

November 26, 2007 – Subject: Ancient and Modern Necromancy, alias Mesmerism and Hypnotism, Denounced

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 an article in THE CORNERSTONE of November 1991 by Portia Birse.

MAN’S DIVINE RIGHTS

In the Christian Science textbook, Science and Health, we read: “Man’s rights are invaded when the divine order is interfered with, and the mental trespasser incurs the divine penalty due this crime” (S & H 106:12-14). Surely this belief of invasion tries to lay claim and permeate every strata of being.

From the standpoint of the world scene, invasion seems a constant threat and oft-times makes considerable advances before being rebuffed and defeated, as we have recently witnessed in the Gulf War which brought the warring sides close to a universal conflict. One can also look at relationships from a collective point of view and realise that here, too, from Truth’s standpoint, the harmony that naturally reigns in the family, in business relations, between friend and friend, indeed in all sorts of instances, can frequently be threatened by the intrusion of false claims which try to invade and split up such relationships. So, too, with the individual. The belief that invasion can take place in his body, in the rhythm of his life, which invasion can encroach in very subtle ways, and in his very oneness as idea with divine Principle – all these have to be faced up to and overcome.

Looking again at the above reference, one must ask, what are man’s rights? What is the divine order? Who or what interferes with it? Man’s rights are spiritual and they are all good because they are from God. “God has endowed man with inalienable rights, among which are self-government, reason, and conscience” (S&H 106:7-9). Basically, the divine order must be the fourfold operation of the seven synonymous terms for God which cannot be interfered with spiritually. Because we know that

error is neither person, place, nor thing, we should therefore not focus on a person – not even our own person – when trying to overcome the belief of encroachment, but rather recognize that “the mental trespasser” is animal magnetism; it is this that perpetrates the crime, tempting us to believe that it operates through “people.” It is imperative to impersonalize, taking all good back to God and all evil back to the one liar. Hence in pondering man’s spiritual rights as they appear in divine order, one must also handle that which the divine order annihilates.

Man’s spiritual rights are realized and found in the light, the wisdom, the intelligence, the allness of the one Mind, in Mind’s divine law which leads us to recognize these rights as spiritual ideas. This light of Mind dispels darkness, its intelligence dispels ignorance of man’s true origin and source; Mind’s allness dispels the belief in another origin, another power, other minds with erroneous influences claiming that man is created materially.

Man’s spiritual rights are realized and found in the onliness of Spirit, the reality and naturalness of the purity and goodness of Spirit, in true spiritual substance, and it is Spirit’s onliness that dispels the claim that we live in a dualistic world which includes Spirit and matter; the claim that substance is material and can be subject to the laws of matter, that material existence is man’s native habitat.

Man’s spiritual rights are realized and found in identifying himself as idea, one with its divine Principle, and this identity is defined by Soul in which is found freedom from all bondage, giving man joy – the joy that spiritual sense brings when dispelling all the claims made by physical sense. It is only through spiritual sense, which is inherent in every individual, that we understand that man’s identity can never be confined in a matter body.

Man’s spiritual rights are realized and found in recognizing and accepting the oneness and unity between divine Principle and its idea and further that this oneness is forever demonstrated, proved and interpreted through divine Science and its system. The fact of this oneness dispels the belief the man lives outside of the government of a divine Principle and that the demonstration and proof for all spiritual facts must be found in the material universe.

Man’s spiritual rights are realized and found in recognizing them to be of the nature of Life and thus they are ever multiplying because they are

eternal, deathless; they are always new and spontaneous, rising higher and higher Spiritwards. These facts dispel the lie that man's rights can lessen and come to an end because mortal mind claims that man's life is finite and that his inspiration can become stale and limited.

Man's spiritual rights are realized and found in recognizing them to be of the nature of Truth, of wholeness, that their form is in accordance with the Christ ideal, the true standard. Man has the right to be conscious of this wholeness, of his health in all aspects. These facts of Truth dispel the erroneous belief that man's health can be depleted or lost or that man can be conscious of anything opposed to the truth; his divine form cannot be impaired in any way, nor can his standard be dropped.

Man's spiritual rights are realized and found in recognizing them to be of the nature of Love, hence totally free of fear because in the realm of Love fear is unknown. Love's embrace and encirclement hold man in unity with Love, and in its realm there is no opposition and therefore nothing can invade its sanctity. It is clear that in Love's all-inclusiveness all opposition 'is annihilated including the belief that there can be imperfection of any kind, or the belief that man cannot find rest or peace.

We can but conclude, therefore, that in the Science of being "man's harmony is no more to be invaded than the rhythm of the universe" (Ret. 61:10-11), and in this fact of Truth we can live and move and have our being in the harmony that is natural to man as Principle's idea.

"Discerning the rights of man, we cannot fail to foresee the doom of all oppression. Slavery is not the legitimate state of man. God made man free. Paul said, 'I was free born.' All men should be free. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Love and Truth make free, but evil and error lead into captivity" (S&H 227:14).

Our second selection is from:

Answers to Questions Concerning Christian Science, by Edward A. Kimball, C.S.D.

"you cannot always tell what a man believes by what he says. It is not enough to say, I am this or that. Suppose a man says to you, "I believe

that God is infinite.” And you: perhaps reaching out beyond the limitation of the testimony of the senses, allowing your thoughts to rest on those things that are not within the reach of the eyes, nose, and mouth, lay hold somewhat upon the meaning of this word “infinite.”

You know that that which is infinite must be self-existent and all-inclusive; it must contain all the elements of continuance or immortality; it must be unlimited; there can be nothing unlike itself or that is not included in itself. And as you begin to take on the wonderful, signification of the word, you turn to him and say, “So do I.” And all the time you are thinking of infinite intelligence, of the all-inclusive God, infinite wisdom. Then he says, “I believe in the omnipotence of God.” And as you realize that there is no power without intelligence, and that which is omniintelligence or omniscience must also include all power; when you realize that infinite cannot be anything less than infinite, and that it is the omnipotence of the omnipotent that you are thinking about, you again say to him, “So do I.”

Then he says to you, “I believe in the power of evil. I believe that there is an entity called Satan, possessing all the characteristics of immortality, possessing power akin to the divine power and the ability to hold mankind in eternal punishment, power to drag man down from the image and likeness of God to perdition.” And when you see that this man who is trying to believe in the omnipotence of God lays a great deal more stress on the power of evil; when you find that he believes in an eternal entity and intelligence opposed to the infinite God, then you see and know that the man does not believe in the first two propositions at all. It makes no difference how a man tries to persuade himself that he believes in an infinite, omnipotent God, if at the same time he is trying to believe in a devil or power opposed to this infinite. All the sophistry he can bring to bear upon the subject can not outweigh the utter falsity and futility of the effort and of that conclusion.

It is said that there are about one hundred and forty different Christian sects; nevertheless, it would perhaps be indelicate for me to stand up here and say what other people’s beliefs are concerning God and man, and their relation to each other; concerning the question of the Messiahship, of future punishment, man’s duty, and so on. It is not for me to say what you and others believe, nor is it worth while for me to discuss the beliefs of the different denominations, but we will take up what I suppose to be the intent of this inquiry, and put it a little differently from the way in which it has been stated.

“In what respect is Christian Science, viewed as a religious belief, different from all other Christian beliefs?” or rather, “In what respects are the fundamentals of Christian Science different from all other beliefs?” I can perhaps with profit speak of two special differences. One is this: Christian Scientists do believe that God is infinite; that God is infinite good, infinite Truth, infinite Life, infinite Love, infinite wisdom, infinite intelligence, and that “there is none beside him.” That being the case, we have to account for evil in some other way than by calling it a power opposed to God, or an evidence of the manifestation of intelligence and wisdom. Christian Scientists believe emphatically and thoroughly that if God is good at all, He must be infinitely good; if God is Truth at all, He must be infinite Truth, and all truth must be good; if God is intelligence at all, He must be infinite intelligence, and, therefore, all intelligence must be good; and that which calls itself evil intelligence and evil power is not of God, is not included in the infinite, is not permitted by the infinite, is not made use of by the infinite, but is entirely apart and separate from it. It is utterly impossible to conceive of God as infinite good and then incorporate within that an entity called Satan or spirit of evil.

How do Christian Scientists account for evil?

We find it to be this: That the only Satan there is, is the false concept of being, or what has been termed the carnal mind. Just as soon as men absolutely stop sinning, there will be no witness of sin, there will be no witness of a devil; there will be no sin known; and in order to get rid of sin, the only way to do it is to stop sinning.

Mortal man has contemplated this thing we call evil so long, and sin itself has seemed to exercise such bondage over him, that he has seemed to be obliged to account for it in some way. He has looked upon it as something supernatural; something from which he could not escape; and that horrible sense of the power of evil has hung upon him and mildewed him; its chains have deprived him of the dominion he has over the claim of evil power. What is there more paralyzing to a man’s endeavors than to suppose that there is opposed to him a mysterious power – a supernatural agency with which he is unable to cope; which in spite of his every effort may drag him down to infinite punishment for the finite sin he has committed.

The question arises: “What is the Christian Scientist trying to do to resist Satan?” He is trying to cast evil out of his own thought, from his own life, from his own experience; the only way he knows of whereby to resist

evil is to do that, and he does it rationally, with the understanding that when he has accomplished that he has overcome the devil in himself. What has been the scene of his strife? Is it not that of his own experience, of his own thought, of his own tendency? When he sees that he has overcome Satan, if we ask what has been the theater of action, and he answers truly, he will say that it has been his own consciousness.

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