

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY

Unity as it is now known can be traced to Myrtle and Charles Fillmore who in 1884 settled in Kansas City, Missouri, where some three years later they came under the influence of the "new" religion called Christian Science. Myrtle Fillmore had been raised a Methodist and her husband, Charles, had had an eclectic background of religious experience during which time he admittedly "dabbled" in Spiritualism. At any rate, both were "wedded" to the religion of Mrs. Eddy as early as 1890. In April of 1889 the Fillmores published their first magazine entitled "Modern Thought" which in 1890 became known as "Christian Science Thought". The title of this magazine, however, was revised, the words "Christian Science" being omitted due to the displeasure of Mrs. Eddy. The name Unity itself, incidentally, was assumed in 1895, five years after the Fillmores had begun to drift away from the mother fold of Christian Science into the sphere of influence dominated by the teachings of Warren Felt Evans, a disciple of P.P. Quimby whose religious convictions eventually became known as "New Thought."

As is the case with most mental healing cults, the Fillmores claimed that they had been delivered from a variety of deadly diseases, which eventually culminated in the founding of the Society of Silent Health which is today the Society of Silent Unity, an organization which specializes in "prayers" to the abstract deity to whom all Unity adherents pay unflagging homage.

We see then that 1889 was a crucial year in the history of the Unity school for in that year Myrtle Fillmore declared that she had been healed of tuberculosis through the agency of a modified version of Christian Science, and she zealously spread these principles throughout a relatively small gathering of persons who held twice weekly meetings where Myrtle held forth regarding "the love principle as taught by Christ" (Modern Thought, Vol. 1, Oct. 1889, No. 80).

Charles Fillmore had little or no contact with orthodox Christianity before his indulgence into metaphysics and could be easily classified as an agnostic. One exposure he did have was in 1893 at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago where he met and eventually became the American publisher of one Swami Vivekananda of India one of the great pioneers of Yogaism in the U.S. This undoubtedly is where the Fillmores absorbed much of their philosophic structure from Hinduism and Yogaism, notably the belief in reincarnation so widely held by those in Unity today.

From this unusual union, a Methodist turned Christian Scientist, and a religious agnostic, came the Unity School of Christianity, which today numbers in excess of a million persons, operates the largest mail order religion in the world and one which has necessitated the United States Government placing a special postal depot at Lee's Summit, Missouri, the present headquarters of the cult. The Unity School published material for persons of all ages and occupations, "Wee Wisdom," for children, "Good Business" for the working man, "Daily Word" for all members of the family and "Weekly Unity," a newspaper-type of religious bulletin.

Beyond this the Unity School prints literally hundreds of millions of tracts, pamphlets and other propaganda material and disseminates it on a world-wide basis. Largely dependent upon a revamped New England transcendentalism as found in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and indented to a greater or lesser degree to the religions of Christian Science, Hinduism, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Spiritualism, and New Thought. It is an eclectic religion to the core, drawing upon many sources and borrowing from various systems of religion to make up what is today a most palatable form of gnosticism. This gnosticism, incidentally, is in diametric opposition to the basic principles of the historic Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This "higher form" of Christianity, is of course, in reality a shallow pretention, and one which is thoroughly unmasked by the testimony of objective history and an exegetical study of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

I TRINITY

UNITY - The Father is Principle, the Son is that Principle revealed in the creative plan, the Holy Spirit is the executive power of both the Father and Son carrying out the plan (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, Unity School of Christianity, p.629).

God is Spirit - John 4:24

Manifested Himself in many ways - 1) The Angel of Jehovah - Ex. 23:20; Judges 6:12,13; Judges 13.
2) The Son of God - Dan. 3:25.
3) Emmanuel - Is. 9:6.
4) Theophany - Gen. 19:1 (called Jehovah 14 times)

Gen. 1:26,27; 3:22 11:7; Is. 6:8.
Deut. 6:4
Mt. 3:16,17; 28:19

A personal Spirit - God hears - Ex. 2:24

God sees - Gen. 1:4
God creates - Gen. 1:1, Is. 44:24.
God knows - 2 Tim. 2:19; Jer. 29:11
God has a mind - Jer. 7:31; Rom. 11:34.
God has a will - 1 Jn. 2:17; Jn. 6:38.
God has emotions - Jn. 3:16.
God is a cognizant reflectable ego (a personal being - Ex. 3:14; Gen. 17:11.

The three persons are:

Omnipotent - Father, Rev. 19:6; Son, Mt. 28:18; H.S., 1 Cor. 12:7
Omniscient - Father, Heb. 4:13; Son, Jn. 21:17; H.S., 1 Cor. 2:10,11
Omnipresent - Father, Jer.23:24; Son, Mt.28:20; H.S., Ps. 139:7
Eternal - Father, Ps. 90:2; Son, Jn.1:1,2,14; H.S., Heb. 9:14.

II THE DIETY OF CHRIST

UNITY - The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but the Bible does not here refer to Jesus of Nazareth the outer man; it refers to the Christ, the spirit-

ual identity of Jesus, whom he acknowledged in all his ways, and brought forth into his outer, until even the flesh of his body was lifted up, purified, spiritualized, and redeemed. Thus he became Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. And we are to follow in this perfect state and become like him, in each of us is the Christ, the only begotten Son. We can through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and example, bring forth the Christ within us, the true self of all men, to be made perfect even as our Father in Heaven is perfect as Jesus Christ commandeth His followers to be (Unity Magazine, Vol. 57, No. 5, p. 464; Vol. 72, No. 2, p.8).

The Eternal Word made flesh - Jn. 1:1,14; 1 Jn. 4:1-3.

Redeemer of Israel and Savior of the World - Mt. 1:21-24; Ac. 4:12; Ac. 2:36.

His true identity - Is. 9:6; Jn. 5:18; Col. 1:15-18, 2:9,
1 Tim. 1:17; Jn. 8:58 & Ex. 3:14;
Heb. 1:3,6,8,10-12; Titus 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:1;
Jer. 23:6; Phil. 2:6-8,11; Is. 44:6 & Rev. 1:8,17,
18; Micah 5:2; Jn. 10:30-8; 20:28; 1 Jn. 5:20,
Rom. 9:5.

The same forever - Heb. 13:8

III THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lk. 12:12; John 16:7,8; Ac. 13:2

IV THE BIBLE

UNITY - ". . . spiritual principle is embodied in the sacred books of the world's living religions. Christians hold to the Bible as the supreme exponent of spiritual principle. They believe that the Bible is the greatest and most deeply spiritual of all Scriptures, though they realized that other Scriptures such as the Zend-Avesta and the Upanishads, as well as the teachings of Buddha, the Koran, and the Tao of Lao-tse and the writings of Confucius, contain expressions of eminent spiritual truths. . . (What Unity Teaches, Unity School of Christianity, P. 4).

Authority - 2 Tim.-3:16,17; Jn. 17:17; Ps. 119:89,140,160; Jn. 10:35;
2 Pet. 1:16 & Lk. 1:2; Is. 40:8; Mt. 24:35; 5:17,18; Gal.
Gal. 1:11,12; 1 Thess. 2:13; Jn. 5:39.

Jesus recognizes O.T. as authority - Lk. 24:27,44; Mt. 12:39-41
Mt. 24:37-39.

Interpretation is not private but by the Holy Spirit - 2 Pet. 1:20-21;
3:16.

No progressive revelation needed - Jude 3; Lk. 24:27; Lk. 16:19-31;
Ps. 119:89; Heb. 1:1,2

Normal interpretation commanded over mystical - 1 Sam. 15

V THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

UNITY - We believe the second coming of Jesus Christ is now being ful-

filled, that His spirit is quickening the whole world (Unity Statement of Faith, Art. 24).

The first coming of Christ is the receiving of truth in the conscious mind, and the second coming is the awakening and regeneration of the subconscious through the superconsciousness of Christ-Mind (The Twelve Powers of Man, Charles Fillmore, Unity School of Christianity, p. 1).

Personal return - 1 Thess 4:13-18; Mt. 24:29-31; Mk. 13:24-27.

Return as Messiah and Savior to execute judgement - Zech 12:10
Cf. Rev. 1:7;
Mt. 25:31-46;
II Thess 1:7-10

The Blessed Hope of the Church is visible - Tit. 2:13-15.

VI. THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

UNITY - The atonement is the union of man with God the Father in Christ. Stating it in terms of mind, we should say that the atonement is the At-one-ment or agreement or reconciliation of man's mind with Divine Mind, through the superconsciousness of Christ-Mind (Charles Fillmore, What Unity Christianity Stands For, p. 5).

All have sinned - Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 1 Jn. 1:10; 3:4; 5:17.

Atonement - Ex. 12:5-14; Lev. 17:11; Ps. 22; Is. 53; Dan. 9:26;
Mt.26:28; 28:5-7, Jn. 1:29; Rom. 5:6-8; Eph. 1:7;
Col. 1:20; Heb. 1:3; 9:26; 9:22; 1 Jn. 1:17; 1 Pet.2:24;
1:18,19,23,25.

VII. THE RESURRECTION NOT REINCARNATION

UNITY - We believe that the dissolution of spirit, soul and body caused death, is annulled by rebirth of the same spirit and soul in another body here on earth. We believe the repeated incarnations of man to be a merciful provision of our loving Father to the end that all may have opportunity to obtain immortality through regeneration as did Jesus. . . (Unity Statement of Faith, Art. 27)

Our destiny - 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21-23; Jn. 14:1-3; Heb 9:27; Dan. 12
Dan. 12:2; Job 19: 6; Is. 26:19; Mt. 25:41,46;
Ecc. 12:7; 3:21; Lk. 20:37-38; 16:19-31; Rev. 6:9;
Mt. 17:1-3.

Divine justice - 2 Sam. 14:14; Jn. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15 (esp. 14 & 17)

Atonement is only way to rid sin (see above)

Bodily resurrection - Lk. 24:39; Jn. 2:21; Jn. 20:25-26; Ac. 10:41,
1 Tim. 2:5 (man); 1 Cor. 15:50,53; Mt. 28:9;
1 Pet. 3:22; Phil. 3:21.

VIII. SALVATION

Mt. 11:28, Jn. 1:12

Through Person and Work of Christ alone - Jn. 3:3-7,16; 14:6; Ac. 4:12;
Rom. 10:9,10; Ac. 16:31;
Mt. 11:38; Eph 5:2; Heb. 5:9.