

**August 21, 2006 – Subject: Christ Jesus.**

Dear Friends: Mary Baker Eddy gave her students 26 subjects for weekly Bible Lessons, to be covered twice yearly. Flowing through the year in her order of the subjects, we hereby present fresh views of each one by outstanding Christian Scientists. In this way, we hope to partake with you of new unfoldments of her infinite revelation.

Our selection this week by John Doorly.

**CHRISTIAN SCIENCE:**

**THE REVELATION OF CHRIST.**

Christian Science is exact and scientific in its teaching about God and about Christ, and it declares unswervingly that their true nature can and should be understood practically and intelligently here and now, and indeed that to attain any measure of real health and salvation we must first follow the injunction to “acquaint now thyself with him [God], and be at peace.”

**GOD AND HIS LAW**

The questions “therefore arise: How are we to acquaint ourselves with God? How are we to know that our view of Him is the correct one? To both these questions Christ Jesus, whose teachings all Christians acknowledge as absolute and final, has given direct answers, and Christian Science has proved these answers to be practical, religious, and scientific facts to be used in daily life. To the first question, How are we to acquaint ourselves with God? Christ Jesus replied, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” In fact he stated that the Father must be known through the Son, and through the Son only. To the second question as to how we were to decide when we had known God aright, his reply is, “These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

The Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, was raised from what seemed likely to be her death-bed through her study of the Scriptures. She had grasped from them somewhat of the true nature of God, and had also perceived that

Christ Jesus was not using some specially bestowed power when he performed his marvelous and convincing works, but that through his exact and comprehensive knowledge of God he was simply utilizing the ever-present divine law, which might be unknown to those who were ignorant of the Father's true nature, but which was ever available to all who understood God aright. This divine law had formerly been utilized to some extent by Abraham, by Moses, by the prophets, and later by Christ Jesus and his followers, and it is this law that Paul describes as the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which he declared had made him "free from the law of sin and death." Christian Science then accepts the fact that there is an ever-present divine law which, if understood and used, will with scientific certainty make men free from the supposed law of sin and death. It is certain, however, that to appreciate this divine law we must understand the nature of God, the divine lawmaker, the one cause.

### **TRUE NATURE OF GOD**

How then are we going to understand the nature of God? It is evident that we can never understand God upon a human basis, for according to the testimony of our physical senses we cannot see, hear, touch, taste, or smell God; and indeed if we relied wholly upon our five physical senses we would never know that God exists. Christian Science therefore declares that God must be understood spiritually or mentally, and that to know Him aright we must depend upon spiritual understanding. It also declares that it is the habit of relying on our five physical senses for information as to what God is that has hidden the true God from us and has caused us to worship a man-made sense of God. Therefore to understand God aright Christian Science relies on divine reason and revelation.

What then does Christian Science say about God, basing its conclusions on reason or correct thinking and revelation? It states that God, to be all-power, all-presence, and all-knowledge, as the Scriptures declare, must be the infinite One, for it is quite evident that if God were not the infinite One there would be another presence, another power, and some other knowledge. Thus Christian Science teaches that God is the infinite One, the only cause and the one creator.

Since God is the infinite One, He can never be included in anything, but He Himself includes all being in Himself. Consequently Christian

Science says that no man can ever include God in his thought, for to do so he would have to be greater than God; – but it says that this infinite One can be understood through thoughts or ideas which reveal His divine nature. So we perceive that it is impossible to outline God, of the infinite One, in our thought, but it is possible to understand this nature of God; and this is what St. John meant when he stated that “no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”

For instance, if you or I should appreciate the fact that God is Spirit, as the Scriptures declare, this would in no way mean that we had included the whole of God in our thought, but it would mean that we had entertained one correct thought or idea about God which revealed His true nature; and so whenever we think truly about God we are only beholding thoughts or ideas which reveal His nature, and we are in no way including the infinite One in our thought, for this would be impossible. In fact Christian Science realizes that it would be just as idolatrous to try to outline God in our thought or to form a mental concept of some great personality and call it Deity, as it would be to make an image of wood or stone from that mental concept and call it Deity; for false views of God, whether they be mental images or material images, are equally idolatrous. When humanity appreciates the great fact that God is the infinite One, it will cease speculating about the personality of God, but will begin to understand His nature, and it will then strive intelligently to be godlike.

### **GOD AS PRINCIPLE**

Christian Science teaches us to think of God as Principle, and uses this word Principle to show that God is the fundamental and invariable source or cause; that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It has sometimes been objected that this word Principle makes God seem distant or cold, but Christian Scientists have found that this knowledge of God, as infinite divine Principle, who changeth not, is the rock upon which the waves of error dash themselves in vain. Many Christian Scientists under great stress of sin and disease have gratefully recognized the nearness and dearness of God as ever-available Principle, who cannot fail to heal and to save; and whose divine law is ever operating on behalf of those who will understand and use it.

Christian Scientists who have learned to know God as Principle are never found trying to change God through their prayers, but are rather

found trying to draw nearer to Him through understanding His divine nature and conforming their thoughts and daily lives to the unchangeable nature of this infinite Principle.

Christian Science teaches likewise that God is Mind, or, as Jesus declared, Spirit; and to be intelligent, God must be Mind. As He is also the infinite One, therefore Christian Science recognizes that Mind is one, and that Mind is creator. This truth forever obliterates the idolatrous human belief that there can be minds many, or that matter, the opposite of Mind, can be a creator.

To sum up, therefore, Christian Science teaches that God is the infinite One, indivisible, and not included in anything but including all true being in Himself; that He is divine Principle, and that He is also infinite Mind, or Spirit. These are all conclusions which are not only taught by the Scriptures, but, what is equally important, they can be proved in daily life in the same way that Christ Jesus proved them, by anyone who is willing to understand these conclusions and to govern his life by them.

Having gained a correct sense of God, we are now in a position to know what Christ, His expression, must be; for even if Christ Jesus had not revealed to mankind that God and His Christ were “one,” – that is, one in quality, – it would be evident that the infinite creator, or divine Principle, could only create that which is infinitely like Himself. Christian Science therefore recognizes that the Christ must forever be the emanation or expression of the infinite One, and that he must always be one in quality and essence with the Father; that he was, therefore, “before Abraham was,” and that he never began and could never end.

## **ATTITUDE TOWARD JESUS**

It is sometimes erroneously stated that Christian Scientists do not appreciate Christ Jesus as other religionists do; but is this statement true? Do not Christian Scientists appreciate Christ Jesus and his teachings so fully that they rely on them unreservedly, not only for their own health and happiness, and indeed their very lives, but, what is even more important to them, for the health and happiness of their loved ones? Other religionists who claim that we do not appreciate Christ Jesus, because we have a more practical sense of his life-teachings, should remember that they are not willing to do these things.

It is true that Christian Scientists do not believe that the human Jesus of Nazareth was God; but they know that the spiritual man, or Christ, was, the manifestation of God, and is indeed Immanuel, or "God with us." They also understand that this real man, or Christ, was not the material personality of Jesus, which he himself declared must go away, but that this true Christliness was the Mind or consciousness which was in Christ Jesus, and that this consciousness was his spiritual reality, which, he stated, was forever present, although unseen by the physical senses.

Is it not evident that the material body of Jesus could not still the tempest when he was asleep in the boat, but that his awakened consciousness stilled it at once? And so in some cases of healing it is recorded that Jesus was far distant from the people he healed, clearly proving that it was not his bodily presence, but his consciousness, or what he knew of God and of true being, that healed those cases.

There is no body of people on earth who recognize more the importance of Christ Jesus as the Saviour of humanity, or who accept his divine Sonship more clearly, or who are more humbly and gratefully conscious of the loving, unparalleled, and selfless sacrifice of Christ Jesus, than are Christian Scientists, and they are trying to prove this, not so much by saying "Lord, Lord," which mere verbal expression means nothing, but by doing the will of the Father "which is in heaven."

St. Paul declares, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more;" and can it be said that Christian Scientists do not recognize Christ Jesus fully, because they follow Paul's injunction and understand that the very Christ, the manifestation of God, must be wholly spiritual or mental; and not material? It is the understanding that it was Jesus' mentality, or his knowledge of God and of true being, which enabled him to be Jesus the Christ, that has now enabled Christian Scientists to accomplish in some measure his works.

### **SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST**

Mankind, from its personal point of view, has insisted on regarding the material personality of Jesus as its Saviour, rather than his spiritual individuality, forgetting that Christ Jesus himself perceived

this erroneous condition so clearly that he told his followers that if his human personality went not away the Comforter, or spiritual truth, his divine reality, would not come to them, i.e., would not be understood by them. He saw that his followers were relying on his human personality and not on his Christliness, or his spiritual individuality. As a matter of fact, the Holy Ghost, or consciousness of spiritual being, did not come to his followers until the human personality of Jesus had disappeared before his full recognition of his divine Sonship.

On one occasion, when some one more than usually personal addressed Jesus as “good Master,” Christ Jesus rebuked him with the remark, “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.” He recognized that his questioner was regarding only his human personality, and not his divine reality, or spiritual selfhood, which alone was good, or godlike. Jesus understood more clearly than anyone has ever done the nothingness of human personality and the all-importance of spiritual individuality, and he spent his life trying to turn the thoughts of men away from the human to the divine, both with regard to himself and to everything else.

Upon careful examination it will be found that all the woes and discords of existence are based upon human ignorance of God and of His Christ, or on divergent views upon these subjects. Does anyone suppose, for instance, that war would be possible between nations or individuals who understood the teachings of Christ Jesus so that they could prove them as he did? It would be utterly impossible. Therefore, it is all important that we should lay aside every wrong preconceived notion about Christ, and gain the one true and therefore scientific sense of him which the Scriptures teach, and which can be proved, for this understanding alone can unite all humanity in one universal brotherhood. This understanding of Christ will bring to pass Samuel Longfellow’s words:-

From hand to hand the greeting flows,  
    From eye to eye the signals run,  
From heart to heart the bright hope glows;  
    The seekers of the Light are one.  
One in the freedom of the truth,  
    One in the joy of paths untrod,  
One in the heart’s perennial youth,  
    One in the larger thought of God.

## TRUE NATURE OF CHRIST

Both Christian Science and the Scriptures teach that the Christ is the full and perfect expression of God, that is, of infinite divine Mind or Spirit; and to be the full and perfect expression Christ must include all that is true, for if he did not include all that is true then Christ would not be the full expression of God.

Christian Science therefore accepts the fact, which the Scriptures teach and which is essentially logical, that Christ must include the truth or the spiritual reality, not only of Christ Jesus but of everybody and of everything. St. Paul clearly states this when he declares, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Christian Science thus teaches that the truth or spiritual reality of you and of me and of all things is included in the Christ; and it further states that this spiritual reality of Christ Jesus and of all things, is what constitutes God's creation, spiritual and perfect, or is that which God has made and which He declared to be "very good;" and consequently that the spiritual reality of Christ Jesus, of you, of me, and of all that exists, is what constitutes the Christ.

Mrs. Eddy illustrates Christ in her writings "by a simile, using the sun as a symbol to explain God and His Christ. She says, "If we say that the sun stands for God, then all his rays collectively stand for Christ, and each separate ray for men and women" (The First Church of Christ, Scientists, and, Miscellany, p. 344). The Christ, therefore, is that which manifests or expresses God, and this must necessarily be what God has created.

What then has God created? Since God is infinite Mind, or Spirit, it is evident He could only create that which is the likeness of Mind, or that which is mental and spiritual; and as infinite Mind is that which eternally knows, therefore Mind's creation must be that which always expresses knowledge, or must be conscious existence. Also it is quite clear that infinite Mind, or Spirit, could not create its opposite, finite material things, but that it could only create its likeness, spiritual thoughts or ideas, and that each of these ideas must be eternal in its individuality and perfection, for "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Thus God's only creations must be spiritual thoughts or ideas, each one perfect and eternal, and forever conscious of existence; and this

consciousness of true being, or this true conscious being, is what we in a human way call spiritual understanding, or right knowing.

The Christ, therefore, is that which God has created, and consists of infinite spiritual ideas, each perfect and eternal, and forever conscious of God and of true being; and this true and conscious being, or this consciousness of true being, is spiritual understanding or right thinking.

## **JESUS THE CHRIST**

Christian Science thus teaches that it was his spiritual understanding, or the Mind which was in Christ Jesus, that constituted him Jesus the Christ, and also that spiritual understanding is what always constitutes the Christ.

Is it not perfectly clear that every man's individuality or spiritual reality must be what he knows that is true about God and about all being, or is his spiritual understanding?

Does anyone object to the statement that the Christ, the expression of God, – that is, of infinite Spirit, or Mind, – must be wholly mental or spiritual, and must therefore be spiritual understanding or true conscious being? Of course if humanity insists on regarding God as a glorified human being, it will naturally desire a glorified mortal for its Saviour, and it will remain in the same condition as Thomas, looking for the Christ in matter instead of in Spirit, or Mind; but that is not what the Scriptures teach, nor can it ever help anyone to attain the knowledge of God or of true salvation.

When humanity understands that God is infinite Mind or intelligence, it will naturally perceive that it was his spiritual understanding, or the Mind which was in Christ Jesus, that made him the true likeness of God, and it will then be willing to go a step farther and see that spiritual understanding is always the likeness of God, i. e., of infinite divine Mind, and is therefore always the Christ. Such understanding is, however, as we have seen, really the consciousness of true being, or is true and conscious being, the spiritual reality of Christ Jesus, of you, of me, and of all that God has made; and this is the Christ which is revealed throughout the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, the man of God's creating, the spiritual man, including the spiritual realities of all things. This appearing to human consciousness of true being, is the forever coming of Christ, with power to heal the sick, reform the sinner, and comfort the sorrowing.

This healing and saving power of Christ is clearly defined by Mrs. Eddy when she states that Christ is “the divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error” (Science and Health, p.583).

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