

CHAPTER XVII

Christian Science and Unity

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Christian Science)

The founder of this group was Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy. She was born on July 16, 1821, in Bow, New Hampshire, and was the youngest of six children. She was raised in a family of strict Calvinism but was never won to this belief herself.

Her health was very poor; it interrupted her formal education. She was a semi-invalid for years.

George Glover, whom she married in 1843, was the first of her three husbands. In less than a year after their marriage he died, leaving her with an unborn child. Later, after the death of her mother and remarriage of her father, she married Daniel Patterson. Patterson was captured and imprisoned during the Civil War. When he returned, he ran off with a neighbor's wife. Eventually he and Mary were divorced. During all these years she constantly suffered from one thing or another.

While still married to Patterson, Mary heard of Phineas Quimby, who supposedly cured people without the use of medicines. She went to see Quimby when she was 41 years old, and during several weeks at his Portland, Maine, office she received relief which she attributed to God working through Quimby. Quimby denied, however, that God had anything to do with it or that he had any special healing powers.

Mr. Quimby died in 1866 when Mary was 45 years old. Mary Baker Patterson began to portray herself as a healer from this time on. Shortly after Quimby's death she fell on an icy street and injured herself. She claimed that the doctor who examined her injury declared it to be fatal (though the physician's own testimony later on denied this). Some friends came to visit her before her supposedly impending death. She had them all leave the room while she read Matthew 9. While reading this portion of Scripture she was immediately and completely healed (so she said).

She began a school to teach others to heal, charging from \$100 to \$300 for a course lasting three weeks. During this time, too, she worked on her book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which later became the textbook for the cult. When the book was ready for publication, she had to get the help of her followers to print it for no Boston publisher would.

She was married the third time to Asa G. Eddy. In 1878 she organized and pastored the First Church of Christ Scientist with 26 members. During this period Mr. Eddy died of a bad heart. However, Mrs. Eddy declared he had died by "arsenic poison mentally administered" by their enemies.

Her later life was filled with sickness and nervousness. She died in 1910. Even though she claimed not to believe in the reality of death, she had to keep that appointment which God says every man must keep (Hebrews 9:27).

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE DOCTRINE contrasted with the WORD OF GOD, THE BIBLE

"Genesis 2:7. Is this addition to His creation real or unreal? Is it the truth, or is it a lie concerning man and God? IT MUST BE A LIE, for God presently curses the ground" (*Science and Health*, p. 524).

"The second chapter of Genesis CONTAINS A STATEMENT of this material view of God and the universe, a statement WHICH IS THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF SCIENTIFIC TRUTH . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 521).

"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ." (II Tim. 3:16).

“In hope of eternal life, which GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2).

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35).

CHRIST’S DEATH FOR SIN

“One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin” (Science and Health, p. 23).

“That God’s wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son, is divinely unnatural” (ibid., p. 23).

“The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon ‘the accursed tree’ than when it was flowing in his veins as he went daily about his Father’s business” (ibid., p. 25).

“For BY ONE OFFERING He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14).

“In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1: 7). “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD HATH LAID ON HIM the iniquity of us all . . . it PLEASSED THE LORD to bruise Him” (Isaiah 53:6, 10).

SIN

“Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death” (Science and Health, p. 475).

“To put down the claim of sin, you must detect it, remove the mask, point out the illusion, and thus get the victory over sin and so prove its unreality” (ibid., p. 447).

“For ALL HAVE SINNED, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and SINNETH NOT” (Eccl. 7:20).

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

“The virgin-mother conceived this idea of God, and gave to her ideal the name of Jesus—that is, Joshua, or Saviour” (Science and Health, p. 29).

“Jesus was the offspring of Mary’s self-conscious communion with God” (ibid., pp. 29, 30).

The angel, not Mary, said, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a SAVIOUR, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

“And Paul . . . reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead; and that THIS JESUS, whom I preach unto you, IS CHRIST” (Acts 17:2, 3).

“. . . for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost . . . Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US” (Matt. 1:20, 22, 23).

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb (not in her mind), and bring forth a son, and shalt call His Name Jesus” (Luke 1: 31) .

THOUGHTS ON YOUR APPROACH

(1) You must understand the major premise or formula of the Christian Scientist in order to reach him intelligently for the Lord. His basic approach to God, salvation, etc., can be summed up in this way:

God is Love . . . God is Life . . . God is Good . . . God is Spirit . . . God is ALL. (These are all true except for the last.)

Since God is Love and God is ALL, there can be no hate. Since God is Life and God is ALL, there can be no death. Since God is Good and God is ALL, there can be no evil. Since God is Spirit and God is ALL, there can be no matter. (So they feel there will be no hatred, illness, sin, death, etc., to the person who knows God aright.)

This is another form of “pantheism,” the doctrine or belief that God is not a personality, but that all laws, forces, manifestations, etc., are God. It is strongly adhered to by Christian Scientists. This formula governs nearly all their thinking. Therefore, you need to know how to answer it from Scripture.

(2) SCRIPTURES REFUTING THE IDEA THAT “GOD IS ALL.”

Genesis 1: 1, “In the beginning God CREATED the heaven and the earth.” Notice it doesn’t say God IS the heaven and the earth—but He created it.

Isaiah 59: 2, “Your iniquities have SEPARATED between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you...” Again, the truth that God is SEPARATE FROM His creation.

Numbers 23:19, “God is NOT A MAN, that He should lie....” Man lies; God does not. No thinking person really believes God is EVERYTHING!

(3) The most important thing to remember is that you must give the Christian Scientist the GOSPEL. Often a person is attracted to this cult because he doesn’t want to believe that he is accountable for the sins he has committed. Christian Science gives a convenient way out for such a person and provides a FALSE sense of security. If he understood the gospel, that God loves sinners and has already made a complete payment for sin, he would perhaps respond and accept Christ as his Saviour.

(4) One reason so many elderly people are Christian Scientists is that they fear death and what lies beyond, and they do not know the love of God. The teachings of Christian Science that there is really no sin or death, etc., calm their fears.

(5) As a group, you will find that the Christian Scientists are lovely people who are trying to live the best kind of life they know how. Even though the plan of salvation excludes man’s good works for entrance into heaven, there is no reason why you shouldn’t compliment a person who is obviously trying to live a good life.

(6) Since the Christian Scientist doesn’t believe he is a “sinner,” an effective way to get across to him the truth that he needs a payment for what he has done wrong is to ask, “Are you perfect?” Most people quite readily admit that they are not perfect. When they see this and that they need to be perfect to enter heaven, half your “battle” is won.

(7) Be sure to emphasize Scriptures like John 3: 16, that point out the great LOVE God has for us, since this will be especially appealing to the Christian Scientist. The gospel—the good news that God has made a payment for sin— is the power God will use to save the Christian Scientist.

Note: “. . . keep that which is committed to thy trust (the gospel), avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of SCIENCE falsely so called, which some professing have ERRED concerning the faith” (I Timothy 6: 20, 21).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Unity)

Unity was founded in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1889 by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore. At the time, the Fillmores were almost penniless; Charles suffered from numerous ailments, including a withered leg (the result of a childhood skating accident); Mrs. Fillmore had tuberculosis.

They heard a Dr. Weeks speak on “New Thought.” After the lecture Mrs. Fillmore reasoned that since we are all children of God (error), there must be a fixed divine law operating in her life. If she had faith in this law, surely all the negative things of life, like sickness and poverty, would vanish.

After this “discovery” the couple improved in health and financial status. They felt their theory had been proven. In 1889 they decided to devote the rest of their lives to spreading the gospel of their “discovery.” Thus “The Unity School of Christianity” began.

DOCTRINES OF UNITY and the TRUTH FROM THE SCRIPTURES

- (1) Reincarnation of man. Hebrews 9:27; Romans 5:12; Hebrews 10:30, 31.
- (2) God never performs miracles. John 2: 1 - 11; John 6:2; Acts 2:22; Acts 15:12.
- (3) Man is part of God. We may all be like Christ now. Isa. 53:6; Isa. 64:6; Romans 3:10-18, 23; Numbers 23:19.
- (4) There is no evil. Genesis 6:5; John 8:39-45.
- (5) Heaven and hell are states of mind. John 14:1-3; II Cor. 5:1, 2; Jude, verse 7; Matthew 25:41.
- (6) Pain, sickness, poverty, old age, and death are not real. Heb. 9:27; Rom. 5:17, 18; Rom. 8:18-23; Matt. 4: 23, 24.
- (7) The entire Bible is allegory. John 17: 17; Psalm 19:9-11; Psalm 119: 128, 142.

With such people as these, keep Paul's instructions to servants of the Lord in mind: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt (able) to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose them selves" (II Timothy 2:24, 25).

THOUGHTS ON YOUR APPROACH

(1) Unity's method of interpreting the Bible is "spiritualization." For instance, according to Unity, "Jerusalem" is not a city at all; it "signifies the heart centre of the individual consciousness." Peter was a "fisherman" which is "symbolical of a consciousness that is open to and seeking for new ideas." Their whole approach to the Bible is based on this kind of spiritualization.

(2) The main emphasis of Unity is on health and prosperity. Personal salvation is ignored completely. That man needs to be saved is denied. Its emphasis is on this life now on earth, as it is in many liberal Protestant churches to day. It offers no hope for life after death.

(3) Perhaps one of the greatest dangers of the cult is the fact that many of its sentiments are both beautiful and true—as far as they go. So when someone hears the message of a Unity church, he often misguidedly thinks it is just a more "practical" approach to "Christianity."

(4) You need to emphasize that the gospel is of grace, not of works. This is essential because of Unity's insistence that man is part of God—as a drop of water is a part of a great ocean. Therefore, according to Unity, man just needs to recognize who he is—part of God—possessing goodness and deserving of God's favor.

(5) Like the Christian Scientists, disciples of Unity don't like to think about sin and its punishment. They need to understand the gospel.

(6) Those who believe in Unity doctrine are usually so intent on looking for the good in man that they will not admit to the presence of any evil. Sometimes you might have to bring them to face reality by a question such as, "Do you think the brutal slaughter of six million Jews under the direction of Hitler was a GOOD thing?" Or, "Do you think a man is showing God-like qualities when he steals, lies, and murders?"

(7) I am glad the Lord has given us the Bible, which is a sharp, two-edged sword, and which can penetrate the heart of man and bring in the light of the gospel. Without the power of the gospel from the Word of God, no one could be saved, including those under the teachings of Unity.

Please address any questions or comments to:

The Gracenet

info@gracenet.com

http://gracenet.com/



**For a printed bound copy,
please contact**

Rev. Wally Morillo

P.O. Box 775

Pharr, TX 78577