

Introduction

Dear devoted Christian Scientist:

As I was reading the book, *The Life of our Blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*, I came upon the following paragraph that so clearly defines the present day situation occurring within the Cause of Christian Science:

“Hegesippus, the Jewish-Christian historian (A. D. 175) ...adds this valuable testimony on the state of the Christian church in this early time. ‘The church continued until then (A. D. 115) as a pure and uncorrupted virgin; whilst if there were any at all that attempted to pervert the sound doctrine of the saving gospel, they were yet skulking in dark retreats. But when the sacred choir of the apostles became extinct, and the generation of those that had been privileged to hear their inspired wisdom had passed away, then also the combinations of impious error arose by the fraud and delusions of false teachers. Those also, as there were none of the apostles left, henceforth attempted, without shame, to preach their false doctrine against the doctrine of truth.

Let us bless God that though the apostles are dead, we have the writings of the apostles as a light to guide the church forever.’ (2 Pet. I. 14-21)”²

After reading this, I looked up the definition of “church” in Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. It states: “CHURCH. The structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from divine Principle. The Church is that institution, which affords proof of its utility and is found elevating the race, rousing the dormant understanding from material beliefs to the apprehension of spiritual ideas and the demonstration of divine Science, thereby casting out devils, or error, and healing the sick.”³

In studying the definition of church, the word “institution” stood out to me. When thinking of the word institution, one very prominent definition is that of a material organization. In the *American Dictionary of the English Language*, by Noah Webster, 1884, the definition for institution is as follows: “Institution: that which institutes or instructs; a treatise or text book; a system of elements and rules.”⁴

If *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* is the institution referred to in the above definition of church, has it been corrupted and adulterated as was the early Christian church? I hope the following document will help you discover the “design of God” as revealed in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.