

August 5, 2002—Subject: Spirit

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 first selection this week is from John Doorly's TALK ON THE SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE VOL.7. For a brief biography of Mr Doorly please [click here](#).

Our second selection is from the summary at the end of Peggy Brook's pamphlet GOD'S NATURE AS SPIRIT. Please [click here](#) for a short biographical sketch on Peggy Brook.

TALK No. 70
(June 7th, 1949)

ISAIAH—X
Chapters 32: 1—33: 24

The One Infinite

Let us never forget that the subject we are considering is the infinite. The infinite is one and includes everything that is true within itself, and so whatever aspect of this subject we may be considering, we are always considering the infinite One. If we were considering mathematics or music in any aspect, we would always be considering them in their oneness. The great fundamental fact of metaphysics is that "the Lord our God is one Lord," that there is only one cause, one presence, one power, one being. We need to hold that constantly in thought. Mrs. Eddy says, "Christ's Christianity is the chain of scientific being reappearing in all ages, maintaining its obvious correspondence with the Scriptures and uniting all periods in the design of God" (S. & H. 271: 1—5). Therefore whenever Truth operates in any way at all, it is the operation in some degree of the one infinite. Moreover, in considering all the categories of divine metaphysics, we can never leave the realm of that one infinite, that which is the infinite divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love.

Someone said to me, "What is the difference between divine Science, absolute Christian Science, and Christian Science?" Well, it isn't that divine Science is something here, absolute Christian Science something there, and Christian Science something some-where else, because they are all operating infinitely at the same time. Suppose you want to give a Christian Science treatment and you begin by thinking, "God is the infinite, the only. God is Life and Truth and Love." You are thinking in divine Science. Then suppose you go on and you say to yourself, "And divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love forever translates itself as infinite ideas of Life, Truth, and Love." Then you are thinking in absolute Christian Science. And suppose you think further, still in this one Christian Science treatment, and you say to yourself, "And these ideas of Life, Truth and Love, being ideas of Soul, exchange the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul." Then you are thinking in the realm of Christian Science, because you have applied Science to the human problem. So when we talk about these categories of metaphysics, do remember that we have to consider the infinite infinitely, and that they are all divine categories of the one divine Principle, which is Life and Truth and Love. Keep foremost in your thinking this sense of divine oneness.

The Development of the Christ-idea

We have been going through the Bible, and we have now come to the prophetic age, that point where the light of the Christ really began to break on thought. Before the prophetic age, the appearance of the light was in the main through persons. It came as Abraham, as Isaac, as Jacob, as Moses and so on, but when it became the light of the Christ in the time of Isaiah, it began to appear as divine system, that perfect system of metaphysics which is laid out in the first chapter of Genesis, and which permeates the whole teaching of the Bible. Then, as the Christ developed further, it appeared in the fifth thousand years of the Scriptural record as the man Christ Jesus, who demonstrated both individuality and eternity. After Jesus, the Christ began to operate as Christianity, and so it appeared as God's universal idea of Himself, which is what we call man, or creation.

In the same way, the Christ continues to develop to each one of us in thought as we progress further. At the point of Principle it comes as system, at the point of Life it comes as individuality and eternity, at the point of Truth it comes as the right idea of manhood, and at the point of Love it comes as the divine ideal.

Separating Between Spirit and Matter

I now want to consider with you a very important question. I notice these days that there is a great tendency to mix the divine metaphysics of the Bible with human philosophy. But the metaphysics of the Bible teaches clearly that as Jesus said, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Until you have understood the firmament, which is the essential symbol of the second day of creation, you are not able to separate between the flesh and the Spirit. Right at the beginning of your study of metaphysics, in the second day of creation, you have to learn to do that. Anybody who tries to find Spirit in matter, even beautiful matter, is a pantheist. Also, without knowing it, he is a Buddhist, because the Buddhist says that all is Mind, that the lamp is Mind, the book is Mind, the table is Mind, and so on. That is not the teaching of Christian Science, which states categorically that the attempt to draw any conclusions whatsoever from the testimony of the five physical senses is pantheism pure and simple. Moreover, the Bible and "Science and Health" don't just teach us that evil is unreal and leave it at that, but they teach us how to prove in infinite detail the unreality of evil.

They don't take a chunk of God, as it were, and try to destroy a chunk of evil. But they teach us how, through the infinite categories of divine metaphysics, to use definitely and specifically the ideas of Life, Truth, and Love, to destroy the myriad beliefs of sin, disease, and death.

As I told you last week, there is a great deal of nonsense being talked about God's allness and oneness, considered in an emotional and religious way, being a sufficient answer to the problem of evil. If you just say that there is only one creator and that therefore everything that exists must be His creation, and if you leave the matter there, very soon you will find yourself believing that such things as germs and disease are realities. Your premise will lead to the conclusion that if you think in any other way about them, you will be accepting two creations. Well, Mrs. Eddy calls such things dark images of mortal thought" (S & H 418: 31), and she shows perfectly clearly that it is essential to learn to separate between Spirit and matter, because you can't draw any conclusions whatever about reality except from Principle.

As you understand God as divine Mind, you know that His creation consists of ideas; as you understand God as Spirit, you know that ideas are spiritual; as you understand God as Soul, you know that those ideas are definite and they are identified with God; as you understand God as Principle, you know that those ideas demonstrate Principle; as you understand God as Life, you know that those ideas are eternal and indestructible; as you understand God as Truth, you know that those ideas are of the nature of true manhood; and as you understand God as Love, you know that those ideas are forever fulfilled in divine Love. But to draw any conclusions whatsoever from mortality is hopeless, it is pantheism. Moreover, just to say that materiality is unreal and leave it at that by going off into what is supposed to be a highly exalted state of spiritual sense, and call that divine Science, is just the doctrine of Buddhism, of what is termed Nirvana.

Our civilization is face to face with very real issues, and what we need is something which will enable us to meet those issues and prove the unreality in every detail of sin, disease, and death. We don't want something which is so abstract that it doesn't deal with the mortal. If you just say that all there is is reality, and you don't recognize anything else, the devil will agree with you. He will say, "Very well, all there is is spiritual reality, but meanwhile here is a so-called material universe going through hell, and you are doing nothing about it. You are simply shutting it out and saying that it doesn't exist." But the purpose of Christian Science is to save mankind from the hell of materiality. Mrs. Eddy writes: "I shall not forget the cost of investigating, for this age, the methods and power of error" (Mis. 222: 29-30); and she also says: "I never knew a student who fully understood my instructions on this point of handling evil" (Mis. 292: 28-30).

But what do we know about that process today? We handle evil through our ordered and scientific understanding of the divine infinite calculus, and we handle it with intelligence and authority. The Word of God is that aspect or category of divine metaphysics which disperses the darkness; then the Christ is that category which "comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error," which is a very different thing. The Word says, "Let there be light," and it shows you how that light will develop, and disperse the darkness to some extent; but the Christ is the "divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error" (S & H 583:10-11) organic life, or life in the flesh. Then Christianity is that category which scientifically obliterates the mortal concept.

Remember that all three processes are essentially ordered. The Word as the breaking of the light must operate in a divinely ordered way, and surely the intelligent approach to any subject must always be ordered. If it were disordered, how could you learn it? The breaking of the light in mathematics is ordered, and you can learn and grasp mathematical values, because they are ordered. If there were no order, there could be no values.

As the light of the Word breaks and you gain some sense of God as the divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, that begins to operate in your thought in an equally ordered way as the coming of the Christ, which is subjective. Moreover, that Christ irresistibly "comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error"—it doesn't just remain in the realm of metaphysical abstractions which ignore the claims of error. It shows you how scientifically and systematically to prove in every detail the nothingness of sin, disease, and death. All error ever asks is to be let alone; it doesn't ask anything else of any Christian but that. But Christian Science shows you how to handle it with authority as soon as you touch the Christ.

Then as you reach Christianity, which is the demonstration of Principle, you begin little by little, detail after detail, to obliterate the mortal concept altogether. You don't obliterate it all at once, but little by little, until eventually you arrive at the pure demonstration of spiritual values, which leads you to the basis or the platform of Science.

The Significance of the Firmament

Before we go any further, I want to remind you of what Mrs. Eddy says about the second day in Genesis and the symbol of the firmament. To me this is super-important, and it shows so clearly the futility of so-called higher metaphysics, which says that because God is all there is only one universe, and that therefore the material universe is a dim sense of that one universe. It isn't anything of the kind. It is no more our dim sense of the divine universe than $2 + 2 = 5$ is a dim sense of mathematics. $2 + 2 = 5$ is no sense of mathematics, it is "non-sense." Unless we people get this question clear in our thought we won't go anywhere at all; we shall just have mingling, and mingling is the curse of metaphysics.

So Mrs. Eddy writes of this second day: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." Spiritual understanding, by which human conception, material sense, is separated from Truth, is the firmament. The divine Mind, not matter, creates all identities, and they are forms of Mind, the ideas of Spirit apparent only as Mind, never as mindless matter nor the so-called material senses.

"And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so." Spirit imparts the understanding which uplifts consciousness and leads into all truth. The Psalmist saith: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea," Spiritual sense is the discernment of spiritual good. Understanding is the line of demarcation between the real and unreal. Spiritual understanding unfolds Mind,—Life, Truth, and Love,—and demonstrates the divine sense, giving the spiritual proof of the universe in Christian Science ... God's ideas reflect the immortal, unerring, and infinite. The mortal, erring, and finite are human beliefs, which apportion to themselves a task impossible for them, that of distinguishing between the false and the true." Only Spirit can discern between the false and the true, nothing else can. "Objects utterly unlike the original do not reflect that original. Therefore matter, not being the reflection of Spirit, has no real entity" (S & H 505: 4-25, 28-5).

If the carnal mind could have made a universe more unlike God's universe than the material universe, it would have done so. Mrs. Eddy says that "from first to last, the body is a sensuous, human concept" (S & H 177:13-14).

God's man is idea, the mortal man is belief. God's idea is infinite; the mortal man is finite. God's idea is spiritual; the mortal man is material. God's idea is from everlasting to everlasting; mortal man begins, gets sick, and dies. And so in every way "human conception, material sense," is as unlike reality as it can be. So for goodness' sake don't let's try to draw conclusions about reality from the material universe, because if we do, we shall be drawing our conceptions of reality from the only hell there is, the hell of materiality. Unless we have a firmament, unless we have that spiritual understanding which separates human conception, material sense, from Truth, we shall never go anywhere.

A SUMMARY

Let us conclude by summarizing this sevenfold sense of Spirit as we have taken it here, feeling the reality of these statements and Jesus' words in connection with them.

Spirit as Mind is the pure unfoldment of reality that is creation.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Spirit as Spirit is the substance of all reality.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Spirit as Soul is the pure understanding of good that constitutes the firmament.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Spirit as Principle is the strength of oneness.

"He that cometh from heaven is above all ... For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."

Spirit as Life is the rhythm of Spirit that is infinite progression—the chain of scientific being.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and thy are life."

Spirit as Truth is the one pure reflection appearing as the divine standard.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Spirit as Love is the purity of holiness that blesses man and abides with him forever.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

There has always been resistance to the acceptance of the allness of *Spirit* and the nothingness of matter. Perhaps this is because in general the *spiritual* has been thought of as vague and intangible, and has never been associated with science by the average man. However, the time is with us when enlightened thought is naturally gravitating towards this inevitable spiritual conclusion.

As we have seen, intelligent reasoning processes in the research fields of science and medicine are leading to nonmaterial conclusions as to the nature of reality. Theology is plunging deeper into the truths it has taught and finding a dimension of depth in its teachings,—a dimension which leads away from outward forms to the spirit of truth.

The time may be nearer than we think when "material substances or mundane formations, astronomical calculations, and all the paraphernalia of speculative theories, based on the hypothesis of material law or life and intelligence resident in matter, will ultimately vanish, swallowed up in the infinite calculus of Spirit" (S. & H. 209: 25-30).

This is not a happening that takes place independent of man, however. It is not a state of millennial glory which he will be happy to receive when it comes to pass. It inevitably demands his spiritual participation. We have spoken often of the substance of Spirit, but this substance is no objective reality. Man can only experience it as he is actively conscious of letting Mind's ideas unfold to him and as him, relying on spiritual substance alone, and willing always to be the "firmament" of understanding in all his ways. Moreover, Spirit demands that man abides in the strength of oneness, never dropping to the level of seeking merely material results from spiritual understanding. It demands that he recognizes his only history as forever in and of the eternal order of spiritual being, willing to accept his birthright as Truth's reflection. It is only through such conscious, active reflecting of Spirit that man can experience the blessing of the eternal Comforter,—Spirit as All-in-all,—and this in no far-off future, but here and now.



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