

Science and Health and the Church Manual

Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today

W. Gordon Brown

PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH

13. Teaching Christian Science

In the thirteenth section of "The Apocalypse," corresponding to the textbook's thirteenth chapter, "Teaching Christian Science," there appears, in consequence, a new heaven and a new earth. This is heaven and earth in their original undivided reality, the old material sense of them as separable having passed away, so that there is no more occult sea.

We have found freedom at last from the murderous assaults of outside indoctrination, from political and religious methods of insemination, from hypnotic compulsions to toe the party line, which all false teaching methods engender in one form or another.

This means to say, we have passed from death to life, or rather our real immortal life has passed over death. We have partaken fully of the original Paschal (Passover) meal. We have passed through the city's twelve open gates (the twelve preceding sections of the foursquare framework) into the heart of the city itself (the remaining four sections). In accordance with Revelation 22:14, we have won our right to the tree of life, having kept the divine commandments.

Earth being thus born of heaven (not of sea) is, as shown in the text of this thirteenth section, the human consciousness "which God bestows," and is identical with our being taught Christian Science divinely of God instead of its being inseminated humanly by man.

Hence, in the prophecy of God's "new covenant" (correlative with the appearing of this new heaven and earth) we read: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts... And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest"(Heb 8:10-11).

And the conditions for being thus taught of God rather than of man are the divine ethics, the spiritually based morality, demanded throughout the textbook's thirteenth chapter.

14. Recapitulation

We come therefore to the great summarizing fourteenth chapter itself where, as a result of conforming to the ethical demands made in the thirteenth chapter, we are taught of God, and not of man. And this fact is represented correspondingly in the fourteenth section of "The Apocalypse" "by the descent from God out of heaven of the universal bridal city, given away by God the Father for Lamblike (selfsacrificing) humanity to wed as its body, or as its real spiritual self.

This holy, foursquare city is none other than man himself as the idea of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love (in the textbook's fourteenth chapter - S & H 465) in actual manifestation as the Word, Christ, Christianity, Science (in the Apocalypse's fourteenth section - S & H 575).

14. Recapitulation (cont.)

Whereas, therefore, "Teaching Christian Science" stipulates the moral requirements for our being taught of God, "Recapitulation" summarizes systematically what it is that God teaches. "Recapitulation," in other words, is the textbook's epitome of all its teachings, and therefore of the teachings of the whole vast subject of Christian Science.

We have turned unreservedly from person to Principle, and have moved therefore from humanity as mortality to humanity as the manifestation of divinity itself. These, says the text, are "God's requirements," to which every student must resolutely conform.

Unless these requirements are properly acceded to, and all unethical, occult malpractice, all control of persons by persons, is rejected, it is impossible for the student to be taught of God he can only be taught of man. Hence, at the end of the chapter, what Mary Baker Eddy says she founded was a scientific system of ethics, "which neither dishonesty nor ignorance can ever overthrow.

'What are you God?' we ask, in effect, at the beginning of the chapter. And the answer comes: 'I am incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. This is my infinitely synonymous idea of Myself, and is therefore what you, man, are as the body of Me, God. The form this idea takes in its unity and in its diversity is the rhythmically structured healing system of the Word, Christ, Christianity, Science, which is the true idea of church. Never is this a thing of numerical, measurable quantity, but always of infinite, unexpendable quality. Therefore it is that you, man, are the very spirit (little s) of Me, God, Spirit (capital S).'

At the close of "Recapitulation" (where we reach the chapter's final question and answer) man qualifies for membership of the all-harmonious Christ-body (Christ's church), as being the embodiment of the Principle which is Love. For at this point we arrive at the Christian Science Tenets. To these Tenets all individuals must lovingly subscribe in order to be members of the church-body.

"For as the body is one," says Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, "and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (I Cor 12:12).

Here, then, the first part of Science and Health ends, and the second part called "Key to the Scriptures" begins. Because of all that the first fourteen chapters now mean to us (closing with the Christian Science Tenets) we are able to enter upon the four remaining chapters of the book, where we are qualified members of the one universal church.

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