jesus gave proof that all these were possessions of man, gifts from God. Our work is to raise them up, mentally accept them, give them place as living realities in our lives and refuse to accept as true the misconceptions of ignorance, discord, sickness, and unhappy relationships which a material sense claims to evolve and impose upon us. These are not the things God has given. The raising up, or honoring, of what God has given us has to be done right in your thinking and mine.

WE LIVE TO GIVE, NOT TO GET

The world is busy getting. Some would like to get wealth, some fame, some power, some are getting sick, some are getting discouraged. Christian Science is pointing the way to a truer order, the divinely intelligent order, wherein it is seen that man exists only to give, to give forth what God has given him, even joy, health, and useful being. As the sun provides all that each sunbeam needs to be a sunbeam, as the principle of mathematics provides all that each number needs to be a number, so Mind provides for man, as His representative, the health, activity, and understanding he needs to be an individual expression of intelligence. God alone is responsible for man and He fulfills His responsibility. All we need to do is to be willing to think and live as the sons and daughters, not of men, but of God.

Some time ago I was motoring with a party of friends through a beautiful section of Pennsylvania. It was a spring day full of glory. All nature sang a silent symphony of praise to the creator. Everything was giving! The sun above was giving light and warmth; the road beneath was providing an easy way of travel; the car was giving transportation and comfort; the friends were giving of their hospitality and kindness; the trees were giving grace and beauty; the flowers were giving color and sweetness; the birds contributed their song; the farmhouses were giving shelter; the cows were giving milk for food and drink; road signs gave helpful directions. And then suddenly there came into view in the distance a group of white tombstones, glistening in the sunlight on the borders of a pleasing country village. The question came, Could they too be giving? Quickly came the answer: They are giving testimony of loving regard for friends still living, though not now seen. How good it was to know that!

On we sped. The hills and mountains gave messages of strength and stability; the valleys told of the productivity of humility. Then we came to a mighty river which had, through the centuries, been wearing down the slopes of hills and mountains preparing on its erstwhile banks the even grades where men now lay their ways of travel. All was giving. False sense was giving way, and Mind was revealing that all creation, including man, was, and is, just to make Love manifest. No sense of selfish striving was there, no competition, no lack. And the giving was so vital, so

joyful, so fearless, so free. It was a faint glimpse of the heart-throb of divinity. What was thus perceived on this one day but hints what we all may perceive each and every hour, even that order of creation wherein every created thing lives to give, to be the witness of the unselfish, living good that is God.

ENTER HEAVEN WITH FRAISE

We find God and our agreement with Him as our hearts are filled with thankfulness for what He has done. The Psalmist writes, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Every moment there is something for which to give thanks. If we seem at times to be in difficulty and darkness, let us remember the nightingale, which sings even in the night. Its joy transcends the shadows. So can ours.

On every hand are the gifts of God for which we should be constantly grateful. This building which gives us shelter, the homes of comfort from which we came, the means of transport which brought many of us and will take us home, our country, our schools, and churches—these are a very few of the blessings at our right hand. Then there are the men and women who help supply our needs, and whom we seldom see, the ones who work on distant farms, in factories, mills, and on railways. Some plant and harvest, some manufacture, some ship and bring to us the things we need. From all the earth good comes to us. Are we grateful to the One who gives to them and to us? Remember that neither they nor we are able of ourselves to do or think anything. The Life and Mind of each and all is God, the All-in-all.

Everything that is truly useful and good is the gift of God, Love. The useless thoughts and things we do not have to accept. It is related that Lincoln once said, "I like to stroll of an evening through the shopping district of Washington and look into the store windows, for I see there so many things that I can get along without." Christian Science shows us that there are many things that we can get along without, things we once thought we must have, such as colds in winter, hay fever in summer, and almost anything in between. Through the discovering of our oneness with God, universal good, we realize our rights to those nobler, better things, such as health, happiness, successful activity, which intelligent Love has provided for us.

John Martin has told us in one of his poems that the best of things in life are free. These are the lines:

In gloomy tones we need not cry,—
"How many things there are to buy!"
Here is a thought for you and me,—
"The best of things in life are free!"
The air, the sunshine and the sea,
All gladness, beauty,—these are free.
Our faithful friendships, sympathy,
The joys of living,—these are free.
The budding blossom, stalwart tree,
God's open country,—these are free.
All loving service, loyalty,
Our God's protection,—these are free.
The more we look, the more we see
How many precious things are free.
The heart will find more than the eye
Of things we do not have to buy.

Yes, think how very rich are we
When all the best of things are free.

LOVE HAS MET EVERY NEED

One of the comforting statements in the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 494), is, "Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need." To our material senses there appear to be many needs which have not been met. The ravages of sin, sickness, sorrow, war, and famine, all would assert that a vast number of human needs for deliverance from evil have not been met. Yet the statement stands that divine Love has met every human need, and the statement is true.

The child struggling with his mathematical problems may fail often, yet mathematical law has met his mathematical needs. In his ignorance he may doubt this, but the fact remains. So the eternally intelligent Principle, Love, has met every possible human need. And Love has met every human need by making immediately available for each of us those ideas of true Mind which, as we open our thought to understand them, displace the wrong thought-condition we call a need. "Truth is God's remedy for error of every kind," writes Mrs. Eddy on page 142 of Science and Health. For every erring human condition, or concept, called a need, there is a true idea to meet and master it. Our work is to discover through study and prayer and drawing near to God these need-meeting ideas of the divine Mind and use them to meet our needs.

Matter said the need of Lazarus for healing had not been met, and he died. Jesus proved Love had met his need and that the conscious acceptance of the Love-provided concept of man as spiritual and undying, superior to matter and material law, proved Love's provision. Daniel might have been tempted to think that Love had not met his need when he was cast into the den of hunger-mad lions. But he did not. He refused to accept the material picture and found Love's provision for his need in the divine idea

that intelligent Love is the only real controller of creation and never permits one of its creatures to harm another. Jesus might have thought his need had been overlooked by divine Love when his body was nailed to the cross. But Love's provision for his extreme need was proved in the activity of the Christ, or spiritual idea of God, in his thinking, which produced his resurrection from the grave and ascension out of material consciousness.

Are you believing that you have a need that Love has not met? Stop such believing. It is but a futile denial of Love's intelligent provision for every need of man. Affirm that as God's child you have no unmet need, and then proceed to discover in your God-given consciousness the true ideas which Love has provided, wherewith to dissipate the argument of matter that it can impose on you a need that cannot be supplied. Our primary need is not for money and things. It is for ideas, intelligent ideas, with which to put to flight the enemies of sickness, fear, discouragement, inferiority, incapacity, and so on. These constructive ideas Love has provided without measure.

THE PRESENT TIMES

Is the world's need in these present times met by Love? It surely is, just as surely as God exists. The nature and presence of universal affirmative divine Mind has never been touched or supplanted by the empty negative mental processes of mortals, which in their totality make up what we call a world-depression. Were the Master among us today he would surely say as he did when among men, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Change your thoughts, for God's supremacy is now present to be understood and enjoyed. The eternal presence and sovereignty of the all-loving Mind has never been ended. God and His depression-destroying ideas are now present. Are we willing to open our thought to their living sunshine, or are we consenting to sleep a little longer in the dreamland of false material thinking, believing the illusion that erring mortal mind is our condition-maker and its negative thought-conditions our environment from which we cannot escape?

The Bible tells us we must overcome the world. One application of this would be to overcome our belief in a depressed world. This world-depression is exposing the poverty of material processes of thought, their inability to regulate in any satisfying way the economic affairs of men. With large surpluses of food and needed products we are confronted with a surplus of destitution and poverty. Something is wrong. The blame is put here and there on various persons, after the fashion of human beings whose custom is to blame someone else for their troubles. The culprit is really the false sense of mind that the whole human race has accepted as mind, the source of its thoughts, the devil described in Revelation as he who "deceiveth the whole world."

What is the remedy? A willingness to think the thoughts of divine Mind, God, thoughts of co-operation and brotherhood—a willingness on the part of employers and employees and the public to let unselfish intelligence co-ordinate the production, distribution, and consumption of things produced. More of the light of the divine Mind must come into and govern the affairs of men, curb fear, suspicious distrust, selfish human will, dishonesty, greed, and regulate human effort so that it will serve the common good. The place for this higher intelligence to appear is in your consciousness and mine. Let us leave the other fellow to God. Let us take care of our mental home and see whether there are issuing forth from it from hour to hour thoughts that honor and respect God's government, or those that deny His unselfish control of the affairs of men.

MANY ZEROS TOTAL ONE ZERO

We do not drive our car past a red traffic signal because someone else may do so. We respect the law which we know is for us to obey, regardless of the indifference or ignorance of someone else to it. Why, then, should we violate divine law by going into the danger zone of negative thinking, even if others do so? That does not change our obligation to divine law, to think the ideas of divine Mind. An epidemic of sick business is no more of God's making than an epidemic of sick bodies. A world-wide sense of error is no nearer truth than a localized sense of error. Many zeros total zero.

How then does the Christian Scientist think in order to keep above such conditions? He knows that God, the eternal and intelligent cause of the universe and man, is the sum of reality and Truth, that in God's universal presence and selfhood is the true identity, activity, substance, and life of every creature. God's infinite activity and universal presence never ceases. He is forever sustaining Himself and the true life and individuality of each of us, for we live to express Him. In the fact of God's ability to sustain Himself is man's assurance of endless sustenance, for in sustaining Himself He must sustain man who expresses that divine Self. Man now, in reality, manifests the self-sustaining activity of God. Man's oneness with the self-

(Continued on seventh page.)