

November 6, 2006 – Subject: Mortal and Immortals.

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 selections this month will all be from: A Collection of Twenty-one Articles entitled HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A 2? by Richard Claude Haw.

DEMONSTRATING OUR SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

So remote does the goal of perfection appear to be to human beings that the great majority never give it a thought. Or they relegate it to a “future life.” But we can make current progress toward the goal of perfection as we gain a deeper understanding of God and of the real man’s likeness to Him. We need to identify ourselves with this likeness, and then set about realizing and demonstrating it.

Militating against progress, however, is the widely held theological belief that man has fallen from God’s grace. The ancient story of Adam eating forbidden fruit may not always be taken literally today, but the view it portrays is still with us – a man inherently imperfect, saddled with desires that make sin natural. Christian Science has come to explode that myth and all its consequences and to declare man’s spiritual status. Mrs. Eddy makes this unequivocal statement: “You can never demonstrate spirituality until you declare yourself to be immortal and understand that you are so. Christian Science is absolute; it is neither behind the point of perfection nor advancing towards it; it is at this point and must be practised therefrom. Unless you fully perceive that you are the child of God, hence perfect, you have no Principle to demonstrate and no rule for its demonstration.” (Miscellany)

Can we afford, then, to accept the old theological teaching that we are sinning mortals, living in fear of a wrathful Deity, and trying to work out of mortality into a doubtful heaven after death? This doctrine has never been able to meet mankind’s deepest need for redemption.

Christian Science teaches us to start off and stay with the spiritual facts. God creates and maintains man as His own representative. Understanding man's immortal status, we can identify ourselves correctly and start putting off the mortal sense of identity by realizing that materiality, with concomitants of disease and mortality, is an illegitimate mental imposition. Material conditions have no part in our true being. The spiritual understanding of our real selfhood frees us from false identification and from the penalties imposed by belief in the doctrine of the fall of man

How else but through recognizing and proving our divine son-ship could we follow Paul's injunction to put off the old, corrupt concept of man, "and be renewed in the spirit of [our] mind; and... put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"? We could not begin to do this if we identified ourselves as sinning mortals and acted that way. Since the real man is now, and always has been, God's expression, we can demonstrate this expression only by letting our lives consciously and conscientiously bear witness to the nature of God.

The way was shown by Christ Jesus. His loyal follower, Mrs. Eddy, teaches us the Science of Jesus' way, which she received from God. Though mortal belief would hinder us, we can, through prayer, start to dematerialize thought and fill it with the spiritual ideas imparted by divine Mind. We can put on the Christliness that belongs to the sons of God. Materiality will begin to thin out and disappear as thought becomes a clearer transparency for the Christ.

The present, eternal fact of our sonship is brought out in I John: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." The Christ brings the realization of divine son-ship, and we are at least beginning to grasp the divine idea of man as our true identity. So when we read these words, and ponder them prayerfully, we can give thanks for the present fact of son-ship.

Man is spiritual idea – not becoming so. We must get away from the materialistic concept of a spiritual reality and something else called mortal existence. Right now God is All, and His creation, including

man, is entirely spiritual. What appears as the mortal is the physical senses' misperception of the divine fact: spiritual man coexisting with God.

The actual presence of God and His Christ, Truth, reveals man's true status, and the inspiration of this can reach us, wherever we are in understanding. No longer is God considered a remote Deity. Rather, we come to know Him as a living presence. And we understand Him through the universal activity of Christ, Truth. We read in Hebrews, "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people..." Through divine Science, God establishes His new covenant as a continuing commitment to Christly consciousness.

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