

October 4, 2004 - Subject: Are Sin, Disease, and Death Real?

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 an article by Mary Baker Eddy. For a brief biography on our featured authors, click [here](#).

BODY

by Mary Baker Eddy

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The term Mind and body I understand to mean God and man; man the manifestation and embodiment of Mind is the body of Mind; is the Infinite aggregation of spiritual ideas forever held, controlled, and governed by the law of Life, harmony, and completeness, so man was never born, never had a claim, never sinned, never left heaven, but is spiritual, perfect, harmonious and eternal. This understanding is the savior to our belief of body, the law of recovery of every and any claim of error. There is just one God and one body. I am the image and likeness of God; no mortal mind can confine this image in a mortal body, harm or touch it in any way, Mind has set me free from every error. Divine Love fills every avenue, flows through every channel and removes every obstruction. Man has no material body through which to express anything; his body is the body of God.

The term Mind and body literally means God and man, for man is the expression of Mind and the manifestation of Mind is the embodiment of Mind. Therefore man is God's body and there is but one God. Body is therefore the aggregation of spiritual Ideas, forever controlled and governed by the law of Life, harmonious and eternal. This understanding of perfect body is the savior of the belief of body and is the law of recovery to any and every claim of error.

It seemed a wonderful thing when advanced thinkers began to perceive certain mental laws and to apply them to the healing of the body. This mental teaching is that man is the builder or creator of his body, that he builds or forms his body through his own thought, that he can change his body by his thought, and therefore that, if he has built a sick body by wrong thinking or ignorant thinking, he can build a well body by right thinking, that by his ignorant inharmonious thought he prevents God from manifesting, and by his true and harmonious thought he brings God into manifestation.

Of course, this is a great advance over the old drug system, but it does not go far enough to satisfy the one who wishes the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It makes the body a battle ground for opposing and contending forces, wrong thinking tearing down, right thinking building up; wrong thinking creating disease, right thinking destroying disease and bringing in healthy conditions, for this teaching deals only with the changing conditions of the personal mentality and not with the changeless state of being, the changeless Mind, the omnipresence. It is better than the old way, but it is a hard way, a way of constant battle between good and evil, of hard work and doubtful results, because it deals with two powers instead of one.

Practically all metaphysical teachers agree that there is one presence, therefore one power, but they balk at the next step, which is that one power must mean one activity. Omnipresence means the full presence of God as all, that God is everywhere, all the time. It means that God and his activity is all there is, not only of the invisible, but of the visible, not only of the formless, but of the formed. Therefore it must follow that the formed is as perfect as the formless, the manifest is as perfect as the unmanifest; for since there is but one unchanging creator, one activity, one power, one perfect Mind bringing forth its own perfect substance, it logically follows that all form is changeless and eternally perfect. The body is God incarnate, God created and formed. It is God come forth within Himself and of Himself, and man's beliefs, opinions and mental concepts are not making God manifest, nor are they hindering or preventing that manifestation. Man does not create anything. He only sees that which eternally is, which is God manifest, and calls it good or evil according to his own development.

Paul tells us, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. Our sufficiency to think is of God; our ability to form thoughts and opinions is of our own ignorance, our belief in duality, but our power or sufficiency to think is when we think with God, as God. From this basis then, we see that man's wrong or ignorant beliefs and opinions and misinterpretations do not create or produce conditions in the body or in God's substance anywhere. Wrong thinking, which is really mental chaos and confusion itself, has no power to create. It does not create conditions of disease. The wrong thinking itself, the mental confusion and chaos itself is the condition, for the condition is wholly and entirely of that personal mentality.

There is no condition in substance, for substance is God. A condition is not a tangible something which has been created in the body by a belief of evil or an ignorant attitude. The definition given in the College Normal Class is this: A condition is that conception of Truth which is limited and temporal. It is not something which the limited conception has created, but the limited conception itself. It has no place anywhere but in the realm of chaos and confusion, the place of opinions and conclusions, based on a false premise. That there is a condition, is all the condition there is.

The inharmonious belief does not create an inharmonious condition. The belief of lack is the lack. The belief of disease is the disease. That is why the body seems to change as man's thinking changes. It is simply as beliefs of disease and

imperfections fall away, and our thinking is corrected and held true to Truth, so that mental chaos and confusion no longer cloud our vision, we see the body as God sees it, as it eternally is. Then it stands revealed to us in its beauty and its glory, the temple, not made with hands. All that our ignorance does is to affect our vision, or view of things. It does not change anything that God has made.

We do not handle substance through our personal thought to change it. We only see according to our thought, our degree of enlightenment. Walt Whitman said, "The world is jagged and broken to him who is jagged and broken," to him whose mental realm is dark. If one's thought is ignorant and unenlightened, it changes his vision as a cloud of mist. As he looks through the cloud he sees this world, the body, all things, distorted, abnormal and wrong.

If the mental atmosphere is dark and dense, we see but dimly and are not able to perceive the perfection that is. Man does not by mental effort bring God into manifestation, neither does he through wrong thinking prevent God's manifestation. God IS and God is manifest, and it is not in the power of unenlightened personal thought or mental effort to obstruct or hinder the activity of God, or to mar or to deface the perfection of God's creation.

The only thing that depends upon my thinking, the only thing that is affected by it, the only thing that responds to it, is my vision, my realization. I may be ignorant of the truth of the body, but that does not alter the body itself. It is whole and perfect now, not because I think it is, but because it is God manifest. Thinking with God, as God, shows me the perfection of the body, but the body is just as perfect before I know it as after. God's substance does not cease to be perfect just because I am ignorant of its perfection, nor does it become perfect because I find out the truth. Its wholeness does not depend upon my degree of enlightenment. It is eternally perfect because it is eternally just what God is and there is no power anywhere to make it anything else. If we are looking at it through a mental fog, opinions, doubts, fears, confusion, we shall not perceive its perfection, but that does not change the body itself any more than looking at the sun through a fog changes the sun.

All the thought that the earth was flat did not flatten the earth, did it? It just went right on being as it was, and the only thing that changed, or could change, was man's thought about it. Of course, until he reached that place, he lived as if this ignorance was the truth.

We hear a lot about spiritualizing the body through thought. This teaching regards body as physical or material and undertakes to change matter into Spirit through mental effort. Divine Science, from the basis of omnipresence, teaches that, since, there is but one substance and that substance is Spirit, there is no material body. The body is Spirit now. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." Just so long as you are trying to spiritualize the body, or to heal the body through your own mental effort, just so long as you are trying to create health, you are laboring in vain, for you are trying to do God's part, to do that which has already been done.

We live in a universe of perfect form. Not only our body, but all that is formed is literally the body of God and is perfect now. To believe that the infinite substance has been malformed through the ignorant mental activity of the individual, and must be redeemed and perfected through the same activity, is to see not one power, but two. There is no condition in the body. There is nothing in the body to be rebuilt or straightened or healed. There is nothing to change. There is nothing needed but to see God. Stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord. Your spoken word is not needed to make wholeness manifest, for wholeness is the eternal state of the unseen and the seen, the unformed and the formed; but it is needed for your unfoldment, for the unfolding and broadening and deepening of the individual until he realizes this perfection. Stop trying to think God into manifestation. God is manifest now. God's glory and perfection are everywhere visible to him that hath eyes to see.

All that we need to do-and it will keep us busy-is to train our thought faithfully and persistently in the acknowledgment of the truth of God's presence, train it to judge righteous judgment, to see God and God only, to think God and God only. Having accepted the onnipresence, hold to it no matter what the apparent condition may seem to be. In treating yourself, never deal with appearances or symptoms. Do not center your thought upon organs or functions. Infinite substance, power, intelligence and activity are in that place and do not need your suggestions. Do not try to formulate in thought the perfect body. Stop thinking about the body or trying to picture it as perfect from your standpoint. Our highest perception of the body today is far short of what body really is. Stop tinkering with it mentally. Loose it and let it go. Just know that it is God's body and that God is this moment and every moment forming it or bringing it forth according to His Word, His divine idea. Jesus recognized Lazarus as an undying manifestation of God."

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