

September 3, 2007 - Subject: Man.

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.

"THE SCIENCE OF CELESTIAL BEING"

by *Julia M. Johnston*

In speaking of Jesus, Mary Baker Eddy, the Discover and Founder of Christian Science, writes in *Science and Health with key to the Scriptures*, "His mission was to reveal the Science of celestial being, to prove what God is and what he does for man," In another of her writings, *No and yes*, she refers to the celestial nature of man. "Man is a celestial, and in the spiritual universe he is forever individual and forever harmonious. From these two references the student may deduce that man, as the offspring of God, is divinely cared for through spiritual laws, everlastingly love and provided for, This deduction leads to a clearer sense of the eternal coexistence of God and man, and to a deeper comprehension of the Master's work.

"The Science of celestial being," or divine Science, maintains the order of heavenly existence, demonstrates spiritual perfection, and is the law of immortality. It is the only Science of man. It governs him absolutely and eternally. Though this Science all the essentials of his eternal being are supplied to him from the divine substance of Spirit. The Science of man's being preserves the indestructible relationship between the infinite source, the essentials of existence, and man's individual expression of Life.

"All that is true is a sort of necessity, a portion of the primal reality of things," our Leader writes in her *Message to the Mother Church for 1901*. Then all that is of God is necessary and available to man as His likeness, this availability depending upon the essentials of substance dwell forever in this substance, they are never developed in matter nor manipulated by it. Thus no shortage, waste, or absence of anything indispensable to perfect being can ever really occur. All that man receives from God is eternal, never passing through a finite form or a negative condition.

Spirit is the only source of man's existence, for Spirit is eternal Life. It is the origin of all that is necessary for well-being. Spirit being omnipresent, everything intrinsic to harmonious existence is always present in sufficiency, in infinitude.

There could be no permanent harmony or continuity for man were not the essentials of his being forever included in omnipresence. The same power that creates man must possess and control the necessary constituents and relationship that maintain his Godlikeness.

“The Science of celestial being” holds man tributary to exhaustless supply; hence man exists at the point of individual, changeless, infinite income of unfluctuating sufficiency. In the unbroken rhythm of scientific existence, lack, error, matter are unknown. Man is forever endowed with every quality of perfection. He is royally furnished with all that is commensurate with his high position as the everlasting representative of God.

That which is essential to present eternal existence must partake of the nature of infinity. It must be equally and continually available for all creation. “The Science of celestial being” imparts to man without cessation the elements of divinity, the essence of immortality, the nature of holiness, for these are essential to his continuity. It maintains the undisturbed order of heaven, the fullness of perfection in man, whereby he remains the likeness of God, not for a moment only, nor for the future alone, but for eternity. He can be this identity only because he is supplied with the essentials of immortality from the infinite source to which he is tributary. The Master’s assertion that the kingdom of God is in man issued from his understanding of the Science of man’s celestial being.

Man dwells forever in the substance of Spirit as the natural and inevitable expression of eternal Life. Celestial being is man’s present and perpetual estate. Governed by divine Science, he moves through divine impulsion, possesses Christly equipment, and expresses divine achievement.

Since man is celestial, his essentials are those of eternity. If we were to enumerate some of these, would they not include inseparability from divine cause, obedience to Principle, existence within divine Mind, immortal nature, eternal essence, underlying perfection, spiritual source, incorruptible substance, oneness in God? Is one of these essentials in matter? Is one of these created or maintained by the so-called human mind? Is one of these temporal or nonexistent? No! Rather are they changeless, enduring facts of Life, of Truth. Then the essentials of existence are not accumulated by human struggle, nor lost because of human frailty, That which is necessary for man’s existence is never in matter to end, decay, die, be absent, or cut off, but is of Spirit. The simplicity, soundness, and perfection of this divine plan are noteworthy.

The Science of celestial order includes the forces on unending existence. These forces are the power of divine Love, of Spirit and its holiness, of Life and its

continuance. Divine Science possesses the forces of perpetuation, unfoldment, and peace, There are no forces unlike these, The forces of Love hold the infinite purpose as gently as the petals of a rose and hold the cosmos of celestial identities in perfect order. These forces spring from the depths of reality and are the elemental movements of creative and preservative Mind. They are the energies of omnipotence. The forces of Love are dynamic, harmless, progressive, benedictory.

Since the essentials of being and forces of existence coexist naturally in eternal Life and cooperate in divine Science, man's harmonious existence is assured. Again and again in fulfilling his mission Christ Jesus proved this to be true. In the stilling of the storm and the immediate arrival of the ship at the shore whither the men would be, in the feeding of the multitudes in a desert place, in the raising of Lazarus, the essentials of existence and the forces of Love were proved ever present, spiritual, and demonstrable through the understanding of "the Science of celestial being."

Jesus once prayed that his followers might understand the truth of being as he did. St. John records his revealing prayer in the following words:"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Jesus' followers then, as now, were people engaged in the various trades and professions of human welfare. They lived in humble circumstances. They were beset by limitations and aggressions. Their surroundings savored of the densest materialism. Yet Jesus taught them that the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, is in man; hence that man must be heavenly, and celestial Science must eternally govern his being.

Jesus would not have prayed as he did, had it been impossible for his students to understand man's naturally spiritual selfhood. He knew that men must see this glory before starting to demonstrate it. Then the human footsteps move patiently through the valley of humility, and by the renunciation of mortal selfhood the ascent to heights of spiritual realization is won. Of such experience Mrs. Eddy says in *Miscellaneous Writing*, "Self-renunciation of all that constitutes a so-called material men, and the acknowledgment and achievement of his spiritual identity as the child of God, is Science that opens the very flood-gates of heaven; whence good flows into every avenue of being, cleansing mortals of all uncleanness, destroying all suffering, and demonstrating the true image and likeness." In this statement may be glimpsed the functioning of the forces of Love in human experience.

As men recognize and accept the truths of divine Science, they gain understanding whereby to handle the collective claims of error, claims based on the false beliefs of materiality and of all that is supposedly associated with it. From such beliefs follow the assumption that famine, pestilence, disorder, and limitation of every sort are inescapable, So-called mortal mind, while falsely claiming to be able to furnish the essentials of existence and the forces of their operations through matter, admits that matter is limited, imperfect, undependable, dangerous – here today and gone tomorrow. Then it is wise to abandon such wrong reasoning and bring to bear upon every situation all the strength of deliverance from error that abides in the power of spiritual understanding. This will help to hold in check the world crimes of mortal sense that would doom millions to death because matter cannot supple sufficient sustenance; that would threaten the human race with extinction because mortal mind believes its own dream of ultimate destruction.

Christian Scientists are not indifferent to or troubled about these aggressive, erroneous claims. Rather do they follow the example of their Master and of their Leader in effective, intelligent denial of these claims in their own experiences, and then in collective situations presented to their thought. They are equipped, together with all enlightened Christians, with spiritual understanding wherewith to challenge and overcome so-called world evil, as well as personal faults, because these are not large and small difficulties. They are only the nothingness of error.

So long as the way of salvation seems to wind through materialism there is no solution for the problem of human experience. The mission of Christian Science is to show the way entirely apart from materiality whereby men may be ushered into everlasting harmony. This way of redemption is the mental awakening to the ever-presence of the kingdom of heaven within man. This awakening reveals celestial being and divine Science as the forever facts of man. As this truth disrobes the beliefs of mortals, it verifies the facts of immortality. As it presses evil to final extinction, it unfolds the presence of holiness. As it loosens humanity's hold on physicality, it strengthens its grasp on spirituality. As Truth caused every mirage of law and power to vanish from the material concept of existence, it reveals the eternal Science of the universe of Spirit and of Spirit's indestructible, harmonious man.

No greater opportunities for Christian miracles – natural proof of divine law – awaited our Master's immediate disciples than those rising before his followers in this generation. Because of this, the Christian devotion to God's Word should be as spontaneous now as then. Divine healing is as essential an element of each one's Christianity today as it was of the Master's experience. Jesus

successfully practiced the Science of spiritual existence in daily affairs and he required his followers to do so. This Science is forever able to demonstrate the allness and omnipotence of Life that is Love; of Life that eternally maintains the primal divinity of existence, causing it to bloom in ageless beauty.

Old, limited beliefs about the world are fast falling by the wayside. Why cannot ancient misconceptions of man likewise fade away? So-called physical science has invaded the stratosphere, explored the bed of the ocean, and with radar touched the moon. The little affairs of the finite are yielding to the infinite. The infinite is pouring itself out upon men. A mortal has no place in the unfolding concept of the eternal universe and spiritual family of man. Only he who is incorporeal, free, spiritual can exist in the immeasurable universe of Mind. Then let there be no holding back from the recognition of man's celestial being as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Let there be a reaching upward in thought to behold and accept man's true selfhood with the glory that God gave to it before the world was, and that endures when the mortal sense of things has ceased to be entertained.

As men ally themselves with "the Science of celestial being," all the laws of Spirit, the forces of Love, the essentials of well-being will abide with them. Keeping pace with the movements of divine revelation, they will abandon belief in mortality before it collapses and will be established in spiritual reality as it unfolds. Then there need be no vacuum of desolation in human experience.

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