

A Christian Science Lecture Entitled

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: A SYSTEMATIC HEALING POWER

by

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INTRODUCTION

One winter day, while driving down the freeway, I noticed a flock of birds crossing my path against a stormy west wind. I was able to watch them for quite awhile because it appeared they weren't traveling forward. They would fly a few feet westward, turn, fly farther eastward, turn, and fly westward once again. You've heard it said, one for you, two for me, two for you, three for me - well, this flock could have echoed, two feet back, one foot forward, three feet back, two feet forward. This wasn't a haphazard approach to their destination. It was a picture of systematic progress. And the impressive result was that they were actually getting somewhere - they were systematically arriving where their search was directed.

Much like this storm-enduring flock, mankind is searching for its destination. Satisfaction and fulfillment sometimes seem just beyond grasp. Sensualism demands. Selfishness motivates. Partaking of a feast of materiality, for many, has become unfulfilling. It's been said that the 1980's were the years of selfishness - materialism at its height. Today one's heart is deeply moved by the war-torn peoples from the center of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the tribesmen of the Rain Forest, from the peaks of Nagorno-Karabakh to the terror of Soweto. Thus the yearning for fulfillment drives us to search for answers and progress, for a

systematic healing power which offers solutions to stormy situations.

No matter what the difficulty, there is available today a healing power which is effective. It halts not at the door of fear. It confidently enters the chamber of sin and exits victoriously leaving the individual whole. This healing power has been recorded over thousands of years. It's found with the pastor of Christian Science: the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.

This pastor teaches us of God's presence and power. The Book of Leviticus records God as saying, "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (26:12). God walks with us. This must mean that He's with us to help us, during times of untoward winds.

Recently, a friend asked me how one should think of God. He said that when he thinks of God it's hard for him not to think of an object or an over-sized human being or something out there somewhere that is somehow caring and governing. This difficulty doesn't belong solely to my friend. Many are unsure of how to think of God. Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, writes in her Textbook, "In the Saxon and twenty other tongues good is the term for God" (S&H 286).

Isn't this how we could think of God? God literally means good. Thus we can surmise that whatever is good is of God. And consequently, whatever is not good is not of God. We know this because through the Scriptures we learn of the impossibility of God being involved in anything that appears to be inharmonious. Jesus taught, "...there is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark 10:18). Thus the attempted intrusion of inharmony within one's life can be ruled out of existence by apprehending God as the source and cause of all good and thus the destroyer of all evil.

And there we've described God a little more: as source and cause. God is the source of good not evil. He is the cause of health not disease. This concept of an all good and powerful God may be a bit startling for some, for mankind has believed in a temperamental God since time began.

By some, God is believed to act haphazardly upon one's life depending upon the frequency or preference of the one negotiating with Him. He is believed to be unpredictable. However, Christian Science teaches that it's because of our belief that God vacillates that we find our prayers unfulfilled, because our concept of God is limited to an entity, bound by our own misconceptions. Thus, to turn confidently to God, our misconceptions of Him should be dissolved, because our thought is always externalized in our lives.

Someone once said, "What makes us men is that we can think logically. What makes us human is that we sometimes choose not to" (Ebert, Commentary on "Rising Sun"). What we choose to believe determines our experience. If we choose to believe in a God who is only merciful, sporadically, we could hardly rely upon Him when He's most needed; but if we choose to turn to God through righteous prayer, we'll find Him, even in our greatest hour of need.

Turning confidently to God requires that we worship Him for what He is. Jesus taught that "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). In Christian Science, Spirit is a synonym for God. Divine Mind, Soul, Truth, and Principle are also synonyms which are applied to God through these teachings. They help elucidate God's essence and nature.

There was a quotation in *The New York Times* which said, "People see God every day, they just don't recognize him" (Pearl Bailey, 11-26-67). Physical scientists and astronomers see God every day in the orderliness of the universe. Through the science of mathematics they prove there is a systematic principle behind the formation of the cosmos. And you and I see God every day, in the good that is expressed. In the love that is felt. In God's expression, the real man. The Bible tells us that, "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him" (Gen.5:1).

In the likeness of God was man made. Thus we can correctly reason that if God is good, man must be

good. And since man is made in the very likeness of God, he is under God's care.

The relationship of God and man is inseparable, though distinct. God will always be God and man must always be man. God, the great cause, must have an effect. That effect is man. Thus just as cause and effect are inseparable, God and man are inseparable. This is why man is, in reality, cared for, no matter what the physical senses are declaring.

It appears we're not cared for because of our misconceptions of God and man's relationship, hence Paul's teaching, "...be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom.12:2).

To renew one's mind is to turn from the misconceptions of God and man, to reality - man made in God's likeness. And because thought is always objectified, putting off false thoughts and ways, puts them out of experience.

In writing about Christian Science Mrs. Eddy says, "By this system,.. man has a changed recognition of his relation to God. He is no longer obliged to sin, be sick, and die to reach heaven, but is required and empowered to conquer sin, sickness, and death; thus, as image and likeness, to reflect Him who destroys death and hell. By this reflection, man becomes the partaker of that Mind whence sprang the universe" (Misc.235). What a wonderful recognition: that man is no longer obliged to sin, be sick, and die, but rather, required and empowered to conquer sin, sickness, and death because man is the image and likeness, the reflection, of God, good.

For many years I was plagued with a growth on my eyelid that was obvious to me. Then one day, after learning more about God, I decided I should turn to Him and pray as taught in Christian Science. I prayed daily to dissolve the misconception that man is separated from God, and based my thinking upon God's omnipresence and omnipotence.

His omnipresence and omnipotence were enlightening to me because I could reason that since God

was always present there was no room for an opposite power. I mentally began yielding to His power, but there was no outward improvement. In fact, the growth became even more evident. I felt like the storm-enduring flock going against strong winds. And at times I felt incapable of effecting a cure. My search seemed hopeless. Eventually though, steadfastness won out. I doubled my earnest efforts, but there was still no change.

Then one day I came to the realization that I had systematically, or should I say consistently, prayed for myself. And I don't mean to imply that consistency has anything to do with the limitation of time, but rather the perception of spiritual sense that knows that when thought is aligned with God one's life is aligned with God. And because I had consistently relied upon divine Principle I could go a step further and rely upon God enough to let His work appear to me. And I knew that it would because, the Bible teaches, man is already made in God's likeness.

I don't know how much time passed, but instead of sitting down each day, as if I were pumping weights, to pray to effect a cure, I began to see God's orderliness and man's usefulness all around me. Not long after this I reached up to rub my eye. The growth was completely gone.

Though it looked as if I weren't advancing at all, the healing was taking place in consciousness which was manifested in my experience.

Now this doesn't mean that just because it appears we're not advancing we should stop praying! Think of what would have happened if the birds stopped flapping! I never stopped praying, my prayer was being manifested in my life and this resulted in healing.

I learned that man is required and empowered to conquer false evidences. (Man is empowered because he reflects God). And I learned that divine Principle is ever-ready to help us accomplish our tasks when we're ready to align thought with God. By turning to Him and simultaneously turning away from material beliefs we're transformed.

Christian Science is systematic in its approach. It's systematic because it adheres to divine Principle, God, without deviation. It rests its truths upon demonstration. It can be proven by anyone seeking God's kingdom, for Christ Jesus taught, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt.6:33).

PRAYER AND FASTING

The Bible records that there was a time when the disciples were unable to heal a young boy. So, they brought him to Jesus for healing. In Matthew we read: "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matt.17:14-21).

Jesus' reply that this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting was an instruction to his disciples to cultivate more spirituality. He was teaching them to base their thinking upon God. Because he knew thought based upon God results in healing.

Thought based upon God prayerfully seeks and finds Him. Prayer in Christian Science can be petitionary. But highest prayer is based upon the unity of God and man. It is an awareness of God's presence and power. It begins and ends with God, and necessarily includes God's creation, the real man.

This is the prayer, or spiritual awareness, that Jesus taught.

Prayer is spiritual right thinking which aligns thought with God. It tends towards a receptivity which otherwise might not be cultivated. And receptiveness to God is a receptiveness to good. Thus aligning thought with God, aligns experience with God, and blessings ensue.

The second command that Jesus made was the command to heal through fasting. Fasting, in Christian Science, is the mental fasting from false concepts. It always accompanies prayer. It means to mentally put aside hatred and fear; and to clothe our thought and actions with the spiritual understanding, the compassion, our prayer and heart is searching for.

Fasting is true sacrifice that enables us to rid ourselves of wrong thinking which, when destroyed, destroys wrong doing. For the more one learns of God and man, the more one sees that thought will always result in experience. Thus the need to fast mentally from whatever is ungodlike.

An American author, Edna Ferber, once wrote, "Roast beef, Medium, is not only a food. It is a philosophy. Seated at Life's Dining Table, with the menu of Morals before you, your eye wanders a bit over the entrees, the hors d'oeuvres, and the things a la though you know that Roast Beef, Medium is safe and sane, and sure."

OK. Seated at Life's Dining Table, with the menu of Morals before us, our eye wanders a bit over the entrees of secularism, the hors d'oeuvres of sensualism, and the a las of materialism, but the religion of Jesus is always the safest, sanest, and surest approach to healing because it is systematically based on divine Principle, God. Our spiritual fasting begins when we prayerfully put off the side dishes of mortality. Self-sacrifice, or fasting, doesn't necessarily mean doing without things. It doesn't mean we need to starve, go without roast beef, or stop participating in good activities. It does mean to put off harmful thoughts and ways which rob us and others of harmony and peace. Doing without anger. Taking a vow of temperance. Renewing our lives

through renewing our spiritual sense - (and we do this through prayer) these are some of the ways we immolate ourselves. Sacrificing false concepts for spiritual understanding regenerates our lives.

We may feel we've greatly sinned and that forgiveness is far from our experience. However, through prayer, constant self-immolation, and selflessness, we can begin to gain our redemption by fasting as taught in Christian Science.

Sin is wrong thought manifesting itself in wrong action. To change the actions we must first change the thoughts. Constantly striving to be more Godlike, endeavoring to be the image and likeness of God, right here, right now, is consistent prayer, expressed in thought and life simultaneously. It is divine power which brings everything into balance with divine Principle.

When a scribe questioned Christ Jesus about the Ten Commandments, and after Jesus answered him by teaching him to love God and his neighbor, the scribe wisely replied, "...for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mk.12:32,33). This is true sacrifice - true fasting - self-immolation which never really ends but unites us with God, good.

It is this true fasting which Jesus taught his disciples to cultivate as he did. He fasted by refusing intolerance. He replaced it with patience. He abstained from mere human sympathy. He indulged in healing compassion. He never temporized with materiality, but proved his words by his works when he healed, systematically, hereditary diseases and raised the dead. His systematic healing power was taught to his disciples who in turn employed this power to benefit others. And today we find this healing power through the teachings of Christian Science.

The spiritual understanding of God and man's unity is what makes Christian Science systematic. It doesn't just make things better, but

literally dissolves the discord. Like Jesus and his disciples, we too, today, can prove that prayer based upon God and man's unity is prayer based in success.

An acquaintance of mine, in attempt to fix something above his head, accidentally emptied a full tube of super-glue into his eye when the tube fell apart in his hands. He said that besides being quite painful he could immediately feel his eye being glued shut. He couldn't open it at all. My friend began to pray and he called a Christian Science practitioner to help him. A practitioner is someone who devotes his full time to healing solely through prayer as taught in Christian Science. Throughout the night my friend prayed and fasted. Through prayer he mentally fought against the fear of lack of vision and pain. And he fasted, or abstained from false concepts, by aligning His thought with God. Many times that night he tried stretching his eyelid open. The glue was solidly holding it shut.

He continued praying throughout the night and into the next day. But there was no outward change. He did say, however, that he began to feel confident that God was ever-available, helping him. Much more than mere blind faith, my friend's confidence in God was based in his spiritual understanding of God's presence.

Later on, that same day, after still no change, my friend contacted the makers of super-glue and asked if there was any solvent that could help him, "No," they replied, "not any." He then contacted an emergency room at a near-by hospital to ask if they had any solvent, they also replied, "No."

Undiscouraged, my friend persisted in prayer. About that time, someone with him reached up and began to pull the eyelid apart, just as he had tried many times the night before, but this time it came easily apart and all the glue came out. My friend's prayer brought healing by transforming his thinking which transformed his experience.

He said that at that second the healing had taken place. There was no recovery period of any kind. However, the prediction had been

made that he would always have sight problems with that eye. But my friend had spent the night in prayer, mentally fasting from false concepts, partaking of spiritual understanding, and he never did have any difficulty with his eye or his vision. He was perfectly healed.

Now, during this difficulty, it appeared that my friend wasn't making any progress. And had he based his prognosis upon matter and its misconceptions that might have been the conclusion. But by basing his spiritual evaluation upon divine Principle, and prayerfully transforming his thinking, he systematically proved God and man's unity.

Through prayer and fasting he proved Christian Science to be the safest, sanest, and surest approach to healing. If Christian Science just temporized with this difficulty it would have done my friend no good, he needed healing, and he turned to Christian Science, a healing power - which proved unfaillingly practical in its premise and conclusion.

FEAST AND FAMINE

In her book, *Christ and Christmas*, Mrs. Eddy writes,

“To-day, as oft, away from sin
Christ summons thee!
Truth pleads to-night:
Just take Me in!
No mass for Me!”

What are we being summoned to? And by what? Isn't it the same thing that mankind is searching for? A feast of Soul and a famine of sense. We're being summoned to feast on the presence and power of God, to take Truth, God, in, within consciousness, to cast out sin. And we're being summoned by Christ, the spiritual idea of God.

Mrs. Eddy defined prayer when she once wished her household "...a feast of Soul and a famine of sense" (My.263). Isn't this what we are all yearning for? Isn't this our real search? To find Soul, God, abundant within our experience. To find God's symmetry outlining our lives in beauty. To find Him ever-available. To have a famine of sense. To put out of thought and action rampant

materiality, and sensuality. Through spiritual feasting, or prayer, the material senses are famished, and Soul-sense, or Christ, the ideal of Truth, flourishes within consciousness and experience.

The Bible teaches that it's "the Christ in you, the hope of glory," the Christ in you, the Christ in me. We each innately have the Christ consciousness within. The Christ is the presence of the right idea of God. It's man made in God's likeness.

The Christ summons the human consciousness to give up limiting misconceptions, and put on through prayer, a deep, clear understanding of God and man's unity. This summoning of the Christ is the call to have a famine of material-sense, through lack of expression, through lack of a witness. It's the call to have a feast of Soul. St. Paul put it much more eloquently when he said, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb.12:1).

There's a country song titled "Travelin' Shoes." The refrain is: "...all God's children need travelin' shoes; To walk the road that's narrow but it's true; We can't stop here we're just passin' through; That's why all God's children need travelin' shoes." The road is narrow which Christ leads us on. And we do need mental travelin' shoes to follow its summons, to run with patience the race that is set before us. Shod with mental travelin' shoes aimed for the feast of Soul, we'll find we're leaving behind us the famine of sense.

Heeding Christ's summons, blending thought with God, individualizes the Christ-power, which presents man as indestructible. The Textbook states, "Christ presents the indestructible man, whom Spirit creates, constitutes, and governs. Christ illustrates that blending with God, his divine Principle, which gives man dominion over all the earth" (S&H 316).

Dominion over all the earth is the promise - dominion demonstrated on behalf of ourselves and others, just as Jesus did, and just how he taught his disciples to do. Thus we utilize this healing power systematically.

Dominion over all the earth is also dominion over false concepts because when false concepts are destroyed they can no longer be externalized. Jesus destroyed false concepts every day. And through the teachings of Christian Science we learn that today this is not only possible but mandatory.

The Textbook explains, "The physical healing of Christian Science results now, as in Jesus' time, from the operation of divine Principle, before which sin and disease lose their reality in human consciousness and disappear as naturally and as necessarily as darkness gives place to light and sin to reformation. Now, as then, these mighty works are not supernatural, but supremely natural. They are the sign of Immanuel, or 'God with us,' - a divine influence ever present in human consciousness and repeating itself, coming now as was promised aforetime,

To preach deliverance to the captives
[of sense],
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are
bruised" (xi).

A friend of mine, for more than 20 years, suffered from two lumps on the back of his head. One eventually grew so large and ugly that he hated to be seen in public. Another friend of mine once said quietly to me about this man, that when she entered church, the problem seemed so pronounced, all she could see was this difficulty. My friend had prayed about the problem plaguing him. And had had prayerful treatment from a Christian Science practitioner. But still the problem remained. He'd been told that these two lumps would be easy to remove surgically. And he was tempted to turn to materia medica. He was tempted to think that Christian Science isn't a safe, effective method for everyone, particularly for himself at that time. He was tempted to believe that it isn't systematic. Then one day my friend awoke to the realization that Christian Science was the only cure for him because he knew its efficacy when applied systematically through the understanding of God as divine Principle. He said, "I knew then that

I would rely on God alone, no matter how threatening the physical situation.”

Not long after this, one of the lumps began to swell and became quite painful. He called a Christian Science practitioner to help him in the crisis and within 24 hours the lump opened and drained. Later the second lump opened and disappeared. He writes, “I was pleased to hear my barber calling one of his co-workers to ‘come and see what prayer can do.’”

Upon telling this healing to a relative, it was mentioned that a common friend had a similar lump and had it removed surgically, twice. And it grew back, twice. Then he turned to Christian Science treatment, and the healing was permanent. When my friend whole-heartedly turned to this healing system, to divine Principle, it was effective. Today he's active and free.

It blesses us to feast on the spiritual understanding of God and man's unity, to have a famine of sense, to partake of Soul. It blesses us because, like the birds, persistence and a scientifically systematic approach ensures dominion and success.

GIVING VERSUS GETTING

Now, you may be wondering if Christian Science is effective in other aspects of our lives. Say, for instance, is it effective in healing drug and alcohol addiction? Or can it help with difficult relationships? Or maybe our relationships are OK but we're out of work, feeling we've fallen victim to the economy, or on the brink of bankruptcy, and our horizon looks hopeless. Can prayer as taught in Christian Science help? Yes. It can heal any circumstance, no matter how far gone, because it's based upon one, good, God, because Christian Science is systematic.

Not long ago I was at a University when I noticed a flier that was pinned to a wall. It said, “Come to a workshop that will teach you how to get a real job.”

A real job. Just exactly what is a real job? How would you describe it? Would you define it as something that brings in a certain preconceived amount of income? Or maybe a real

job is one that supports a certain life-style or status. We might even ask ourselves if our concept of a real job is defined by our friends and family.

Have you ever noticed, that, with some, when they find a job that they like, one they're happy in and successful at, their description of the job changes from one of merely status to genuine service. Why is that? It's because a so-called “real job” consists of ideas.

The expression of ideas can't be purchased. That is, one can't purchase integrity or the desire to serve others. These qualities are spiritually cultivated, through prayer, through spiritual fasting.

Thus we can reason, that because a so-called “real job” consists of ideas, it consists of giving, not necessarily of getting - although for one's service it's natural to receive in return. So, couldn't we agree that a real job doesn't consist of getting a certain life-style, or material possessions. A real job consists of giving, by expressing competency, intelligence, courtesy, dependability.

Christ Jesus taught us this when he said of himself, “I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27). Couldn't this be our position, too? To be among others as one that serveth. And we serve with right ideas, with the motive of giving, not of getting. That's what Christ Jesus did.

Now, I know when one is in the midst of financial ruin that it appears that what they need is to get something. But, actually, the opposite is true. Let me illustrate.

A company that a friend of mine worked for sent he and his wife to Australia on business. He had a top-level job with a large company. They were put up in a luxurious hotel overlooking the bay. The room was beautiful, the view spectacular. They had been there for about a week and were planning to stay longer, on their own vacation time, to enjoy the rest of the country. A few days before their vacation was due to begin they received an over-seas phone call. It was this man's boss. The phone call was cordial but to the point. They no longer needed my friend's services. He was fired.

My friend turned from the phone to tell his wife the bad news. He was

near retirement age and they had saved a little, but he didn't see any hope in the future. They were devastated. Then his wife said, “We may not be able to have our vacation as we planned. We need to be economical and save all we can. But today we're in this beautiful hotel, with this spectacular view. I'm grateful for that. Let's pray and tomorrow we'll go back home.”

Once at home they continued praying. They had some severance pay and he took out unemployment, but there were no job offers. Their savings was dwindling. Then on the last day that he could take out unemployment for the last time, he was called to help a company complete a project. From that point on, off and on, he had temporary jobs. He moved to other cities, he commuted, he gratefully did whatever he had to do to sustain an income.

My friend and his wife talked about what they both could do to improve the situation. They decided that they would like to serve others and temporarily relieve others from their work as the demand was needed. This desire was soon met. They contacted a company they felt they could help. Their services were temporarily welcomed and it was decided that they would relieve some of the permanent workers during the Christmas holiday.

This job was harder than they thought. Patience, dependability, courtesy, and a willingness to help at anytime of the night or day were just some of the right ideas they learned to express and give.

It was Christmas time and they couldn't be in their own home. The company agreed to let them have some rooms to stay in that would be vacant during this time, but they had to be separate rooms. And to make things even more challenging one of their sons called. He was coming home for Christmas.

The parents explained that there wouldn't be a traditional Christmas that year as they were temporarily living in another city and couldn't possibly have a tree with all the trimmings. They couldn't even offer him a place to come home to. The son said it didn't matter. He wanted to

see them and he would come, live in a separate room, and help. And that's how they spent their Christmas together - giving and serving. After Christmas the permanent workers came back and my friends were told they were no longer needed. They returned home - still without a job.

They learned much. They learned how to give. They learned how to express man's innate God-given qualities, to bless others. And they persisted in prayer. It wasn't long after this that my friend received a phone call from a small nucleus of individuals that had formed from his former job, they wanted him to come to work, temporarily, and they would evaluate quarterly whether or not they continued to need his services. He continued to pray, and was led to accept the position. Today he is still working for this company in serving mankind.

Mrs. Eddy writes, "God gives you spiritual ideas, and in turn, they give you daily supplies. Never ask for tomorrow; it is enough that divine Love is an ever-present help; and if you wait, never doubting, you will have all you need every moment. What a glorious inheritance is given to us through the understanding of omnipresent Love! More we cannot ask: more we do not want: more we cannot have. This sweet assurance is the 'Peace, be still' to all human fears, to suffering of every sort" (Misc.307).

This is our real job: reflecting God by employing spiritual ideas by expressing man's God-given qualities, such as dedication, promptness, reliability, honesty, integrity, and every other quality our job calls for. Thus we learn 'God gives all, and man has all that God gives' (My.5).

THE SPIRITUAL SYSTEM OF CURE

Recently I received a phone call from an optometrist, one who fits glasses. He had a patient come to him who was a Christian Scientist and he was concerned for her well-being. He tried to explain to her the severity of the condition plaguing her, but felt she didn't understand well enough because she refused his suggested treatment. When he asked her what

she normally does in times of crisis she replied that she calls a Christian Science practitioner. He asked her to wait, he then left the room, and called me. He said, "I know very little of Christian Science, and hence, can't speak your language, so pardon me if I speak mine." He then continued, with deep sympathy and care, to explain to me what he had diagnosed as the difficulty. His love and concern for his patient were touching, and he wanted to know what I would do for her. I explained that I would give Christian Science treatment. Treatment of prayer only - which has proven effective since the time of Christ. We then spoke of the generalities of Christian Science, its care for others, its basis of a good God, and the effectiveness of righteous prayer. He said, "I don't doubt that Christian Science heals and that prayer is effective, so please, talk with this patient, do something for her, send someone to see her, I think she's lonely." And then he said, "If what you tell me of Christian Science is true, then humbly, but honestly, I must say that this patient needs to be a better Christian Scientist." Oh, couldn't we all be better Christian Scientists, whether we're starting today or started years ago, by apprehending God as the source and cause of all existence. This man went out of his way to help, to understand her approach, - even when his method of healing was declined by the patient. His bedside manner is one we all could learn from.

Mrs. Eddy writes, "On comparison, it will be found that Christian Science possesses more of Christ's teachings and example than all other religions since the first century. Comparing our scientific system of metaphysical therapeutics with materia medica, we find that divine metaphysics completely overshadows and overwhelms materia medica, even as Aarons' rod swallowed up the rods of the magicians of Egypt" (My 127).

Divine metaphysics completely overshadows and overwhelms materia medica when we choose righteous prayer based in Christian Science. This prayer assures us of Jesus' promise: "My sheep hear my

voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

According to the Bible, God's child cannot be plucked out of God's hand because God and man are one, though distinct. Hence we need never fear that any circumstance could arise that could separate us from the arms of God. So even if we're labeled the black sheep of the fold there is a way that leads us out of discord into harmony.

Turning away from God, to other methods of care, or trying to mix such a spiritual system as Christian Science with material means, only divides us between two opposite types of treatment, spiritual and material. Yet we have the promise of the Bible, that no man is able to pluck God's children out of His omnipotent hand. And it's unnatural to pluck ourselves out of His omnipotent hand, (even if it were possible), by going along with the winds of materialism.

God has given mankind this system of healing power through the teachings of Christ Jesus. These teachings are unlike any other because they're based solely upon divine Mind, God, not upon the erring human mind. Daily, Christian Scientists partake of this medicine of divine Mind through prayer. It's available to everyone. And anyone who is willing to rely solely on God, through spiritual right thought, can benefit from this practical healing system.

PURE CHRISTIANITY - ENDURING

The religion Jesus established and the era he began, the Christian era, has proven to be resilient. Even though the Dark Ages overshadowed Christianity, and Christ Jesus' teachings were hidden for a period of time, today they live on. It's inevitable that we ask why. Why have Christ Jesus' teachings lived on through great turmoil and over thousands of years? Because what

he's given to mankind is demonstrable, a systematic healing power.

It's this systematic healing power that was discovered in 1866 by Mary Baker Eddy, a woman who earnestly followed God and searched the Scriptures. And today it remains a demonstrable, inevitable, healing system, which dogmas, rites, and rituals, can't destroy.

Jesus taught his disciples (and those who follow him today are also his disciples) that we should expect to do the kind of works he did, and even greater ones. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). Could one of these greater works be Christian Science, the discovery which records Divine Science, the promised Comforter, and teaches its systematic healing power?

We read in the Textbook, "Our Master healed the sick, practised Christian healing, and taught the generalities of its divine Principle to his students; but he left no definite rule for demonstrating the Principle of healing and preventing disease. This rule remained to be discovered in Christian Science" (S&H 147).

Through years of devoted searching Mrs. Eddy discovered this rule. She discovered it not by worshipping Jesus, but in accordance with his teachings. Neither does Christian Science teach the worship of Mrs. Eddy, but rather the contemporaneity of the healing system Jesus used. Through hardship and persevering dedication she recorded these in her textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

Sometimes Christian Science is mistakenly thought of as a faith-cure or a side-line religion which doesn't offer much to the genuine Christian. However, I can assure you, its Discoverer and its adherents are not so deceived.

Mrs. Eddy grew up in a mainline Christian church. And she loved it. She hoped never to have to part with it. But, when her teachings were not openly welcomed into the creeds and orthodoxy of her home-church, she

was divinely led to establish a church, a religion, a way of life, upon a deeper, more consecrated understanding of God and man.

She diligently studied the Scriptures to learn more of what Christ Jesus and the prophets that went before him already knew: That God's love for His idea, man, along with His allness, are provable when applied scientifically and systematically.

She learned, through great trials and self-sacrifice, of Christ Jesus' teachings. But more, she learned how to apply his teachings to everyday life, reconciling man to God, not God to man. So, when Christian Scientists speak of the Discoverer of Christian Science with great love and dedication - it goes far beyond her material personality to her unfeigned love for mankind, to her self-sacrifice, to her spiritual devotion, to all those things that have given each adherent a better way to think and to live.

Undoubtedly, each adherent of this faith has felt the Christ-power. Has seen healing. Has healed. Has been healed. Undoubtedly their gratitude is immeasurable. Much more than mere believers many of the adherents of Christian Science have become understanders of the divine law and Science. They have learned through great searching how to help their brother-man with their spiritual right thinking.

So, for what Mrs. Eddy has done for mankind we are indeed grateful. But unlike what some may affirm we are not worshippers of her personality; and she is not equated with Christ Jesus. For what Christ Jesus has done for mankind, again, we are indeed grateful - but more, we are in debt to him for sharing through his life, the power, presence, and allness of God. The world is in debt to Christ Jesus, and to Christ's Christianity.

Mrs. Eddy writes about Jesus' life-work when she says, "The purpose of his great life-work extends through time and includes universal humanity. Its Principle is infinite, reaching beyond the pale of a single period or of a limited following. As time moves on, the healing elements of pure Christianity will be fairly

dealt with; they will be sought and taught, and will glow in all the grandeur of universal goodness" (328:30).

The grandeur of God's goodness is upon us. The healing elements of pure Christianity can be utilized through righteous prayer. So, like the flock which crossed my path that stormy winter day, we, too, can systematically go against the winds of materialism, turn to God, and arrive at our destination: the land of Christian Science, "where fetters fall and the rights of man are fully known and acknowledged" (S&H 227).