

**September 10, 2007 - Subject: Substance.**

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.

**SOUL AND SALVATION**

by *Julia M. Johnston*

Many of humanity's fears arise from false beliefs which are entertained about substance and body. Christian Science comes to dispel these fears. Instructed in the truth of being, including the reality of Soul and its relationship to spiritual identity, man can demonstrate Christian Science and experience salvation from belief in evil, which the Bible teaches. To understand that Soul is the only substance is to experience deliverance from bondage to the beliefs of the flesh, including disease and sin. The ultimate of human hope is translation, not death.

Soul is a synonym for God, and signifies that in which man lives, and by which he is aware of his existence forever. The substance is unadulterably good, incapable of discord or disintegration. It is permanently perfect. Soul, being immortal, is thus discerned to be that which ensures the eternal existence of creation. It is the divine cause, which creates every form of expression of true being.

Every form of eternal life is fashioned by Soul. To each form Soul imparts the essence of divinity. Soul provides for all true identities through spiritual law. God, Soul, is the creator and preserver of our identity, but cannot be deformed, of strength that never fails, of beauty that cannot perish. Soul gives to all spiritual manifestation the comeliness of perfection. In *Miscellaneous Writings* Mrs. Eddy refers to "the evergreen of Soul: the coloring glory of perpetual bloom."

Thus we perceive all identity as dwelling in the real of Spirit and governed by Soul, never in the chaos of matter. Man, as Soul's reflection, is not subject to spiritual and material law; the law of Soul is his only law first, last, and always. His existence is ordered by divine mandate. This being true, he could not be fettered in matter or subject to evil. Soul forever enfolds him.

These statements of divine Science lead to the perception of man as always the expression of Soul. Of divine Being. The reflection of Soul must be incorporeal, inorganic. Divinely mental, yea, divine idea. Then man is Soul's idea, or immortal expression. Not mortal minds belief of materiality. Identity is evidence of ever-present Spirit. It cannot be physique. Immortal selfhood reflects or expresses the individuality of Soul. The Apostle Paul glimpsed this truth, when he wrote, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Does not Paul imply in this statement that identity is sinless and eternal? Does he not mean that true selfhood is the expression of divinity, ever partaking of the nature of holiness? How, then, could there be in true substance or its embodiment a sense of evil, a response to evil, or penalty of evil? Any mortal belief must be ignorant of the relationship between Soul and its individual expression. There is but one substance, the infinite and divine. There is but one complete manifestation of Soul—the real man, the eternal selfhood to all which Christian Science reveals.

Spiritual identity is without beginning and without end. It experiences no process of coming or going. Real identity has only a spiritual history. It is never the offspring of sensuality, the progeny of sin, or the child of mortality. The expression of Soul must be as pure in nature as is Soul.

Dwelling forever in Soul, man receives only the impressions of Spirit. Man receives from Soul his complete likeness of divine, infinite Mind. He can never receive a finite sense of self as a mortal. Again quoting from Paul, that spiritual seer, we find confirmation of the view of man in Romans," The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

True identity, body, or individuality, then, is not transitory, but a permanent, eternal idea. It is not a prison or mortal body, in which man is limited, languishes, and dies, but it is man, the expression of Soul.

Identity exists as eternal idea, and not as finite form. All the elements, qualities, and action of Being are eternal and function as such in identity. Thus Christian Science teaches men to comprehend Soul and its reflection, cause and its effect, in inseparable divinity. This is what Jesus taught and exemplified throughout his experience. Mrs. Eddy writes in *Miscellaneous Writing*: "His unseen individuality, so superior to that which was seen, was not subject to the temptations of the flesh, to laws material, to death, or the grave. Formed and governed by God, this individuality was safe in the

substance of Soul, the substance of Spirit, – yea, the substance of God, the one inclusive good.”

True identity “safe in the substance of Soul”! How blessed to learn that Soul’s representative, man, neither abides in matter, nor is waiting for death to release him from finiteness and sin! Soul forever preserves real identity. This coexistence of Soul and divine manifestation is indestructible. Neither one can forsake the other. Man is not a material body, but is spiritual idea, which Soul eternally preserves. The law of Soul holds man forever in immortality. Christian Science reduces this fact to human perception by the healing work, thus gradually delivering humanity from belief in materiality and proving the ever-presence of divine reality.

Salvation for mankind from the belief of being subject to disease, sin, limitation, and evil inheritance, comes through the understanding that the manifestation of Soul, divine substance, is the only real identity. Salvation does not mean spiritualizing a physical body, making a mortal body perfect, or arranging to have it well provided for materially. Salvation means understanding and proving, through demonstration, that the eternal expression of Soul is the only true selfhood. Salvation means resurrection and ascension momentarily and continuously from all that asserts itself as belief in matter and evil. Christian Science demonstrates salvation for humanity by uncovering and rendering obsolete every false concept about substance or body and revealing every true idea which comprises real identity.

What comfort it is to learn that Truth is here to govern, purify, and exalt all human concepts of selfhood until they yield entirely to God’s idea, or everlasting identity! In this progressive process both Truth and error become less personal and multiform to human thought, and men become aware of one infinite, spiritual reality of being and the consequent nothingness of mortality. This steady unfolding is the coming of the heaven of Soul to men. Through the ministry of Christian Science this appearing is already reaching into the secret chambers of human consciousness, dispelling the false opinions of the ages.

Through such human refinement there emerges clearer and clearer the understanding of true selfhood as the temple of God, as the idea which is obedient to Spirit alone. This temple, or body, to which Jesus referred, appears ever more plainly as the representative of Soul, the expression of “the individual infinite.” (*No and Yes*) Man is the work of God, related only to God, the evidence of divine origin and nature, the expression of Life, which is Soul.

The recognition of these Christianly scientific truths and the use of them in daily life, even in the smallest degree, are humanity's salvation from the mortal sense of selfhood. The saving power of Soul does not deal with circumstances and things as something external to me, but dispels the darkness of mistaken sense with the radiance of spiritual facts. Like the sunrise, this deliverance is irresistible and all-embracing. As men awake to welcome its coming they will see the salvation of the Lord drawing nigh, even as the supreme occurrence in human experience. Then will the words of our Leader in *Miscellaneous Writings* glow with the light of revelation for illumined consciousness: "The encumbering mortal molecules, called man, vanish as a dream; but man born of the great Forever, lives on, God-crowned and blest."

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