

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (SCIENTIST) — TRUTH OR ERROR?

John 8:32

NOTE: All numbers in () are page numbers to refer to in "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures"

MATTHEW 9:2-8 . . .

is the Bible passage that was the supposed inspiration and foundation for one of the major cults of our day — CHRISTIAN SCIENCE. According to the records, it had its beginning in January or February of 1866 (107).

Mary Baker Eddy began a "healing" practice, taught others to be "practitioners", and in 1875 completed writing "Science and Health". She organized her first "society" in 1875 and incorporated The Church of Christ (Scientist) on August 23, 1879, with headquarters in Boston.

It continued to grow and a National Christian Science Association was organized in 1886. Mrs. Eddy "retired" from local leadership in 1889, established the prestigious "Christian Science Monitor" newspaper in 1908, and on December 2, 1910, she who declared "death is an illusion" (289) — died.

A self-perpetuating board continues the "work" she began following the guidelines she gave. They are highly organized and provide excellent materials and communications. Their Board of Lecturers provides speakers for local congregations, and they are expected to sponsor a "lectureship" at least once each year. They also sponsor local reading rooms and have a monitoring group known as the Board of Publications that watches and answers those who speak or write negatively about them.

Their services consist of readings from the Bible by the "Second Reader" and from "Science and Health" by the "First Reader". There are hymns and solos, quiet prayer and the saying of The Lord's Prayer (with Mrs. Eddy's interpretation of it). (16-17). Though they do not have pastors or paid clergy, they do have "Practitioners" who offer sessions for "healing". Wednesdays are set aside for people to gather and hear testimonies of "healings".

Though Christian Scientists have not grown as much as other cults, they still have a strong presence in most areas and continue to actively propagate what they call "the truth". Because of their belief in healing, they have attracted many people — and they often use the "healings" to prove that they are "right" and "Christian"! However, we are warned that to make this a standard in judgment is an error! Matthew 7:21-23. We must objectively look at what they believe based on what their writings say they believe!

WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE . . . and how does it compare with the Bible? with Christianity? This is our main concern.

1. WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE? Mrs. Eddy claimed to accept the Bible as her sole source of authority. It sounds good. (110,497) But —

In practice they accept the Bible only as interpreted by Mrs. Eddy and her "Science and Health" (107, 109, 110). She claimed a direct access for additional and final revelation — above the authority of the Bible! See Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Timothy 4:14-17.

The elevation of her writings is evident by its requirement. (456, 457). Error is ascribed to the Bible (139) while her writings are supposedly without error (99). Read her interpretation of Genesis 1:6 (505) or the "Glossary" (579-599) and you can see that Christian Science depends on her for authority. Her "rather unconventional ideas" lead to conclusions that are total error!

The Bible is **not** their final authority! In fact it is subject to Mrs. Eddy's ideas and interpretations. See Psalm 119:140; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 24:35; John 10:35; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16.

2. WHAT DO THEY TEACH ABOUT GOD? It is difficult to have a clear idea from her writings. God is certainly not defined as the God of the Bible — Father, Son and Holy Spirit (256, 331-32). The view of God is summarized in four statements (113):

1. *God is All-in-all.*
2. *God is good. Good is Mind.*
3. *God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.*
4. *Life, God, omnipotent good, deny death, evil, sin, disease. —Disease, sin, evil, death, deny good, omnipotent God, Life."*

Other ideas are presented (330, 331). All lead to an impersonal God — that God is all and all is God! It is the essence of "pantheism" — a pagan idea of god!

This is **not** the God revealed in the Bible! A personal, loving, caring God! Genesis 1:26; Exodus 3:14; John 3:16; Matthew 6; John 16:7-8.

3. WHAT IS TAUGHT ABOUT MAN? ABOUT SIN? This is a strong point in Christian Theology! Romans 3:23; 5:6-12; 6:23. However, they teach that —

Man has no body for matter does not exist! (338, 475, 485). Compare this with Genesis 2:7. This leads to the conclusion that man is immaterial and could not fall — is not a sinner! (259). The story of the Fall in Genesis 3 is said to be a myth, an error! (529-30). Sin is an illusion for man is not sinful! (475).

The Bible does **not** agree with this error! Read Isaiah 53; Romans 6, 7.

4. WHAT IS THEIR BELIEF ABOUT JESUS CHRIST? The great question is what the cults do with Jesus Christ! His essential Deity and His total humanity! (361). They teach that He is not God! is not a Person — only an idea! (141, 332, 333, 347, 473). Compare this with John 1:1-14; Colossians 1:16-17.

Jesus was not perfect according to their belief. (53). Their Jesus Christ is **not** the Jesus Christ of the Christian faith! Look at 1 John 4:1-4 — concerning Christ coming **in the flesh!** 2 John 1:7.

5. WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE ABOUT SALVATION? THE REDEMPTIVE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST? This is the heart of Christianity! The Christian Scientists quickly answer this question (23, 24, 25) for they believe Jesus Christ came only to demonstrate a divine idea (473, 332). He was only an example — not a Saviour! (19, 30, 40).

It is not the Person of Jesus Christ who saves (146) because with no sin there is certainly no need for salvation! He is only the example of a "principle" that is lost in the fog of the teachings of Christian Science!

What a tragedy to ignore the revealed truth of Colossians 1:20; 1 Peter 1:18-20. This is God's answer to sin — and their answer is to deny its existence! (339). However, Mrs. Eddy contradicts her self and talks about "salvation" for the very thing she denies! (39, 593). She adds that you should "cease sinning" (327) — to stop doing what isn't! (19, 22, 36, 37).

The Bible gives only one way of salvation — it is thru Jesus Christ! Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9.

6. WHAT IS CHRISTIAN SCIENCE ESCHATOLOGY — THE DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS? It is something that their beliefs do not permit! Life is now — not future! (39). When "death" occurs (which is "an error") it is followed by probation. (77, 290, 291). This is a time to cleanse the consciousness of all error! If this is not accomplished — there is annihilation! ceasing to be — a contradiction of her stated belief that man has no end! (338).

The idea of Hell is defined (588) as self-imposed. (196). There is no Heaven (587) no resurrection! no final judgment! (291) and no future Heaven and Earth as told about in Revelation 20-22. (536).

This is certainly **not** a Christian view but one based on their own "revelation" — so contrary to Scripture it could not be Christian! See Matthew 13:42; 50; 22:13; Mark 9:44, 46, 48; Luke 3:17; Revelation 20:10 and more! The truth of New Testament eschatology is totally denied!

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE?

It can hardly be called Christian! and does not seem to be a Science! It is another of the cults as predicted in 1 Timothy 4:1. It works from the metaphysical! the mental! and not from the revelation of God! the power of His Holy Spirit! the Person of Jesus Christ! from Biblical truth! What a tragedy for those who are caught in its web of contradictions and error!

Our task is to lovingly share the truth! to point out the error! to lead them to Jesus Christ who alone is presented in John 14:6 as —

The Way . . . to God!

The Truth . . . of God!

The Life . . . from God!

"And what is it that God has said? That He has given us eternal life, and that this life is in His Son. So whoever has God's Son has life; whoever does not have his Son, does not have life."

1 John 5:11-12

And we can be sure of this!

Are you?