

Science and Health and the Church Manual

Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today

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PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH

3. Marriage

Basing ourselves on the true idea of communion, atonement, and therefore of wedlock, taught us spiritually in the first two chapters, we come naturally to the third chapter, "Marriage," where we reproduce morally in our daily lives what it means to be wedded to the divine Principle Love, and therefore to one another. For this is where our outward humanity reflects, in increasing measure, the Principle taught us in the first chapter, and which is shown as being fully demonstrated by Jesus in the second.

In the organic sense of marriage (body-joining, or church-joining, which is here being outgrown) sexually separated mortals join themselves together secretly, for the purpose of reproducing openly the image of their own mortality.

In purely scientific terms, the Word as the Word (typified by the little open book--- first section, first chapter) having led to the Word as the Christ (typified by the God-crowned woman--- second section, second chapter), we arrive at the Word as Christianity, which, in the textbook, is the third chapter, "Marriage," and in the third section of "The Apocalypse" is where the woman is "travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."

The chapter opens accordingly with the citing of Jesus' words to John when he is being baptized in the waters of Jordan - that is, in the waters of repentance for belief in mortal origin. "Suffer it to be so now," he says, "for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

In our own experience, Jesus' twofold baptism stands, first, for our acceptance of what is divinely true (baptism from heaven by the Holy Ghost, or by the divine idea of wedlock taught in the first two chapters) and, secondly, repentance for what is false (believing that men and women are "as gods," in opposition to the one Father-Mother God).

The fact is, God does not create man through the agency of an Adam and an Eve, but through the union of Himself and "the woman" that is, through the wedding of the divine Principle, Love, to its own uncut, non-sexual spiritual idea, or embodiment. Of this spiritual at-one-ment of God the Father with the woman in the Apocalypse "the mother of us all" our own Christ identity is born.

Hence the text at the end of the chapter: "Some day the child will ask his parent: 'Do you keep the First Commandment? Do you have one God and creator, or is man a creator?' If the father replies, 'God creates man through [mortal] man,' the child may ask, 'Do you teach that Spirit creates

materially, or do you declare that Spirit is infinite, therefore matter is out of the question?"

The truth that, in the third chapter, Spirit does not create man through the agency of mortal man, leads to the textbook's fourth chapter, where it is explained correlatively that Spirit does not communicate with humanity spiritualistically, through the mediumship of matter.

4. Christian Science versus Spiritualism

Based on the Principle taught in the first chapter, "Prayer," Jesus, in the second chapter, "Atonement and Eucharist," proves the nothingness of the mortal birth-death cycle. In the third chapter, "Marriage," in consequence, we begin to demonstrate the unreality of organic birth, and in the fourth chapter, "Christian Science versus Spiritualism," the corresponding unreality of organic death.

That God creates man through the male and female of mortality (handled in the third chapter), is basically the same misconception of life as that of Spirit supposedly communicating with (having intercourse with) humanity through the mediumship of matter in the fourth chapter.

The belief that Spirit mingles with, and operates through, its opposite, matter that matter therefore originates in Spirit; that mortal man originates in God; that evil originates in good - this, basically, is the one evil, or evil one, which the text elsewhere calls the serpent's "first voluble lie" (S & H 533:13). This primitive, mythological mingling of good and evil, Spirit and matter, appears in the fourth section of "The Apocalypse" in the form of the unbridled egotism, the lust, the hatred, the malice and greed, of the great red dragon.

The original serpent seen here as having developed into a carnivorous dragon is resistance on the part of suppositional evil to the mighty revolutionary changes in consciousness brought about by the teachings of the textbook's first three chapters, and by the Apocalypse's first three sections. The dragon is the unconscious-conscious, invisible-visible, "sum total of human error," described in the Apocalypse's first section as "elementary, latent error" and its outcome, "visible error and ample sin." As a second "wonder in heaven," he is the mythological reversal of the first wonder, namely, the God-crowned woman herself.

That he appears supposedly in heaven is suggestive of his claim to have originated in God. This primordial lie, this fundamental statement of evil, must be handled at the point of each individual consciousness through union with God as the source of all that truly exists. Because the dragon does not originate divinely he does not in fact originate at all. He is without cause, without effect, has no actual existence, and is therefore without visible form.

The difference between the two heavenly "wonders" is the difference between the human race as it is in Science and its mask-like, temporal, unreal appearance suggested mesmerically by the mortal senses.

No spiritualistic mediumship, no division of man from God, exists therefore in Christian Science. No obstruction in the form of material obstetrics, or a temporal birth-death cycle, lies in between. There is thus no such thing as the breakup of the one Spirit into a plurality of good and evil spirits communicating with mortals through the mediumship of good and evil personalities. The spiritualistic belief of matter here now but Spirit hereafter, life in matter before death but life in Spirit after is

obsolete in Christian Science. What the term signifies is God and man one and inseparable here, now, forever. But how is the nothingness of this "sum total of human error," typified by the dragon, to be proved? By understanding how to unmask it. By knowing how, in Science to remove a deceiving, hypocritical mask seeming to hide the face of reality, and so distort the face of God. In proportion as this is done (as in the coming fifth chapter) God and man, Spirit and its reflection, the deep underlying realities of consciousness and what appears as the visible surface of consciousness will be found one in identity, with no obstructing egotism in between.

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