

January 13, 2003—Subject: Life

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 is from—**SCIENTIFIC HEALING TODAY**—by Peggy M. Brook. For a short biography of Ms. Brook, please [click here](#).

Scientific Healing Today

True healing as revealed in Christian Science demands scientific spiritual understanding, bringing with it an entirely new estimation of the origin, nature, and purpose of man and the universe

The healing element is one that has always stood in the forefront of Christian Science because it was the aspect of Mary Baker Eddy's discovery of this Science that gained the most publicity in the initial stages of her pioneer work. She herself had experienced healing through prayer, both in her childhood and intermittently all through her early life. She had also experimented with homeopathy and various methods of mental healing in her search for the mind-power which she instinctively knew to be the great healing agent. Finally, after having witnessed in her own case a remarkable recovery from an accident through reading one of Jesus' healings in the Gospel of Matthew, she was convinced that it was Spirit alone that had "wrought the miracle," as she herself put it in her autobiography, "a miracle which later [she] found to be in perfect scientific accord with divine law." Since this healing had come through reading the Bible, she resolved to investigate the nature of the spiritual power which pervades the Scriptures. For three years, therefore, she retired completely from society in order to carry out this resolve, relating of this period, "The Bible was my text-book. It answered my questions as to how I was healed; but the Scriptures had to me a new meaning, a new tongue. Their spiritual signification appeared; and I apprehended for the first time, in their spiritual meaning, Jesus' teaching and demonstration, and the Principle and rule of spiritual Science and metaphysical healing, — in a word, Christian Science.

Ultimately Mary Baker Eddy wrote a textbook on Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. As her discovery clarified itself to her, *Science and Health* underwent many revisions and editions until its final statement. People were healed just by reading this textbook and in fact when Christian Science first broke on the thought of mankind thousands of miraculous healings took place. But many of these were mere faith-healings —faith in something new. Mrs Eddy herself was keenly aware of this, for early in her discovery she realized that there was a vital difference between faith-healing and spiritual, scientific understanding that results in true healing.

She has recorded, "I knew the Principle of all harmonious Mind-action to be God, and that cures were produced in primitive Christianity by holy, uplifting faith; but I must know the Science of this healing, and I won my way to absolute conclusions through divine revelation, reason, and demonstration." So insistent was she on the need to understand the **Science** of healing that in 1910, the year of her passing, she was constrained to write a brief but powerful statement which was later published in the **Christian Science Sentinel**. Entitled "Principle and Practice," it issued a warning to students of Christian Science to be awake to the fact that this Science demands the understanding of a Principle and not merely belief in it through mortal conjecture.

“Christian Science is not a faith-cure,” it stated; “to receive Christian Science through a belief instead of the understanding... prevails like an epidemic on the body... weakens the intellect... heals only as a drug would heal... or [results] in no effect whatever.”

These are strong words, but the article insists that Christian Science involves scientific healing based on understanding, “just as it is one’s understanding of the principle of mathematics which enables him to demonstrate its rules.” This statement goes so far as to prophesy that Christian Science will “be lost from the practice of religion” unless scientific healing is understood. Scientific healing implies a Principle; it was the Principle that is Life, and infinite Truth and Love, that Mary Baker Eddy discovered, a Principle that identifies itself through a universe that is entirely mental, of the nature of pure Mind, the Mind whose substance is Spirit. It was not merely a Principle of healing that she lighted upon, but a revelation of the Science of all being and its operation through numerals of infinity and an infinite calculus — through specific, fundamentals and their ordered method of operation.

“Greater works”

If we take a look at the arena of mental and spiritual healing today, including the practice of Christian Science, it is undoubtedly true that there are millions of apparently miraculous cures taking place all over the world through many different methods involving belief, faith, and a measure of spiritual understanding. In fact, this type of healing is gaining increasing recognition as a valid method of cure in our age. But at the same time it compels many questions: What is health? What is a whole man? If all mankind were whole and healthy by merely physical standards, what then? Do such standards put the cart before the horse? What is the purpose of life anyway?

Surely in the final analysis we are not concerned with mere bodily health, although one’s whole heart goes out in compassion to those who long for healing, and one feels an overwhelming desire to comfort and cure. But today it would seem as though a higher demand is upon us, a demand to rise to a real understanding of what constitutes the phenomenon “man”. What is his purpose? What is his destiny? Ultimately in understanding this, the answer to the human predicament will be found, though maybe not in the terms in which mankind stubbornly seeks the answer for lack of spontaneously responding to the real demand of these latter days.

Jesus saved sinners, healed the sick, and raised the dead, yet he said that “greater works” would be accomplished by those who understood or “believed in” him. We have by no means approximated in any degree the extraordinary healing record of this man, but did he mean such a statement to be taken merely as a direct comparison of the actual works themselves? In the Gospel of John (chapter 14) where we find this prophecy, there is also foretold the coming of the Comforter, “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” Nevertheless it will “guide [men] into all truth.” Also in this same discourse Jesus declared that the peace he was leaving and giving to men was not peace as the world estimated it.

Worldly thought can never receive the “Spirit of truth” because it is not given in terms compatible with its material values. Furthermore, is worldly thought seeking for peace in matter, peace in the corporate body or in the physical body? In essence, peace can never be found there, for the fundamental nature of reality is spiritual and there can be no abiding peace except in that which is fundamental and innate in men.

Many pay lip-service to the basic teaching of Jesus given in the words, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," yet have they deeply accepted the implications of this statement, which are completely revolutionary? Jesus told the people of his day that he had many things to say to them but they could not bear them then, for the time was not ripe for the full understanding of the truth about man and the universe to be accepted and understood. But with the coming of the scientific age, in which the question "Why?" is the paramount question that is asked about all phenomena, it is logical that the promised Comforter should appear in the form of a divine Science and lead men into all truth. The Principle of an undenominational, spiritual science is interpreting, through true knowledge, the spiritual reality of all things, revealing the nature of man and the universe to be idea or consciousness.

All is Mind

The Science of spiritual being is compelling man to accept a completely new system of reference with regard to life. It does not urge him merely to improve or to look higher, but it demands that he start out **from** spiritual reality as the norm. Moreover, it does not ask him to do this through mere faith. General scientific research is drawing nearer and nearer to the conclusion that mind is the basic factor to be reckoned with in any interpretation of the universe. The time is at hand when the physical scientists' statement as to the nature of being will parallel Mary Baker Eddy's, namely, "There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation..."

This is a statement supported by the whole Science of being, the Science of spiritual reality, that identified itself to Mrs Eddy not only through revelation but also through reason (an intelligent process of understanding) and demonstration (supporting proof), which is the way in which great discoveries always unfold.

If all is Mind, then there is no matter. This is the basis of scientific healing. Therefore, as Scientists, we are never dealing with diseased or healthy **matter**. We are always dealing with what Mary Baker Eddy termed "mortal mind" and its subjective state, which is called "matter" but is nevertheless still **mind**, both in nature and essence. She wrote in her textbook, "Usage classes both evil and good together as **mind**; therefore, to be understood, the author calls sick and sinful humanity **mortal mind**, - meaning by this term the flesh opposed to Spirit, the human mind and evil in contradistinction to the divine Mind, or Truth and good.... As Mind is immortal, the phrase **mortal mind** implies something untrue and therefore unreal; and as the phrase is used in teaching Christian Science, it is meant to designate that which has no real existence." Therefore the one Mind and its infinite manifestation, specifically understood, operates as a law of annihilation to the finite beliefs of mortal mind in their various classifications. This is seen by limited finite sense as the healing of a body, or the overcoming of sin, but from a higher standpoint it is the conscious and specific understanding and demonstration of being as idea of Mind.

Metaphysical healing in Christian Science has often been regarded as merely the power of mind over matter or simply a question of "holding the right thought," but it is becoming increasingly clear that a natural healing power inheres, in the scientific fact that basically man and the universe is the expression of pure Mind. Moreover this Mind has the nature of Spirit and this constitutes the reality and identity of all phenomena, moving as idea under the government of a universal divine Principle. As this Science of Mind - this Science of spiritual reality - is intelligently and spiritually understood, it is bound to demonstrate its own innate harmony.

The realization that all is Mind and therefore that idea constitutes the life, substance, and intelligence of man changes the whole basis of healing, because it changes the whole basis of one's consciousness of life. It makes "all things new," as we read in Chapter 21 of Revelation, but in becoming aware of the "new heaven" and "new earth" various states and stages of consciousness would seem to be involved. Subscribing to the material sense of life, we accept a universe where good and evil, health and sickness, life and death appear to have equal validity. Mary Baker Eddy once wrote, for instance, that to "the frightened, false sense of the patient" sickness is "more than fancy; it is solid conviction." In this state of consciousness we go up and down according to the kind of testimony that faces the material senses.

But nothing can prevent the light of Truth from breaking, and so we become aware of the mental nature of being and the power of mind. The Science of Mind, however, does not simply reveal that to live aright it is important how one thinks. Though Shakespeare wrote, with insight, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so," to go no further than this stage results in an immature metaphysical outlook on a merely mental basis. If we drift along accepting the accustomed concept that we are mortal personalities, whilst at the same time believing that everything around us is fundamentally of a mental nature, it often causes us to be more fearful than we would be without this knowledge - unreasonably fearful of other people's thoughts, of alien atmospheres, of mental malpractice, of "animal magnetism," even to the extent of imagining a wily devil to be hiding round every corner with the sole intent of destroying us and our lifework! This state of mind results from conscious or unconscious acceptance of a dualistic sense of existence, in which the spiritual and material have equal reality. This makes for a constant battle and is not Science, the Science of true being, the Comforter that brings the type of peace promised by Jesus, a peace based on the reality of Spirit alone.

To understand that all is Mind means to be fully aware of the one Mind as the only Principle of all being, expressing itself as infinite idea, which is man. This man reflects the living Principle, Love, whose nature is Spirit; therefore the life, substance, and intelligence of this identity or man is purely spiritual. In answer to the question, "What are body and Soul?" Mrs Eddy stated in her textbook, "Identity is the reflection of Spirit, the reflection in multifarious forms of the living Principle, Love. Soul is the substance, Life, and intelligence of man, which is individualized, but not in matter. Soul can never reflect anything inferior to Spirit. Man is the expression of Soul." From this it is clear that the personal "I" goes out of the picture - the mortal ego with its determination to hold life, substance, and intelligence resident in a mortal personality - and the one Principle, the one Soul of the universe, "individualized, but not in matter," takes the stage.

Healing is the consciousness of Life, Truth and Love

We talk a great deal about healing, but what is healing? If we stay firmly with our feet on the ground of mortal existence as our basis, we classify spiritual healing as a non-material process, the main purpose of which is to bring about a change in phenomena from a sick body to a healthy body, from a sinning mortal to a sinless mortal, from a lack of material supply to an abundance of material supply - always having a dualistic sense of existence. These changes in phenomena are certainly a form of healing that one has witnessed many a time, but surely true healing is in itself a complete change of standpoint as to what constitutes the reality of being.

Mrs Eddy observed, "Health is not a condition of matter, but of Mind; ...the Science of Mind-healing shows it to be impossible for aught but Mind to testify truly or to exhibit the real status of man." She discovered that in reality man is idea, "the infinite expression of infinite Mind," and that the spiritual man's consciousness and individuality are emanations of Life, Truth, and Love. From these spiritual facts it must follow that the understanding and living acceptance of man as idea of Mind - the Mind that is Spirit, Life, Truth, and Love, the Mind that operates according to a divine Principle - is true health. In proportion as man realizes his status as idea, therefore, and abandons the basis of reckoning mortality as the natural state of being, he is experiencing true healing.

This gives living validity to such statements of Jesus as "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" and "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." This spiritual status of man *is now*, but seems to have to be worked out in life-practice through a cultured spiritual understanding of the Science of being and letting this demonstrate itself in our experience. But once we accept and understand man's status as idea, we find our attitude towards human life changes. It becomes not so much a question of every human need as of every *spiritual* need being met.

It is through a natural understanding of the fundamentals of the Science of being - the numerals of infinity and the divine infinite calculus - that we begin to experience that the one Life is living *us* as the facts of Truth in a divine plan of Love. We then find that our desire is constantly to *let*, this be, and our whole human experience takes on a different look.

For instance, this spiritual and scientific standpoint compels us to regard the names and types of disease in quite a new context. The unenlightened human mind makes the mortal body and brain its basis of reckoning, and observes what seems to take place with them. When they register pain and disorder according to the testimony of the physical senses, it studies the course and nature of the disorder, eventually pronounces a name for it and then attempts to discover its cause and cure. As soon as it is named, it becomes a false god which men begin to fear and obey according to the characteristics of that god. But working from the spiritually scientific standpoint, conscious that all is Mind, we regard every discord and difficulty as an intimation of a spiritual birth to us of a new facet of being, an aspect of true identity that we have not as yet become aware of, and our whole desire is to let this appear.

Jesus clearly indicated such a standpoint when he healed the blind man (see John, Chapter 9). The disciples asked, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" They were attempting to find a cause in human history or in material heredity. But Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest "in him". He saw that the truth about this condition was entirely spiritual, revealing man to be a work of God, a purposeful expression of the divine Principle, irresistibly coming to light through the eternal activity of divine Life, Truth, and Love - the true origin of all. Again, with Lazarus (see John, Chapter 11), he turned the whole incident of Lazarus' death into a positive demonstration of Life, Truth, and Love, saying, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

This standpoint is discernible in spiritual healing today. For example, in one case what was termed "heart disease" was seen to be merely the trigger that opened the door for someone to a completely new life. This individual was healed to human sense, yes - but much more than that, for she was reborn spiritually and pursued a new course of life devoted to spiritual healing.

From a higher view it could not be called “heart disease” but an alerting point that, seen rightly, was the way in which a new estimate of life was forced upon her by the ever-present activity of Life, Truth, and Love.

The essential nature of Being is Life, Truth, and Love. On this basis alone rests true health, and it is because Life is continually expressing itself as Truth in its fulness and completeness that human experience always appears to be presenting us with challenges, which bring constant newness of life.

Truth always has the initiative

Such freedom follows from the acceptance of man’s true being in Science. No wonder Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” The greatest liberation is from a personal sense of selfhood, and one continually experiences the fruitage of this impersonal yet supremely loving standpoint impelled by the Principle of Science. Often when faced with a physical or moral difficulty we have sought above all for “my” healing, and in consequence have related to “me” and “my” problem every truth that came to us.

But Science shows that we are never dealing with a personal ego. We are primarily concerned with ideas moving in a divine infinite calculus according to the irresistible Principle of the universe, and the solution is not mixed up with a medley of personal issues which have no validity in the Science of being. Man is not a mortal, thinking about spiritual reality, which thinking is in some way going to change a mortal character and heal a mortal body. True, this change of evidence may be the result that becomes apparent to human sense. And why? Because the Science of being is all-encompassing. It is basic to all life, its identified ideas constituting the life, truth, substance, and intelligence of every individual expression. Therefore the harmonious facts of its Principle cannot help but operate on all levels of consciousness and apparently exchange discord for harmony, disease for health — in fact, incompleteness for completeness or wholeness in any detailed way that is needed. But all the while the “need” is the divine Principle’s “need,” or the purpose of divine Love to bring out its infinitely good plan, rather than the mere granting of the finite and personal desires of a limited, mortal sense.

Since these positive calculations of being, which are the true man, are actively in expression in an ordered way, they will (as long as there is the problem of human existence to work out) throw the searchlight of Truth on the ignorance or misapprehension of existence that comprises mortal consciousness. Thus it follows that from the standpoint of absolute Science it is the Truth that raises what may look like a difficulty. It is the light that throws up the shadow, the basic fact that always precedes the error. And so the solution is there before the problem. If we seek the answer by indulging in self-analysis, introspective thinking, tackling the whole situation as a personal issue, we are defeated before we start, because we are trying to find an answer from a false premise. Instead of our being disturbed or ashamed that such a difficulty should come into “our” experience, the Science of being impels us to approach the whole situation from a higher premise, namely, that the divine Principle, Love, is constantly individualizing its plan and is demanding the full acceptance of a particular truth in human consciousness at the very point where it can break through.

To human sense, this takes the form of what is called healing. Again, this was manifest in Jesus' experience as set forth in the Gospels. For instance, John records in Chapter 8 two mighty statements which Jesus made regarding the nature of spiritual man, namely, "I am the light of the world" and "Before Abraham was, I am," and immediately there follows the outcome of these great spiritual facts realized — Jesus' healing of a blind man through the denial of mortal origin.

The Truth had the initiative. It is abundantly clear that John must have understood the Science of this divine process (his Gospel specifically emphasizes the oneness of the Christ man with God), for he constantly relates his story in this scientific way. To take another instance, a little later in this Gospel he gives the Master's words, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" and "I have power to lay [my life] down, and I have power to take it again" — the understanding of the one Life— giving complete dominion over a human sense of life—and this is followed at once by the raising of Lazarus and shortly after that by Jesus' own death and resurrection. The allness of the one Life had the initiative, Truth is never static. It is Life—the life of all being. And it's irresistible power fulfils itself specifically in immediate experience according to Love's plan.



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