

# CHRISTIAN SCIENCE vs. SOCIALISM

Mildred L. LeBlond

Notes taken from 1943 Association Address

I should like to say something about Socialism. At the beginning, may I state my position in this matter. After a considerable amount of research, I know that Christian Science and Socialism are opposites. As your teacher, I assume it my duty and privilege to set before you certain ideas regarding this subtle subject.

To an American, the term 'socialism' is a natural antipathy, for instinctively he recoils from anything, which he believes advocates the destruction or tearing down of his prized heritage of individual freedom. For this reason the Socialist Party, *per se*, receives very little support. As I have said, however, "Socialism is subtle." It is a serpent masquerading as the Love of God advocating all things for all men, but in the wrong way. Seldom, if ever, do the sponsors of a plan or law involving the theory of Socialism openly declare it as such, for they know it would be defeated. Their aim, therefore, is to couch the phraseology of their bill or plan in such a way that none but the very alert can recognize it as socialistic.

Webster gives the definition of socialism as follows: "A political and economic theory of social reorganization, the essential feature of which is governmental control of economic activities, to the end that competition shall give way to cooperation and that the opportunities of life and the rewards of labor shall be equitably apportioned."

It's various theories and various programs have received many distinctive names; such as *Christian Socialism*, promulgated in England by Thomas Hughes, Charles Kingsley, F.D. Maurice, and others; Owenism [*sic*] and Fabianism in the same country; collectivism in France; the communism of the Brook Farm in America; the socialism of the chair, state socialism and the social democracy of Germany. Often, however, socialism is used to denote specifically the economic theories developed especially by Ferdinand Lassalle and Karl Marx, advocating the annulment of private ownership of capital and land, and maintaining that all values are the creation and just due of labor.

"In questions of policy, opportunist or conservative socialists are distinguished from revolutionists or radical. The latter have been more or less associated the anarchists, and socialism is often confounded with anarchism. Socialism, however, advocates a powerful central government, while anarchism opposes all government as evil; both, however, are forms of communism, sharing the ideal of a cooperative society. Socialism is the disposition to seek social reform

through political activities or agencies; the trait or character shown in this disposition; -- opposed to individualism.”

Of the various kinds of socialism mentioned, two of the most common are Christian Socialism and Fabianism. Christian Socialism is defined in Webster as “any theory or system, which aims to combine the teachings of Christ with the teachings of socialism in their applications to life.” I believe it is self-evident that such a theory is completely opposite from Christian Science, which shows the “teachings of Christ” are complete within themselves and applicable to any problem, individual or national.

Fabianism derived its name from that of the Roman general Fabius and his policy of delay, which indicates the tactics of the Fabianists. They support ameliorative instead of revolutionary tendencies. It seeks nationalization of land and of such industries as can be “conveniently managed socially;” rent and interest added to the reward of labor; the idle class to disappear and virtual equality of opportunity to be gained. Fabianism is dangerous because of its extreme subtleness and its tactics of patiently and quietly pressing the acceptance of its theories under the guise of beneficence for mankind.

I am sure you will agree, therefore, from the definitions just given, that we, as Christian Scientists, must constantly be vigilant that the subtlety of socialism does not find receptivity in us.

Now I am not unmindful that socialism is the thought of many men is an attempt to express love to their neighbors, in a human way to express the goodness of God. But this is patronage, not Science. It also means that those in favor of this have not had the revelation of the Science of individual being as understood in relationship to God – this being the basis of the spiritual freedom of man.

Since the “Kingdom of God is within” us, as Jesus said it is, we should not allow *men* to give us the kingdom of heaven. The more that is given the individual by the government, the more will have to be given, for during the period of being helped, the individual lets go of his individual initiative and creative talents and becomes more and more dormant. He wanders in the *Land of Nod*, and for the moment forgets the joy and warmth of feeling he used to have when, as Mrs. Eddy says, he called for “active witnesses” to prove the completeness of his being. I know everyone here knows the joy of working things out.

God’s idea does not want security. He is not afraid of limitations of work, food, clothes, health, happiness. He only needs the opportunity to prove God’s Allness. There is life and vigor in the proving of God’s Allness. The same cannot be said of the desire for security. The individual who is proving even in some measure

the Godliness of his own being rather resents the intimation that he needs security of the variety handed out by government.

Security means less, always. Take less and be sure, rather than launch out fearlessly in the understanding of God is All. It is interesting to note that our Declaration of Independence states that all men are entitled to the "*pursuit of happiness*," not the *gift of happiness*.

Practitioners will tell you from their experience in the healing work that you cannot plan sickness out of anyone's life, that you cannot plan poverty out of anyone's life, that you cannot plan unhappiness or any other error out of anyone's life. No matter how much one would desire to take these things from him, and give him that which we know God already has given him, at the same time, we absolutely know that there is no such thing as planning evil out of one's life. The elimination of that which we call evil has to come from within the individual, it can never come from without.

Here I am reminded of an old painting. It is called "The Light of the World" by Hoffman; a picture of Jesus standing before a door which is covered with cobwebs and over-grown weeds, looking as though it had not been opened for a long, long time. There is no latch on the outside of the door which one could take hold of to open it. The latch is on the inside of the door! The inspiration for this picture is found in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Note that Jesus says, "if any man." This is a wonderful illustration of individual salvation. Jesus, who was the Wayshower, who knew more than anyone of his time, indicated by this statement that he knew he could not plan existence for an individual or plan evil out of anyone's existence.

As an example, there was Judas, who saw the life and demonstrations of Jesus, and yet it availed him nothing because something had not occurred in the thought of Judas. Mrs. Eddy also comments on the fact that one cannot give salvation to another, for she says of Christianity. . .

"It is the dear children's toy and strong tower; the wise man's spiritual dictionary; the poor man's money; yet it is the pearl priceless whereof our Master said, if a man findeth, he goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth it. Buyeth it! Note the scope of that saying, even that Christianity is not merely a gift, as St. Paul avers, but is bought with a price, a great price; and what man knoweth as did our Master its value, and the price that he paid for it? (Mis 252:29-5)

This is not an argument for pessimism, but points rather that we see the need to stay with the original plan of perfect God and perfect man, and that because God is

perfect, His manifestation is perfect, lacking nothing. Christian Science is God's plan and purpose for healing the world of sin, disease and death by the resurrection of individual consciousness from material beliefs to the apprehension of spiritual ideas. Until the individual and nation is healed and redeemed from within, no plan or purpose will work.