

## **Science and Health and the Church Manual**

***Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today***

*W. Gordon Brown*

### ***PART II CHURCH MANUAL***

#### **Pastor Emeritus: Principle**

No one could reasonably doubt that the Pastor Emeritus, who heads the list, stands for the one all-governing Principle voicing its Word of supreme authority through the church's "dual and impersonal pastor," the Bible and Science and Health (Mis 322:10). Because of her fidelity to the pastorate of the divine Principle, Love, Mary Baker Eddy's apparently personal pastorate (having, in 1889, dissolved the organization, and having, in 1892, resurrected this in temporarily rebuilt form) merited honourable retirement. The word "emeritus," from the root "to merit," means accordingly "retired from office." What the Pastor Emeritus typifies therefore is Principle's own absolute government of its world-wide body, or church.

#### **Board of Directors: Mind**

That which, under the authority of Principle, owns the church property and directs its affairs, is the body's all-knowing, all-wise, all-controlling Mind, or intelligence —the very Mind of the Principle itself.

Four Directors only appear in the legal Deed of Trust, given them in 1892, in which they are allowed to be self-perpetuating, and where the church is known solely as The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston. This number was increased to five in the Manual of 1902, where the church is known also as The Mother Church. In the Manual, the Board is not self-perpetuating, because Mrs Eddy's personal approval is required for the election of its members.

Two distinct Boards are evident, therefore, a fiduciary Board consisting of four members, and an ecclesiastical Board consisting of five. (Remember, in the story of Abraham in the Old Testament, how a battle raged between four kings and five! - Gen 14.)

But why is it that, in the Manual only, the change was made from four to five? To ensure that the "Mother" aspect of The First Church of Christ, Scientist (safe only in the hands of the Pastor Emeritus), dissolves with the passing of Mary Baker Eddy, leaving only self-governing branch churches (including The First Church of Christ, Scientist, operating under its own Deed of Trust, where its directors are four and self-perpetuating) to constitute the world-wide Christian Science Church.

Five directors, administering illegally an authoritarian organization (governed no longer by the Principle of the Pastor Emeritus but by themselves personally) typify, it seems, the five organic senses holding the body in the grip of mortal mind, and therefore under "laws of limitation."

Four directors, on the other hand, owning and administering The First Church of Christ, Scientist, as the local Boston church, typify the church's real spiritual estate, the holy city itself, with its four cardinal points reaching out in all directions at once.

In view of this, examine carefully (in Joseph Armstrong's *The Mother Church* p62), what is called the Directors' Window in the original Mother Church edifice. Designed with the authority of Mrs Eddy herself, this window depicts the holy city as the "city of our God" (S & H 577), in that it incorporates these four unbounded cardinal directions.

In Science, the body which is man, is possessed and activated by the all-directing Mind which is God, in order, says the textbook, that we may "unite with the one Mind," and so bring out "the proper sense of God's *unerring direction*" (S & H 424:7 - italics added).

## President: Soul

Under the control of Principle's all-directing Mind, the church is presided over by infinite *Soul*. Typified by its symbol, the "sun". (S&H 595:1) Soul presides over the body which is man even as the sun's "central stillness" (S & H 121:24) does over its own solar system. The word preside is from the root "before + to sit." Thoroughly conversant with the church's rules of conduct, the President takes charge of its annual meetings, when the church is represented as coming together as one body.

When, under Principle's provisions, the five directors yield to the four, this would seem to typify the five organic senses yielding to the senses of Soul, and therefore to Soul's presidency of the body. On the other hand, "When what we erroneously term the five *physical senses are misdirected*, they are simply the manifested beliefs of mortal mind, which affirm that life, substance, and intelligence are material, instead of spiritual" (S & H 274:17 - italics added).

## First and Second Readers: Spirit and Life

In Principle's orderly system of government, the Bible and *Science and Health* stand for the inseparable manhood and womanhood of God, having one Mind, and being one in identity in Soul. Together they voice the Word of God. The two Church Readers (consisting ideally of a man and a woman) impart this Word to the assembled congregation. The First Reader reads from *Science and Health*, the Second Reader reads from the *Bible*.

*Science and Health* articulates the pure language of *Spirit*, as the opposite of the language of matter, and in so doing translates the language of matter back into its original spiritual tongue. The Bible is known as the Book of Life. The Bible, interpreted thus by the 'new tongue' of Spirit, becomes to us our "sufficient guide to eternal Life" (S&H 497:3).

What Mary Baker Eddy originally discovered, she said, was "Life in and of Spirit; this Life being the sole reality of existence" (Mis 24:17). Afterwards she recorded her discovery in *Science and Health*, as constituting the Bible's spiritual and original meaning. "Even the Scriptures," she wrote later, "gave no direct interpretation of the scientific basis for demonstrating the spiritual Principle of healing, until our heavenly Father saw fit, through the Key to the Scriptures, in *Science and Health*, to unlock this 'mystery of godliness'" (Ret 37:16).

The language of Spirit in *Science and Health* becomes, in this way, the Key to the understanding of Life, as unfolded by the Bible.

## Clerk: Truth

Through the ministry of Christ, or Truth, man is said to be "reconciled to God" (II Cor 5:20). A relevant By-law declares accordingly, "All applications for membership must be addressed to the Clerk of the Church" (Man 36:24).

What is the idea behind this symbol? Surely that only through Christ as the mediatorial head of the body does man join himself to, or become a member of, the universal Christ-embodiment, or the true idea of church.

The term *Christ*, like the term *Truth*, conveys the idea of God and man one and inseparable, and the impossibility of their ever being fragmented or torn apart. The office of Clerk in the running of the organized church is likewise mediatorial. All correspondence, all communications, between membership and church are, therefore, to be conducted (says the Manual) through the office of the Clerk.

### **Treasurer: Love**

Throughout Mrs Eddy's writings, the term Love, the seventh and last term in the Christianity order, is characterized by ideas of riches, recompense, wealth, treasure, and by the divine bestowal of all that is good. The outpouring gift of God, the gift of divine grace, the divine affluence, as well as that which meets every human need, result from the fact that the all-providing Principle of the body which is man, is infinite divine Love.

Man's real treasury, his true riches, are to be found in the limitless capital resources of his system of capitalized, synonymous terms for the one absolute God. The single consummate term which defines for him his munificent divine *Treasurer* is, accordingly, impartial, inexhaustible, universal *Love*.

In the spiritual reality of church (where the accent is universal Christianity) Principle, Mind, Soul, Spirit, Life, Truth, Love thus govern harmoniously the system of spiritual relationships which is their own embodiment. Their government is reflected symbolically in the human picture by the Officers of the Christian Science Mother Church, whose duty, under the authority of the Pastor Emeritus, is to lead the membership to the point of total self-government under this same sevenfold Principle, free from outside maternal control.

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