

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE ITS REVELATION AND RELEVANCE

by

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A man was riding his bicycle down the highway, when suddenly the chain broke, putting his bicycle completely out of commission. He didn't like the idea of having to walk his bicycle all the way to the next town, so he decided to try waving vigorously at passing cars, hoping that one of them would stop. Finally, a man driving a brand new big blue sedan came to a halt. The bicyclist said to the driver, "If you would take my bicycle and me to the next town where I can have it repaired, it would be a big help." The owner of the new blue sedan replied, "I want to help you, but I'd rather not put your greasy bicycle into my brand new car. However, I do have some strong wire, and I can bind one end to the rear of my car and tie the other end to the front of your bicycle. You ride on the bicycle and I'll pull you to the next town."

Then he added, "My little boy left his whistle here in the car. You take it, and if you feel that I'm going too fast, just blow the whistle and I'll slow down." The bicyclist readily agreed. So they hitched the front of the bicycle to the rear of the sedan and they started down the road.

Everything was going just fine until a red sports-car came tearing down the highway going in the same direction. As it went zipping past, it cut sharply in front of the big blue sedan and went speeding on ahead. This annoyed the owner of the sedan, and he muttered to himself "I'll show him a thing or two!" And he went in hot pursuit of the red sports-car. He almost caught up with it, but the faster he went, the faster the sports-car went

Now a little further down the road, a radar speed-trap had been set up. For the benefit of those of you who never have had the dubious pleasure of being caught in a radar speed-trap, it works something like this: One police car, with radar detection equipment, is parked alongside the highway, usually partially concealed. Farther down the road, another police car is stationed. Radio communication is maintained between the two cars. Whenever the radar indicates that a car is exceeding the speed limit, the first car communicates with the second car with instructions to flag down the speeding vehicle.

So, as the red sports-car and the big blue sedan went zooming into the speed-trap, the police officer in the first car radioed to the second police car and shouted,

"Joe! Stop a red sports-car doing 110 miles an hour! And stop a big blue sedan going 105 miles an hour! And Joe! You'll never believe this! There's a man on a bicycle trying to pass both of them - blowing a whistle furiously."

Complete Non-conformity

Is there something familiar about all of this? Does it seem as if you are somewhat like that man on the bicycle? Do you feel as if you are tied to a material world, and that it's pulling you along with it, sometimes slowly, sometimes at a frightening speed? Have you apparently been caught in a speed-trap of individual and world problems? Have you been flagged down and arrested by an unseen law of human suffering? Have you tried in vain to do something about it by blowing a whistle-full of human opinions and human remedies? And, like the bicyclist, have you given your consent to let the bicycle of your thinking become tied to the big blue sedan of a material world?

If you have, there is something very effectual you can do about it. You can break that mental tie right now by adhering to these words of the Apostle Paul recorded in the Bible. He writes, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." It is just as if Paul had said, "Don't consent to let your thinking be conformed or tied to any material concept of existence."

Some people seem to feel that nonconformity to this world can be achieved through the use of alcohol or drugs, by inducing mental numbness to this world. There appear to be those who think that non-conformity means to renounce certain standards of this world and embrace other standards of this world. But the severance of one tie to this world and the acceptance of a different tie to this world does not constitute non-conformity to this world. It only amounts to a reshuffle, or a change of one's tie to this world. But even though one changes his tie, it's still around the same neck. He's still mentally bound to a material concept of existence. And this mental bondage is the cause of all the problems and all the sufferings associated with the human race.

Then what is complete non-conformity? Christ Jesus was the truest example and greatest exponent of complete non-conformity to this world. His whole mission was devoted to the liberation and uplifting of thought from a material, or

mental misconception of existence, to the spiritual or true conception of existence. But the healings and harmony which accompanied his inspired teachings proved that the liberation of thought from human concepts of existence does not ignore nor shelve human problems. It solves them. Even the highest level of his spiritual mindedness was always relevant to the lowest level of material mindedness. He gave us a clear guide to the practice of spiritual mindedness when he said, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" Judge not according to the appearance. How about that for non-conformity? But then he gave us something to conform to: "Judge righteous judgment." The meaning of the word "righteous" is "Godly." So righteous judgment means to keep one's thought in accord with what is Godlike, or divinely true about God. And all that is divinely true about God includes all that is divinely true about man. And whatever is divinely true about God and man cannot be determined by the appearance of matter or physicality. No more than what is true about music can be determined by the appearance of a piano.

Clear View of God and Man

Now let's see how and why Christian Science is the revelation of what is divinely true about God and man. Then we'll observe some actual experiences of how relevant this revelation is in the healing and harmonizing of human problems. Also, we'll see how you can experience the same benefits, and help others to do so.

In order to appreciate the revelation of Christian Science even more, it might be helpful to know something about the Revelator of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy. Mrs. Eddy never claimed any supernatural powers. She was not a mystic. She refused to be deified. And she is not deified. But she is appreciated, and she is loved by all who have been touched by her revelation and have been helped and healed by it.

Before she discovered Christian Science, she was almost destitute. Her health was a constant challenge. She was alone most of the time. And due to her frequent illness, she was deprived of her only child. But during her own childhood, she had learned to love the Bible. This was accompanied by a wholehearted faith in God. And it never wavered.

Then came an occasion when Mrs. Eddy's faith was put to its severest test. A critical injury, judged to be fatal, left her incapable of arising from her bed. After almost three days of immobility, she opened her Bible more desperately and more

humbly than she ever had. Her thought literally flew wide open to God. She read about Jesus' healing a man of palsy. She had read it so often before. But this time something happened for the first time. In her own words she tells us: "As I read, the healing Truth dawned upon my sense; and the result was that I rose, dressed myself and ever after was in better health than I had before enjoyed. That short experience included a glimpse of the great fact that I have since tried to make plain to others, namely, Life in and of Spirit; this Life being the sole reality of existence." (Miscellaneous Writings p 24) In her clear view of God as infinite Spirit, Mrs. Eddy had her first glimpse of infinite Spirit as infinite divine Life. She also had her first proof that when human thought is illuminated by divine Life, it liberates what is thought to be human life.

This was only the beginning of the divine revelation which literally poured into her receptive thought. She not only understood that God is infinite Spirit, and the only Life, but she perceived that God is also the only Mind, ever-present Love, unopposed Truth, all-governing Principle, and boundless Soul. These seven synonyms for God all combine to convey the absolute allness of the one and only God. As you may see, the allness of God does not consist of matter or physicality. Nor does it co-exist with matter or physicality. The allness of God exists instead of matter or physicality.

This does not mean that Christian Science disclaims man and the universe. It explains man and the universe. It reveals the full meaning of this inspired Biblical account of man's real identity. The Scriptural passage reads, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." Considering what God really is, what a view of man this gives us! Think of it! Man is made in God's image! It did not say that man bears a slight resemblance to God. Or that he would eventually become the image of God. Man is the image of God. This means that the image of unlimited Spirit is an unlimited image. The image of all-knowing Mind is an all-knowing image. The image of perfect Life is a perfect image. The image of all-loving Love is an all-loving image. This is the divine Truth of all identity, yours, everyone's, right now, and forever.

All-spiritual God not only means all-spiritual man, but all-spiritual universe. Paul states it in these words, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Assuredly, the materially visible is not the basis of the spiritually veritable.

Relevant Revelation

At this point you might want to say, "All of that sounds good but what I want to know is how it even relates to the problems confronting us. I mean, how would my thinking of an invisible spiritual Principle, solve a visible human problem?" Perhaps this will help to clarify the question: If you were confronted with mathematical errors, you would realize that the solution to the problem would not be found in the problem itself. It would be necessary to turn your thought to the rules and facts of mathematics. Now the errors involved might be all that were visible. Whereas, the mathematical rules and facts might be completely invisible. Nevertheless, those invisible mathematical truths would be very relevant to those visible mathematical errors. The visible errors would be seen as nothing but mental misconceptions of mathematic. They wouldn't even be mathematics. Mathematical errors, no matter how visible, are never anything but erroneous thoughts about mathematics. So thought which is illuminated with invisible mathematical truth, is liberated from visible mathematical errors. The effect is a visible solution of the problem.

Accordingly, when confronted with human errors or discords, it should be realized that the solution to the problems cannot be found in the problems themselves. It is necessary to turn thought to the facts, or divine Truth of existence. Now the errors and discords involved might be all that are visible. Whereas, the divine Truth of being might be completely invisible. Nevertheless, invisible infinite Truth is very relevant to visible human errors and discords. Visible material concepts of existence are nothing but mental misconceptions of existence. Mrs. Eddy perceived this so clearly. In her God-inspired book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, she writes, "all that is material is a material, human, mortal thought, always governing itself erroneously." Therefore, all that is material, no matter how visible it seems to be, is never anything but a material, human, mortal thought about man and the universe. So thought which is illuminated with invisible infinite Truth, is liberated from visible human errors and discords. The effect is visible solutions to human problems. Divine revelation is always relevant to human tribulation.

Confrontation with Poverty

Now let's see how relevant this revelation actually is in everyday experience. There is much concern about poverty these days. And while poverty is generally associated with a lack of money, poverty can also apply to a lack of any human need: a lack of health, lack of love, lack of companionship, lack of peace, lack of Justice, lack of equality, lack of progress, and so on. But regardless of how poverty is classified, it is basically poverty of thought. May I tell you about my confrontation with plain, old-fashioned poverty, otherwise known as being totally "flat-broke"?

Today we hear talk about poverty in depressed areas. My experience occurred when the whole nation was a depressed area. Each day to me seemed to be a fruitless search for employment. Having anything to eat was a daily challenge. This was sometimes solved by selling, piece-by-piece all of my clothes, except those I was wearing. A fountain pen, which I sold for twenty-five cents, took care of one day's food supply. The only reason for these details is to show that mine was a poverty case, not merely an incident where I was down to my last hundred dollars.

I was living in a little room in a large building, in a low-rent section of a big city. Every apartment in the building had been converted into individually rented rooms, each room having its own lock and key. One evening after another fruitless day of job-hunting, I discovered that my key would not unlock the door. I had heard of people being locked out of their rooms because they couldn't pay their rent, and now it had happened to me.

I went back to the ground floor and found the owner of the building in his office. I was told that I was so far behind in my rent, I would not be permitted to use my room unless I could pay some of the back rent. Otherwise, I would have to look for some other place to live. Then the owner added, "However, since it is already nighttime, and a bit late to look for a place to stay tonight, I'll let you use another room. I couldn't let you use your own room if I wanted to, because the janitor kept the new key when he changed the lock on your door. And he's gone for the night" Then the owner took me up to a little room, which was one where the maids kept their mops and cleaning materials. It had a small cot with no bed covers, and one straight chair. But it was warm, which was a factor, since it was early November.

I was a rather new student of Christian Science. But it had shown me that God is All and He is good, and never deprives man, but sustains man. I realized that if I were experiencing lack and limitation, it must be because somewhere in my own thought there was a lack of understanding God. Now, with eviction staring me in the face, I was roused to open my thought more unreservedly to the true meaning of God's allness and goodness.

I had my briefcase with me, and in it was my Bible and Science and Health. Each week there is a Lesson-Sermon which Christian Scientists study for that week. The lesson for Thanksgiving was due later that month, but I decided that the best antidote for lack, limitation, and fear was to increase my gratitude to God. I sat down on the little cot, and using the seat of the chair as a desk for my books, I eagerly began to study the lesson on Thanksgiving. As I pondered its inspired passage, I saw that I had been using materiality as a measuring stick to determine how much I had to be grateful for. I had frequently contemplated my empty pockets and long periods of unemployment, and thought to myself, "when these pockets are full and I have a decent job, I certainly will be grateful." My gratitude had been based upon good matter, instead of upon the goodness of God. I had thought my need was an improvement of matter, instead of an improvement of thought.

Ever-presence of Infinite Good

When I finished studying the lesson, I decided to go for a walk and further ponder what I had read. It was past 9:30 that evening as I walked along, and my reasoning went something like this, "Dear God, You are infinite good. And You are all. Since man is Your image, then Your image is all-good. And I am really Your image. Then I am the image of good. This means there must be some good I can do, right now." But then a suggestion came, "It's almost ten o'clock at night! What good can you do at this hour out here all by yourself?" But just as quickly I thought, "No! I have listened to enough arguments of limitation. Thank God there are no limits on God. He is boundless good, right here, right now. Then I am the boundless expression of boundless good, right here, right now. So there must be some good I can do, right now!"

At that instant I thought of a friend of mine who was beginning a career as a salesman. He had asked me if I knew anyone who might be a likely prospect for what

he had to sell. I had replied that I had already given all the names I could think of to another friend of mine in the same business, and didn't feel that I should give out the same names. But now I suddenly thought of several other friends whom I had not thought of before, and how they might be even better prospects than the others.

I immediately walked to the home of the friend, who was just beginning as a salesman, and gave him the names. As I started to leave, my friend said, "I certainly am grateful to you for walking over here at this hour to give me those names. Is there anything I can do for you?"

Now if I had wanted to borrow money, this particular friend would have been the last one I would have gone to. Because I knew that he also was having a financial struggle. But even so, I was not looking for a loan. It hadn't even occurred to me. So flippantly I replied, "Oh! Of course there's something you can do. About a thousand dollars will be just fine!"

My friend answered very seriously, "No. I mean it. Do you need some money? I just borrowed some today on my insurance policy. You can have whatever you need. Just meet me at my savings bank tomorrow and it's yours." I didn't want to borrow the money. It certainly was not my motive in seeing this friend. But I realized that I must not let human pride or human outlining obstruct the fruition of my newly unlimited acceptance of God's allness and goodness. So I gratefully agreed to accept enough to pay some of the back rent

I returned to the building literally bursting with gratitude -not for the money I would obtain the next morning, but for a more unlimited sense of the divine Principle, or Truth of being. I went into the owner's office and told him that I would pay some of the back rent the next day. The owner must have glimpsed the change in my whole being. He must have been touched himself by divine Love. He responded by saying, "As you know, I don't have the key to the new lock on your door, but instead of your sleeping in that little room I gave you, I'm going to put you in the best room in the building. We just finished redecorating it, and everything in it is new."

And so that night, I slept in a beautiful room, between new sheets, under new blankets, on a new pillow, covered with a new pillow case, but which became very wet with tears of gratitude. My own limited, human thought had sentenced me to the worst room in the building. But unlimited, divine Mind unfolded the best. Nonconformity of thought to visible material lack, and conformity of thought to invisible unlimited good, solved the visible human problem.

But that's only half the story. A few nights later, during a meeting at the Christian Science church where I am a member, I told about this experience. My purpose was to testify to how instant is God's help the instant we open our thought to His allness and goodness. After the meeting, two different members of the church offered me living quarters, rent free. One of them explained that he and his family had been given a very large house in one of the finest sections of the city, for the purpose of keeping it in good order. And in return, it was not costing them any rental fee. He said that they had so much extra space in the house, they had been praying to be shown the right one with whom to share their blessing. I gratefully accepted their loving offer to move in with them. I lived there for a year and a half, in one of the best and most affluent areas in the city, without having to pay one penny of rent. That was the end of the depression, unemployment, and poverty in my experience.

True Employment and Supply

Obviously, it was not a change of human conditions which solved my problem. Of course, human conditions changed and they changed for the better, much better. But what made them change? When my thought changed. Human conditions change from bad to good when human thought changes from matter to Spirit from material seeming. Things began to change for me because Christian Science changed my concept of substance from dollar standard to the divine standard. Poverty is not just a lack of materiality, but a lack of spirituality. And it is just as erroneous to believe that poverty is a part of someone else as it is to believe that it is a part of oneself. If we believe that somewhere there is lack, we are believing that somewhere God lacks being all.

Christ Jesus made this very clear when he declared, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" That was the equivalent of saying, "Don't believe that God's provision for man has to wait for a passage of time, or a change in material conditions. Lift your concept of man and the universe from the material and limitable to the spiritual and illimitable."

This is emphasized in these words of Mrs. Eddy. She writes, "Wholly apart from this mortal dream, this illusion and delusion of sense, Christian Science comes to reveal man as God's image, His idea, coexistent with Him - God giving all and man

having all that God gives." That is from The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany. It is significant that Mrs. Eddy did not say man getting all, but man having all. Truly, Christian Science is the Science of what is, not what should be or will be. It is the Science of being, not becoming. Because God is, man has.

Now one might say, "I can see how Christian Science can be helpful with one's own problem when it just involves himself. But how does it help when it involves others?" Here's one example. A student of Christian Science was employed by a large automobile agency. One day he started to drive one of the cars out of the company garage. But before he reached the exit, he was called to the telephone. He left the car near the exit, but where it would not obstruct the passage of other cars. When he returned from the telephone and started toward the car, one of the mechanics hurled a barrage of abusive language at him. The mechanic angrily berated him for leaving the car where he did.

At first, the Christian Scientist was tempted to lash back at the mechanic with equal fury. It seemed so unjust and unwarranted that he should be the target of such hatred. He reasoned to himself, "I can return his hatred with my hatred and increase the problem. Or I can reject his hatred by accepting divine Love's allness and omnipresence, and have no problem." He got into the car and drove off without saying a word in reply to the mechanic.

However, it still concerned him that such discord should try to come into his experience. Then he woke up to why it had happened. In the past, he had observed how that particular mechanic had been so belligerent with others. But instead of mentally rejecting that false concept of man's identity, he had let his thinking become tied to it. And here it was, trying to pull him into a speed-trap of human discord. He thought to himself further, "If someone handed me a brick and told me to carry it around with me and not to let go of it, would I do it? Of course not, I would reject it. Why wouldn't I agree to carry the brick around all the time? Because it is no part of my being. It would be a burden, it would slow me down, and interfere with everything I did." Then he thought further, Then suppose someone handed me a mental brick, and the name of the brick was called hatred. And I was told to carry it around with me all the time, and not to let go of it. Would I do it? Of course not! Then why wouldn't I agree to accept it? Because it is no part of my being. It would be a burden, it would slow me down and interfere with everything I did." Then the thought came, "How about others? Do I believe that hatred is any part of their being? Do I think that divine Love is all where I am, but didn't happen to

reach where they are?" He realized that he had not only accepted a wrong concept of man, but he had even entertained a wrong thought about God. And wrong thoughts are like C.O.D. packages. They always arrive collect. If we accept them, we have to pay for them.

The next day, the Christian Scientist arrived at work with nothing but love in his thought. He had no love for hatred. He simply left no space in his concept of Love's allness for the possibility of hatred — anywhere. Instead of trying to see a mortal as loving or hating, he saw man's identity as being immortal, spiritual, the "eternal image of Love.

Later that day, as he was driving near the garage, he saw that same mechanic walking along carrying a heavy piece of equipment. The Christian Scientist happily offered him a ride. As they drove along, they had a very friendly conversation. And after he had let the mechanic out, the Christian Scientist realized that for the first time, he had not even thought of the difference in the color of their skins. He had seen God's idea of man not a mortal, black or white. Mrs. Eddy gives us this inspired guideline. In *Miscellaneous Writings*, she writes, "I earnestly advise all Christian Scientists to remove from their observation or study the personal sense of anyone and not to dwell in thought upon their own or others' corporeality either as good or evil"

Healing Disease

We might sometimes wonder why we seem to go through severe trials, even though we may be trying hard to adhere to divine Truth. But the worst part of wondering why things are so rough is that it only delays our awareness of how completely All God is and how completely like Him we really are. If Jesus had wondered why he was nailed to the cross, he might have become destructible. If the Hebrew boys had wondered why they were put into the fiery furnace, they might have become combustible. And if Daniel had wondered why he was tossed into the lions's den, he might have become digestible.

A student of Christian Science went through a very severe trial while on an overseas tour in connection with his work. On one of his free days, he toured an ancient garden, which had many fountains. It was a warm day, and as he reached one particular fountain, it was bubbling forth like a drinking fountain. He was uncertain about the quality of the water, but then he saw, carved in the old stone

slab behind the fountain, the weather-beaten words "potable". Feeling reassured, he drank avidly of the water. As he was leaving the gardens, he passed that particular fountain again. This time a streak of sunlight illuminated the whole stone area slab, and he detected the faded prefix on the word, which now read very plainly, "non-potable". He passively affirmed the allness, perfection, and purity of divine Life, and man's continuous reflection of Life's perfection, and then dismissed the incident from his thought.

By the time he arrived in another country, all the symptoms believed to be attached to the drinking of polluted water began to appear. He prayed diligently, clinging to the divine reality of being. But the symptoms grew alarmingly worse and he became much weaker. Mrs. Eddy tells us in Science and Health, "You render the divine law of healing obscure and void, when you weigh the human in the scale with the divine, or limit in any direction of thought the omnipresence and omnipotence of God". As he pondered the first part of this statement, he held fast to man's completely spiritual identity as abiding in the allness of Spirit. Nothing human in that scale with the divine. He resolutely affirmed man's unlimited, spiritual perfection as the image of perfect, divine Life. Nothing human weighed with that.

He refused to conform or tie his thought of identity to a physical body, sick or well. Heal the thought which believes there is physicality, and you heal the disease which is thought to be in physicality. The harmony of divine Truth always accompanies conformity with divine Truth. Then why was he not experiencing that harmony?

He explored more searchingly the last part of the citation just quoted. It said not to "limit in any direction of thought the omnipresence and omnipotence of God." Obediently he had been affirming the omnipresence and omnipotence of God as being right where he was. But then he suddenly realized that he had neglected to acknowledge the omnipresence and omnipotence of God as being right where everyone else was. Why is this so important? Because, if we believe that right here is perfect Life, but out there is imperfect life, then right here is a belief of imperfection. We might believe the imperfection is out there, but it's being believed right here. Well, we might believe that it's being believed out there, but it's being believed right here that it's being believed out there. And where the belief of imperfection originates, that's where it aggravates.

Additionally, every belief of disease is a universal belief. One of the most tenacious beliefs associated with what is believed to be a material world, is that the whole world believes in disease. It believes that man is a mortal and liable to disease. How important then to know that whatever is divinely true individually is divinely true universally. The only universe is the allness of infinite Spirit. The only condition is the allness of perfect Life. The only mentality is the allness of divine Mind. Mind's allness leaves no place or space for an individual mortal mind nor a universe of mortal minds to establish a universal belief, to make a law of sickness or health, or to break a law of sickness or health.

When the student of Christian Science awoke to this broader and more sweeping implication and application of divine Truth, he was quickly and completely healed. In Miscellaneous Writings, Mrs. Eddy says, "If Mind, God, is all-power and all-presence, man is not met by another power and presence, that - obstructing his intelligence - pains, fetters and befools him. The perfection of man is intact."

So whenever we might be tempted to tie the bicycle of our thought to the big blue sedan of a material concept of existence, we can reject it with complete non-conformity. We can say, with divine authority and dominion, "No! No ties! No bondage! No speed-traps of idolatry! No beliefs in anything unlike or besides God!"

These words from the Christian Science Hymnal seem to epitomize the teachings of Christian Science, its revelation, and its relevance:

*"In Thee O Spirit true and tender
I find my life as God's own child;
Within Thy light of glorious splendor
I lose the earth-clouds drear and wild.*

*In Thee I have no pain or sorrow,
No anxious thought, no load of care.
Thou are the same today, tomorrow;
Thy love and truth art everywhere." (Hymn 154)*