



What is True Government?

by Max Kappeler

I. The Science of Government

1. The Law of God

“LAW CONSTITUTES GOVERNMENT,” writes Mary Baker Eddy in the *Manual of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts* (Art. I, Sec. 9). Since cause determines effect, a correct appreciation of law is necessary in order to demonstrate a true government. But law in Christian Science is quite distinct from laws adopted for the regulation of civil, political, social, economic, and religious affairs—distinct from their nature and essence, as well as from their origin and motivation. Consequently, it is important to get a correct understanding of the basis and origin of fundamental law and its inherent nature.

Modern democracies have abolished, to some extent, those laws that allow men to act arbitrarily.

They have adopted a higher sense of law—law that does not require the subject to obey the will of a single individual.

Even the king is under God and the law. But who has created such law? Who has conceived it? Though this law has come through the developed thinking of leading, outstanding men and women, and has been kept abreast of the times by them, the fact remains that such a standard of law has been insti-

tuted by human beings and adopted by the majority of the community. And what of the minority? Is it not an impairment of individual rights that the minority must support the will of the majority? Is the majority always right? The antinomy between *liberal idealism* and *democracy*, and the frictions arising

from it, are well known, and point to an unquestionable fact—that the harmonious and fundamental law of government has not yet been established. The world of today clamors for a solution.

Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered the Science of all sciences, has given an answer regarding these leading questions in her explanation of the Science of divine and Christian government. She has established the fact that law is not

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created by a single man, ruler, king, or despot, nor by a majority of people, but is eternally vested in God, divine Principle, alone.

*God is the lawmaker and lawgiver; God, divine Being, is law to itself.*¹ This lawgiver is described as

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KAPPELER INSTITUTE, INC. USA

Kappeler Institute
Information Center
P.O. Box 99735
Seattle, WA 98139-0735
206 286 1617 (telephone)
206 286 1675 (fax)
mail@kappelerinstitute.org
www.kappelerinstitute.org

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Editor
Joel Jessen
Assistants to the Editor
Barbara Bruch
Jodi Jessen
Jody Siqveland
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Jodi Jessen

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THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE THAT MARY BAKER EDDY discovered and stated in her textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," is seen to be the universal Science of all sciences. The denominational aspect of Christian Science is fading away, and its vital role as a proto-science is emerging.

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divine Mind, the omnipotent, infinite All.² God is Spirit, and God's laws are purely spiritual.³ God is the "law-creating, law-disciplining, law-abiding Principle" (Mis. 206:18-19), which needs no help from persons in order to demonstrate itself, and is free from the beliefs and prejudices of human beings, societies, "-isms" and "-ologies." Nowhere in her writings does Mary Baker Eddy indicate that man could create real laws, or enforce and develop them. Besides God, there is no true law-maker, and the realization of this truth establishes one universal law, bringing freedom, harmony, perfection, eternity, and never causing division, friction, discord, and decay.⁴ Moreover, God's laws apply to all equally and are forever universal.

Any attempt to enforce other laws and statutes than the *spiritual laws* of God must sooner or later lead to discord and so hinder progress. "Human law is right only as it patterns the divine" (My. 283:26).

2. The Government of God

GOVERNMENT IS THE EXECUTION OF LAW. The differing forms of government may be classified according to the nature of the laws on which they are based.

Anarchy implies an absence of law. *Autocracy* may be defined as absolute authority exercised by one person, or by a small group of persons. *Democracy* is

described as sovereign power exercised directly or indirectly by the majority of the people. *Theocracy* is government under the immediate direction of the will of God. When law is vested in God, divine Principle, then God, not man, governs. In such government,

there is no ruling of man over man as in an autocracy, or even in a democracy, for all men owe allegiance to God alone.

Divine Science reveals that God, the infinite All-in-all, is not only the universal legislator, but also the sole executive power, the *Supreme Ruler*,⁵ governing man in perfect harmony. St. Paul spoke of "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6). As there is but one lawgiver, the divine Mind, and but one governor, the divine Principle, man and the universe

are governed harmoniously and intelligently. All action, volition, functions, relations, plans—all that is real and true from the infinitesimal to infinity—are embraced in God's government.

Perfect *government* will not become apparent until *Christ*, God's ideal, is understood spiritually and scientifically. Of this Christ it is written, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. 9:6), and Mary Baker Eddy prophesied: "Christ, God's idea, will eventually rule all nations and peoples—imperatively,

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absolutely, finally—with divine Science” (S&H 565:16–18).

That the understanding of true government must be based on Science becomes even more certain as we apprehend the close relation forever existing between Science and government. Mrs. Eddy writes: “The term Science, properly understood, refers only to the laws of God and to His government of the universe, inclusive of man” (S&H 128:4–6).⁶ Just as every other subject must be learned scientifically, so man must gain a spiritual and *scientific understanding* of the divine Principle of the universe and of its absolute government.⁷ In the measure that we realize this fact will ideal government appear. This government is infinitely good, and man is tributary to it alone, and must ever remain in obedience to the law of God.⁸ Subjection to so-called laws which rest on belief, blind faith, emotion, stereotyped doctrines, dogmas, personal opinions, and the like, results in restrictive laws, slavery, and inadequate forms of government.⁹

It is well to remember, therefore, that the government of the universe, including man, can be based neither on material nor on human laws,¹⁰ also that any interference with God’s law is inadmissible.¹¹ Consequently, human opinions, concepts, ways and means must be eliminated. The physical and moral (transitional) must give place to the *spiritual*. The spiritual must be attained through a right apprehension of God as Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love (S&H 465:10); also through the understanding of Christ, God’s spiritual ideal; and through divine Science and Christian Science.

The question may arise: What relations exist between spiritual, human, and material government,

and which must have the preponderance? It is a rule of Science that *the greater controls the lesser*; the higher governs the lower.¹² Man, the governed, is subject to God who governs. Man cannot, therefore, make laws either for God or for man. Mortal man has no dominion over his fellow man and, consequently, cannot govern him. Ethically, there can be no question among men, “Who shall be greatest?”

Mary Baker Eddy leaves no doubt that spiritual understanding is always higher than *belief*, higher than *faith*, far above ritualism and creed.¹³ Christian Science likewise teaches that divine laws cannot be circumscribed by human and material laws or forms, for the greater cannot be put into the lesser.¹⁴

As we understand the supremacy of Spirit and the nothingness of matter, we shall be ready to admit that the higher is a rebuke to the lower,¹⁵ that the *lesser* must *yield* to the *greater*—must, in fact, give itself up and disappear. Human experience is but a transitory, shadowy state, hinting at reality to a greater or lesser degree. As has been previously stated, the final solution to human problems will not be found by working up from the material through the human to the spiritual. Such a process only involves “the condemnation of mortals to till the ground” (S&H 545:7). Spiritual thinking must always be from the absolute.

In the spiritual realm, the greater controls the lesser; so in the suppositional, material realm, the stronger erroneous thought claims to rule and to dominate the weaker.¹⁶ And so we ask: What rules—the *majority* or the *minority*? Democracies have accepted the rule that the majority governs the minority. That which the majority decides upon must be accepted by all, even if, at certain times, the rights and

freedom of the minority are thereby curtailed. Is this divinely scientific? No. In God's sight all men are equal; no one is more important than another, although each maintains their eternal individuality in Science.¹⁷ Christian Science shows that, in human experience,

Democracy will certainly fail unless democracy patterns theocracy.²² In order to gain a purer sense of democracy, we must first gain a *scientific understanding of theocracy*—the government of God, the reign of divine Science.

the beliefs of the majority seem to rule,¹⁸ but it also teaches that through scientific understanding man can rise above the majority of human opinions and find that “one on God's side is a majority,” because Science teaches man how to demonstrate God's divine Principle.¹⁹ It will thus be seen that scientific *understanding* reigns even over the majority of human *opinions*.²⁰

As spiritual understanding develops, a more perfect government must become apparent. This applies equally to the government of the human body and to the government of the body of the Christian Science movement. Every body, individual or politic, reflects exactly what governs it, whether it is *Science* or mere *religious faith*, understanding or mortal belief, progressive thinking or apathy, original thinking or mass-thinking.²¹ Hence the necessity for guarding thought against wrong motives, erroneous judgments, sentimentalism, emotion, self-seeking, apathy, and other mortal beliefs that endanger the health of the human body and of the body politic. Forward steps in

human government must come from spiritualized thinking, from the scientific understanding of the government of divine Principle, Love, which is able to solve every problem.

Are Christian Scientists working out God's government in matters affecting their own bodies, the Christian Science movement, and the world? Democracy will certainly fail unless democracy patterns theocracy.²² In order to gain a purer sense of democracy, we must first gain a *scientific understanding of theocracy*—the government of God, the reign of divine Science. This Science rests on one universal Principle. When divine Principle is understood scientifically, even by a minority, the understanding of Science by that minority will control the majority—those who do not understand, but who merely believe, who “having ears, hear not.” No other government can hold crime in check or give a satisfactory solution to the present world problems. But progressive steps in spiritual understanding must include honesty in admitting past failures, and a willingness to part with old concepts in order to make room for the “new wine.”

With the coming of a more progressive period, men began to question the right of man to rule over his brother. Mary Baker Eddy, who must be regarded as one of the most liberal-minded thinkers the world has ever known, gives a clear answer in her writings. In unmistakable terms she declares that in divine Science man is governed by God alone. Man, as God's reflection, was given *dominion* over all the earth. He was given the ability to know as God knows, that is, to understand and demonstrate spiritual reality. Any

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government that gives man the power to dominate his fellow man humanly is Christianly unscientific, since it would presuppose more than one Principle. Mary Baker Eddy states this clearly: “If the individual governed human consciousness, my statement of Christian Science would be disproved; but to demonstrate Science and its pure monotheism—one God, one Christ, no idolatry, no human propaganda—it is essential to understand the spiritual idea” (My. 303:15–19). Scientific understanding of the spiritual idea alone governs, nothing else can. This understanding does not give man the power to dominate or control his fellow man, but it enables every man to demonstrate his unity with God; and unity with God is the only majority rule.

The spiritual idea will evolve true government. It must therefore have free course. Democracy patterns this requirement by allowing the *vox populi* “free speech” and “open criticism,” both of which have their proper place in the Christianly scientific government.²³ If these are lacking, there is danger of autocracy.

Evolution makes strong demands on men, and this is true in questions of government as in all else. In general, people are willing to leave the physical (the first degree of mortal mind) with its depraved qualities, but they are not so willing to strive to lay down those moral qualities that are described by Mary

Baker Eddy as being transitional in nature. The present age, however, demands that man leave not only the first but also the second degree, since no rightful government can be built on either basis. The first and second degrees have to be superseded.²⁴ “Mistaken or transient views are human: they are not

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governed by the Principle of divine Science: but the notion that a mind governed by Principle can be forced into personal channels, affinities, self-interests, or obligations, is a grave mistake; it dims the true sense of God’s reflection, and darkens the understanding that demonstrates above personal motives, unworthy aims and ambitions” (Mis. 291:1–8). It should be constantly kept in mind that transient views are human (second degree) and that they do not originate in the Principle of divine Science. When human forms of government are superseded and

human thought is finally relinquished, man will find himself governed by God alone, entirely, absolutely, and finally. This development comes as the result of a clearer apprehension of the law-enforcing Principle of divine Science. Even the best forms of human government at the present time must evolve scientifically, and the *Science* that *governs* these *changes* must be spiritually understood. The more spiritual and scientific the apprehension, the more natural will be the evolution. ■

Endnotes

¹ See Mis. 258:12–13; S&H 184:12–15; S&H 381:15–16

¹ See My. 108:15–16

² See S&H 434:30–435:2

³ See Mis. 259:14–18; Mis. 208:6–10; No. 10:27–11:3

⁴ See S&H 590:15–19

⁵ See also Mis. 58:22–25; S&H 264:32–265:1; S&H 219:20–21

⁶ See S&H 304:22–26; S&H 536:8–9; S&H 141:21–26;
S&H 39:22–27

⁷ See S&H 14:9–11; Mis. 199:1–8; My. 278:1–2; Ret. 90:29–91:2

⁸ See Rud. 10:5–9; S&H 184:17–18; S&H 225:2–3;
S&H 282:23–25

⁹ See S&H 83:16–20; S&H 231:12–16

¹⁰ See S&H 62:22–26

¹¹ See S&H 121:22–24; S&H 318:28

¹² See S&H 458:20–22

¹³ See S&H 467:17–23; S&H 223:9–12

¹⁴ See S&H 589:19–22

¹⁵ See S&H 154:16–21; S&H 198:23–28

¹⁶ See Pul. 4:7–14

¹⁷ See S&H 155:3–11; S&H 177:25–26:7; S&H 164:17–23

¹⁸ See S&H 155:11–14; Mis. 102:27–31; Pul. 4:14–17;
Mis. 245:23–29; No. 45:24–46:2

¹⁹ See S&H 62:27–28; My. 293:32–33:6; S&H 323:17–18;
S&H 569:6–11

²⁰ See S&H 324:7–11

²¹ See My. 283:26–28

²² See Mis 80:16–23; My. 240:15–19

²³ See S&H 115:19

²⁴ See S&H 224:4–10

This article is an edited excerpt from Max Kappeler's book, *Christian Government—Its Scientific Evolution*, 3rd edition (Seattle: Kappeler Institute Publishing USA, 1991), pp. 5–12. Available now from Kappeler Institute Publishing. Paperback, 106 pages, US\$12.

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