

CHAPTER IX

Spiritualizing America

Truth and Love Uncover Hidden Evil

The Truth of Christian Science is bringing error from under cover and destroying the myriad illusions which the five physical senses present. It is revitalizing the religion Jesus taught, revealing the kingdom of God within the consciousness of every man, woman, and child on earth. Christian Science teaches humanity how to judge not according to appearances, but to judge righteously; how to see through the universal hypnotic suggestion that makes man appear as a mortal; and how to realize the ever-present Christhood of every individual.

Christian Science has come to set us free, once and for all. It has come to America and the world to "crown thy good with brotherhood, thy liberty with [infinite good's] law." Today the great truth of Christian Science is at work everywhere, leavening and revolutionizing world thought. Why, then, are we still plagued with "wars and rumors of wars"? Why the moral uncertainty, why the spiritual confusion clouding this nation's vision today?

If we suppose today's world struggle is economic, or one system of government versus another, we misread the present dilemma and underestimate its peril. The conflict is between genuine Christianity and secular power, between keeping the faith and having none. The solution lies in accepting Mrs. Eddy's epochal discovery that in reality there is only one power, infinite good.

Unfortunately, institutionalized religion, rather than advancing man spiritually, can actually become an obstacle to humanity's realization of its ever-present oneness with God. According to Webster, "religion" means to "tie back." All too often religion has served to tie people back to effete doctrines and dogma rather than to the healing ministry practiced by Christ Jesus, and restored by Mary Baker Eddy in the second coming of the Christ.

All mortal experience and much religious doctrine mistakenly insist that there are two powers--the power of good and the power of evil. This is a house divided against itself; it is a false belief which mankind outgrows as it learns and accepts that God, infinite good, is the only power.

In Christian Science we discover that there is no evil power, however much it appears that we can use material forces for good or for evil, and can use mental power for good or for evil. The beliefs in evil power are the tares which grow side by side with the wheat, the truth that God alone is power.

As we adhere to the Principle that the kingdom of God within our consciousness alone is power, the tares begin to wither and gradually fade out, leaving only the wheat, the presence of God, infinite good.

What America Needs

Christopher Booker, quoted by Gordon Brown in *Civilization Lieth Foursquare*, observes:

Deep down...we know that we are approaching some tremendous crisis in our civilization--one which will require a change of heart and perspective far deeper than anything which has yet touched any of our public representative...it is no good any longer looking for rebirth to the public drama, to the outward show, to the collective--it must begin from somewhere altogether different [it must begin in the kingdom of God within our own consciousness].... Far down and mysteriously, in the only place which counts...the great unimaginable process of rebirth...has already begun.

Allan Bloom sees America's problem as the lack of a single, sound, fundamental, principled basis for conduct. In *The Closing of the American Mind*, he warns it will take an intellectual and spiritual assault of heroic proportions to move, let alone rout, the dead weight of relativism burdening higher education in this country. His withering charges and stinging criticisms reach beyond campuses to all of American society.

"The American Revolution," he writes "was the greatest transformation of man's relations with his fellows and with nature ever effected." Today, however, while there is constant prattle about "self-fulfillment" and "commitment," the American people "are haunted by the awareness that talk doesn't mean much and that commitments are lighter than air.... The eternal conflict between good and evil has been replaced with 'I'm okay, you're okay'.... The dreariness of the family's spiritual landscape passes belief."

"Yet," he says, "Americans long for something lost--the great moral truths upon which civilization rests. It is a longing for the kind of substance that gave such breathtaking meaning to the Declaration of Independence" when brave and noble men courageously proclaimed:

For the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Today we should heed John Adams' prophetic warning to the generations which would follow:

Posterity, you will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make a good use of it! If you do not, I shall repent in heaven that I ever took half the pains to preserve it.

To which Thomas Jefferson added:

Yes, we did produce a near perfect republic. But will they keep it? Or will they, in the enjoyment of plenty, lose the memory of freedom? Material abundance without character is the surest way to destruction.

Mary Baker Eddy knew error must be uncovered before its nothingness can be seen. In accordance with her teaching this section will deal with certain grave errors today facing America.

The "Third and Last Struggle"

History tells us that during the Revolutionary War, General George Washington had a dramatic vision of two further struggles, namely: the Civil War and a third great struggle in which he saw America "burned to the ground" a struggle still to come.

This third and last struggle Mrs. Eddy called "the great battle of Armageddon" (Mis. 177:120). The anti-Christ is working feverishly to discredit the revelator to this age and to blot out her discovery of the Christ Science which reveals the nature of the kingdom of God--with its infinite goodness and power--within each individual consciousness. Mrs. Eddy warned, "There is a great struggle before us and it is for life. I dare not tell you what I know.... Now you see what you have to do--be a transparency for Truth. This is the work--knowing what this Science means. Get out of a sense of apathy. This battle is today upon us." Her Manual, obeyed as written, would have alleviated this struggle.

What was the third struggle revealed to Washington in a vision? What is this struggle Mrs. Eddy foresaw?

In Abraham Lincoln's addresses and stern reproaches to the nation he reminded the people that "nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishment and chastisement in this world." Then he pointedly warned: "May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war...may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?"

Lincoln spoke of the nation's prosperity. "But," he rebuked, "we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand that preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us."

Mrs. Eddy saw this same tendency to forget God. Christian education was being taken out of the home, where it had raised up men and women who loved the Bible, people who were willing to count the cost of Christian liberty and fight for it. She warned against the shift from the building of individual Christian character to the building of a group character conformable to society.

As Mary Baker Eddy and Abraham Lincoln recognized, the third and last struggle facing America is for the mind of man--to redeem it from under the curse of materialism. "Between the centripetal and centrifugal mental forces of material and spiritual gravitations, we go into or we go out of materialism or sin, and choose our course and its results" (Mis. 19:25).

The Most Imminent Dangers

In this "battle of Armageddon," which "is upon us," we need fervently to pray that we are alert to the power of words. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue," said Solomon (Prov. 18:21). With words we have the power "to edify or offend, to strengthen or weaken, to give hope or to frustrate, to purify or pollute, to build or destroy."

We also need to be mindful that we look first for the problem in our own thinking before we condemn conditions or people outside ourselves. Mary Baker Eddy saw that when we believe we are dealing with

evil "out there," we are thinking materially; we are being governed by hypnotic suggestion and are not awake and listening to the Mind that is ever-present Love and which redeems us from the curse of materialism. Jesus said, "A man's foes shall be those of his own household" (Matt. 10:36) and admonished us to "cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye" (See Mis. 336:14).

Even well intentioned efforts to "correct" or "help" others can interfere with their divine sovereignty. Verna Hall, author of *Teaching and Learning America's Christian History*, tells of her excitement in being connected with federal government work where "new opportunities were opened for government to do things for people and communities." She soon learned, to her dismay, "that a government that can do things for the people also can, and will, do things to the people. Thus," she says, "I experienced the beginnings of socialism; I saw the thoroughness of socialistic organization descend like a pall upon every facet of our economy and culture, altering almost everything."

There can be no doubt that Mary Baker Eddy saw that substituting the power of human law and human government for a recognition of God's--divine Mind's--government in the affairs of men, was and is causing the "third great struggle--the great battle of Armageddon," which she warned was already upon us. In an article to the *New York World*, Mrs. Eddy warned:

To my sense, the most imminent dangers confronting the coming century are: the robbing of people of life and liberty under the warrant of the Scriptures; the claims of politics and of human power, industrial slavery, and insufficient freedom of honest competition; ritual, creed, and trusts in place of the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (My. 266:1).

A true patriot writes:

Nothing distinguishes the kingdoms of man from the kingdom of God more than their diametrically opposed views of the exercise of power. One seeks to control people, the other to serve people; one promotes self, the other prostrates self; one seeks prestige and position, the other lifts up the lowly and despised.

It is crucial for Christians to understand this difference. For through this upside-down view of power, the kingdom of God can play a special role in the affairs of the world. As citizens of the kingdom today practice this view of power, they have an opportunity to offer light to a world often shrouded by the dark pretensions [illusions] of a devastating succession of power-mad tyrants.

In 1776 the Declaration of Independence was the voice of the American people speaking through their representatives. Thomas Jefferson's words spoke for the majority then and they should speak for us now:

I swear, before the altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man.

"Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5 :1).

The Qualities That Can Save a Nation

Through the wholesome chastisements of Love," writes Mary Baker Eddy, "nations are helped onward towards justice, righteousness, and peace, which are the landmarks of prosperity" (My. 282:10).

The following account is from The Christian Science Journal, May 1887:

At a meeting of the National Christian Scientist Association held April 13, 1887, a question was asked Mrs. Eddy which "related to the prayer of Abraham, that if fifty, or even ten righteous men could be found in Sodom, that city should be saved from destruction."

Mrs. Eddy's answer is of profound import to all nations and peoples. Her reply, as reported in the Journal, was that "salvation was in proportion to moral weight.... A life or a nation is saved, in proportion to the predominance within of purity, patriotism, or other right motives; and this is the inner spiritual meaning of the story of Abraham's petition to God. If Sodom City had in it enough moral worth, it would be saved, not otherwise."

Christian Scientists should read often what Mrs. Eddy has said in Science and Health, on pages 96:25 to 97:25, how "during this final conflict [the conflict between truth and error]those who discern Christian Science will hold crime in check...."

The birth and survival of this nation remains a wonder of the world; its future is in our hands. This nation provided the cradle for the revelation of Christian Science. Now Christian Science can bring America to its fullest, finest expression, if we let it. "The Science of Christianity comes with fan in hand to separate the chaff from the wheat. Science will declare God aright, and Christianity will demonstrate this declaration and its divine Principle, making mankind better physically, morally and spiritually."