

The book cover features a teal-colored triangle on the left side, which points towards the top right corner. The rest of the cover is filled with a light grey grid pattern. The title is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font on the teal background.

Introduction to the Science of Christian Science

Max Kappeler

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*Einführung in die Wissenschaft
der Christlichen Wissenschaft*

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Abbreviations for the titles of works by Mary Baker Eddy:

- Mis. Miscellaneous Writings
Ret. Retrospection and Introspection
Hea. Christian Healing
Un. Unity of Good
Mess.'01 Message to The Mother Church, 1901

All references in brackets refer to the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures", by Mary Baker Eddy.

Note to the Reader

The aim of this book is to provide a general introduction to the scientific fundamentals of Christian Science and to show how they can be applied as an efficient scientific method of resolving problems.

The central theme of the book is the scientificity of Christian Science. One of the special characteristics of a science is its ability to reduce a complex, infinite subject to its basic categories and thereby to its simplicity, making it intelligible, without in any way limiting it. My primary object is therefore to present the scientific system of Christian Science in its fundamental outlines, and so for the sake of clarity I have confined myself to essentials. I have thus refrained from dealing with every problem that could possibly arise, and examining it from every angle according to my present understanding of the whole theme. I would ask the reader to bear in mind that in an introductory book of this kind it is not possible to explain every detail and answer every question. I would also ask him to approach the subject with an unbiased and open mind. It may at first seem difficult – more so than when learning any other subject – to accept the fundamentals of the Science of being without mental reservations, when the subject touches one's own life and all its problems as closely as Christian Science does. It will greatly help the reader if to begin with he can lay aside, as far as possible, all the questions, doubts and objections that occur to him, and concentrate without prejudice on the line of reasoning set out in the following pages. As in every new field, the first requirement here also is to get a general view of the

whole subject. For only when the reader sees this whole in broad outline can he properly understand how all the details relate to each other and form the universal coherency of the whole. In proportion therefore as he begins, step by step, to grasp the divine system of Christian Science, he will also automatically find clear and satisfactory answers to the questions which called for a solution.

Autumn 1977

Max Kappeler

Part I

The Four Prime Factors of the Divine Being

Chapter I

The Universal Life-principle

The four prime factors for solving problems

In their longing for harmony and health all men search for an absolute principle of life. Christian Science teaches the Science of Life – the Science of divine Being. This divine Being is the being of all mankind; and therefore the Science which teaches the divine Principle of all being applies equally to all men, irrespective of race, colour, religion, nationality, class, or any other distinctions. It presents a universal Life-principle, which is also universally valid. It is undenominational because it is independent of all religions and ideologies – in fact, it is ‘scientific’. Not only is this Science available to all, but it also provides the answer to *all life’s problems*.

The question then arises: Is there a *generally available method* which is fundamentally applicable to solving all questions and problems? The answer is: Yes. There are four basic prime factors governing the whole of being. Everything going on within the one infinite Being operates in accordance with it. Thus we too unconsciously follow these four prime factors of Being when we try to solve our problems. The Science of being deals with these prime factors; they form the basis of divine Science, and hence also of this book.

Four fundamental steps towards the solution of a problem. The four basic steps for solving every problem can best be understood by considering how in the general course of events people would set about finding the answer to any ordinary problem. It will then be shown later what these four basic steps mean, from an absolute point of view, in being.

First step. First, we always refer to some principle, to a *guiding principle*. We appeal to something; this something will vary according to circumstance and person. For a problem in arithmetic, it will be the principle of arithmetic; for a mechanical problem the principle of mechanics; for the ordinary problems of life probably ethical, moral or religious principles. Many people prefer to appeal to their own feelings, to their intuition. In a business the staff may refer to their employer; within the family a wife may turn to her husband. Others make success, wealth, pleasure and so on the basis for their decisions. Whatever the individual guiding principle in human life may be, the fact is that everyone turns to something which he can rely on to lead him.

Second step. Why does man act according to a principle (step 1.)? Clearly experience has taught him that there is a comforting, problem-solving, redeeming and liberating power to be found in following a principle. When for instance machinery goes wrong, the one who mends it refers to the principle of mechanics (step 1.). He does this knowing that only this principle can give him the solution; that he must therefore bring himself into line with this principle; that in deciding how to deal with the machine he must be led by this principle alone and trust it unreservedly. This brings us to the second step in solving a problem, namely to *trust* that the principle we follow has an *inherent solving power*.

Third step. But it is not enough merely to turn to a principle (step 1.) and trust that it will work (step 2.). A third step is necessary: We must act in accordance with our principle, apply it, put it into practice, live it, obey it. When a principle is applied it begins to operate according to the law of cause and effect. The right principle, when practised, always brings about the right effect. Merely to have confidence that a solution lies within the principle (step 2.) is not enough. We must avail ourselves of the principle; only then can we receive the benefit which is inherent in the principle. The third step then requires a *living practice* as a result of the first and second steps.

Fourth step. With the third step, the utilization of the guiding

principle, we do indeed achieve results, a practical outcome, but a further, fourth, step is still essential. Only too often those who have followed these first three steps still do not find the answer. They experience sickness, lack, deprivation, failure, and discord of every kind. The guiding principle which they trusted, and by which they worked, has had some effect but it has not solved the problem. Why not? Because in the first place they have chosen the wrong principle, and secondly they have entrusted the solving of their problem to this inadequate and false principle, and must therefore, thirdly, arrive at an unsatisfactory result – disharmony, difficulties in every department of life. Via this negative experience they come to the fourth and most important step: They must look for an authority that can also teach them which is the right Life-principle for solving problems harmoniously, and which are the wrong principles and rules that will produce negative results. Consequently in the fourth step comes the crucial question: Who or what is this absolute authority which can show us what the true Principle of life is?

This fourth step, which leads to an *understanding* of the true Principle of being, is therefore of the greatest importance to us. For when we fathom the Principle of being scientifically and make it our Life-principle and guiding principle (step 1.), we can rely on a really dependable help and redeeming power for solving life's questions (step 2.) and – because we are using a truly redeeming Principle – we can expect a right and harmonious result (step 3.). Like the student who digs deeper and deeper into the principle of arithmetic in order to solve ever more difficult and taxing arithmetical problems, we too must continue to search and explore more profoundly the Life-principle, with which we can overcome our everyday problems. This fourth step – the understanding of Truth – must be placed first in importance.

*

The four fundamental steps in solving a problem are:

- to choose the right guiding principle,
- to trust the problem-solving power of this guiding principle,

- to act in accordance with the guiding principle,
- to understand the Principle of being to be the guiding principle of Life.

The four prime factors in the light of the Bible

The Bible, 'the Book of Life', also shows very clearly the four prime factors of Being. It points therewith to the universal Life-principle and demands that all who recognize the Bible as their authority, should take the scientific way of the four steps in solving their life-problems. It is very interesting to see in how far these steps are already foreshadowed in the Bible:

First: Monotheism. Throughout the entire Bible there sounds the great call to have but one God, the God who is All-in-all. To the biblical writers the main enemy is polytheism. The patriarchs, the prophets and Jesus all proclaim one God; they all see polytheism as the root-cause of human discord. From the first chapter to the last the Bible calls upon man to have only one God. The very first verse declares the universal all-inclusiveness of God: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1) This God, who rules over heaven and earth, is the all-embracing Principle of being. Thus Moses gives his people the great commandment of God: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Ex. 20:2, 3) Moses hereby insists that the people of Israel should accept only one Principle, only one God, and he exhorts them further: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4).

The Book of Isaiah is also tireless in its denunciations of polytheism and idolatry in Israel. It is full of exhortations to have only one God, as for instance: "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Isa. 44:6), or again: "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isa. 46:9).

The New Testament likewise demands the same monotheism. Jesus acknowledged only one father, God; he acted always in accord with this one God. Whatever the nature of the problem he had to deal with – whether it was a religious, ethical, medical, social, economic, political, legal, or any other problem – he solved it always on the basis of one Principle, being himself in unity with the one God. For him God was not only a religious principle, but the All-principle; the Principle which contains within itself the solution for all life's problems. Also his beloved disciple John begins his Gospel, as Genesis does, by declaring the allness of the one divine creator: "All things were made by him [the Word, the Logos]; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:3) Paul expresses the same thought in different words: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." (Rom. 11:36)

The first step towards solving a problem is, as we have seen, to turn to the right solving principle. We have also seen how important it is to choose the Life-principle as the only true guiding principle for obtaining a satisfactory solution. Experience also leads to the conclusion which the Bible urges upon us, and which both the Old and New Testaments so strongly emphasize: the requirement to know only one God – in other words, the necessity of turning only to one Principle, the all-solving Principle of being. But like Israel, whose polytheism was deplored by their prophets, the Christian of today – while calling himself a monotheist – does service to countless other principles, letting himself be led by ambition and greed, by notions of hygiene and medicine or economics, by ethical and moral views, or again by anxiety and fear. Thus the names of the gods may have changed, but polytheism remains.

Secondly: Christ, the Redeemer. The second step is to submit to this guiding principle and trust that it can bring about a solution. This principle then becomes our comforter, our redeemer. The Bible calls the Redeemer Messiah or Christ. The Old Testament prophets already knew that God has a Christ, a saving power. Therefore they not only constantly urged the

people to have only one God (step 1.), but required them just as insistently to put their trust in this one God, to submit themselves to Him, let themselves be guided by Him and obey Him (step 2.). Then God would deliver them from all dangers, from all difficulties and crises.

Jesus, who always referred solely to the one God, to the one Life-principle, also proved above all that there is likewise only one Christ, only one Redeemer. In his Epistle to the Galatians Paul stresses the fact that Christ is the only Redeemer, all that we need to make us free. Man does not need a variety of redeeming principles (dogmas, theories, healing methods, techniques, etc.), but one Saviour alone, one Christ. Jesus taught that in this Christ lies the only true saving power, and he also showed how man can make use of this power: by making himself completely one with the divine Principle – “I and my Father are one.” (John 10:30) Through this oneness with divine Principle the divine ability to save gains dynamic power for man. Thus Paul can speak also of the “power which the Lord hath given me to edification” (2 Cor. 13:10).

Thirdly: Christianity. The third step is to act in accordance with the first and second steps; it requires us to avail ourselves of the redeeming Principle, and therefore to practise Christ in every sphere: Christianity. The word ‘Christianity’, when used to denote the third great prime factor of Being, signifies the outcome of the operation of the impersonal Christ-idea, and does not refer to the body of Christian believers or the Christian religion. Moses and the prophets were already aware of the law of cause and effect operative in the sphere of divine being. Thus they constantly called upon the people of Israel to keep the commandments; for they realized that obedience to God, that is, the obedient application of the divine Principle, produces harmony, whereas disobedience to this Principle brings only disharmony, disappointments, ruin and bondage. Jesus became the Master and Way-shower for mankind, because throughout his life he proceeded from the one divine cause, and this produced harmonious results. All the healings and works that he performed can be attributed to the fact that he loved and

lived the harmonious Principle of being and never used any other problem-solving principle.

Fourthly: Spiritual understanding. The fourth step – the understanding of what the true solving principle is – is crucially important for us. Who or what can show us the right Truth-principle, to which in the first place we must turn, which in the second place we must trust, and which in the third place we must use? Can feelings, conscience, blind faith, beliefs, theories, dogmas, human opinions or human intellect be true advisers and authorities? Can rituals, sacrifices, formal prayers, sacred music, hymn-singing, religious ecstasy, meditation, asceticism, and so forth unlock Truth for mankind, as so many religious and metaphysical groups believe? The Bible declares otherwise. Isaiah, for instance, calls all these “vain oblations” (see Isa. 1: 10–17). The Bible increasingly demands from us something quite different, namely understanding.

God’s very first command is to know, to understand. The biblical account of creation starts with the command: “And God said, Let there be light” (Gen. 1: 3). Light is a symbol for intelligence, wisdom, clarity, understanding. Solomon also saw that the first necessity is for understanding (I Ki. 3: 5–15). When the Lord said: “Ask what I shall give thee”, Solomon asked for “an understanding heart”, that he might “discern between good and bad”. And God gave him “a wise and understanding heart”, because he had not asked for riches, honour or long life, but only for “understanding to discern judgment”. His understanding heart, however, caused Solomon to act in such a way that he also earned riches, honour and long life. This recalls Jesus’ words: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Mat. 6: 33) As we read in Proverbs: “Get wisdom, get understanding. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom” (Pro. 4: 5, 7).

The prophets insistently urge the people of Israel to strive first for an understanding of God. Isaiah begins with the Lord’s accusation that Israel has rebelled against Him: “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel

doth not know, my people doth not consider." (Isa. 1:3) Later he lets them see that sacrifices and burnt offerings do not please Him: "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me" (Isa. 1:13). And at the same time the prophet Hosea was declaring: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hos. 6:6) Jeremiah is even more explicit. He envisages a new covenant between God and man, the covenant of understanding: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (Jer. 31:33, 34). This is the true divine covenant, and it holds good as much today as in the time of Jeremiah: Each one of us individually can, should and must learn to understand God; for only then can we refer to the redeeming Principle for all our life problems, submit ourselves obediently to this Principle, apply it, and thus be able to experience the harmony of being in our lives.

The demand for an understanding of Truth is put even more emphatically in the New Testament. Especially John, the disciple who discerned more clearly than any other the scientific Principle of Jesus' life and teaching, points out again and again the necessity for knowing God: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) It is this same disciple John who records in his Gospel Jesus' greatest prayer, the prayer that men should receive spiritual understanding as their future Comforter: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter [or Advocate] that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16, 17). Then, speaking further of this understanding, he promises: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

For the New Testament God is not 'the great Unknown'.

When Paul sees in Athens the altar with the inscription: "To the unknown god", he seizes the opportunity of teaching the Athenians: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." (Acts 17: 23) He also says of the Jews that "they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10: 2). Paul attaches special importance to knowledge, and he points out that it is God's purpose not only that "all men [should be] saved", but – what is much more significant – that they should "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4); for only a true knowledge of God keeps them from again abandoning the one saving Principle.

It is very interesting in this connection to see how firmly Paul places faith in God and Christ in the foreground of his teaching. The term 'faith' in biblical language does not have the modern connotation of 'blind faith', which would contradict the demand for knowledge. The word used for 'faith' in the Old Testament means: steadfastness, constancy, faithfulness, self-reliance, trustworthiness, confidence. In the New Testament it means: "the consent of reason to the revealed Truth." Here faith and understanding become almost synonymous. Faith expresses the capacity for total reliance on an understood truth¹.

The spiritual climax of the Bible, the Revelation of St. John, also points to the great importance of a right understanding of God. In one of his many visions John saw "in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals . . . And no man . . . was able to open the book, neither to look thereon" (Rev. 5: 1, 3). 'Book' is the symbol for a textbook, for an understandable, interpreted principle. The book in the right hand of God symbolizes that God, the Principle of being, wants to be interpreted and made intelligible. Thus in a later vision a mighty angel appears; John sees him "come down from heaven . . . And he had in his hand a little book open" (Rev. 10: 1, 2); the little book was now "open for all to read and

¹ For the term 'faith' see: Max Kappeler, *The Epistles in the Light of Christian Science*, pp. 20-29.

understand" (559: 1). Then John is told to "take it, and eat it up" (Rev. 10:9) – to make the divine understanding his own.

Jesus had promised to send another Comforter, "the Spirit of truth", and he had said that this "Spirit of truth" would guide them "into all truth". Now, in the vision, he lets John see that this "Spirit of truth" is revealed in the form of a 'book', symbolic of a textbook for everyone who studies it (eats it up) to understand. This book, which interprets the Principle of being so that it can be grasped through spiritual understanding, is the textbook of Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy (referred to in this book as 'the textbook'). Its key-words are 'Science' and 'understanding'¹. It appeals expressly to the thinker: "The time for thinkers has come" (vii:13), and, like the Bible, it requires understanding from the student. "Until belief becomes faith, and faith becomes spiritual understanding, human thought has little relation to the actual or divine." (297: 28)

The four prime factors in the light of Christian Science

Terminology. As we have seen, these four steps for solving a problem are also contained in the Bible as four great requirements. In Christian Science, which like every other science must work with exact, clearly defined terms, the four great prime factors of Being are designated by names which were deduced from the Revelation of St. John.

The visions of John culminate in the exalted vision of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. It is a city foursquare, with four equal sides which represent the four prime factors of divine Being. "The four sides of our city are the Word, Christ, Christianity, and divine

¹ The textbook uses the word 'religion' only about forty times, and then mostly in a negative sense; the word '*Science*' on the other hand, appears almost one thousand times and the word 'understanding' several hundred times, and both always in a positive sense.

Science” (575:17). The four steps we have been dealing with can therefore be defined as the Word of God, Christ, Christianity and divine Science:

- 1. *The Word of God*: The Word of God, without which nothing was made that was made, is the divine Principle of all being, to which we must first address ourselves.
- 2. *Christ*: When we turn to the Word of God and submit ourselves to it, it becomes a redeeming, liberating and helping power for us. The Word of God becomes Saviour, Christ.
- 3. *Christianity*: This Christ-attitude or Christ-way of acting, when faithfully and consistently expressed, leads to Christ-practice in every field. It brings about the true sense of Christianity. Christianity describes that attitude which expresses Christ-like thinking, feeling and acting.
- 4. *Divine Science*: What divine Truth is, however, only the absolute authority of divine Science can teach us. Divine Science interprets the Principle of being, the Word, Christ and Christianity, and so brings the divine Principle nearer to human understanding, by teaching its absolute meaning. It explains the Principle of being as the redeeming Principle, to which man can and must always turn.

The Principle for solving all life’s questions is thus founded in the four sides of the Holy City. They constitute the four prime factors of divine consciousness, which is symbolized by the city which came down from heaven, and which will “wipe away all tears”, so that there will be no more “sorrow, nor crying [nor] pain” (Rev. 21: 4).

The four fundamental requirements

If the solving of all problems rests on consciously following the four steps in accordance with the four great factors of Being, then we can easily understand why human existence is so uncertain, so full of fears and unsolved problems. In divine jurisdiction also, ignorance does not excuse us from punishment, that is, from inharmonious consequences. Fundamentally every

discord originates in man's total or part failure to fulfil the four basic requirements, which are:

- 1. *Turning to the one Principle of being*: Usually we turn to a variety of principles to solve our problems, according to whether it is a matter of health, morals, human relationships, social or economic situations, etc. We think that a different principle is appropriate to every one of our diverse troubles. But a genuine solution can be arrived at only when we realise that for all our problems the one God, the one and only Principle, is to be considered authoritative.
- 2. *Trusting the Principle of being as the only redeeming power*: Very often human thought is able to accept the one Principle in general, but nevertheless expects concrete help to come from any and every other human principle and theory. Yet only trust in the one divine Principle, as the one and only saving power, delivers us from human discord.
- 3. *Practising the Christ-attitude*: It is not sufficient to stop at theoretical acceptance of the one redeeming Principle. A harmonious solution comes only through practical adherence to the Principle we recognize as the true liberator.
- 4. *Learning how to understand the Principle of being*: Blind faith in Principle does not produce a solution. The Principle of being, in whose liberating power we put implicit trust, must be understood. We take it for granted that we have to spend a good deal of time learning arithmetic, although that is a principle we shall only be able to use for solving arithmetical problems. To the Principle of being, on the other hand, an understanding of which is crucial for our whole life, we appear to devote very little time, energy or dedication. Yet without a constant striving for spiritual understanding we can scarcely expect our lives to be more harmonious.

*

Development of the subject in subsequent chapters: The further development of the subject grows out of this necessity for a better understanding of being:

- First, the word 'God' will be examined more fully, with special reference to the definition given in the textbook (465:9).
- Next the term 'Christ' will be discussed in more detail. The redeeming and healing modus operandi of the Christ will be investigated, showing that the eternal Christ forever expresses itself according to the divine law and that there is no escape from it.
- This then leads us to a more thorough study of Christianity. Here it will be explained how by acting according to the Christ-attitude we gain a higher concept of man, which leads to such harmonious solutions as those exemplified by Jesus.
- The fourth theme will deal with the divinely scientific consciousness and show how, through study and research, we can achieve enlarged spiritual understanding and increase our grasp of the Science of being contained in the Bible and the textbook.

Chapter 2

The Word of God

God must be defined

The one God. The Bible contains the teaching of pure monotheism; it presents the Word, the self-revelation of the one God, the All-in-all. If there were several equally powerful gods, more than one divine Principle, this would imply that being is disharmonious. Discord would be the mutually contradicting and inevitably appearing result of those different principles and could therefore never be removed, never be solved. Jesus however solved all disharmonies, proving that discords of all kinds arise, not because there exists more than one Principle of being, more than one God, but solely because mankind have made themselves many gods – because they follow many guiding principles. If, however, everything is subject only to the one divine Principle – as Jesus taught – then no contradictory results can arise, but only mutually complementing ones, which combine to form an undivided whole, and which can be experienced as a state of harmony.

Yet the realization that there is only one God is only a small step forward. We have not attained true monotheism until we know this God as He really is, and not merely as we in our ignorance imagine Him to be. Many declare that they believe in only one God, but to the question: What is God? they give the most varied and contradictory answers. God is regarded as a person or a spirit; as an inscrutable creative intelligence or as the unknowable; as loving Father or as vengeful judge. For many, God is ‘above’, for others He is ‘the depths of being’,

and not a few, when asked what they understand by God, would answer with an honest: I don't know. Moreover, people's views on God are apt to change in the course of human experience. So long as we entertain such vague and constantly changing notions of God, we shall not have monotheism.

Divine definition. The one God, as portrayed in the Bible, is not what *we* imagine Him to be. He is what *He* is. And what He is is defined more fully through the self-revelation of God. The word 'God' by itself, without that more detailed explanation, is a mere series of three letters, to which the most divergent meanings can be attached. Like the terms 'the Lord', 'the One', 'the Infinite', etc., 'God' is an empty concept which can impart neither the nature nor the essence or wholeness of Deity. The name 'God' gives no indication of whether this God is good or bad or both; whether He is spiritual or material or even indeed both; whether He is a person or impersonal or both; whether He imparts only health, sinlessness and deathless life or whether He also sends sickness, sin and death.

The term 'God' must therefore be defined, and in such a way that the meaning of the one God is so unequivocal that it excludes all misunderstandings, and at the same time so comprehensive that it expresses all the essential aspects of God. Such a definition cannot be personally or humanly devised – it must be divine.

God cannot be defined as a whole. The subject of God is infinite. The question then immediately arises whether one does not limit the infinite Being by trying to express it in one short, unambiguous definition. "Even eternity can never reveal the whole of God, since there is no limit to infinitude or to its reflections" (517: 22), says Mary Baker Eddy in her textbook, and she is equally emphatic in her declaration that God "is indefinable as a whole" (213: 10).

The principle of the whole must be understood. It is however not necessary to define God as a whole. To impart the true concept of God it is sufficient to explain the nature, essence and operation of God. A similar method is used for example in arithmetic. No one wishing to progress in arithmetic would try to get hold

of the subject by learning every possible calculation by heart. Rather he would find out what the elements of arithmetic are, and the laws by which they combine. In other words, the system of arithmetic has to be explained, and through that one arrives at an understanding of the whole subject. Such a procedure is scientific.

Analysis of the concept of God. In the same way the whole essence of God can be understood through the analysis of His fundamental nature and method of operation. This is best illustrated by an example from ordinary experience. Suppose we are talking not of God but of a Mr Smith. Some people do not know him, others are not sure whether they may have met him or not, while others think that they know him because they are confusing him with another Mr Smith. In this case too we use analysis. We characterize this Mr Smith by describing his job, his various commitments, and his particular way of life: Mr Smith is a married man, the father of three children, manager of a commercial bank, a prominent Rotarian, treasurer of the golf club; we stress, for instance, that it is not the Mr Smith from X, but the one who owns the fine house in Y, the same Mr Smith one meets at golf on Sundays, etc. The more detail we add to the description of his activities and peculiarities, the more his identity emerges. Those who did not know him before now know at least who Mr Smith is; those who confused him with others can now get the right one. From now on, when there is talk of Mr Smith everyone on hearing the name will think of the same man. There is no longer any doubt about his identity.

The Bible does the same with regard to God. The first verse presents the divine Person God in His universality: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The wholeness of God is already stated in this one verse. If this were the Bible's only aim, it could well finish at the end of the first verse. But it would then have given us no exact conception of God; each one of us could form his own opinion about the nature and essence of this God. It would be like speaking of Mr Smith, in the example above, without first excluding, through more

detailed characterization, all the possible misunderstandings and uncertainties as to which Mr Smith we are dealing with.

The Bible however goes on to give the self-declaration of God. The creation of heaven and earth, stated in the first verse in its wholeness, is then analysed more fully (in the following verses of the first account of creation) in its seven stages – the seven days of creation (Gen. 1:3–2:3). So God does not remain a mere vague concept for us, but becomes the name for the nature of God analysed into seven aspects and precisely defined. How these seven days of creation present the theme of God in detail cannot be treated here¹; it is initially only important to see that the Bible too uses the method of analysis.

That the analysis of the different aspects inevitably leads to a clearer understanding of the whole can be shown by a further illustration: When we analyse white light by passing it through a prism, the white light is split up into the seven colours of the spectrum. Conversely, if we paint a disc in equal segments of the seven colours of the spectrum and spin it fast enough, we no longer see the seven separate colours but once more only white. White is therefore not a colour in itself, but only a collective term for the seven different colours of the spectrum. Thus in order to find out what white is, we must investigate the seven colours of which white is composed. Likewise ‘God’ is only the collective name for the seven fundamental aspects of the nature of the divine Being. The Bible explains God as a whole by defining these seven aspects in detail.

Definition through the seven synonyms for God

What is God? In the chapter ‘Recapitulation’ of her textbook Mary Baker Eddy gives a new answer to the old question: What is God? It reads: “God is incorporeal, divine, supreme,

¹ On the subject of the days of creation see:

John W. Doorly, *Talks on the Science of the Bible*, Vol. 1.

Max Kappeler and co-writers, *Compendium for the Study of Christian Science*, No. 2, ‘The Seven Days of Creation’.

infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love.” (465:9) In this definition she follows the first account of creation in Genesis, for she too defines the one term ‘God’ analytically by means of seven other terms (corresponding to the seven days of creation in the biblical account). In this way – thinking back to our example with the colour white – she so to speak passes the collective name ‘God’ through the prism of scientific analysis and obtains the seven basic ‘colour tones’ which together make up the concept of ‘God’.

The seven synonyms for God. The seven terms Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love all share one particular characteristic – that is to say, they are synonyms. What exactly does one mean by synonyms, or words of similar meaning? In Funk and Wagnalls’ Dictionary we find this definition: “By synonymous words we usually understand words that coincide or nearly coincide in some part of their meaning and may hence within certain limits be used interchangeably, while outside of these limits they may differ very greatly in meaning and use . . . To consider *synonymous* words *identical* is fatal to accuracy.” What then are the limits within which the terms Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love coincide in their meaning, or to put it differently: In respect of what common concept can they be used interchangeably? Mary Baker Eddy gives the answer in her reply to the question: “Are these terms synonymous?” (465:11), where she declares: “They are. They refer to one absolute God.” (465:12) What does this mean? It means that these seven terms have one common characteristic when they refer to God – that is, they can be used in place of the word ‘God’; each one of the seven synonymous terms can stand for God, and we can use Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth or Love interchangeably to mean God.

Although each synonym implies all the others, this does not mean that they are identical in meaning. Webster adds to his definition of the word ‘synonym’ the following comment: “A thorough analysis of *synonyms* will in most cases show that the words actually have marked differences of meaning . . .” All the synonyms for God characterize God – this is what they

have in common; but each one characterizes God in its own unique, non-interchangeable way, and in this sense they differ from each other. It is this difference which is the whole point of substituting seven words for the one word 'God'. These seven other terms explain the nature and essence of God, by each stressing a particular divine characteristic of God. Thus the seven synonyms for God accentuate different fundamental aspects of God. Mind therefore says something different from Spirit about God. Soul emphasizes a different aspect of God from Principle. Again, when we say that God is Life, we are indicating different characteristics of Deity from when we speak of God as Truth or as Love – and yet all refer to one and the same God.

As each of these seven synonyms stands for the wholeness of God, each one includes within itself all the other six. So that when we, for instance, substitute Mind for God, this does not mean that all the divine aspects which characterize Spirit, Soul, etc. will not be contained within the term Mind. Rather we indicate by Mind the whole of God, but with emphasis on the special aspect which God as Mind possesses as distinct from God as Spirit or Soul, etc. The same naturally is true for the other synonyms, for Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. Each synonym for God must therefore be understood through the specific divine qualities or ideas which characterize it.

The synonyms must be accurately characterized. By substituting the seven synonymous terms for the single term 'God' it is possible to obtain an exact concept, a scientific, analytical understanding of God. This naturally presupposes that the seven synonyms for God should in turn be exactly defined and characterized, otherwise everyone would again be able to entertain his own personal views about God as Mind, God as Spirit, as Soul, as Principle, as Life, as Truth and as Love. In determining what is characteristic of a synonym for God we should include only that which is characteristic also for God Himself, therefore nothing human. Also, since these seven synonyms all represent God in His seven different fundamental

aspects they differ in meaning from each other. This is why by saying, for instance, Mind, we understand mainly that which distinguishes this synonym from all the other synonyms for God.

This point can also be seen more clearly from the example of the spectrum. Not only does white light split up into seven different colours, but the colours of the spectrum, moreover, constitute the primary colours; each one of them is composed of countless shades and hues. There is not just one blue, for example, but many shades of blue. In the same way, the term 'Mind' includes many shades or tones; it is – like Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love – only a collective term covering countless ideas. Thus "Science is the prism of Truth, which divides its rays and brings out the hues of Deity" (Ret. 35:13). All the ideas which characterize any particular synonym for God constitute together that clearly defined concept or 'basic tone' of what Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love mean specifically. This in turn reveals ever more clearly in what respects the synonyms for God do not coincide in meaning, that is, how one synonym differs from the other six synonyms for God and which specific aspect of Deity it stresses, thereby distinguishing itself from all the other synonyms.

Study of the synonyms. Our discussion of the four steps for solving problems showed that we only achieve harmonious results when we understand the Principle of being, the one God whom the Bible teaches as He really is and not as we imagine Him to be. But now we also know how to attain this true, divine concept of God: by grasping the seven synonyms for God through the ideas which characterize them. Thus one of the first and most important tasks is to become thoroughly acquainted with these ideas.

In the textbook the seven synonyms for God are characterized through specific ideas. Therefore if we wish to investigate the ideas which belong to one particular synonym, we must study every sentence in the textbook containing this synonym, to find out what particular characteristic is attributed to the synonym in question. Each of these synonyms appears several

hundred times in the textbook, so by studying these passages systematically we can compile a fairly comprehensive list of the ideas, qualities and attributes which characterize each one. To succeed in this study however we need to know more about the system of Christian Science.

But first, so that the reader can follow the theme of this book more easily, it may be useful to include here at least a general survey of the meanings of the seven synonyms for God, showing in italics the most important ideas for explaining each synonym:

Mind: Mind is the *creator* of all ideas; as creator it is the *first cause*, therefore the *origin* of all manifestations. To *manifest* creative ability Mind must also be *power* and *force*, which express themselves as *all-action*. This *divine will* to manifest itself comes from the *all-intelligence* of divine Mind as *law* which *leads* and *guides* everything *wisely*. The one divine Mind *controls all* and therefore appears on the human level as true *medicine* at work in every situation to *heal*, to *save*, and to *maintain*.

Spirit: Spirit is the *only*; it knows no dualism and recognizes nothing besides itself. Therefore Spirit, and the *spiritual*, is the *only reality*, and hence the *only substance*. Since nothing claiming to be the opposite of Spirit can exist beside Spirit, Spirit only ever expresses itself in its own *likeness*; nothing of a foreign nature therefore can oppose *unfoldment* and *development*, so that, in accordance with divine *order*, like always gives *birth* to like and *brings forth* like. So that divine creation is an infinite *reflection* of Spirit.

Soul: God, Soul, is *immortal, unchangeable*. As Soul can *never be 'in' anything*, it is *limitless* and therefore *incorporeal*; consequently it can never lose its *identity*, but preserves it constantly. The *identities* of being remain what they are. It is only *Soul-sense*, that is, *spiritual sense* or *spiritual understanding*, which can *bear true witness*, and which can *name* and *define* everything rightly. Since Soul is the only true *Ego*, man as the idea of Soul is *selfless*. Soul never sees man as a mortal body, but identifies him always as incorporeal, limitless, and thereby bestows on him *freedom, joy* and *happiness*.

Principle: Mind, Spirit and Soul constitute the *trium* Principle. This Principle is the Principle of all *sciences*, and it *governs absolutely* and *authoritatively*. Principle *interprets* itself through its divine *system of ideas* and *demonstrates* or *proves* itself as the *problem-solving, omni-active* power, which only ever produces *harmony*. Governed by this Principle every idea is in harmonious *relationship* with every other idea; all are united in the great *one-ness*.

Life: God, Life, is *eternal, timeless, deathless, without beginning or end*. Life *is*; it *exists out of itself* and *sustains* itself. Life always *provides*, like a divine *Father*, out of the *abundance* of being, and brings the perpetual *newness* and *multiplication* of Life into *existence* as infinite *individuality*. Therefore Life is *indestructible* and *omnipresent*.

Truth: Truth knows only the truth of all things; it is the divine *consciousness* of that which is factual. The *factuities* of being are *never self-contradictory*; they are *undeniable*, and *self-enforcing*. They are *victorious* over every kind of falsehood. The *potency* of Truth brings *dominion* and everywhere raises the *standard* of the divine *ideal*. Nothing can withstand it. Since in Truth there is no error, Truth always expresses *wholeness* and *health*, always the complete *form* or *gestalt* of all things. Thus Truth becomes the *Saviour*, the *Christ*, or *healer* of every erroneous problem; it is the *Son of God* coming to this age.

Love: Love sees no error; it looks on everything like a divine *Mother* and manifests itself in *perfection* and *completeness*. The divine *plan* is consummated in *all-embracing* Love, in which the *glory* and *holiness* of the universe of ideas finds *fulfilment* in perfect *rest* and perfect *peace*. Love is never without its complete expression. Therefore it knows no enemies, no accuser, no fear and no envy.

This brief summary may be enough to show that these ideas are not isolated concepts arbitrarily gathered together under the collective name of a particular synonym for God. Anyone who has begun to *understand them spiritually* realizes that, on the contrary, they are all intimately connected with each other and have to be taken together to convey the full meaning of the

synonym in question. Also, the ideas which characterize one synonym for God are closely related in meaning with the ideas which characterize the following synonym, so that a divine order can be discerned in the infinite abundance of ideas. These and other important questions connected with the synonyms cannot however be dealt with more thoroughly here. For a further study of the subject the reader should consult the 'Compendium', where all the synonymous terms for God are explained in detail¹.

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The Word of God or the self-revelation of God gives us the true concept of God that we need. But how can we grasp the infinite One?

1. Christian Science defines God through seven synonymous terms which reveal the one infinite God in His seven different fundamental aspects.
2. Each of these seven synonymous terms can be defined through specific ideas. A knowledge of these ideas leads to a more and more exact understanding of what each of these seven synonyms means. In this way the indefinite or empty term 'God' is replaced; the unknown God becomes for us the known God. Then, as well as having one God we also have only one concept of Him. This is the monotheism which the Bible demands and which the textbook declares to the modern age in more abstract symbolism.

Teaching through symbols

Definition by symbols. "Spiritual teaching must always be by symbols." (575:13) Spiritual facts can only be presented to

¹ Max Kappeler and co-writers, *Compendium for the Study of Christian Science*, Nos. 4-10.
Peggy M. Brook and co-writers, *A Study of the Fundamentals of Christian Science*.

human understanding through signs and symbols. The type of symbol used to elucidate spiritual facts can vary and also change with the course of time. For the symbol is not itself reality, but only indicates reality in a form that can be understood. Thus the Bible, for instance, illustrates the fundamental self-revelation of God's nature through the symbolism of the seven days of creation; whereas today the same nature of divine being can be symbolized through the seven synonymous terms for God. But this does not in any way change the divine message. This fact was clear to that missionary to the Eskimos who translated "Behold, the Lamb of God" as "Behold, the little seal of God" – for to an Eskimo the seal typifies all that is innocent, peaceable and lovable.

From biblical symbolism to the metaphysical symbolism of the twentieth century. Biblical symbolism was specially suited to the people of Israel and their environment. It was also in keeping with the views of the universe which were current at that time. Biblical writers used mostly concrete things or natural phenomena for symbolizing their spiritual message, such as: heaven, earth, moon, stars, water, stones, mountains, seeds, trees and animals (such as the lamb, lion, wolf and bear). And in addition to these they used politics and the nation's own history and wars, as well as their sagas, legends and myths.

Numbers also were used to symbolize spiritual facts. The number 7 appears most frequently – as a symbol of perfection; for the whole nature of being can be reduced to seven basic elements – just as all numbers in arithmetic can be reduced to 10 digits. Other numbers also appear frequently (especially 1, 3, 4, 10 and 12). But this does not imply a hidden numerology. For whereas numerology attaches a magic power to numbers themselves, the numbers used in the Bible are there merely as signs by which a divine fact or divine event can be explained by means of symbols.

The language with which we try to communicate spiritual facts today is largely metaphysical. It no longer uses concrete objects as much as biblical writers had to in order to be understood. The abstract symbolism of today is better adapted to

convey a more exact sense of the facts of being; in fact they make it possible, for the first time, to formulate a scientific definition of God which is appropriate for the thinking of the twentieth century. The biblical symbolism which expressed the notion of 'God' through the seven days of creation was translated by Mary Baker Eddy into a symbolism more intelligible to the present age. The definition of God through seven synonyms makes it easier for modern thinking to grasp the true concept of God.

Capitalization in the textbook. The seven terms Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love are central to the system of Christian Science. This is evident from the special way they are written in the textbook¹. The seven words which, as we have seen, can be used in the place of 'God' are always written with capital letters when they are being used as synonymous terms for God. But all seven words also appear in their generally accepted human meanings, and in these instances are written in small letters. Thus we find, for example, the form 'mind' as well as 'Mind'. 'Mind' with a small 'm' denotes the human, mortal, sick or sinful mind; it does not stand for God and is therefore not capitalized. The same applies to all seven terms. Thus:

- We write 'Mind' when we refer to God, but 'mind' when we speak humanly of a well-balanced or a disturbed mind, a sick or a contented mind, etc.
- We write 'Spirit' when we refer to God, but 'spirit' when we speak of various types of spirit, such as a discerning spirit, a brave spirit, an evil spirit, etc.
- We write 'Soul' when we refer to God, but 'soul' when we speak of a good soul, a gentle soul, a human or sinful soul, etc.
- We write 'Principle' when we refer to God, but 'principle' when we speak of principles in physics, moral principles, legal or economic principles, or any other human principles.

¹ See Mary Baker Eddy's article 'Capitalization' in *Miscellany*, p. 225.

- We write 'Life' when we refer to God, but 'life' when we speak of organic, embryonic, physical or human life.
- We write 'Truth' when we refer to God, but 'truth' when we speak of a specific truth, in contradistinction to absolute Truth, which is God.
- We write 'Love' when we refer to God, but 'love' when we speak of human love, sexual, personal, or selfish love, or any human sense of love, however fine, if it cannot be equated with the one God.

Any one of the synonyms for God always stands for the whole of God; it denotes divine quality and quantity. Single divine attributes or ideas, on the other hand, such as selfless love, exalted life, acknowledgement of a truth, etc. have the same divine quality but not the same quantity; they are indeed divine but they are not God. Because these terms are not synonyms for God, they are not capitalized. We can perfectly well read of the life of Life, the truth of Truth or the love of Love without any sense of contradiction.

Chapter 3

The Christ

The second side of the Holy City, Christ, corresponds, as we have seen, to the second step in the solving of our problems. This is where we submit ourselves to the Word of God, so that Principle can appear to us as a power to help and to save – as Christ. This second step, or second great prime factor of Being, therefore consists of two complementary aspects: first, the requirement to submit ourselves unconditionally to the Word of God; and secondly, the outcome which results from this, namely that we experience the helping, redeeming power of the Word as harmony. On the one hand it has to do with man's attitude towards God and, on the other, with the operation of God as the redeeming power. Our Christ-attitude – obeying the Word of God unquestioningly and trusting it implicitly – enables us to experience the saving power of God as our own Saviour.

What this Christ-attitude involves, and the means by which we can culture it in ourselves, will be treated more fully later (p. 115 f.). But first let us consider the Christ and its saving power.

The Christ-idea

When studying the definition of God through the seven synonymous terms, we saw that the divine nature includes only the realm of spiritual perfection, from which everything mortal and imperfect is excluded. Thus when we speak of the Christ as the saving and healing power, we must be aware that it is only man who experiences this Christ-operation as redemption,

for God Himself, the perfection of being, needs no Redeemer. Looked at from the standpoint of divine reality, therefore, Christ does not have the narrow meaning of a saving power, but represents God's fundamental power and will to express Himself. While the Word of God presents God's nature and essence, Christ emphasizes that aspect of divine Being which gives expression to the nature and essence of God. God is not only a self-existent divine Principle, He is also self-expressed Being. Without self-expression God, the creator, would be without a creation, therefore no creator, and hence a nonentity. Christ is God's inherent ever-operative power to express Himself, through which the eternal newness of creation perpetually manifests itself.

In what way does God manifest Himself? Through His infinite idea; God has an infinite expression. For He is not only Himself, but He has also an infinite idea – that is, a grand design, an all-embracing purpose, containing within itself both will and fulfilment. This goal-directed power is always at work to establish and to realize boundless divine perfection everywhere and in every age. It is the Christ-idea which irresistibly enforces God's plan and fulfils it completely. In the reality of divine being this constantly self-fulfilling plan is the self-realization, or the self-expression of God's nature; in the human realm it is experienced as redemption¹.

The redeeming power of the Christ

Christ transforms. How does this redeeming power work? Through transformation. Paul explains this process: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17) In other words, as soon as we develop the requisite humility to submit ourselves wholly to the Word of God, the old erroneous

¹ On this subject see: Max Kappeler, *The Christ-idea*.

concept disappears and we become a new, a redeemed, creature. Behind this process of change there lies a great operative power, but there is nothing mysterious or inexplicable about it. It works in accordance with a general law, which holds good in every field – which, for instance, we see operating quite naturally for every student of arithmetic. How does someone who cannot do arithmetic become a good arithmetician? By turning to the principle of arithmetic and learning its rules, and in this way getting rid of his own false notions with regard to his arithmetical problems. He is now mentally at one with the rules which lead to a solution of these problems. Then “old things” (his ignorance) are passed away, and he is “a new creature” (a good arithmetician). This effective transforming method of the Christ is thus not a mystic power, but a scientifically explainable process. And because we can understand the natural and fundamentally simple way in which the Christ-operation works, our awe before such a universally available resolving power is increased.

The Christ-translation

The two phases of the Christ-translation. The Christ-operation rests on the fact that God is all-powerful not only in the domain of Truth, but also in the realm of beliefs; that His power is absolute, not only in the spiritual sphere, but also in the material; not only in the divine, but also in the human; not only in the absolute, but also looked at from the relative point of view. This is why Jesus could pray: “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” (Mat. 6: 10) God has a Christ, which means that the divine always carries within itself the ability to translate itself to the human. How does this happen?

By showing us the “scientific translation of immortal Mind” and the “scientific translation of mortal mind” (pp. 115–116) the textbook gives us an insight into the spiritual processes which take place within the Christ-operation. It is as if we could follow in slow motion the laws behind God’s redeeming power

at work. The Christ-translation goes on simultaneously in two directions. First, it translates the divine Mind, God, to man, to the point where it can be understood through divine ideas; secondly, it thereby simultaneously translates all false beliefs, and everything unlike immortal Mind, back into the divine Mind and in this way exchanges all illusions for ideas.

The "scientific translation of immortal Mind" begins with God. The point now is not what God is (Word), but in what way He operates and translates Himself to man (Christ). Thus in the first translation, of immortal Mind, God translates Himself – divine Principle, Life, Truth, Love, Soul, Spirit, Mind¹ – to man, and He does this through ideas.

The "scientific translation of mortal mind" then explains the process which goes on in the human when these ideas are accepted into consciousness and understood. While the first translation shows a descending order from God to man, the second translation shows the ascending order from the mortal to the divine.

The three degrees. This translation of the mortal into the divine takes place in three stages through the three degrees. *The first degree* is called "Depravity" and comprises the beliefs of "unreality", which constitute the "physical" view of things. The list runs: "Evil beliefs, passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, self-justification, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, revenge, sin, sickness, disease, death."

The second degree. When the light of the Christ-consciousness penetrates the darkness of the first degree, then the darkness recedes and the divine begins to dawn on human consciousness and to leaven it. This is the transitional stage of the second degree called "Evil beliefs disappearing", where the "depravity" of the "physical" gives way to a "moral" state. Here we find "transitional qualities", namely: "Humanity, honesty, affection,

¹ Here the seven synonymous terms for God perform a totally different function and therefore they do not appear in the same order as when they are used to define the nature of God. See Max Kappeler, *The Four Levels of Spiritual Consciousness*, pp. 187-192.

compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance". With these qualities the human has gained a moral stage, but not yet reached the spiritual or divine.

The third degree. Not until the third degree, called "Understanding", do we touch "reality", which is purely "spiritual". Here understanding moves in the realm of divine ideas: "Wisdom, purity, spiritual understanding, spiritual power, love, health, holiness. In the third degree mortal mind disappears, and man as God's image appears." (116:4) Consciousness is then completely free from all material, human beliefs and is filled only with God's ideas.

The translation process. This translation shows how divine ideas act in the human upon the first degree of "depravity". It illustrates how the divine ideas of spiritual reality operate on the physical, mortal level, which is termed unreality. This second translation shows that ideas, in giving us a true concept of God, make us realize more and more clearly that the evil beliefs of the first degree must be relinquished as unreal. In proportion as this understanding dawns on us, the false concept changes, and in the place of physical beliefs there appear those moral qualities which characterize the second degree. This process of transformation goes on until all beliefs have disappeared and the third degree of "understanding" is reached. Then "man as God's image appears" – he is redeemed.

This Christ-operation – these two translations, which are necessarily set down one after the other in the textbook – are nevertheless one process; in reality they are always going on simultaneously. Both translations always go hand in hand. In proportion as we let the first translation, the translation of immortal Mind, operate, and learn to know God through His ideas, our human experience also improves; for, as we saw right at the beginning, the problem-solving power, that is, the resolver of all life's questions, lies in our submission to Principle, which contains the solution for every specific case. God, the divine Principle of all being, holds within itself the solution for all human problems. In translating itself to us through the first translation – the translation of immortal Mind – and mak-

ing itself understood through its ideas, it delivers us out of the dream of unreality and leads us to the understanding of God (the second translation or translation of mortal mind). The starting-point is therefore always the first translation; this impels the second translation, through which evil is transformed into good, and depravity into perfection. The second translation is always the result of the first. Why must this point be stressed?

Very often we strive for improvement in the human by trying to overcome through our own effort whatever seems to us to be wrong. In doing this we are trying to "so improve material belief by thought tending spiritually upward as to destroy materiality" (545: 8). This however does not lead to redemption, but amounts to "condemnation of mortals", as the textbook points out; for the true redeeming power lies not in mortal "thought tending spiritually upward", but in the Christ-translation. The destruction of materiality – deliverance from the realm of depravity through the second translation – gets its irresistible transforming power only from the first translation, through which God comes to man in the form of ideas which can be understood. Every attempt to experience existence more harmoniously must therefore always begin with this first translation of immortal Mind, that is, from God. The translation of mortal mind into the divinely real then happens automatically, in proportion as we let the first translation take place in our consciousness.

The three degrees in the Bible. This redeeming process involves three stages, explained in the textbook by the three degrees. The Bible, likewise, always describes the operation of the Christ-translation in three stages.

In the Bible mortal man is represented by the Adamic race. The main purpose of the Bible is to show how Christ, Truth, is always at work to liberate us from this Adam-dream. It is Eve, as a later chapter will show in more detail (p. 87), who first glimpses the truth that man is not fallen; she analyses evil as the serpent, which stands for mortal consciousness. Her three sons, *Cain*, *Abel* and *Seth*, symbolize the three stages of

the way to salvation, shown in the textbook as the three degrees. Cain symbolizes the first degree of the physical, depravity. He is a tiller of the ground and a fratricide. Abel is a keeper of sheep; he represents the second degree, the moral stage, and is a type of the moral qualities belonging to this second degree. Seth, the third son, typifies the third degree of spirituality; he turns to the divine. In his time "began men to call upon the name of the Lord". (Gen. 4: 26)

But how was it that Cain could slay his brother Abel? Why is Abel, a representative of the higher, improved stage of humanity, subject to the first degree of depravity? Or, to put it in other words, why does our human experience constantly show us that the morally good man is cheated, even destroyed, by the thoroughly bad man? The Christ-translation provides the answer. We saw, when considering the two translations, that true salvation must always come from the first translation, and therefore from the realm of ideas, from reality; that the attempt to improve what is bad through moral qualities, by one's own effort, amounts to the condemnation of mortals. Everyone who, from within himself, wants to improve or even overcome evil seems to be under the same curse; for instead of solving his problems through an understanding of ideas, he works hard at reducing what is bad and depraved in the world, or setting it to rights, by expressing good moral qualities himself. Such an effort is doomed to failure. True, the moral stage is on a higher level than the first degree of depravity, but there is as yet no effective redeeming or Christ-power in it. The second, moral degree is only a transitional stage resulting from a growing apprehension of spiritual reality. But the potential power which will get rid of the first degree of physicality and evil lies solely in the translating power of the Christ. Christ translates God to man to the point where man can comprehend God through His ideas. Then we can shine the light of understanding onto the darkness, so that the darkness yields to the dawning light and disappears. Thus, to overcome evil we must not trust in our own moral qualities, but devote ourselves to the spiritual. This is what Eve does, when her second son

Abel is killed by Cain – when the bad, as so often, seems to triumph over the morally good. She replaces Abel by Seth, whom God “appoints” her. Thus, in the place of the second degree she puts the third degree of understanding, and in so doing she is able to prepare the way for the coming of the true redeeming idea; Noah, Abraham, David and finally Jesus were descended from the line of Seth.

This also answers another question which has puzzled many readers of the Bible. Why in the Bible do wickedness and injustice so often seem to triumph? Why is wrong not punished and right rewarded? Here we touch upon a key point in biblical teaching. The Bible does not set out to be a handbook of ethics; it is not intended to provide a code of morals or lay down any particular theory of behaviour. Rather, the Bible pursues a spiritual aim; it shows how man may be led to God, to the spiritual. This spiritual teaching remains valid in every age and for all mankind, whereas views about what is morally good and right vary from religion to religion, from country to country, and from century to century. The purpose of the Bible is to bring all men to the spiritual; therefore it must present those spiritual facts which lead to salvation independently of our moral outlook. Thus the biblical story of Cain, Abel and Seth illustrates the attitude we must adopt when we too, like Eve, suffer the experience that our moral sense and way of thinking can be destroyed by wrong and evil; it teaches that we must turn to the spiritual, which alone bears within itself the power of redemption.

The *Judges* – to take another example – had the same experience. Israel’s Judges were not legal judges, but saviours in times of trouble; they were redeemers. In the days of the Judges “there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 17:6). Now the Book of Judges aims to show that no redemption can be worked out on the principle of “Do right and fear no one”. What we regard as right is frequently far from right before God. So we find that the stories in the Book of Judges always follow the same pattern. Although “every man did that which was right in *his*

own eyes”, it was not right from the divine point of view; for “the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the *Lord* . . . And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers” (Judg. 2:11, 12). Although the children of Israel did right as they understood it, trying to live morally good lives, God delivered them time and time again into the hands of their enemies. Their good morals helped them no more than Abel’s had helped him against his enemy Cain. But as soon as the Israelites found themselves in the hands of their enemies, they remembered the divine command to worship God alone, and then they “cried unto the Lord”. They saw that they could not prevail against the powerful force of the first degree, and turned to God; and “the Lord raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them” (Judg. 3:9). “The Spirit of the Lord” (the understanding of the third degree) came upon this Judge, and he was able to free the children of Israel out of the hands of their enemies (out of the first degree). After that, the land had rest for forty years. This means that the redeeming power of the spiritual, the third degree, brings about an improved, peaceful condition in the human – the second degree. The same story repeats itself for every Judge, showing over and over again that the second degree, the moral degree, always gave way before the first degree of depravity; that only the third degree of the understanding of God has the power to conquer the first degree and protect the qualities of the second degree.

The healing power of the Christ

We have been studying the translation of God to man as the redeeming Christ-power, which acquaints us with the third degree of spiritual understanding, which can free us from the beliefs of mortal existence. But the definition of God has shown us that God, Spirit, knows nothing of matter and has no cognizance of mortals’ beliefs. Which raises the question: How can God, Spirit, heal His opposite, of which He has no knowledge? How can the physical world of mortals be influenced

for good and reformed through the spiritual? The answer is, through a change of consciousness. To understand this process of redemption of the mortal through a change of consciousness, we must look again at the three degrees.

The hierarchy of spirit, soul and body. Man is usually regarded as a unity made up of three equally important elements working side by side, consisting of body, soul and spirit. Soul is taken to mean the human psyche. According to this conception, theology has to do with the spiritual sphere, psychology with the sphere of the soul, and the doctor with the physical side, or body. Body, soul and spirit are thus looked upon as three realities of different nature, being equally real and of equal value. The task, then, is to bring these three different elements into harmony with each other. Starting from this premise it is impossible to explain why one of the three equally valid spheres, namely the spiritual, should exert a dominating influence over the other two.

The three spheres are also indicated in the Bible: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless" (1 Thes. 5: 23). But when one looks at this verse in the light of the whole New Testament, it becomes clear that the three spheres of body, soul and spirit show a definite order of precedence, or hierarchy, which corresponds to the three degrees of the physical, the moral and the spiritual. In this hierarchy the spiritual, the realm of reality, is first in importance; the psychic, or the human psyche, is subordinate to it; this means that the moral sphere (of the second degree) is governed by the spiritual. The body in its turn is subordinate to human consciousness, the psyche, and is influenced by it. Paul's prayer, that the God of peace might sanctify the Thessalonians wholly, signifies that process which we found in the Christ-translation: human consciousness, the psyche (second degree), becomes more and more filled with spiritual understanding, with the spiritual (third degree), and this has an inevitable effect on the body (first degree). Even medicine itself ascribes considerable importance to psychic equilibrium; psychosomatics especially

makes it increasingly plain that a healthy body depends on a healthy mind.

The power of Spirit over body. God, Spirit, which is not cognizant of matter, exerts its healing influence over the body, for the reason that the sick body is controlled and restored by a healthy consciousness, and the healthy consciousness in its turn is moulded by an understanding of God. Just as light never comes into contact with darkness and yet causes it to disappear the instant it shines, so Spirit never comes into contact with its opposite, matter or error, and yet it can cause the discords of mortal existence to disappear.

To understand this healing process rightly, it will be necessary to go thoroughly into the question whether matter actually possesses objective reality. This will be dealt with in a later chapter (p. 74). But in connection with the Christ-translation, we need at this point only to be clear that Spirit and matter, the divine and the mortal, never touch nor mingle, and also that there is no contradiction in the fact that the divine can redeem the mortal without having any knowledge of it.

The textbook defines Christ as "the divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error" (583:10). Christ comes *to* the flesh and not *into* it, just as light does not enter into darkness, but merely approaches it and the darkness is banished.

The fact that Truth translates itself to man is the Christ, or Redeemer, for all problems. Truth itself needs no Redeemer; in the realm of reality there is nothing that needs to be redeemed or healed. But the consciousness which entertains a false concept of Truth must be liberated from this "incarnate error". This is possible only because Truth operates everywhere and at all times. In the same way, the principle of arithmetic operates not only for those who are good at figures and who know the rules, but also for those who do not understand properly. But if those who are poor at arithmetic are to learn how it operates, they must give up their misconceptions and acquire the understanding which will solve the problem.

The Christ is irresistible

The Christ comes either through suffering or through Science. When making the statement that the Principle of being operates as Redeemer for everyone, we must never forget something very important. The redeeming power of the Christ is indeed always at work, irrespective of whether we accept it or not, whether we want it or not, whether we submit to it or not. But whereas we experience this Christ-operation as a saving, healing and comforting power when we are consciously willing to yield to it, the same Christ-operation appears as strife, suffering and sorrow in our lives when we try to evade it or even oppose it. Again it is the same as in arithmetic. When we willingly accept within ourselves the principle of arithmetic, then it translates itself to our specific problem and solves it; but if we put up resistance to the correct rules of arithmetic, they go on working just the same, and then our own reckoning is exposed as false and inaccurate – and this causes us to suffer and later on to give up our resistance or ignorance. In this case we experience the operation of the arithmetical principle first in a negative way. Similarly, the Principle of being is always at work, enforcing itself everywhere through the Christ-operation. We feel this process in the one case as a painful experience, in the other as a scientific method of solving our problems, as redemption. “Either here or hereafter, suffering or Science must destroy all illusions regarding life and mind, and regenerate material sense and self.” (296:6)

This also provides the answer to our question as to what becomes of all those who do not turn towards God. Are they not saved? Even they cannot escape divine salvation. God has a Christ. It is in the very nature of Christ to manifest the divine at all times and in all circumstances, thereby causing that which is ungodlike to disappear. No human resistance can hinder this dynamic self-expressing energy of the Christ. Anyone who resists the Christ still cannot exclude himself from divine Being, which always has within itself the saving aspect of the Christ. But in this case his human experience takes a different

course. Like the Israelites in the days of the Judges, he falls into the hands of enemies – he experiences discord of every kind; and this condition forces him to seek a new guiding principle. Then he gradually begins to “cry unto the Lord”, that is, to follow the right Life-principle. And, as to the Israelites, so to him, a deliverer is raised up in his need, a judge, who leads him into peace.

“*The anger of the Lord*”. The prophets already knew that the power of the Christ-translation lay behind this suffering. They called this process the “anger of the Lord”. The “anger of the Lord” is that very power of divine translation which admits of nothing counterfeit, erroneous or evil; which never allows us to turn to other gods and think them good, positive and helpful. Whenever the children of Israel turn away from the one God, and seek goodness and justice from sources outside this one God, the “anger of the Lord” is evoked by the prophets. This angry, vengeful God then eradicates and destroys everything that the children of Israel hold dear – but in so doing He destroys only the false, only all that which would keep them from their true universal salvation. Thus wayward, stiff-necked Israel is to be crushed by the law of God because, as we read in Nahum: “The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.” (Nah. 1: 2) The adversaries of God always stand for all beliefs which oppose the divine nature (Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love). They are the enemies pursued by the “anger of the Lord” or the saving power of the Christ.

To man in his ignorance it seems as if God has sent the disaster. But, from the standpoint of understanding, the same process can be seen as a law of good rejecting evil. When Truth destroys error, it may appear to those ignorantly holding on to error as if they themselves are being destroyed. But what is really going on is always the self-destruction of error. “The manifestations of evil, which counterfeit divine justice, are called in the Scriptures, ‘The anger of the Lord’. In reality, they show the self-destruction of error or matter and point to matter’s opposite, the strength and permanency of Spirit.”

(293:24) Always when someone experiences great misfortune, we should bear in mind that no other power can be at work but the Christ-power, which is forcing mortal thought to give up its beliefs, until all error yields and Truth prevails.

Christ Jesus

Christ and Jesus are not identical. Now that we have studied the significance of the Christ as the second great prime factor of Being, we are better able to understand what the New Testament means by the frequently used name 'Christ Jesus'. Over the centuries this expression has led to the misapprehension that 'Christ' and 'Jesus' both allude to the person Jesus of Nazareth, and that both terms – 'Jesus' and also 'Christ' – may be used interchangeably as a name for Jesus. Christ and Jesus are not synonymous, however, but have quite distinct meanings.

'Christ', 'the Anointed', is the Greek form of the Hebrew title 'Messiah'. The Hastings Bible Dictionary defines the word as "appointed and empowered by God through the impartation of His own Spirit, to become the Saviour of His people." 'Christ' is thus used in the Bible as a title for that which is "appointed and empowered by God".

'Jesus', on the other hand, is a proper name still used today, which – like all other Hebrew names – has a special meaning, namely, 'God helps' or 'God saves' – hence Jesus' title of 'Saviour'.

The difference is therefore clear: Jesus is the name of the human Jesus of Nazareth; Christ is a divine title for a certain attitude of mind – the Christ-attitude, which consists in making oneself one with the divine nature and thereby letting the saving power of God take effect. Jesus was a corporeal being; Christ is incorporeal. Jesus appeared in the flesh; Christ is spiritual. Jesus was a man, and therefore human; Christ is the divine idea. Jesus' human existence was brief; Christ is eternal. Jesus *was*; Christ *is*.

The Christ-attitude is something which any one of us has the

right to assume at any time; it is not restricted to any one historical person. In proportion as we so identify ourselves and make ourselves one with God's nature, that the saving power of divine Principle can express itself as a healing, helping, liberating power, we have the Mind of Christ, and then we too may be said to bear the divine honorary title of 'Christ'.

Jesus the Christ. Jesus expressed the Christ-nature to such a degree that he could finally lay down his human life and become one with divine Life. His life's aim was to work out this complete at-one-ment with God. He did not identify himself with corporeal men, nor as Mary's son; rather, his nature as the 'lamb of God' caused him to become the Son of God. The Christ-nature became more and more clearly manifest in the man Jesus. His God-likeness is therefore best suggested by the name 'Christ Jesus'. "He expressed the highest type of divinity, which a fleshly form could express in that age." (332:29) Jesus is defined in the Glossary as: "The highest human corporeal concept of the divine idea, rebuking and destroying error and bringing to light man's immortality." 589:16)

The eternal Christ

Christ, the eternal idea of God. Christ must be understood as an ever-present fact in divine being. Just as Christ did not first come into the world at the birth of the human Jesus of Nazareth, so also it did not leave it at Jesus' ascension. The saving power of God, Christ, is rather, as we read in Hebrews, "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). Thus, Jesus, who identified himself so completely with this saving power, could say of himself: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58); not that his bodily form had existed since before Abraham, but the eternal Christ-consciousness, with which he was at one, had done so. Spiritually inspired men have from the beginning had occasional gleams of the Christ-idea. "Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and the prophets caught

glorious glimpses of the Messiah, or Christ, which baptized these seers in the divine nature, the essence of Love.” (333:23) But Jesus understood the Christ in full measure. After his ascension the illuminating power of the Christ manifested itself on the Day of Pentecost, and later it was seen by Paul on the road to Damascus; a few decades later the same Christ caused John to behold his visions on the island of Patmos. The eternity of the Christ is expressed in the last verse of the Gospel of Matthew, when Jesus says: “and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Mat. 28:20)

Infinite forms of the Christ. Not only is the operation of the Christ-power unlimited by time, but it also expresses itself in infinite ways and by infinite means. The Christ reveals itself to every age in just that form which is suited to the general thought and the special needs of the time. It does not necessarily come through a person as it did in the case of Jesus.

The Christ appeared to Abraham, the father of faith, in an age of saga, legend and visions, in the mythical form of *Melchisedek*. The Epistle to the Hebrews interprets the name Melchisedek as ‘king of righteousness’, ‘king of peace’, and describes him as follows: “Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God”, and adds that he “abideth a priest continually.” (Heb. 7:2, 3) For Abraham the Christ was the true, eternal high priest, and therefore, not a person, but the recognition that man is spiritual and eternal, like his creator. This realization became for Abraham the redeeming Christ-idea; for the promise that he should become the “father of all nations” could only be fulfilled if he did not identify himself as the father of “Israel after the flesh” (1 Cor. 10:18), but as father of an Israel after the spirit.

To Moses the Christ-idea, or the idea of redemption, appeared in a new and quite different form, because it had a completely different task to fulfil – the children of Israel had to be led out of bondage in Egypt. How could Moses, their spiritual leader, deliver them from thirst on the journey through the wilderness? According to the biblical account, in the desert

Moses struck a *rock*, from which God commanded water to flow. Paul describing this incident says that the children of Israel "did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). The rock, stone or corner-stone later becomes a symbol for Christ. To Peter, who first recognized who Jesus was, and who could therefore confess: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God", Jesus declared: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church"¹ (Mat. 16:16, 18).

In Jesus the saving Christ-power became *visible* in the form of a *human Saviour*. But Jesus himself knew that the Christ would later appear to men in a different form, and he also saw that it would not be a person, but "*the spirit of Truth*": "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26) John the Revelator recognized this Comforter in his vision of the book sealed with seven seals, which could be loosed only by the "Lamb" – that is, by the Christ-understanding. This vision clearly shows that the Comforter must come to men in the form of teaching, proclaiming the "spirit of Truth".

In the scientific age Mary Baker Eddy received the Christ-revelation and wrote the textbook, which is sealed with the seven synonyms for God. Whoever understands these is able to open the textbook and find in it the Science of being, which will "teach all things". The Christ is thus expressed in a way which is appropriate to our own age, appearing in the form of *Christ Science*.

¹ Here 'church' has the usual New Testament meaning of *ecclesia* 'community'; it stands for Christians in general.

Chapter 4

Christianity

Christianity is true manhood

Christianity is Christ-like doing, the Christ way of acting. The third side of the Holy City, Christianity, is defined as “the outcome of the divine Principle of the Christ-idea in Christian history” (577:16). Christianity, then, is an outcome. How can this outcome be achieved in Christian history – in human experience? It comes about – as we have already seen in our study of the four stages in the solving of a problem – when we turn to the divine Principle of being (Word), bring ourselves into spiritual unison with it (Christ), and then act and live in agreement with it (Christianity). The outcome of this doing and living then coincides with the Christ-attitude; it is as divinely harmonious as the Principle of which it is the result.

Christianity is the application of the Christ-attitude in all areas of life; it signifies that Christ-like doing which produces a Christ-like manifestation. Thus, like the Word and also the Christ, it is a factor of the one divine Being, and not to be confused with the ordinary use of the term ‘Christianity’, which usually suggests Christendom – Christians in general, together with their religion.

We cannot reach true Christianity, the third great prime factor of Being, until we understand the true meaning of the first factor (Word) and the second factor (Christ). The third factor of Being always follows on from the first two factors. We cannot begin with it, but it is the inevitable result of the previous two. As a necessary consequence of incontrovertible divine order, we cannot help experiencing true Christianity,

that is, harmonious results, if we begin with divine Principle (Word), identify ourselves with the nature of this Principle (Christ), and act in accordance with this Principle in every department of life (Christianity).

A higher humanity. In our human experience the "outcome of the divine Principle of the Christ-idea" always shows itself as better manhood, as higher and more perfect humanhood. This is the natural expression of the transformation which takes place in us, when we identify ourselves with the Christ-attitude and give up all our own desires and objectives, so that we let divine Principle operate and not our own human principles. In proportion as we let ourselves be changed by the Christ-attitude, or in proportion as we are one with the Word of God – with the ideas of divine Principle – these ideas express themselves, and the standard of our humanhood is raised.

In order, therefore, to be able to lead a more rewarding, more successful and altogether better human life, our first need is to change, not our external circumstances, but only our attitude towards them. It is not primarily a matter of *what* we do, but of *how* we do it. However our work may be judged by human standards, the only criterion that matters is the motive with which we do it. If we act in accord with the Word and the Christ, we are carrying out our task in the spirit of true Christianity, and so we shall also obtain a satisfactory result; but if our thinking, feeling and doing are geared to ungodlike, human, erroneous principles, then our labours earn us only the fruits of these principles, namely, sickness, lack, discord, futility, etc. Then we experience mortal manhood, the opposite of true Christianity. Yet man is divinely destined to awake to the fact of his immortality and thereby attain a higher humanity. Thus Christianity, the third factor of Being, demands that we should fulfil our true destiny by turning to the Word of God and acting in accordance with it through our Christ-like attitude. This is the practical evidence which is asked of us: "Every day makes its demands upon us for higher proofs rather than professions of Christian power." (233:1)

Mortals and immortals

When we ponder Christianity, we find that the focus is on man, and on that which constitutes manhood. Thus it is vital to make a clear distinction between so-called mortal man, the Adam-man, and man in God's image and likeness, immortal man.

The two biblical records of creation. The Bible raises the great question "What is man?" from the very start. In the first record of creation (Gen. 1:1-2:3) man is presented as God's man, as God's image and likeness, as immortal man. In the second record (Gen. 2:6-5:27) there is a quite different account of creation, one which contradicts the first record in every detail, and sets forth the exact opposite of immortal man – the history of mortal, sinning, material man.

Thus the two records of creation open up the fundamental argument of human life and formulate the most vexed of all questions: Is man immortal, divine, eternal (as the first record says), or is he a mortal, material, sinning creation (as the second record declares)? All the subsequent books of the Bible try to deal with this problematic question, until at last the solution is found; Jesus furnishes the proof that man is the son of God, by overcoming sin, sickness and death and sitting down "on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3).

Comparison of the two records. In the first record of creation God is called 'Elohim', which in the Bible has been rendered 'God'. In the second record Deity is called 'Jehovah', translated as 'the Lord God'. Elohim is the spiritual, exalted concept of Deity; Jehovah, on the other hand, is the tribal God of Israel, an anthropomorphic God. "The word *anthropomorphic*, in such a phrase as 'an anthropomorphic God', is derived from two Greek words, signifying *man* and *form*, and may be defined as a mortally mental attempt to reduce Deity to corporeality." (517:3) Accordingly, the creations of these two concepts of God, 'Elohim' and 'Jehovah', are also different. The first record is divine; the second is mythical. The first record begins with light; the second begins with mist – in mystification and

obscurity. In the first record God or Elohim creates everything out of Himself; in the second record God needs the co-operation of matter and man. In the first record creation comes 'from above', from supreme perfection; in the second everything is created 'from below', from the dust of the ground. In the first record man is the image and likeness of God; in the second he is a corporeal sinner, created from matter, led astray by a lie and later cursed. In the first record man is spiritual and immortal; in the second he is 'carnally minded', and therefore mortal. In the first record man is the perfect creation of his perfect creator; in the second he appears as imperfect, full of pain and sorrow, and is abandoned to destruction. The first record shows the ascending order of the eternal Elohim's creation, leading to the highest perfection; the second record presents the false method of creation, that of the man-projected Jehovah, leading in a descending line to the dissolution of his own creation. Already the very first son of Adam, Cain, "went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod" (Gen. 4: 16). 'Nod' means 'wandering, misery'; Jehovah's creation thus remains always in 'misery' and has no part in reality.

By contrasting them in this way the Bible from the outset clearly shows that corporeal, material, sinning mankind, the Adam-race, has nothing in common with the real man created by Elohim in His own image and likeness. Throughout the subsequent books of both the Old and New Testaments there sounds the persistent call to identify ourselves with the perfect concept of man, with the Elohim creation, letting go of the Adam-man.

Isaiah, for instance, exhorts Israel thus: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2: 22) In other words, cease from the man of the second record of creation, whom the Lord God created from a mixture of matter and spirit, forming him of the dust of the ground and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life; cease from the erroneous belief that man is both material and spiritual.

In the *Psalms* also a clear distinction is made between mortal and immortal man. Of mortal man we read: "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." (Ps. 103:15, 16) The place of mortal man is 'Nod' – wandering and misery; it knows nothing of the real man. We must awake from this mortal wandering: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Ps. 17:15) How can we "be satisfied" with the likeness of God? By awaking and recognizing God as He is – that is, by identifying God rightly (Word), by making ourselves in our essential nature identical with this true concept (Christ), and in this way gaining our own true identity as God's man (Christianity).

Jesus never identified himself with mortals. "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." (Mat. 23:9) Without his conviction that he was created by God, and not by a human father, he could not have overcome death. To be able to conquer death, he must know that he had never died into a mortal condition, into a body – for material birth is nothing else than the first death, and is not from God. His words leave no doubt on this point: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." (John 8:44)

Similarly *Paul* referred constantly to the man of grace, for he knew that "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15:50). Therefore he tells the Corinthians: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh" (2 Cor. 5:16). Thus he too turns away from the material, mortal man of the second record of creation.

Difference between mortal man and the real man

Scientific criteria of distinction. It is not difficult to obey the biblical injunction to distinguish clearly between a mortal and

the real man made in the image and likeness of God. We know the creator of the true man as the Word – as Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. Everything which is not the image and likeness of the Word of God, and therefore is unlike the nature and essence of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love, cannot be termed man.

How then does the real, spiritual man differ from the mortal?

- Immortal man is the image of Mind; as idea he has a divine origin – mortals have no divine creator and therefore exist only as an erroneous belief.
- Immortal man is the image of Spirit; he is purely spiritual – mortals are fleshly, physical, material.
- Immortal man is the image of Soul; he has divine identity; he is incorporeal and sinless – a mortal is a sinning, sensuous body.
- Immortal man is the image of Principle; he is harmonious and always governed divinely – mortals are inharmonious and always dominated by personal, human opinions.
- Immortal man is the image of Life; he is deathless, eternal and indestructible – mortals are temporal, finite and subject to decay.
- Immortal man is the image of Truth; he is the son of God, whole and healthy, endowed with divine consciousness – mortals are not the children of God; they have a mortal consciousness, which continually produces sickness and inharmony.
- Immortal man is the image of Love; he is perfect and complete, safe in the rest and peace of Love's divine plan – mortals are imperfect in every respect, full of fear, hate, envy, strife, jealousy and revenge.

Perfect man. Man in God's own image is as perfect as his Maker. But, as we saw in our study of the Word, the creator, God, expresses Himself only through ideas. Therefore if we wish to experience the truth about man, we must always begin by grasping the truth about God – that means, we must realize what Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love are, as the true nature of God. Since God Himself is always perfect,

that which alone can claim to be called 'man' is likewise always perfect. The real man, therefore, can never lose his standard of perfection; he is never fallen, nor accursed. "If there ever was a moment when man did not express the divine perfection, then there was a moment when man did not express God, and consequently a time when Deity was unexpressed – that is, without entity." (470:24)

Just as the perfect man can never be less than the full expression of his divine creator, so he is equally incapable of being in any way linked with a mortal. Man, as the immortal idea of God, and a mortal are as opposite as light and darkness. They have no point of contact. The real man has no partnership with a mortal; he overcomes him.

Mortals. "Mortals are the counterfeits of immortals." (476:1) They are "counterfeits from the beginning" (409:22) and "a burlesque of God's man" (92:18). This implies that mortals are not actual and real, but are merely a distorted image of the true, divinely created man, and that the mortal, material body, which we mistakenly call 'man', is only a counterfeit. But this sinning, corporeal mortal has nothing to do with the real man and cannot be called by the same name.

Recognition "that the so-called mortal man is not the reality of man" (347:12) is one of the most important and fundamental facts in the teaching of Christian Science. To get a true picture of God and His creation, we must give up one of the greatest lies that have deceived mankind for thousands of years, namely, that a material, sinning and sickly mortal is 'man' and God-created.

Another misconception, as firmly fixed in us as it is false, is that a mortal is a fallen immortal. But the real man can never fall; just as an untruth has never previously been a truth, so a mortal has never at any time been an immortal, and can therefore never become one. "Mortals are not fallen children of God. They never had a perfect state of being, which may subsequently be regained." (476:13) Hence it is never a matter of improving a mortal or of trying somehow to turn him into the real, immortal man. A mortal simply is, as his name indi-

cates, mortal and imperfect, the opposite of the true man. And just as one cannot make light out of darkness, Spirit out of matter, or Truth out of error, so the real man cannot be made out of a mortal. On the other hand, darkness can be dispelled by light, error can be dissolved by Truth, and in the same way the concept of a mortal can be replaced by the immortal idea of man – in other words, the counterfeit or “burlesque of God’s man” can be put off as a false belief.

And yet, from as far back as we can remember, the primary object of all religions and ethical movements has been to improve mortals. This has been a great tragedy, as the Bible shows in the story of Adam. Adam was condemned to till the ground. The textbook explains this condemnation as follows: “The condemnation of mortals to till the ground means this, – that mortals should so improve material belief by thought tending spiritually upward as to destroy materiality.” (545:7) The supposition that we can improve materiality “by thought tending spiritually upward” is accordingly not a proper solution, but the very curse itself which weighs on Adam’s race. It is a curse because the effort to improve the mortal always derives from matter and not from the Word of God. Starting from imperfection, from that which is opposed to the Word, we gain, not perfection, but its opposite, disharmony. Only a scientific solution can free us from this condemnation. The scientific method always starts from perfection, from the Word, and enables us to adopt that Christ-attitude which then leads to a perfect result. This is how other sciences solve their problems. The student of arithmetic, for example, would not attempt to solve the mistakes in a long and complicated sum by starting with the wrong answer and trying to put it right. Rather he turns afresh to the principle of arithmetic – to perfection –, does not deviate from it again in his new calculation, and so arrives in the end at the right, the perfect, answer. The same is true here as in the Science of being; perfection excludes imperfection and, because of this, correction or improvement becomes possible. Whereas the unscientific method amounts to a curse, of the real man we read: “Man, created by God, was

given dominion over the whole earth.” (545:10) In other words, through the scientific method man gains dominion. In the Science of being, therefore, let us always start from perfection, so that we are no longer under the curse which afflicts the Adam-race, and which always involves trying to make something ungodlike Godlike. We win dominion by the opposite method of identifying ourselves from the start with the real man.

Man as the reflection of God

The real man, as shown in the first record of creation, is the image and likeness of God. Because he is an image which is the exact likeness of the original, he is the pure reflection of God. “Man is, and forever has been, God’s reflection.” (471:17) What is meant by the term ‘reflection’?

Reflection. A reflection involves three essential factors: first, the object in front of the mirror; secondly, the mirror; and thirdly, the resulting image in the mirror. Interpreting this metaphysically, we may call the object in front of the mirror God; the mirror is the instrument which produces a reflected image corresponding with this object – in our case this is the Christ, for Christ is defined in the textbook as “the coincidence, or spiritual agreement, between God and man in His image” (332:32); and thirdly, we have the reflected image, the result of reflection, which is man. God, Christ and man – or the Word of God, the Christ-attitude and Christianity – thus constitute reflection.

In this process the mirror plays a particularly important role. Only when it is quite smoothly polished does the image in it become a likeness of the object before it. If the mirror however is scratched, uneven, or not properly polished, one gets an image but not a likeness, only a distorted image of the reflected object. So although the object in front of the mirror (God) remains perfect, the result in this case is not the image and likeness of God, the real man, but only a deflection, “a burlesque of God’s man”. This falsification or counterfeiting takes place

whenever our mirror is not clean, or as soon as our expression of the requisite Christ-attitude becomes tarnished. Our mirror must be the Science of Christ, a clear understanding of the "coincidence . . . between God and man".

Bearing in mind how reflection takes place, it is easy to see that the image never comes into being of itself, nor can it do anything of itself. The reason for the image always lies with the object before the mirror, with God. God is the foundation of all perfection, which man can only reflect. When the mirror (our Christ-attitude) is flawless, therefore scientific, then the result or reflection is the real and perfect man, the image and likeness of God. But if the mirror is tarnished, or, in other words, if we try to act on our own, according to our own erroneous principles, then the result is the distorted image, called mortal man. Jesus expresses the fact that man is the reflection of God in the following words: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (John 5:19)

Man is not person. As the reflection of God the real man is not a corporeal person, but a divine state of being. This is why Mary Baker Eddy, in answering the question "What is man?" uses the impersonal form: "He is that which . . ." When referring to the real man, she deliberately avoids the more usual "he who". Man is in fact not person, but that which results when the pure Christ-consciousness mirrors the Word of God. Man is "that which has no separate mind from God; that which has not a single quality underived from Deity; that which possesses no life, intelligence, nor creative power of his own, but reflects spiritually all that belongs to his Maker." (475:19) "Man", she insists, "is not matter; he is not made up of brain, blood, bones, and other material elements." (475:6) By the term 'man', then, we must understand only that which comes from God, from Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. He is exclusively that which God knows, that of which God is conscious; he is the name for 'God's consciousness of Himself'.

Man is the compound idea of God. Since God expresses Himself only through ideas, and knows only ideas, man is the compound idea of God. Christian Science therefore defines man as "the compound idea of God, including all right ideas". Man is the "generic term for all that reflects God's image and likeness" (475:14). Man is therefore much more than just a divine quality. He is the compound of all ideas. God expresses Himself in infinite ideas; all ideas taken together as a whole constitute 'man'. Thus man always reflects, simultaneously, all the ideas of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. He is never merely an expression of single positive qualities, such as fine feminine characteristics of patience, hope, kind-heartedness, spiritual sense, receptivity, and so on. The real man expresses all the ideas of God and therefore includes masculine characteristics as well, such as creative, constructive, intelligent, logical, systematic and original thinking. Only that is man which results from the co-operation of all the divine qualities.

We must identify ourselves as God's idea. We have been acquainting ourselves with the image of the real man. When we strive after a higher humanity, it is not enough to turn away from the mortal; we must consciously go beyond this and identify ourselves with the true idea of man. The Bible teaches us, both that Christ Jesus is the Son of God, and that we ourselves are sons of God. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 John 3:2). John is telling us here that we must claim our divine sonship, our true and perfect manhood.

Just as Jesus acknowledged and claimed his divine heritage as the Son of God, so we also can say: I am the son of God. But in doing this we must be clear what we mean by 'I'. If by 'I' we mean a mortal, our own sick, corporeal, inadequate personality, then we are making a serious mistake and stating what is not true. The only 'I' which can claim to be the son of God is the man who is the "compound idea of God". When we say 'I' we must not identify ourselves with physical, mortal so-called man and then call this the son of God. It may be helpful (in order to avoid misunderstandings) to invert the true statement: "I am the son of God," and say: "The son of

God am I,” or: “The son of God (that is, God’s perfect man – not mortal corporeality) is my true ego.”

Since body does not constitute our true ego, it cannot be the measure of our manhood. When we identify ourselves with the right idea of man and not with a corporeal mortal, then we see that nothing which happens to the frail mortal body can touch our true ego and manhood. Jesus was crucified, but not the Son of God. Neither a healthy nor a sickly body is the expression or standard of our true manhood.

God and man is one. God, the Principle of being, is spaceless and timeless; it is omnipresent and eternal. The same is true of its expression, its idea, man. God and man are therefore never in any way separated from each other, but are always one. “In divine Science, God and the real man are inseparable as divine Principle and idea.” (476:4) To express this inseparable unity of Principle and idea, Mary Baker Eddy uses the apparently anomalous singular verb ‘is’, in place of the plural ‘are’: “Principle and its idea *is* one . . .¹”. She then continues: “. . . and this one is God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Being, and His reflection is man and the universe.” (465:17) This means: Right there, where God is, is also the real man; where the expression of God, the real man, is, there is God also. Consequently man is not merely a part of God, but rather a partaker of all that constitutes his creator, the eternal Principle of being. He is one with the eternal newness of being; he is one with Mind, one with Spirit, one with Soul, one with Principle, one with Life, one with Truth, one with Love; he is one with all that is characterized by God’s nature, by the seven synonyms for God.

¹ Author’s italics.

Chapter 5

Science

The meaning of Science as the fourth prime factor of Being can best be understood when looked at in relation to the Word, Christ and Christianity. The “four cardinal points are: first, the Word of Life, Truth, and Love; second, the Christ, the spiritual idea of God; third, Christianity, which is the outcome of the divine Principle of the Christ-idea in Christian history; fourth, Christian Science, which to-day and forever interprets this great example and the great Exemplar.” (577:13) Science, then, has the function of interpreting Christianity (i.e. “the great example”), which in its turn is “the outcome of the divine Principle of the Christ-idea”. Science therefore explains Christianity, the Christ and the Word. It is the sole authority that can teach us what the divine Principle (Word) is, with which we must identify ourselves (Christ), so that we experience the great example, the outcome, (Christianity). The main question now is: What is Truth, from which we must start?

When examining the four stages in the solving of a problem, we saw that recognition of the right solving principle determines the measure of our success; that our way of life depends on what solving principle we follow. The question how we can gain an understanding of Truth becomes one of the most important themes in the study of this fourth cardinal point, Science.

Science and revelation

The two sources of knowledge. In the quest for an understanding of Truth, there are two sources of knowledge to call upon:

revelation and science. *Revelation* means the disclosure of reality which is in its nature concealed; it appears to those who are receptive to it as sudden insight into the whole of Truth. *Science*, on the other hand, means the whole of knowledge; but a special characteristic of science is the systematic increase of acquired knowledge, along strictly methodical lines.

Ultimately revelation and science have one and the same aim: the explanation of reality. But whereas knowledge of Truth by revelation comes through intuition, through immediate cognition, the scientific knowledge of Truth rests upon an ordered understanding through logical reasoning, which leads to gradual insight into the whole. Revelations seem to have been the privilege of the very few; but the scientific way is open to all. This fundamental difference between science and revelation led to a misapprehension which still persists today – that science and revelation are necessarily mutually exclusive and diametrically opposite methods. The fallacy has grown up that for understanding the nature of the divine Being only the way of revelation is valid, whereas for understanding the universe and man we need a scientific approach.

Coincidence of science and revelation. This however is a position no longer held by an increasing number of scientists. There is a growing realization that scientific knowledge need not necessarily conflict with revealed truths, that in fact they are often complementary. Moreover many scientists have found that often in the first stages of a scientific discovery revelation and intuition play an important part, and then continue hand in hand, along strictly methodical lines, in the further research work.

This brings us to the significant fact that, while representing two quite distinct approaches to knowledge, Science and revelation – providing both are founded on the divine Principle of being – in reality complement each other, and that their content, the knowledge we gain from each source, is ultimately the same – namely, Truth.

So the one Truth can be grasped through revelation as well as through Science. Thus divine Truth, revealed by biblical

prophets and seers and recorded as revelation, is also scientifically explicable and understandable. True revelation and true scientific method never exclude each other; every divine revelation must be truly scientific and every divinely scientific conclusion must be of a revelatory nature. "Divine logic and revelation coincide. If we believe otherwise, we may be sure that either our logic is at fault or that we have misinterpreted revelation." (93:10) This must be clearly understood; divine, true, logic always agrees with revelation, but what are very often directly opposed to each other are revelation and human logic, human thinking.

In Christian Science revelation and true scientific method combine harmoniously. Mary Baker Eddy calls her discovery the "final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing" (107:5). Christian Science is the revelation of the divine Science of being, and is also the Science of divine revelation. "This heavenly conviction," she says, "was 'the gift of the grace of God'" (108:1). It came to her, therefore, by revelation, yet she did not rest until she had succeeded in presenting the scientificness of this revelation to our age. "My conclusions were reached by allowing the evidence of this revelation to multiply with mathematical certainty and the lesser demonstration to prove the greater" (108:12); "reason and revelation were reconciled" (110:15).

Science versus sense-testimony

The antithesis of Spirit and matter. Christian Science teaches that the creation presented in the first record of creation symbolizes the only real creation. It shows that only that which proceeds from the Word of God can be called true and real. In other words, only Spirit and spiritual ideas are real and substantial. From the divine standpoint matter is unreal, nothing.

That God is Spirit, and does not know matter, is also the starting-point of the Bible. Elohim is nowhere characterized as

material, fleshly or corporeal. On the contrary, God's nature is shown beyond doubt to be purely spiritual: "God is (a) Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) Jesus, who was always at one with this God, was hence never a slave to matter, never made use of material remedies, but subjugated so-called material agents and laws. He based himself on the fact that "it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). In the Bible, Spirit and matter are always presented as opposites; one of the chief aims of the biblical writers is therefore to lead us to the knowledge that flesh or matter is of no avail, that it has of itself no life, no power, no substance, no reality – and therefore it is nothing.

Christian Science, like the Bible, starts from the premise that there is only one God, that this God is Spirit, the only reality. God's creation, made in His image and likeness, is therefore also divine, hence spiritual, and alone real. Consequently the opposite of this spiritual creation, what we regard as the material creation, cannot be real. Why it nevertheless appears to be real is explained later.

This spiritually logical conclusion, however, contradicts sense-testimony. To our physical senses, to our thinking and according to our human experience, the material universe and corporeal man and, indeed, evil, are realities. We can measure, feel, see matter; we can sense evil in the world.

That the testimony of the material senses, however, is often false, because as instruments of perception they are inadequate and extremely limited, is generally agreed today. A few examples will illustrate this point.

Sense-testimony is deceptive. Daily experience teaches us not to rely on the senses. The sky appears to touch the earth at the horizon; two parallel lines appear to meet in the distance. These and countless other sense-impressions, recognized by everyone as false, nevertheless remain so rooted in our imagination, that we are taken in against our better judgment. For centuries we have known, for instance, that the sun does not move in relation to the earth, but that the earth turns on its own axis

besides revolving round the sun. But our senses do not feel this movement; they see the sun 'rise' and 'set', so that we still speak of 'sunrise' and 'sunset'.

Sense-testimony is limited. Just how limited our perceptive faculties are can be seen from the following facts. Out of the whole range of electro-magnetic rays, from cosmic rays of between a trillionth of a centimetre to immensely long radio waves, the band of light visible to the human eye is extremely narrow. Thus it perceives and converts into colour impressions only a mere forty thousand millionth part of known ether waves. Moreover, in nature there are no colours, only light-waves of different lengths, which are first perceived by us as degrees of luminosity. Our perception then names certain wave-lengths green, others red, and so on. But an object which we call green is anything but green; for there is no such thing as 'green' in nature, and furthermore we can perceive radiations with the 'green' wave-length only because it is just these rays that the object does not absorb, but reflects. Thus we wrongly ascribe to the 'green' object precisely that which it does not possess.

Since the human eye observes only a small range of light rays, and since it misinterprets and falsifies what it does take in, it is impossible for us to know how the universe is really constituted. If our eyes detected, not the rays of the spectrum, but the shorter wave-lengths of X-radiation, for example, we should have a totally different conception of our world. The same applies to our sense of hearing, which can pick up only a minute fraction of all sound frequencies.

These few examples point to the following important conclusion: Neither the number of people experiencing the same sense-impression, nor the length of time it has been generally regarded as a reality, can offer any proof that something we grasp through our senses is actual or true.

Scientific knowledge and sense-testimony perpetually contradict each other. Thus the task of science is to substitute the logical conclusions of reason for the illusions of the senses, and to provide man with insight which is not based on belief in

what the senses testify, but springs from an understanding of invisible relationships, the 'universal hanging-together of things'.

Everything depends on the point of view. Atomic physics particularly has been responsible for the renewed investigation of man's powers of perception, which since Kant has spread into wider fields. The controversy as to whether we can ever know "the thing in itself", and if so, what it really consists of, has not been settled by philosophy or physics. But the revival of interest in this argument has reminded us of one thing: what we see always depends on the standpoint from which we observe it – on the measuring instruments at our disposal, for instance, or on the extent of our insight into the laws which govern the phenomenon. What we observe is the result of a process of thought; so we may interpret one and the same thing quite differently according to the position we have reached, according to the level of our powers of reasoning.

The natural scientist Lecomte du Noüy explains this in his book 'Human Destiny' by the following illustration: "Let us suppose that we have at our disposal two powders. One white (flour) and the other black (finely crushed charcoal or soot). If we mix them we will obtain a grey powder which will be lighter in colour if it contains more flour and darker if it contains more soot. If the mixture is perfect, on our scale of observation (that is, without the help of a microscope) the phenomenon studied will always be a grey powder. But let us suppose that an insect of the size of the grains of flour or of soot moves around in this powder. For him there will be no grey powder, but only black or white boulders. On his scale of observation the phenomenon, 'grey powder', does not exist."

We cannot tell anything definite about the flour and soot mixture, however; we can only tell what *we* see when looking from our own point of view. But if we examine the mixture more closely and look at the smallest constituent parts, its elementary particles, we come upon another phenomenon. As the physicist Werner Heisenberg showed, the state of motion of the smallest particles cannot be measured without being changed

as a result of the measuring process. He discovered that whereas being examined under a microscope makes no difference to a diamond, for example, to an electron it makes a great deal of difference; for the 'examination' means that the object is subjected to light. Light quanta possess energy, and this energy diverts a single electron from its path. Each measurement, however meticulously it has been carried out, can therefore furnish only an approximate calculation of the position and speed of an elementary particle.

As a result of these and other investigations, physics comes to the conclusion that because we are handicapped by the limited means of perception at our disposal, we cannot make any valid assertion about a thing as it really is; we can at best only declare how an observed object has behaved under observation. But this affords us two vital pieces of information: first, we see how deceptive, unreliable and relative the physical senses and their resources are; and secondly, we begin to suspect that matter itself is not an unshakeable fact either, but merely presents itself as real substance to our human level of cognition.

The subjective nature of matter. As we have seen, neither the natural sciences nor philosophy can give any satisfactory answer concerning the fundamental nature of what we term matter. But for centuries now great thinkers and scientists have been finding clues to what matter is *not* – namely, objective reality. For instance, as long ago as 460 B.C. Democritus wrote: "Sweet and bitter, cold and warm as well as all the colors, all these things exist but in opinion and not in reality"; and the mathematician and philosopher Leibniz believed "that not only light, color, heat and the like, but motion, shape, and extension too are mere apparent qualities". As Lincoln Barnett states in his book 'The Universe and Dr. Einstein', philosophers and scientists "arrived at the startling conclusion that since every object is simply the sum of its qualities, and since qualities exist only in the mind, the whole objective universe of matter and energy, atoms and stars, does not exist except as a construction of the consciousness, an edifice of conventional

symbols shaped by the senses of man". And James Jeans, physicist and Nobel prize winner, declared that "the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine".

The textbook also comes to the same conclusion: "Mortal mind produces its own phenomena, and then charges them to something else, – like a kitten glancing into the mirror at itself and thinking it sees another kitten." (220:18) "The testimony of the corporeal senses", therefore, "cannot inform us what is real and what is delusive" (70:2).

So far Christian Science agrees with the statements of modern physics: "Mortal mind sees what it believes as certainly as it believes what it sees. It feels, hears, and sees its own thoughts." (86:29) But it goes a considerable step farther. The textbook not only explains that matter has no objective reality and why, but it also states that Spirit is the only reality and explains what this means for mankind.

But to be able to understand this fact, we must first consider how far the Christian Science approach differs from that of physics. So we will digress briefly, and see what sort of conclusions are drawn by Christian Science.

The logic of Christian Science

Two-valued logic. Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) is regarded as the 'father' of formal logic. He held that every statement, when tested for its truth-value, falls into one of two categories: a statement is either 'true' or 'false'; there is no third possibility.

Our whole modern way of thinking rests on this *Aristotelian two-valued principle*. In general we put everything that we see, think and feel into one of these two categories, thus dividing all the phenomena of our universe into pairs of opposites, such as good – bad, right – wrong, beautiful – ugly, etc. Because there are always two opposing values, this logic is called two-valued or dualistic logic.

By giving this thought-model classical logic had furnished

us with a method of differentiation, by which we could bring order into our universe and begin to understand it. This two-valued logic is ingrained in all western sciences.

There are certain areas of knowledge however – such as psychology, physics, cybernetics, etc. – which have advanced into regions where two-valued logic is no longer valid. Seeing that it is not only the object itself that counts, but equally the standpoint of the observer, and also that different methods and ways of looking at things may produce quite different results, it is quite clear that one and the same object is capable of many more than two interpretations. This does not in any way invalidate Aristotelian logic; it does however show that this logic is not any longer universally valid, but is only applicable in certain fields. Things have changed over the last fifty years. Today one would hesitate to write off, as unscientific and illogical, any branch of knowledge or any argumentation not based on this two-valued logic.

The dual conceptional logic of Christian Science. Christian Science also uses dualistic logic in so far as it deals with such opposites as divine Mind – mortal mind; Spirit – matter; Soul – body; Principle – human principles; Life – death; Truth – error; Love – hate. Unlike Aristotelian logic, however, Christian Science employs these pairs of opposites, not as values, but as concepts. Why was this such a big step forward?

When we start from two-valued logic, it is true that we can distinguish good from evil, right from wrong; but these opposites appear as two equally real values. Christian Science on the other hand teaches – as physics does today – that we do not see anything ‘in itself’, but only what our perceptual faculties allow us to see. Thus the opposites that we perceive are not really two values, but only two concepts of one and the same value. There are two possible ways of approaching the Principle of being, God: either the Christ-like way, which is one with God, and therefore gives us a Christ-like, true concept of God; or the mortal, human, limited way, which is the opposite of the Christ-attitude and therefore gives us only a distorted, false and contrary concept of God. The Principle of being cannot be

grasped through human methods of thinking and contemplating, nor does it turn thereby into its opposite. What we get is hence not two values, but two different concepts. In Christian Science we can speak therefore of a dual-conceptual logic in contradistinction to the classical, two-valued logic.

One value – two concepts. This does not mean that Christian Science ignores the material world by just pretending that matter and evil are not true, as many critics have maintained. It fathoms the phenomenon of dualism, Spirit and matter, good and evil, even more deeply, and indeed with a logic appropriate to this phenomenon, and defines it with greater scientific exactitude. That mortal man must constantly grapple with dualism, that the divine and the ungodlike both seem real to him, that in his daily life proofs of the presence of evil are often more plentiful than those pointing to divine goodness, and so on, of all this there can be no doubt. But the logic by which Christian Science tests this human experience goes beyond classical logic. Like modern physics, it does not accept the testimony of our world of experience as absolute ‘truth as such’, but gets down to the question of what the two fundamentally different approaches are, which produce these opposite testimonies. The human, mortal view it calls the false, *erroneous concept of being*; the Christ-like view it calls the *true concept of being*. But both views are aimed at one and the same unalterable, eternally incontrovertible value – divine Principle. Principle alone is recognized as the one great value. Consequently the logic of Christian Science is not two-valued like classical logic; it is a one-valued, but dual-conceptual logic.

The one-valued nature of being is already revealed in the Bible with its great theme of monotheism. While philosophy and the natural sciences still always work from the assumption that the whole of truth, or – in Kant’s terminology – ‘the thing in itself’, must remain unknown to man, Christian Science bases itself on biblical revelation, which shows the one great value, God, to be the Principle of being.

Thus Christian Science on the one hand states clearly what the one value, divine Principle, is; and then on the other hand

explains what, in the world of experience, the opposites are, which determine our human existence: two different concepts of the same value. The apparently insuperable contradiction between good and evil is thereby resolved. How? As long as we start from the belief that in these opposites we are dealing with two equally legitimate, co-existent values, we shall be unable to change our world. But if we know that there is only one value, divine being, and that our good and bad experiences spring from two different concepts of the same single value, then we can change our human experience by changing our view of things; we can consciously adopt the Christ-attitude and with this true concept of being we can be aware of the one true divine value. It is this very change of standpoint from the false to the true concept of being that the Science of Christian Science, contained in the textbook, demands.

The real and the unreal

We can now make this our starting-point, this knowledge that everything we experience corresponds with the concept we have of being. Divine goodness coincides with the true, divine concept and shows us reality; bad experience comes from our human, distorted concept of being, making us believe that the unreal is real. The fact that everything we ever perceive is the result of a mental process brings us to the key question: Which mental process, or which consciousness, is the true one, and which the false?

Everything that is not one with the perfection of divine being has no reality, but springs only from supposed ignorance of what is divinely true. In the textbook this ignorance is termed 'mortal mind'.

What is mortal mind? Mortal mind is the supposititious opposite of divine Mind. Whereas God, Mind, is recognized as the origin of all ideas, and therefore the only source of all true being, so-called mortal mind is the source of all illusions, to which matter and all forms of error can be reduced. Mortal

mind is all that which has no knowledge of divine being, and which out of this ignorance would beget in our consciousness a false concept of the reality of being. This erroneous concept then deludes us into believing the material phenomena of sin, disease, death, and discord of every kind, to be real.

But the expression 'mortal mind' does not imply that there is another reality besides God. On the contrary, 'mortal mind' is something which has absolutely no existence in the reality of divine being. For just as the illusions of matter possess no reality in themselves, and are recognized as non-existent as soon as they are illumined by the consciousness of Truth, so also their supposed origin, mortal mind, is not an entity with an existence of its own. "As Mind is immortal, the phrase *mortal mind* implies something untrue and therefore unreal; and as the phrase is used in teaching Christian Science, it is meant to designate that which has no real existence." (114:13)

However real matter may appear to human conception, it is nothing but "the subjective condition of mortal mind". Thus it comes from a source which is no part of divine reality, and which "in obedience to the immutable law of Spirit . . . is self-destructive" (210:22). Therefore matter can never be more than "a human concept, sometimes beautiful, always erroneous" (277:31).

The divine and the human concept. When Christian Science states that "matter is the falsity, not the fact, of existence" (127:19), and when it declares that matter is "nothing more than a mortal belief" (125:31), this certainly contradicts our human experience, but it does not in any way contradict logic. The unperceiving reader, however, may easily misunderstand these explanations. He is then quick to raise the objection that the textbook contradicts itself, showing in one place why matter has no reality, and in the next how it can be overcome.

For this reason it is important always to keep in mind the fact that the textbook is based on one-valued logic, while in its statements it uses dual-conceptual logic. The textbook shows how being presents itself from the divine standpoint and,

at the same time, how this same divine being looks when we view it from the wrong, human standpoint. These two opposite concepts – the divine and the human – then lead to two apparently contradictory statements about being. The reader of the textbook must therefore always take account of the standpoint from which a statement about being is made. Looked at from the mortal viewpoint, which has a false concept of being, disharmony and sickness are real; thus we may read in the textbook: “Sickness is neither imaginary nor unreal, – that is, to the frightened, false sense of the patient. Sickness is more than fancy; it is solid conviction.” (460:14) But equally correct is the statement that (looked at from the divine standpoint, which imparts the true concept) being does not know sin, sickness and death: “Sin, disease, whatever seems real to material sense, is unreal in divine Science.” (353:2) When Christian Science teaches that in reality there is no sin, sickness and death, it is not saying that we shall not experience inharmony in our human lives. It is merely denying that any real value can be ascribed to this human experience. Therefore sickness must “be dealt with through right apprehension of the truth of being” (460:17).

Which consciousness is true and real? The answer to this question is self-evident. Only that consciousness can be true which is one with God and His ideas. This consciousness is one with Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle Life, Truth, Love; everything of which it is cognizant coincides with this divine nature and is real. Mortal consciousness, by contrast, is never one with the divine nature and always testifies to the unreal and false concept of being. For divine being we can substitute the seven synonyms for God and His ideas, which leads us to the following conclusions:

- That is real which is one with Mind and its ideas and perceives the facts of Mind; that which stems from mortal mind, from worldly views and opinions, is unreal and therefore testifies to the opposite of Mind.
- That is real which is one with Spirit and its ideas and perceives the spiritual nature of being; that which stems from

the flesh, from matter, is unreal and testifies to a material universe.

- That is real which is one with Soul and its ideas and is constantly aware of unchanging sinlessness; corporeality, which testifies to the physical senses, is unreal.
- That is real which is one with Principle and its ideas and perceives the harmony of being; all that to which human theories and dogmas testify, as disharmony, is unreal.
- That is real which is one with Life and its ideas and perceives deathless being; all that testifies to death, decay and lack is unreal.
- That is real which is one with Truth and its ideas and always perceives the whole ideal of divine being; all that testifies to sickness, error, falsity, is unreal.
- That is real which is one with Love and its ideas and perceives everywhere the perfection of all-embracing Love; that which at any time or in any place testifies to something other than this perfection is unreal.

Understanding – the key to being. We saw, when considering the unreliability and inadequacy of sense-testimony (p. 71f.), that we cannot grasp reality because of the perceptual limits of our physical senses. To know Truth, to gain a true concept of being, we need scientific understanding. Scientific understanding is the key to the enigma of mortal existence; for it alone informs us that there are not two creations, two mutually contradicting values in being, but only one value, a divine Principle and its creation. When we see this creation rightly, we find it to be spiritual, harmonious and perfect; but if we misunderstand it, then the same creation appears to our false concept material, inharmonious and imperfect:

- A mortally mental universe, with multitudinous physical and mental agents producing evil, is only our misconception of the creation of God, divine Mind.
- A material universe is only our misconception of the creation of God, Spirit.
- A sinning, malicious, wicked universe is only our misconception of the creation of God, Soul.

- A misgoverned universe is only our misconception of the creation of God, Principle.
- A temporal, finite, mortal universe is only our misconception of the creation of God, Life.
- A universe full of lies and deceit, injustice and falsehood, is only our misconception of the creation of God, Truth.
- A loveless, restless, peaceless universe is only our misconception of the creation of God, Love.

Consciousness of Truth. With this realization the student of Christian Science gives up his continual struggle against the material universe; he will no longer try to find a reason for the contradictions and inconsistencies of material existence, but will spend his energies acquiring a better understanding of the one value, God, and His creation of ideas. In proportion as he begins to understand the one universe, instead of misunderstanding it, he gains that spiritually real concept which shows him reality as it actually is – perfect and harmonious. This transformation can take place here and now. In Revelation, John “was on our plane of existence, while yet beholding what the eye cannot see, – that which is invisible to the uninspired thought. This testimony of Holy Writ sustains the fact in Science, that the heavens and earth to one human consciousness, that consciousness which God bestows, are spiritual, while to another, the unillumined human mind, the vision is material. This shows unmistakably that what the human mind terms matter and spirit indicates states and stages of consciousness” (573:3).

This makes the task before us plain. We need to let divine Science teach us what being is, and to gain an ever clearer understanding that the testimony of mortal consciousness possesses no reality in itself, but is merely a misconception of the one divine reality. The textbook says of Jesus: “Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals.” It is this example that we must follow. It says, he “beheld in Science”, therefore not with his physical eyes and not according to human concepts, but with a divinely scientific consciousness. Thus he put off

the false human concept and beheld with scientific understanding. What he saw was therefore not the "sinning mortal man" who appears to all of us, but "the perfect man". "In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick." (476:32) The "correct view" bears fruit. It saves, helps and heals.

Mortal consciousness

For a "correct view" of being, all that contradicts the true concept must be recognized as false and laid aside. The whole mortal consciousness, which constitutes a mortal, must yield to the divine consciousness, which constitutes the real man. But what is mortal consciousness? How does it work, and how does it manifest itself?

1. *What is the basis of mortal consciousness?* 'Mortal consciousness' is a collective name for all beliefs, for everything which does not derive from the Word of God – that is, from the seven synonyms for God. It is based on mortal mind and its erroneous concepts, on matter, on the physical, corporeal senses; it is based on human theories and doctrines, on finite views of life, on error and lies, on imperfection. Mortal consciousness is stamped with all that has no part in the true nature of divine being.

2. *Mortal mind brings forth all inharmony.* We have seen (p. 74f.) that everything we regard as material exists only in our own consciousness. The inharmony of human life resides solely in mortal consciousness, is produced entirely by it, and is therefore not objectively real. Sickness also is not intrinsically real, but is merely the product of mortal consciousness. Today medicine itself no longer excludes this explanation. Since psychosomatics has been steadily gaining ground, there is a growing opinion that in functional and organic disorders the deeper cause of the illness is psychological. Even orthodox medicine is beginning to realize that it is mortal consciousness that produces disease. So, to become healthier human beings,

our first priority is not to make the body healthy, but to gain a healthy concept of what man really is.

3. *Different forms of mortal consciousness.* Mortal consciousness is extremely complex; it presents itself in different forms, and in different ways, and operates in many spheres. To recognize as unreal the illusions which stem from it, we need a clearer understanding of its structure and mechanism. The beliefs which make up mortal consciousness can be divided into various groups. We distinguish mainly between individual, collective and universal, as well as conscious and unconscious, beliefs.

Individual beliefs. All personal views and conceptions, all erroneous, counterfeit beliefs about the divine Being and its creation, held by each one of us, can be termed individual beliefs. They fix their stamp on thought and feeling and mould the individual character of mortals. The kind of life they lead, the way they experience the world in which they live, is partly determined by these individual beliefs. A negative outlook on life produces negative experiences. Worrying about ill-health and misfortune often brings about the very thing we most fear.

Collective beliefs. But not nearly all the diseases, difficulties and problems which beset us can be explained by attributing them to our own individual beliefs. Very often a person becomes ill without ever fearing his particular disease, or even having previously heard its name. Innocent children, as yet uneducated in personal beliefs, fall sick, and so do animals and even plants. This proves that mortal consciousness includes not only individual, conscious beliefs, but also collective, universal and unconscious beliefs.

Many of these beliefs are not formulated in individual consciousness; they are shared by groups of people, collective bodies of thought. Every individual person is a member of countless collectives; he belongs to a certain race, nation, culture, religion; he is a man, woman, child, etc. As members of these collectives, even without realizing it, we are influenced by all the beliefs which are relevant to the respective groups. These collective beliefs can have their effect on the lives and bodies of individuals without their knowing.

Universal beliefs. By universal beliefs we mean all those beliefs which do not only apply to individuals or special groups, but to the mortal universe in general; such as, sin, sickness, death, age and decay, heredity, catastrophe, cosmic influences, and so on.

We should not try to trace all our problems back to our own failure, automatically making our own conscious individual beliefs responsible for bringing about every inharmonious condition. An invalid from birth, suffering perhaps in the universal belief of heredity, may have a higher and, spiritually speaking, more cultivated individual consciousness than a materialist enjoying the best of health simply because the same universal claim of heredity has bequeathed him a stronger constitution. Sickness and discord of every kind come from collective and universal, as much as from individual, beliefs. Family, profession, climate, nationality, and much else besides may also be responsible. Whatever the cause of the sick condition – whether it is a matter of individual or collective or universal beliefs and their effects – it is important above all to see that in any case they are beliefs, and not objective facts, that produce these phenomena.

Conscious and unconscious beliefs. Psychology sets out from the proposition that man consciously experiences only a small percentage of what goes on in his consciousness, and that by far the greater part lies dormant in the unconscious. Consciousness can be likened to an iceberg, of which only the smaller part appears above the surface, while the greater part lies hidden, but is nevertheless there. And it is precisely this greater, invisible part of the iceberg which is treacherous and dangerous. It is the same with the unconscious. Images and forces quite unknown to us, which have been latent for years in the subconscious, may suddenly surface with an impact which the conscious mind cannot understand and is not equipped to deal with.

The unconscious mortal mind embraces all the beliefs of mortal mind, some of which may be thousands of years old. These also, like the beliefs of which we are conscious, bring

forth all manner of discords. "But the fact remains, in metaphysics, that the mind of the individual only can produce a result upon his body. The belief that produces this result may be wholly unknown to the individual, because it is lying back in the unconscious thought, a latent cause producing the effect we see." (Hea. 6: 20)

Mortal mind is in every way the opposite of divine Mind. Thus it is not omniscient, but is in complete ignorance about itself, its origin, its mistakes, its methods of working and their results. "Mortal mind is ignorant of itself, - ignorant of the errors it includes and of their effects." (408: 31) Therefore mortals are for the most part a helpless prey to the discordant circumstances arising from mortal mind, because with this same ignorant mortal mind they can never reach down to the true cause of discord, in such a way that they could find the proper solution to a problem.

4. *Mortal consciousness is not personal.* Mortal consciousness comes from mortal mind and not from a person. Mortals did not wish for nor create mortal consciousness. Quite the reverse, mortal mind creates mortals. "Sin existed as a false claim before the human concept of sin was formed; hence one's concept of error is not the whole of error. The human thought does not constitute sin, but *vice versa*, sin constitutes the human or physical concept." (Ret. 67: 1) In general we are inclined to believe that it is the sinner who sins, that mortals commit sins and must therefore be punished. But the exact opposite is the case: "The sinner created neither himself nor sin, but sin created the sinner" (Ret. 67: 18). The sinner is merely the tool of mortal mind. But this mortal mind was already at work, as the suppositional opposite of the divine Mind, before men became acquainted with the concept of sin. Mortal mind is, rather, the supposed belief of an opposite of divine Mind, seeking to subjugate everything incapable of resistance, such as the thinking of mortals entangled in erroneous beliefs. The originator of false and vicious thought is never therefore the mortal himself, never a person, but always solely mortal consciousness. To free ourselves from it, we do not need to

blame and condemn ourselves as sinners, but rather to seek the means to protect ourselves from becoming the tool of sin or mortal mind.

The Bible is also emphatic in its teaching that sin is not to be ascribed to any particular person. When the Lord God asks Adam if he has eaten from the forbidden tree, Adam answers in the usual manner of mortals who have committed an error; they seek to pass the blame on to something or someone else. Thus Adam replies: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Adam lays the blame on Eve or, metaphysically speaking, he makes the temptation personal. Furthermore he also tries to make the Lord God responsible for the sin, by pointing out that the Lord God gave him the woman who has tempted him. Eve's answer, on the other hand, demonstrates the realization that sin is neither personal nor from God. She does not blame God or any person for the sin, but says: "The serpent beguiled me" (Gen. 3:11-13). The serpent symbolizes mortal consciousness. Eve thereby becomes the first of the great women of the Bible; through her understanding of the impersonality of evil she was able to bring forth Seth, her third son, which marks the first step on the way to redemption; for of him we read that in his time men began "to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26). Not until we understand that evil, sin or mortal mind is not personal, and therefore does not belong to us, can we free ourselves from it. Sickness is not *our* sickness, pain is not *our* pain; sickness and pain are beliefs of mortal mind. "Evil has no reality. It is neither person, place, nor thing, but is simply a belief, an illusion of material sense." (71:2)

If evil, sin, is not a person, then our primary duty is not to punish persons for sin, but to give up sinful beliefs. In any case evil always punishes itself. From the beginning it bears within itself the seed of self-destruction. As soon as we no longer identify ourselves with evil, realizing that it does not belong to us, but only to mortal mind, then we can also free ourselves from the consequences of evil, from the punishment it brings with it. This is what Jesus did at the raising of

Lazarus, for example. He removed the consequence of sickness, death, and brought Lazarus to life. But of Lazarus' sickness he said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." (John 11:4) Even when evil has temporarily enslaved us, we can always reverse the situation, so that it does not destroy us, but serves "the glory of God" and must glorify the son of God – our true, Christ-like being. Such a completely new turn as this was not only possible to Jesus; it happens whenever we awake to the knowledge that evil has nothing to do with us personally and that therefore it cannot destroy us, but only itself.

Because of this we should never judge others. Jesus' teaching "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Mat. 7:1) is not only a good ethical rule, but it states a fundamental metaphysical fact. This is clearly illustrated in the story of Noah and his sons. Noah was drunk, "and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without". Thus Ham judged his father, and spread the evil. "And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness." Unlike Ham they made evil impersonal, by not attaching it to their father personally; thus they turned away from the sight of their father's nakedness. For this reason Ham was cursed, but Shem and Japheth were blessed (Gen. 9:21-27). The self-righteous make both evil and good personal. Evil they attribute to others, good to themselves. In so doing they obstruct their way to reality, where good comes from divine consciousness and evil from its counterfeit, from mortal consciousness. "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you", said Jesus to the self-righteous Pharisees (Mat. 21:31).

He who judges others, judges himself. In ascribing evil to persons instead of to mortal mind, he includes himself in the evil with the others, because he too is a person; and consequently he, like them, is subject to the self-destruction of evil.

But Truth's aim is never the destruction of a sinner – only the annihilation of sin.

5. *In mortal consciousness the greater controls the lesser.* In mortal consciousness there is an accumulation of individual, collective, universal, conscious and unconscious beliefs, partly complementing each other, but partly contradicting each other. In any situation the particular fear of one individual may be quite different from that, for example, of any other member of his own group. Questions then arise as to which beliefs dominate, and whether there is a kind of hierarchy of beliefs in mortal consciousness.

Majority beliefs govern minority beliefs. Universal beliefs take precedence over collective beliefs, and universal and collective beliefs dominate individual beliefs. This holds good in the positive as well as in the negative sense. Thus a group's collective fear of an epidemic, for example, can overrule an individual's belief that it will not harm him; so that although the individual may not have thought of the disease or known anything about it, he nevertheless becomes ill because his individual belief in his healthy constitution is less powerful than the collective belief that everyone could fall a victim to the disease. But naturally the contrary holds good too: although the patient is perhaps sceptical about a drug and has no faith in its curative effect, yet in spite of this it can cure him because the general confidence in its efficacy is very strong. "When the sick recover by the use of drugs, it is the law of a general belief, culminating in individual faith, which heals; and according to this faith will the effect be." (155:3) "Even when you take away the individual confidence in the drug, you have not yet divorced the drug from the general faith. The chemist, the botanist, the druggist, the doctor, and the nurse equip the medicine with their faith, and the beliefs which are in the majority rule." (155:6)

The stronger beliefs govern the weaker. When we consider different beliefs within the same range, as for instance individual beliefs of various kinds, we soon recognize that the stronger beliefs always govern the weaker. For example, the doctor's

belief is usually stronger than the patient's and thus determines the course of the illness. Medicine itself is aware of the powerful effect the doctor's reaction can have on the sick. An encouraging word, a favourable remark from the doctor, contributes more to the recovery than the medicine he administers.

In the same way the beliefs of parents fix their imprint on those of their children. Babies are especially susceptible to the beliefs of their parents, whose anxieties and fears can in many cases also affect the physical condition of their children.

A typical example of the control exercised by a stronger individual belief over a weaker one is to be found in hypnotism. No hypnotist can succeed if his patient confronts him with a particularly powerful mentality or a deep religious conviction. If he succeeds in hypnotizing the others, "he employs one error to destroy another. If he heals sickness through a belief, and a belief originally caused the sickness, it is a case of the greater error overcoming the lesser. This greater error thereafter occupies the ground, leaving the case worse than before it was grasped by the stronger error." (104: 23)

The various methods of auto-suggestion also work on the same principle. In these the weaker beliefs in one's own consciousness are held in check by constant repetition of the suggestion that one's health is improving, until this becomes the stronger belief and finally governs the case.

In the realm of belief, good beliefs do not subdue evil ones, but, as we find by experience, the stronger overcome the weaker regardless of whether they are good or bad. This explains why people who do not obey any moral code are frequently more successful and healthy than the morally good. Because they think exclusively and unashamedly of themselves and have no scruples of conscience, they do not live in a state of inner contradictions; they do not suffer from perpetual feelings of guilt and are free from psychological conflicts. Their mistaken conviction that they have the right to do as they please is stronger than their moral fear of punishment for their sins. The stronger belief overcomes the weaker, and with the stronger belief prevailing evil takes control. But what they do

not realize is that in spite of being humanly healthy and successful they are failing in their mission as man. At some time they will be forced by the Christ-power to conform to the divine plan, as we have seen in the section concerning the irresistible power of the Christ (p. 50 f.).

Faith-healing. That the stronger beliefs in every case govern the weaker we can also see from the various forms of faith-healing, which have been practised to a greater or lesser degree in every age, and always been looked upon as inexplicable miracles. But these, too, rest on the easily understood principle of the stronger controlling the weaker; a stronger belief in the healing power of God gradually overcomes a weakening fear of the destructive power of disease. Here then success does not depend on what the patient believes in, but rather on how unshakeably strong his religious faith is. His blind but unwavering faith in God, or in a particular person's mystic healing powers, may so outweigh the belief that he is ill, that the healing actually comes about. In such a case it is not so much the content of belief as the intensity of confidence which determines success. This is so, not only in the realm of religious or metaphysical faith-healing, but also, and far more commonly than one would suppose, in the field of medicine.

Faith in medicine and in the doctor. As doctors are aware, in every treatment hope and also faith and confidence in the doctor play a major or minor part. This faith plays an important part in the healing work, and is used deliberately in psychosomatic treatment. There is now a growing conviction that it is not so much the prescribed drug as the patient's expectation which effects improvement in his condition. Tests made with placebos confirm this opinion. Placebos are mock-medicines, resembling the real thing in appearance, form, colour, taste and consistency, but containing no medicinal ingredients. A series of prolonged tests demonstrated that placebos produce effects which can lead to a subjective improvement of the diseased condition. Even homœopathy, which has some very good successes, cannot give a convincing explanation as to how a drug reduced to such extreme attenuations can still have any

effect; hence orthodox medicine's criticism that homœopathic cures have nothing to do with the remedies they use. Mary Baker Eddy was familiar with these methods from personal experience: "Homœopathic remedies, sometimes not containing a particle of medicine, are known to relieve the symptoms of disease. What produces the change? It is the faith of the doctor and the patient, which reduces self-inflicted sufferings and produces a new effect upon the body." (398: 16)

The patient who has faith in God has this in common with the one who believes in his doctor – that he too relinquishes his own doubts and fears for a growing belief that he can be cured. In faith-healing it does not matter what the patient believes in – whether it is his doctor, some new preparation, or the omnipotence of God – for it is, in any case, his increasing faith which heals him, and any belief which can overcome his fear will help. There is, however, a fundamental difference between the patient who puts his trust in the doctor and the one who relies on God. In the first case the weaker belief in sickness is dominated by another, stronger, material belief. But in the second case the weaker belief in sickness is replaced by a belief in truth.

Belief in truth is the first step. Looking at these faith-healings from a Christian Science point of view, it is certainly better to be healed by a blind, unquestioning faith in a truth than by a strong faith in erroneous belief, in material means, or in a person. In many cases belief in material means or a person may in fact be stronger than a specific belief in sickness, and because of that it will prove helpful. But there is also great danger in it. The patient has thereby only subscribed to a greater belief – he is therefore not by any means healed, but only governed by a stronger belief, which may be useful as far as the disease is concerned, but can do more harm in other ways than the disease itself. In this it is like medicine; and the fact that every effective medicine has its side-effects is indeed widely accepted in the medical profession.

This does not apply, however, to a belief in truth. This belief does the patient no harm and may be regarded as a first

step towards an understanding of Truth. Moses was already aware of this when he tried to transform the children of Israel's unbelief into a belief in the healing power of God. He gave them a sign: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." (Num. 21:9) Jesus also often told those he had healed that their faith had made them whole.

In the long term a belief in truth is not enough. For many it is easier to believe in an inscrutable God with His incomprehensible healing power, than to understand this God and the way in which He operates. Because of this, healings through a blind faith in God are sometimes obtained very much more quickly than those which come about through a scientific understanding of God. Since the patient's first concern in a majority of cases is to be healed, he often attaches too much importance to a quick result, regarding this as proof of the greater efficacy of faith, or as a sign that blind faith is the better method. But this "holy, uplifting faith" (109:19) becomes in the long run unsatisfying. Why? True, with this type of faith one turns to Truth and not to matter. But one merely believes in it; one does not understand it. And every belief can be driven out by a stronger belief; even a belief in truth may lose its effect, as soon as an even stronger belief in disease takes over. This is why there is sometimes a quick healing through a belief in truth, but in more cases no healing takes place. Mary Baker Eddy realized that "there is danger in this mental state called belief" and she warns that "if Truth is admitted, but not understood, it may be lost, and error may enter through this same channel of ignorant belief. The faith-cure has devout followers, whose Christian practice is far in advance of their theory¹".

¹ See: Mary Baker Eddy's article 'Faith-cure' in *Retrospection and Introspection*, pp. 54-55. Also Mary Baker Eddy's article 'Principle and Practice', reprinted in *Why Study Christian Science as a Science?* by Max Kappeler, pp. 29-30.

Scientific understanding governs all beliefs. This brings us to a crucial question: Is there something stronger than all beliefs? Is there something superior to the strongest individual and collective, conscious and unconscious, even universal, beliefs? God is the greatest and strongest, and one with God is a majority – and therefore always superior. A scientific understanding of God has control over all beliefs; it can hold in check the entire mortal consciousness with all its manifestations. It is a universally accepted fact that science is superior to any belief. Even if thousands were convinced that two and two made five, a single individual, understanding the rules of arithmetic, would arrive at the right answer with the knowledge that two and two make four, irrespective of the strength of the false belief, or the number who shared it. The most effective antidote we can employ against every sort of belief is the understanding of Truth.

6. *Mortal consciousness is the counterfeit of divine Mind.* We have seen what kind of beliefs constitute mortal consciousness, and have come to the realization that an understanding of Truth can wipe out these beliefs. From the standpoint of understanding, therefore, there is no truth, no real substance in this mortal consciousness. It is nothing in itself, but merely the counterfeit of that which exists in reality. Mortal consciousness is only the sum-total of ignorance about the true nature of being; it is a distorted image of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love – derived from ignorance. The phenomena of mortal consciousness, namely sin, sickness, death and every form of discord, are equally unreal. To the physical senses, it is true, these phenomena appear just as actual and real as an incorrect sum written up on a blackboard for all to see. Yet both the products of mortal consciousness and the incorrect sum are unreal, for their actuality is attested only by those physical senses and that ignorance which in their turn originate in mortal consciousness, and are incapable of testifying to what is true. Just as the calculation that twice two equals five does not exist in arithmetic, so sin, disease and death do not exist in the Science of being.

7. *Mortal consciousness is nothing.* We have seen on the one hand what mortal consciousness appears to be, and on the other hand what it really is, when looked at from the standpoint of understanding – namely nothing, the apparent absence of that which really is. As soon as we recognize, through our understanding of what is real, that mortal consciousness with all its erroneous manifestations is nothing, it can never again appear to us to be anything else. Hence as Scientists we turn to the true nature of being and realize that:

- As the opposite of Mind mortal beliefs have no intelligence, creative power, cause nor effect.
- As the opposite of Spirit mortal beliefs have no substance, no reality; they are incapable of development and therefore cannot bear fruit.
- As the opposite of Soul mortal beliefs can bear no witness to true being.
- As the opposite of Principle mortal beliefs have no system, are based on no real authority and can never lead to harmony.
- As the opposite of Life mortal beliefs can bring into being no indestructible phenomena and have thus no permanent existence.
- As the opposite of Truth mortal beliefs contain no element of truth, are always contradictory and self-destructive.
- As the opposite of Love mortal beliefs have no plan and can therefore never fulfil themselves.

This also answers the age-old question: Where does evil come from, if God created only good and He is all? This question is always asked from the standpoint of material sense, deluded by mortal consciousness into regarding evil as real. No satisfactory answer can ever be given to this question by human thought which is fettered by error. It can be answered only by an understanding of Truth, for which the question of evil does not arise, because it does not exist. Similarly, the question where 'two and two make five' comes from can only be answered rightly by someone with certain knowledge that two and two make four. And the answer of those with understanding – in arithmetic as in Christian Science – is always the

same, namely this: The lie, the untruth, comes from nowhere, for it does not exist. It arises only as the misconception of those deceived by ignorance. To these, however, one cannot give the right answer by trying to explain the unreal which they regard as real. It is better to explain to them what is actually true and real; then the illusion vanishes of its own accord, and the question is no longer asked.

Divine understanding

Mortal consciousness, human consciousness, divine consciousness. There are three fundamentally distinct types of consciousness: the mortal, the human and the divine. We have described mortal consciousness with all its beliefs as that consciousness which is imprinted with ignorance of the true nature of being, hence a consciousness which contains only illusions. Divine consciousness, in contrast, knows only divine ideas. It is that consciousness which knows everything about the true nature of being. Human consciousness stands somewhere in between; it is partly governed by the beliefs which arise from mortal consciousness, and yet it partakes to a greater or lesser degree of those ideas which belong to divine consciousness. "Human thoughts have their degrees of comparison." (297:24) In proportion as human consciousness turns away from mortal consciousness and its beliefs, and accepts the ideas of divine consciousness, it is transformed and becomes more and more like the divine Mind. When the last vestige of mortal belief yields to the divine and disappears, then that stage is reached which Jesus demonstrated by his ascension – he attained the perfect divine consciousness.

The way of understanding. We are capable of making a conscious decision not to be misused by mortal mind and all its beliefs, but to be open to divine consciousness and therewith to the spiritual facts of being. When we take this path, a change of consciousness takes place in us. How does this happen? By the way of understanding, which has two stages, described by

Mary Baker Eddy as follows: "Divine Science, rising above physical theories, excludes matter, resolves *things* into *thoughts*, and replaces the objects of material sense with spiritual ideas." (123:12)

The first stage consists in resolving things into thoughts. We took this step when we were discussing the testimony of the physical senses. We saw then that matter has no reality as such, so we need not take it into consideration; and we realized that it is not a question of trying to change material things, whose apparent existence is in any case deceptive, but of changing our concept of things. This realization brings us to the second step: we replace the objects of material sense with spiritual ideas; in other words, we fill our consciousness with the facts of divine being, with ideas. We increase our understanding of the true nature of being, of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. Then we experience the reality which this spiritual understanding brings forth: the harmonious, healthy, perfect creation of God.

Science alone leads to understanding. We can gain dominion over the material world and its attendant discords only through a well-grounded spiritual understanding. But neither blind faith in God nor ritualistic religion leads to this understanding of being. In an age when every aspect of the material world is the subject of research by scientific methods, it is also essential that the truth of being is grasped in its Science; because only as Science can it be explained, learned, understood and then proved. Our age has seen a great flowering of sciences in every department of human life; but the most important thing of our time is the possibility we have today of grasping the reality of being through the Science of God, and of thereby gaining that understanding which overcomes mortal consciousness.

"The universe, like man, is to be interpreted by Science from its divine Principle, God" (124:14). This interpretation from divine Principle – the explanation of the four great prime factors of Being (Word, Christ, Christianity and Science) from the standpoint of Science – will therefore form the subject of the second part of this book.

Part II

The Scientific Approach to the Divine Being

Chapter 6

The Scientific Approach to the Word of God

The divine standard

When we were considering the Word of God (p. 26 f.), we saw that the concept of God has to be defined and its meaning explained in detail. We saw that true monotheism rests not only on having *one* God, but even more importantly on having one, and the *true*, concept of this God. Science gives us this one true interpretation of what God really is. God, the infinite divine Principle of being, has a Science to declare itself (see 546:10). This Science presents the absolute standard or divine norm. It does not interpret the one eternal divine Being from a finite human standpoint, which is incapable of imparting the true concept of things, but rather it gives the self-revelation of the divine Principle of all true being. Examples of this fundamental self-declaration of God are to be found in the Bible (in the seven days of creation) and in the textbook through the seven synonyms for God, which coincide with the days of creation in their meaning as well as in their order of presentation. Through this Science, which reveals the nature of God as Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love, we can give up our various notions about God and gain the true concept. Only Science can lead us to true monotheism, for through Science we find the divine standard from which our concept should never deviate.

In proportion as we understand what constitutes the divine nature, we also begin to see what is not part of God's nature. Real understanding always draws a dividing line between the standard we understand to be divine and everything unlike this

standard – that is, between Truth and error, between reality and the supposed counterfeit of reality. For the student it means learning to apprehend God through the seven synonyms, but at the same time getting to know what has no part in divine being, because it is opposed to the clearly defined sevenfold nature of God. A truly scientific concept of God thus includes both an understanding of God's nature and His ideas, and also a grasp of the nothingness of what seems to be God's opposite.

Belief – faith – understanding

With the recognition that Science is able to provide us with the true concept of being, the question immediately arises: How can we be receptive to this true interpretation? How can we respond to this Science? There are three fundamentally different ways of trying to understand being: 1. through belief, 2. through faith, 3. through understanding. All three methods have one thing in common: their main object is to discern Truth. And yet they lead to very different results; for if we choose the way of belief, we follow Truth ignorantly; if we choose the way of faith, we have a hopeful trust in Truth; but if we choose the way of understanding, we find Truth as a demonstrable Science. So let us take these three approaches separately:

1. *Belief*. All belief, including the belief in Truth, is based on ignorance. But ignorance is no protection for us. Even the good belief that there is only one God, that He is good and cares for mankind, even this in itself does not have the power of demonstration; for, being a mere belief, it has nothing stronger to set against the opposite belief that matter or evil is real. Thus a good belief cannot overcome a false belief, because it does not know what is true, but only believes it. Since, in the realm of beliefs, it is always the stronger belief which governs the weaker, the belief in Truth, although a right belief, will be at the mercy of all erroneous beliefs that are stronger, or held by a larger majority. So if we approach the Word of God by

trying to master the Science of being through blind belief in Truth, we shall not be much farther forward. We shall merely have exchanged our previous religious beliefs for other beliefs, and this avails little. If we want to experience the demonstration of Truth revealed by Science, it is not enough to accept and imbibe this Truth through belief.

Moreover, the way of blind belief is not only lacking in results, but it is even detrimental. "Nothing is more antagonistic to Christian Science than a blind belief without understanding, for such a belief hides Truth and builds on error." (83:9) We should, however, not conclude from this that it is wrong to believe in Truth at all. "A belief in Truth is better than a belief in error" (297:26); in the beginning it may even be necessary to accept the new subject on trust. But it is not right to remain at this initial stage, attempting to demonstrate the Science of God through ignorance rather than understanding.

2. *Faith*. Even with faith in God the reality of being is not fully grasped, although faith takes us much farther than blind belief. Faith is at least so far superior to sense-testimony as to be capable of having "hope against hope" (Rom. 4:18). We have seen in an earlier chapter (p. 21) that in the Bible the word 'faith' has a different meaning from its present use. Therefore we need to differentiate between faith which is a "blind faith" and "holy, uplifting faith". On the subject of blind faith the textbook says: "If we rise no higher than blind faith, the Science of healing is not attained, and Soul-existence, in the place of sense-existence, is not comprehended." (167:3) Blind faith is very similar to belief. Spiritual faith, however, is something quite different. Of this faith the textbook declares: "Faith is higher and more spiritual than belief. It is a chrysalis state of human thought, in which spiritual evidence, contradicting the testimony of material sense, begins to appear, and Truth, the ever-present, is becoming understood." (297:20) True faith therefore can become a stepping-stone to spiritual understanding. Yet we should not content ourselves with faith alone. "Holy, uplifting faith" can, it is true, hold fast to Truth against

all sense-testimony, and have hope in Truth “against hope”, but it cannot prove this Truth conclusively. Someone who has faith can indeed have a sense of reality even where unreality seems to triumph, but as long as he does not understand reality, he can never produce visible proof that his ‘sense’ of it is correct. It is true that his faith will be able to put up greater and more lasting resistance to stronger beliefs, but in the end faith also has to capitulate if the opposing beliefs are stronger. Thus faith must be seen only as a further step on the way to spiritual understanding. If we stop at this stage, even faith can prove to be a stumbling-block. “Unless human faith be distinguished from scientific healing, Christian Science will again be lost from the practice of religion as it was soon after the period of our great Master’s scientific teaching and practice.”¹

3. *Spiritual understanding.* From faith in Truth to scientific understanding another big step remains to be taken. But pure faith can prepare consciousness for the understanding of Truth, making it ready for spiritual understanding. The realities of divine Science “dawn in faith and glow full-orbed in spiritual understanding” (298: 3). Only spiritual understanding of Truth enables us to demonstrate the truths of being – against all human beliefs, however strong and widely held they may seem to be. This state of consciousness, which does not remain at the stage of faith in Truth, but is also able to give undeniable proof of the rightness of this faith, is founded on an understood Principle. In the following passage from the epistle of James this state of consciousness is called faith: “Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” (James 2: 18) This faith which is shown “by works” – that is, by proofs of Principle understood – we term “spiritual understanding”.

Along the path to a full, conscious comprehension of Truth, these three distinct steps lead us from an initial belief in Truth, through uplifting faith, to the point of spiritual understanding.

¹ See: Mary Baker Eddy, *Principle and Practice*.

On this journey blind belief, as well as faith, has a positive and temporarily useful part to play; but a real solution is only reached through spiritual understanding. "Even a blind faith removes bodily ailments for a season . . . The Science of Mind must come to the rescue, to work a radical cure." (398: 27)

Ideas – illusions – thoughts

Thus the way to being is not to be found in improved beliefs about reality, or in an uplifting faith in God, but in the method of spiritually understanding God. The Word of God – Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love – must however be understood through the ideas by which each of the synonyms for God is characterized. But to comprehend God better through his ideas, we have to be clear what ideas really are¹.

Ideas. In Christian Science 'idea' has a fundamentally different meaning from its common use. Since ideas characterize the nature of God, they cannot have a human meaning; rather they indicate something divine. Thus an idea is not what is ordinarily spoken of as 'a good idea' in the sense of 'a notion' or 'a brain-wave'. It is also quite distinct from the philosophical use of the word.

What is the difference? The ordinary use of the word implies that it is man who has an idea or imagines something; that idea is something which can originate in the thought and consciousness of people. Equally common is the meaning which implies that ideas are expressed as matter, that the sensible objects of our physical world are the objective expressions of ideas. But Christian Science explains 'idea' in a new way. The textbook uses Webster's definition of 'idea' as "an image in Mind; the immediate object of understanding" (115:17). In the marginal heading at the side of this definition, idea is also called "divine reflection". There are two points to be especially

¹ For 'Ideas, Illusions, Thoughts' see also: Max Kappeler and co-authors, *Compendium for the Study of Christian Science*, No. 1, p. 16 f.

noticed here: first, Mind does not mean human thinking, human reasoning, but the Mind which is God; secondly, idea is the “immediate object of understanding”, a “divine reflection”. Hence it has a purely spiritual origin and is a purely spiritual expression – a divine, not a material, reflection.

Fundamentally therefore ideas are only what Mind, God, knows about itself; they are the primal conceptions of divine Mind. They are not the human concepts of our imagination, but divine values and hence the elements, as it were, of the divine Being. They are the infinite expressions, the infinite manifestations or reflections, the spiritual identities, of the divine Being. Just as the elements of music are tones, the elements of painting colours, and of arithmetic numbers, so the elements of the divine Being are ideas.

The fact that divine Principle manifests itself through ideas is of great significance. If God had no expression, He would be incomprehensible to us. We can grasp the infinity of being only through its infinite forms of expression; these divine reflections or ideas are immediately accessible to spiritual understanding, and in this way the infinite One communicates with us in a form that we can grasp and understand – namely, in ideas.

Ideas are divine. Ideas are divine values; that is to say, they are always as good, eternal, perfect and infinite as the divine Being, which manifests itself through them. Thus they can possess only the characteristics which God Himself has. Their meaning becomes clearer when we put the seven synonymous terms for God in the place of the word ‘God’, as follows:

- Ideas are the primal conceptions of the divine Being and therefore always emanate from the divine Mind; they do not originate in man’s thought or imagination (Mind).
- Ideas are in their nature purely spiritual and constitute the substance of reality; hence they are never material, but only good and not both good *and* bad (Spirit).
- Ideas are the immutable divine identities of being, which can be grasped only through Soul-sense; sense-testimony cannot give us any concept of what ideas are (Soul).

- Ideas always belong to their divine Principle and not to any particular person; thus they cannot be controlled by persons or by human will, but they obey divine authority alone (Principle).
- Ideas are eternal and ever-present; they are without beginning or end and are therefore always available. Ideas are not subject to time and space; they *are* – and they are free from all limitations of mortal existence (Life).
- Ideas are the forms in which divine consciousness expresses itself; they cannot therefore be mistaken, erroneous or illusory, but prevail over mortal consciousness and all its beliefs (Truth).
- Ideas only ever work towards realizing the divine goal; they all serve Love's universal plan of salvation; they can never be humanly misused or used for the wrong purpose (Love).

Illusions. Illusions are the opposites of ideas. In Christian Science the term 'illusion', like the term 'idea', has a new and quite different meaning. According to this new meaning an illusion is not that which seems to be unreal and deceptive to human thought and reason. Rather the term 'illusion' stands for everything which is not "an image in Mind". Everything which does not emanate from the divine standard of the seven synonyms for God is illusion. Therefore much must be termed illusion which seems thoroughly logical, real and actual to human comprehension, and which appears even beautiful and good to the human senses. Everything which comes from mortal consciousness, from the mortal world of phenomena in which we live, is illusion. Whereas ideas are divine values, their opposites, illusions, are the seeming values of mortal mind, without any element of truth. Whereas ideas are always true and good, illusions are always bad, destructive and negative, even when to human sense they appear attractive, beautiful and positive.

Thoughts. Thought itself is neither positive nor negative, but neutral. It is, so to speak, the channel either of illusions or of ideas. Only the content of thought makes it good or bad. Thought itself is neither good nor evil; to think well is to

entertain ideas, to think ill is to entertain illusions. We are motivated by spiritual or material thoughts, unworldly or worldly thoughts, perfect or imperfect, true or false, immortal or mortal, according to whether we entertain ideas or illusions in our thinking. Thought therefore is not illusion, neither is it idea, but thought can think idea-wise or illusion-wise.

This has special significance in the practice of Christian Science; for unlike many other mental healing methods, Christian Science healing is based, not on thought-healing, but on divine Mind-healing through ideas. It is not thought which heals, but idea; thought can only be willing to receive the healing idea and let it work. This subject will be dealt with in more detail in a later chapter (p. 128 f.). Here it needs only to be stressed that a clear distinction must be made between an idea and a thought. Having once grasped this difference, we can readily see how it is possible for us to comprehend infinite being: the nature of the divine Being is revealed through the ideas of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love – as the ideas of the seven synonyms for God. Each of the seven synonyms for God is characterized by divine qualities, which are of a spiritual and divine (not material and human) nature – that is, by ideas. Human thought can comprehend these ideas and thereby gain the true concept of being, which enables it at the same time to recognize the supposed opposite to be an illusion.

Thought which grasps God's ideas we call divine or spiritual thought; an idea appears to human perception as a divine thought. "Immortal ideas, pure, perfect, and enduring, are transmitted by the divine Mind through divine Science, which corrects error with truth and demands spiritual thoughts, divine concepts, to the end that they may produce harmonious results." (259:26) The more we occupy ourselves with ideas, the more spiritualized our thought becomes, until it eventually becomes a consciousness of ideas. To sum up: Error is not corrected with thoughts, but with truth, hence with ideas. Spiritual thoughts are necessary, however, for seeing this operation of ideas as "harmonious results" in human experience.

To test whether a thought which we hold is divine or mortal, we need to determine its origin: "How are veritable ideas to be distinguished from illusions? By learning the origin of each. Ideas are emanations from the divine Mind. Thoughts, proceeding from the brain or from matter, are offshoots of mortal mind; they are mortal material beliefs. Ideas are spiritual, harmonious, and eternal." (88:9) Truly good thoughts, therefore, must always coincide with the divine nature; they must be in concord with ideas, "emanations from the divine Mind". Any thoughts which proceed merely from our own thinking are not divinely good.

Understanding spiritually

The divine Being makes itself known to man through spiritual understanding. This statement poses a variety of questions, all centering on the main problem of how the student can attain such an understanding. What qualifications must he have? What attitude of mind is needed? Does intellect, for instance, play an important part, or does the student require any particular education? Is spiritual understanding bestowed on some at birth and not on others?

The letter and the spirit. The textbook gives a very plain answer to the question: "How can I progress most rapidly in the understanding of Christian Science?" First we must "study thoroughly the letter and imbibe the spirit" (495:27). Two clear requirements are indicated here, both of which are indispensable for a spiritual understanding: the letter and the spirit – or, in other words, the scientific sense to understand the correct meaning of the revealed text, and the spiritual sense to interpret the letter so as to bring out its life and inspiration. Both must go hand in hand, and only the two together lead to real spiritual understanding; for spiritual understanding, as we have seen, depends on two essentials – first, Truth must not only be accepted and believed, but also really understood; and secondly, this understanding must be, not human, but spiritual.

As soon as we begin to pay too much attention to one of these two aspects, however, thus neglecting the other, we cannot attain spiritual understanding. If we rely solely on the letter, we do not get very far; for the letter by itself is dead. The correct letter – the explication of divine facts by means of a book, classes or lectures – should be regarded only as helping to set us on our way towards spiritual understanding. It is not the goal, but merely a necessary aid to the understanding of Truth. It gives us the scientific foundation from which inspired spiritual sense can operate. The letter should only “aid in bringing thought into accord with the spirit of Truth and Love, which heals the sick and the sinner”(454:32). So when learning the letter we should not forget the most important thing – spiritual sense, which alone brings the correct statement of Truth alive for us.

On the other hand, spiritual sense, without the foundation provided by the letter, does not suffice either. For if inspiration is not founded on a scientific basis, but only on beliefs and vague suppositions, it may indeed be uplifting for a time, but then, like all beliefs, it lacks the power of demonstration. But our goal must be spiritual understanding, which alone is superior to all erroneous beliefs.

Thus spiritual understanding always includes within itself both the letter and the spirit, the scientific sense and the spiritual sense.

Intellectual and spiritual. “This understanding is not intellectual, is not the result of scholarly attainments” (505:26). “No intellectual proficiency is requisite” (x:30) for an understanding of Christian Science, the Preface to the textbook assures us; and this, in spite of the fact that it is a Science that we are dealing with – needing to be spiritually understood, and not just believed. How is this possible? As we have seen, an important step towards the apprehension of Truth consists precisely in dropping the beliefs of mortal thinking and devoting ourselves to the facts of being. Material knowledge also, with all scholarship and all the deliberation and reasoning of the human consciousness, however ingenious, belong fundamen-

tally to this realm of human beliefs and can therefore help us little in the understanding of Truth. Thus it is not in any way a matter of what we have learnt, what training and education we have had. Rather it is a matter of getting an intelligent grasp of the facts of being, which are new to all human thinking. But this kind of intelligence has less to do with human knowledge than with a talent which is given to everyone, and which we all possess in some degree. It is just this gift which distinguishes man from the animals – the capacity for consciously discerning relationships and for matching his ways and actions to his new-found knowledge. This specifically human faculty is called intellect, and it is one which is wholly positive. Everything which trains and develops our intellect, this faculty which is innate in each one of us, helps us to advance in the understanding of Christian Science. “Academics of the right sort are requisite. Observation, invention, study, and original thought are expansive and should promote the growth of mortal mind out of itself, out of all that is mortal.” (195: 19)

Many students’ fears that they are not educated or intelligent enough for a thorough study of Christian Science are therefore not really justified. On the contrary, everyone who is willing to take the first step in this new subject notices that the capacity to grasp its teaching grows in proportion to its occupancy of his thought. There are indeed other qualities which are needed, more important than a keen intellect; these will be discussed below.

Intellect, however, is not to be confused with *intellectualism*. Intellectualism is defined as ‘overemphasis on knowledge derived from pure reason’, which clearly shows that spiritual understanding has nothing to do with intellectualism. We have already dealt in some detail with the two aspects of spiritual understanding – the letter and the spirit – and seen that spiritual sense and scientific sense must always complement each other harmoniously, that they must stand in balanced relation to each other, if our understanding of Science is really to be spiritual, and not human. In this connection we noted that the overemphasis of one aspect – as for instance too

much stress on the intellect – does not lead to a truly spiritual understanding.

We can therefore sum up thus: Christian Science, like every other science, uses men's intellect as an instrument serving the process of understanding; but intellectualism it rejects altogether.

Necessary spiritual qualities. For a basic study of the letter to lead us to the point where we can imbibe the spirit of the subject, three qualities are especially needed: 1. seeking, 2. striving, 3. persevering.

1. *Seeking.* To make progress in the understanding of Christian Science, it is not enough just to be interested in it. Its statements must be not only read, but also studied and researched with great devotion and self-sacrifice. The student must always seek Truth for its own sake; he should not in the first place concentrate on finding an answer to his own questions, but he should try to fathom the whole subject, investigate it thoroughly, and be open to the whole teaching of Science. The seeking student is always animated by the desire to be able to comprehend Truth fully; he studies with great care everything which will bring this goal a step nearer.

2. *Striving.* This searching and seeking must be coupled with honest effort, a real striving for understanding. "Seeking is not sufficient. It is striving that enables us to enter. Spiritual attainments open the door to a higher understanding of the divine Life." (10:14) Only a real striving for Truth lends the necessary depth to our search. Students "must not only seek, but strive, to enter the narrow path of Life" (451:11). Whereas seeking and searching correspond more with our scientific sense, it is spiritual sense which enables us to strive after Truth. Here it is not just a matter of understanding the text; the subject now demands our full devotion. We go to it with our whole heart, with appreciation and love; we are full of awe and gratitude for the magnitude of the subject. When we strive to know Truth, we do not regard the search as a duty; it becomes a privilege to be able to study the truths of being with care and devotion. The study of Christian Science is not a

pastime, in which we indulge when everything else has been attended to. For the student of Christian Science God comes first, not last.

3. *Persevering.* Both seeking and striving lead to success only if we persevere in our efforts. The ability not to let disappointment creep in, but to endure, even when spiritual understanding unfolds only gradually and slowly, this is of the greatest importance. It means that we are always ready to put the divine first and foremost; that we give this great subject the first place in our heart, the first call on our time, and make it our main purpose in life, even when we do not immediately get the results we hope for. In her answer to the question how the Christian Scientist can progress most rapidly, Mary Baker Eddy continues as follows: "Adhere to the divine Principle of Christian Science and follow the behests of God, abiding steadfastly in wisdom, Truth, and Love." (495:28) This steadfast perseverance in seeking and striving, this persistent effort to work both scientifically and spiritually, brings us successfully to our goal.

These three spiritual qualities – seeking Truth, striving for Truth and persevering in Truth – are far more important for understanding the divine Principle than quickness of uptake, a good memory or a good education. They are faculties which we must constantly and consciously culture, even if it should come especially easy to us to get hold of the letter.

Spiritual understanding unfolds gradually. As mentioned above, the student of Christian Science often wishes that he could progress more rapidly in understanding. However, "the letter of Science plentifully reaches humanity to-day, but its spirit comes only in small degrees" (113:3). Mortal consciousness with all its beliefs usually does not change into divine consciousness at a stroke. Our thoughts are lifted only little by little out of the material into the spiritual. Every time we understand something new, not only do we advance in the theory, but our whole lives are transformed and affected in a practical way. Because of this we are wise to "work gradually and gently up toward the perfect thought divine" (Un. 5:5). Impetuous efforts to advance only produce reaction and disturb the

ordered unfoldment of spiritual understanding. The birth of a spiritual understanding is not the work of a moment; it takes years, indeed it is the work of eternity. Everything spiritual is eternal. Spiritual understanding, therefore, carries within itself infinite unfoldment, which is an ordered spiritual process that does not keep to human targets. Spiritual understanding does not develop as quickly as the impatient student would like, but it follows the dictates of wisdom, which let us "abandon so fast as practical the material" (254:21). We gain spiritual understanding by a long steady process of change. It always comes gradually, so that the search is "sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope" (109:15).

Prayer

One of the most ancient forms of turning to God is prayer. It plays a major role in many religions, including the Christian religion. The textbook also begins with the chapter on "Prayer". Can we approach the Science of God, which imparts itself only through spiritual understanding, by way of prayer? To find a clear answer to this question we have to distinguish between two kinds of prayer, which are diametrically opposed to each other: petition and the scientific prayer of spiritual understanding.

Petition. In general, prayer means asking for something, supplication, the form in which our desires and needs are made known to God. When we feel that we lack something, we turn to God with our requests. In so doing we start from premises which, after what has been said before, can be seen to be wrong.

In making requests the petitioner always starts from a position of imperfection and from this basis turns towards the perfection of God. Instead of obeying the Christ-command to identify oneself with perfection, he seeks to inform God, perfection, about imperfection. Petitions also start from the premise that God does not already have a perfect expression; in making requests the petitioner assumes that we must from

time to time point out to God that something is lacking. He usually lets God know exactly what needs to be done, and also just how it ought to be done.

Thus petitions are directed towards a very narrow, human and finite concept of God, which has nothing in common with God's true nature. This form of prayer is therefore inconsistent with the realization that we must turn to God with spiritual understanding alone.

*Scientific prayer*¹. In a science there is nothing to be had merely for the asking. One can approach a science only with understanding. "Who would stand before a blackboard, and pray the principle of mathematics to solve the problem?" (3:5) Furthermore, without the necessary understanding we cannot comprehend or demonstrate mathematics. To succeed in solving a mathematical problem we must not plead for something, but acquaint ourselves with the principle of mathematics. Only when our thought understands the rules of mathematics – only when we can think in a mathematically correct way – are mathematical problems solved. It is the same with the Science of being. Only perfection in ourselves can grasp divine perfection, or, in the words of Paul: "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:11) Darkness can never comprehend light, and light can never comprehend darkness. Similarly imperfection can never understand perfection, nor can perfection understand imperfection: mortal mind cannot enter into communion with the divine Mind, nor matter with Spirit, sin with Soul, inharmony with Principle, lack with Life, sickness with Truth, or fear with Love. A prayer which springs merely from erroneous, mortal thoughts expresses only material desires, asks for forgiveness of sins, importunes God with inharmonious affairs, enumerates deficiencies and losses, believes in the reality of disease, and petitions God in fear – such prayer cannot reach the divine ear. God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil" (Hab. 1:13).

Scientific prayer starts from the knowledge that Mind can

¹ See also: Max Kappeler, *The Spiritual Principle of Prayer*.

only be reached by that in us which is like Mind, Spirit only by that which is like Spirit, Soul by that which is like Soul, Principle by that which is like Principle, Life by that which is like Life, Truth by that which is like Truth, and Love by that which is like Love. This is the new form of prayer, as shown in the first chapter of the textbook. The Christian Scientist's prayer is the prayer of spiritual understanding. It is the prayer "that reforms the sinner and heals the sick", it is "an absolute faith that all things are possible to God, — a spiritual understanding of Him, an unselfed love" (1:1).

It is this conception of prayer (so different from the usual) which we find so often in the teaching of the New Testament. Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) This means that no one comes to the Principle of being except by that which coincides with the essence of Principle — Life, Truth and Love. Jesus constantly urges us to ask of God in the name of Christ. 'Name' is a symbol for identity, for we identify someone or something by the name. "In the name of Christ", therefore, means "identical with Christ"; and Christ, as we have seen, is "the coincidence, or spiritual agreement, between God and man in His image" (332:32). This helps us to understand Jesus' words: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:23, 24) Until then men had prayed in their own name, expressing their own personal wants. But now we are told to pray in Christ's name — from a position of unity with Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. The prayer which proceeds from unity with the Father will then receive the Father's blessing. Jesus explicitly made the fulfilment of our requests dependent upon this unity with God. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) If we are one with the divine nature, we are also one with the will of the Principle of being. Then we pray aright, and are heard. Our requests must not be selfish or personal, but always directed

towards one end – the manifestation of the divine will. “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.” (1 John 5:14) Whether our prayer is heard or not depends solely on whether we are learning to pray, not according to our own judgment and intentions, but “according to his will”, namely, for that which lies within the purpose of God’s nature. How can we learn to pray “according to his will”? By consciously working to establish the divine consciousness in ourselves. To do this we need to have the Christ-consciousness.

Chapter 7

The Scientific Approach to the Saving Power of the Christ

The Christ-attitude

Scientific prayer alone can be heard and answered. This means that we only experience the ever-operative Christ as a saving and healing power when we have developed in ourselves an attitude of consciousness which welcomes this Christ-operation, instead of working against it. We must do the same in regard to the Principle of being as we would in any other subject, as for instance in arithmetic. If we want to solve a complicated sum, and know that the principle of arithmetic operates for us and solves our problems, we first give up our own personal view and judgment of the problem before us, and concentrate solely on the principle of arithmetic. The same holds for our life's problems. Here too we experience a harmonious solution only when we submit unreservedly to the Principle of being. How can we do this?

Identifying oneself with the Word of God. How can we identify ourselves with God? By occupying ourselves more and more consistently with God, with the Principle of being, and not with other gods, with other, human, principles. The Word of God is Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love; by assimilating the ideas of the seven synonyms for God and pondering them, we identify ourselves spiritually with them. Jesus demands this attitude of complete devotion to the Word of God when affirming the greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Mat. 22:37) When all our thoughts and longings are directed towards God and His ideas, we have taken the first step in obedience to Christ's command.

This total identification with Principle involves the following essential requirements:

We must not be swayed by emotions, sentimentality or the evidence of the physical senses, but follow spiritually scientific sense, true understanding. All human emotions must be subordinated to this understanding. We need to reverse all false beliefs, as soon as they enter consciousness, and exchange them for ideas.

We must accept spiritually scientific understanding as our only teacher. Then all our sentiments, feelings and opinions are set right by it alone; for it is only this understanding that can tell us what is right in a situation and what is wrong.

We must couple this understanding with a willingness effectively to give up all beliefs and lay aside the false mortal conception of being, however pleasing it may be to mortal sense. We do not progress very far if we are willing to give up just what causes us suffering, but at the same time try to cling to what mortal mind holds dear. So we must be prepared to give up everything which does not conform to the divine nature, even when it seems humanly beautiful.

Spiritual agreement between man and God. When we identify ourselves in this way with the Word of God, we attain spiritual agreement with God. Mary Baker Eddy points to this special characteristic of the Christ when she writes: "Christ illustrates the coincidence, or spiritual agreement, between God and man in His image." (332:32) Whatever serves to bring our thoughts, feelings and actions, our inclinations and objectives, into unison with God and His ideas, partakes of the nature of Christ, bringing about the spiritual agreement of man with God.

Atonement with God. This agreement of man with the nature of God brings about the atonement of man with God. We know Christ as the great conciliator, who has reconciled the world to God. At the same time we must remember that it is never God who reconciles Himself to man, but always man who may be reconciled to God. What does this mean?

God, Truth, cannot be reconciled to its opposite, error; this

means that these opposites are irreconcilable. But mortals can have part in the atonement, by giving up their false, human, erroneous principles and thereby finding oneness with divine Principle. This process of reconciliation is another characteristic of the Christ-nature. God never has to be reconciled to man "in His image"; for God has never allowed His man, His image and likeness, to fall, but always drawn him "with bands of love" (Hos. 11:4).

Oneness with God. By atonement we attain oneness or at-onement with God. The Christ-attitude culminates in this oneness, to which Jesus constantly referred. He declared: "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) He did not say: "The Father and I are one", although this, seen from a quite different angle, also expresses a truth. In his declaration Jesus meant to emphasize that very Christ-attitude which is always actively trying to identify itself completely with God, to bring itself into spiritual agreement with God, to be reconciled to Him, to be one with Him.

We must, moreover, consciously claim our oneness with the Word of God, in accordance with Jesus' command: "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay" (Mat. 5:37). By "Yea, yea" we are affirming for ourselves that we are one with all the ideas of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. By "Nay, nay" we are simultaneously denying that we have any relationship with the beliefs of mortal mind. This consciousness of unity with God identifies itself consciously with the divine nature and thereby divorces itself from any mortal consciousness or belief.

This Christ-attitude brings tremendous release. For what does it mean for us to make ourselves one with God in this way? It means that we have part in all that God is and does and has. We can then experience the following words of Mary Baker Eddy: "Emerson says, 'Hitch your wagon to a star.' I say, Be allied to the deific power, and all that is good will aid your journey, as the stars in their courses fought against Sisera (Judges 5:20)." (Un. 17:4) The Christ-attitude bids us hitch our wagon - our whole outlook on life - to Mind, Spirit,

Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love; then all the ideas of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love help us on our journey.

From the standpoint of the first side of the Holy City, the Word of God, we are able first to define in detail what God is. Now from the standpoint of the second side, the Christ, we realize that these seven synonyms for God and their ideas will help us. Through a scientific outlook we can "hitch our wagon" to the Word, and experience the operation of divine ideas as a saving power. But if we hitch our whole attitude towards life to that which is unlike God, we experience the very suffering which nevertheless leads us in the end to oneness with the Principle of being.

Humility. However, if we strive to be one with the Word, the Principle of being, we must relinquish all other guiding principles and all other human conceptions about God and man. All personal and human views, desires and plans must be put aside. To succeed in doing this we need great humility.

The symbol for humility in the Bible is the lamb. The lamb is devoid of self-will; it is submissive, easily guided, offering no opposition. Mary Baker Eddy gives the metaphysical meaning of this symbol, interpreting the "Lamb of God" as ". . . self-immolation; innocence and purity; sacrifice" (590:9). Such "self-abnegation, by which we lay down all for Truth, or Christ, in our warfare against error", she designates "a rule in Christian Science" (568:30). This absolute humility, this self-immolation or self-abnegation, was exemplified by Jesus in the highest degree, and because of this he was called the 'Lamb of God'. His Christ-attitude to everything was always: "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22: 42) Jesus never put his own requests to God, but rather put himself under the divine will. When we give up the lesser for the greater, as he did - that is, when we sacrifice our own small, limited, personal wishes and conceptions for the true concept of God, then we "hitch our wagon to a star", to something infinitely big, namely the seven synonyms for God. Then, in accordance with the law of Christ, we shall experience the blessings which

flow from this Christ-attitude of humility. In the words of Revelation: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:12) Unless we culture the nature of the lamb in ourselves, however, we shall not reap any such divine reward. Only too often we turn to the divine saving power with the one object of fulfilling our own desires. If we make the mistake of looking upon the Principle of being merely as a kind of patent recipe for fulfilling all our wishes, we shall naturally be disappointed when we learn from experience that the "rule in Christian Science" requires first the self-abnegation "by which we give up all for Truth, or Christ".

*

How can we obey the Christ-command and establish the Christ-nature in ourselves?

- By identifying ourselves with the Word of God - that is, with the seven synonyms for God and their ideas;
- thereby attaining spiritual agreement with God;
- this leads us to atonement with God,
- whereby we become one with God;
- in this at-one-ment with God we manifest the 'lamb's nature' of Christ, which sacrifices all its own desires and conceptions. Such a Christ-consciousness as this bears within itself the redeeming power of the Christ.

The redeeming power

Christ, the Redeemer. After considering the demands of the Christ, we can understand where the resolving power for all problems lies. Let us ask ourselves: What gave Jesus the power to set men free, to help, heal and redeem them? It is clear from what has already been said that Jesus was not endowed with any mystic gift of grace peculiar to himself, but rather it was

his humility which enabled him to do the works that he did. This can be seen, for example, from his saying: "I and my Father are one." Because of this and similar sayings the Pharisees accused him of arrogance and blasphemy. Yet they entirely misjudged him. It takes the greatest humility to lay down one's own will so completely as to be one with the Father, one with the divine will. But because he was one with God, God was also one with him. Since he submitted wholly to the divine nature, that nature could work in him, and through him come to its full expression. This also holds good today for anyone who fulfils the Christ-demands as Jesus did. To become one with God means allying oneself so completely with the whole Word of God, that this divine nature – Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love – dwells and operates in us. This then gives us that power which Paul declared the Lord had given him "to edification" (2 Cor. 13:10). Like Jesus, Paul received this power only by reason of his humility, which caused him to say: "For when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10) What did Paul mean? In saying this he seized upon the two complementary aspects of the law of Christ, namely, that when human thinking is weak, when it has no more aims and desires (the Christ-attitude of humility), then the divine nature expresses itself as a saving power and makes strong – we experience the Word in its Christ office as redemption (as blessings from the authoritative power of the Christ).

No vicarious redemption. Many Christians deduce from the biblical account of Jesus' works, that by his sacrifice he atoned vicariously for all the sins of the world and thereby won redemption for all mankind. This widely held view is based on a misapprehension. Jesus, the Way-shower, can only be for us what a great mathematician can be in regard to our mathematical problems – one who can show us the way because he has found the right solving method. But just as we do not expect the mathematician to have solved our mathematical problems vicariously, once and for all, so we cannot appeal to the life and work of Jesus to release us from all efforts to solve our own problems. But again like the mathematician, Jesus has

spared us the necessity of continually having to discover the method of solution for ourselves. This is where his great service lies. He discovered, for the redemption of all mankind, the Principle of eternal life and demonstrated for us how it operates as a redeeming power. The very much easier task, however, that of applying to our own problems the Principle which he discovered and taught, from this he could not free us. Jesus knew that no one can escape from the demands of the Christ, that each one of us must drink his cup. "Drink ye all of it" (Mat. 26:27), he told the disciples at the Last Supper.

Adopting the redeeming Christ-attitude. Jesus and also the apostles laid great stress on the fact that all can adopt the redeeming Christ-attitude; indeed it is the duty of every one of us to have "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Jesus lived and suffered to show mankind how to work out their own salvation – by turning to the Father, the Principle of being, and becoming reconciled to it. Jesus knew the divine law behind this process of salvation and was able to assure his followers with these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12) This means: Whoever understands the Principle demonstrated and taught by Jesus, and goes like him to the Father, making himself one with God's nature – with Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love – will do the same works as he, and thereby become a channel for God's greater plan and purpose.

In this Christ-attitude lies the divine mystery of which Paul so often speaks; it is the attitude which we all must adopt if we are not to remain fettered by Old Testament thought. The writers of the Old Testament caught glimpses of the Christ-power, but they could not wholly identify themselves with it. They always postponed complete salvation to some future time, and in so doing they robbed themselves of the divine inheritance. Jesus, on the other hand, made himself the Son of God. He claimed the inheritance by making himself completely one with the saving power of the Christ. He called all

those who had come before him "thieves and robbers" (John 10:8), because they had deprived Israel of taking possession of their divine inheritance right here and now. By always deferring to the future the blessings of the Christ-power which they glimpsed, they robbed Israel of those blessings.

The fact that everyone who assumes the Christ-attitude is able to free himself from the beliefs of mortal consciousness is in accordance with a scientific law, which we discussed when we were dealing with mortal consciousness (p. 89). We saw that in the mental realm the greater always controls the lesser. When, therefore, we are allied to the whole nature of divine being and submit ourselves to it, then this consciousness automatically controls all the beliefs of mortal existence; for the Principle of being is always greater than all individual, collective, universal, even all unconscious and conscious, beliefs of mortal thought. Our understanding of Mind, therefore, handles the beliefs of mortal mind; our understanding of Spirit handles the claims of matter; our understanding of Soul handles all sin and sensation; our understanding of Principle handles human will; our understanding of Life handles lack, decay and death; our understanding of Truth handles sickness; our understanding of Love handles fear, envy, hate and all seeming imperfection.

The irreversible order of the two Christ-aspects. We attain this divine power, however, when we are conscious that the saving power of the Christ is only a source of blessing and healing for us when we have first satisfied the Christ-demands. Only by first adopting the Christ-attitude do we experience the Christ-operation as a saving process.

Many religious people pay no attention to this important ordered progression from the first to the second step. They begin with the second aspect of the Christ, and call upon the healing and saving power of God, not realizing that their declarations, without the preparatory first step, are not based on scientific understanding, but only on blind belief, and that they are, therefore, not demonstrable. The most perfect problem-solving principle is of no use to us, as long as we merely declare that there is such a solving principle, without

ever taking the first step – that of uniting with this solving principle and submitting to it, so that it can operate. Having paid attention only to the second aspect of the Christ, its redeeming power, we not infrequently become disillusioned and, because we fail to achieve our expected results, we come to the false conclusion that everything is apparently pre-ordained and that nothing can alter the natural course of things. But this is wholly mistaken. Jesus proved that he was master of every emergency, controlling the situation, and able to change the course of events completely. How? By identifying himself with the Principle of being, with the Father – as the first Christ-aspect demands – to the point where everything else gives place to the ever-operating power of this Principle. This lawful order of first step always leading to second is very clearly expressed by Mary Baker Eddy in the following statement: “Christ illustrates that blending with God, his divine Principle, which gives man dominion over all the earth.” (316:21)

Anti-Christ

The term anti-Christ in Christian Science denotes everything in human consciousness which does not agree with the Christ-attitude that we have been discussing. People usually think of anti-Christ as the visible incarnation of a satanic power opposed to God, appearing from time to time as a historical person, but destined to be overcome finally by Christ. Thus very different types of person are given the name of anti-Christ, according to the ideology of the time and place in which they appear. Anti-Christ – that which wars against Christ – is regarded as evil per se; yet, just as Christ and the human, personal Jesus are often taken to be identical, so there is a tendency also to see anti-Christ as a person. But anti-Christ is neither a diabolical person nor an evil thing; it is an attitude in ourselves which rebels against Christ. We have seen that Christ is the humble willingness to subordinate self unconditionally and trustingly

to the Word of God. Consequently anti-Christ is everything in us which does not want to unite with Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. It is therefore nothing but an ungodly state of consciousness, which to a greater or lesser degree would gain control of us all. Whenever we feel separated from God, when we think that God has forsaken or forgotten us, when we feel unloved, unappreciated and uncared for, that is the anti-Christ in us speaking. There is only one answer to the false arguments of anti-Christ: we must re-establish our unity with the Word of God, by identifying ourselves with the divine nature of being.

Chapter 8

The Scientific Approach to the Practice of Christianity

Christianity, as we saw in Chapter 4, is the outcome of living the Christ-attitude. It always comes about when we give up our false concept of being and identify ourselves so completely with the divine nature of the one Being – with the Word of God – that “the coincidence . . . between God and man in His image” (332:32) appears. The outcome of this coincidence, perfect creation and perfect man, shows itself as true Christianity.

But, as we saw when considering the saving power of the Christ (p. 39 f.), Christianity as the third great factor of Being has a still deeper and more fundamental meaning. Contemplating Being as a whole, we see that God is not only self-existent Being (Word), but that He also always has an expression and includes within Himself the potential power of self-realization (Christ); this divine self-realization is the eternal, infinite universe of ideas (Christianity). Looked at from the standpoint of divine Being, Christianity is the name for the limitless inter-reflection of all ideas. This infinite realm of ideas as the self-expression of God is coexistent with God, whether we are aware of it or not. But just as the scientific approach to the operative power of the Christ enables us to experience the Christ as Saviour, so through a scientific approach our understanding of the whole universe of idea which is coexistent with God expands. This is experienced on the human level as improvement of the human and as healing of the mortal. This Christianity, when understood, brings to light in us the true idea man, the perfect man, the man of God’s creating.

This progressive realization of the reality of being is a

healing process, in which we are freed by scientific methods from ignorance and the false concept of what constitutes the universe including man, and gain the true concept of reality. We experience this process as healing of sin, sickness and discord of every kind. This scientific healing is the subject of the present chapter.

Scientific healing

Healing in the Bible. The Bible, also, deals with scientific healing, in the broadest sense. Already in Exodus we read: "For I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Ex. 15: 26) The Bible presents God as the great physician, the almighty healer. Jesus healed by purely spiritual means, through his understanding of God. He never used materia medica to effect a healing; he proved that there is no human problem which cannot be solved by the Christ-consciousness. This he demonstrated in every department of life; he not only healed the sick and even overcame death and the grave, but he also reformed sinners and solved practical problems, economic, financial, legal, social, political, by relying always, in every instance, solely on the one redeeming Principle – the Mind of Christ.

Jesus did not claim this Christ-power only for himself, but rather he taught that it is available to everyone. His instructions to his disciples, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils" (Mat. 10: 8), were kept alive among his followers for three centuries. It was only after Christianity had become the official religion under Constantine the Great, and its early inspiration had gradually declined, that this power to heal was eventually lost.

Healing in Christian Science. Jesus fulfilled his mission by demonstrating that the Messiah or Christ is an ever-present power for resolving all human problems. But he came at a time which was not ready to apprehend the scientific Principle of this Mind-healing; he had to give men proofs of his scientific understanding, without being able to explain to them scienti-

fically the divine system which lies behind this healing power, and by what rules healings can be obtained. "Our Master healed the sick, practised Christian healing, and taught the generalities of its divine Principle to his students; but he left no definite rule for demonstrating this Principle of healing and preventing disease. This rule remained to be discovered in Christian Science." (147:24) After Mary Baker Eddy had been healed while reading the Bible, in the year 1866, "when apparently near the confines of mortal existence, standing already within the shadow of the death-valley" (108:19), she set to work to fathom this wonderful healing. For years she sought the divinely scientific system and rules which must have made this healing possible. "I knew . . . that cures were produced in primitive Christian healing by holy, uplifting faith; but I must know the Science of this healing" (109:16). Then, in 1875, she presented this Science of divine Mind-healing for the first time in her textbook. The same healing power that Jesus had so overwhelmingly demonstrated had been rediscovered. In accordance with the needs of a later age, however, the saving power no longer appeared in human form as in the time of Jesus, but in the form of a Science.

Purpose of healing. Before we consider the actual healing process in more detail, we must first ask ourselves this question: What is the real aim of every Christian Science treatment? What is the fundamental task of Christian Science practice?

The task of a Christian Science treatment can never be to satisfy material desires or human objectives. Whatever form the problem may take, it is always basically a matter of realizing the purpose of the Christ-idea and yielding to it. Then, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the solution of our human difficulties will automatically follow. This solution, however, need not necessarily coincide with our human wishes and intentions. The outcome in Christianity depends after all on the humility of our Christ-attitude in sacrificing all our own conceptions, opinions and purposes, and putting our trust in the divine plan of salvation. Such humility demands of us great courage. Yet the wisdom of the divine plan is always greater,

more comprehensive and far-reaching than our own human calculations. If we willingly subordinate ourselves to this plan, it always leads, on the human level, to better solutions than we ever could have outlined for ourselves.

The object of Christian Science practice, therefore, is not to satisfy the patient's wishes. Thus, to the question whether a mortal should be helped by scientific healing, whether it should be our aim to see him well and happy, there are two alternative replies: Yes, it is the object of Christian Science treatment to help and heal mankind, if this healing is understood as visible proof of the divine purpose, if the positive human outcome is regarded as a "sign following", and not as an end in itself. The alternative answer must be 'no', if practice only serves to fulfil mortals' human desires. All healing in Christian Science serves the spiritualization of mankind; its purpose is to bring forth in us the true, immortal man, and lift us to a higher standard of humanity. The real aim of practice is to show a higher method of life, the spiritual way of Life. Jesus taught that our first desire should be the attainment of an increasingly spiritual way of life, not the fulfilment of personal wishes: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mat. 6:33)

How does a scientific healing come about?

True medicine. The remedy which produces a Christianly scientific healing is the same as the one that Jesus used in every case – divine Mind. The medicine of Christian Science is Mind and Mind's idea. This divine Mind is All-in-all; it is the All-Mind, unfettered by place, time or space. What Mary Baker Eddy discovered is the Science of divine Mind-healing and not a system of mental healing. Mind-healing is not – as widely supposed – based on mental practices such as faith-healing, thought-transference, thought-control, or the use of any mental agencies. The human mind with its thoughts is not a factor in Christian Science healing.

In contrast to divine Mind-healing, all human systems of mental healing are based on the control of the patient's false, sickly thoughts by the 'right thoughts' of another person. One person's thinking is thereby dominated by another's; thus there is no victory for Truth, but simply for the stronger thought holding the patient's weaker thought in check. This form of 'positive thinking', or the transference of 'good' or 'right' thoughts from one person to another, is a type of benevolent mesmerism or hypnotism, and has nothing in common with the healing taught and practised in Christian Science. In Christian Science it is not the practitioner's 'right thinking' that heals, but solely divine Mind. Thus the patient is never under the domination of the practitioner's benevolent thought, and dependent on it, as in the various systems of mental healing. He is dependent only on Mind, the true, divine medicine.

In true, spiritual practice we do not rely on a finite, human mind; we "hitch our wagon to a star", that is, we hitch our whole attitude to the divine Mind and its infinite ideas, and these by their very nature will help us – not, like human thought, at one particular time, but always; not in one particular set of circumstances, but at any time and in any place. This difference between divine Mind-healing and the various mental practices and healing-methods based on the power of a person's thought, cannot be too strongly emphasized.

When we accept Mind as the only medicine for all life's problems, we must be quite clear in our attitude towards the numerous other human healing-methods, especially the medical use of drugs. In an earlier chapter (p. 91 f.), we saw that it is after all the patient's faith which endows a drug with apparent healing-power and thereby cures him. Furthermore, the patient's faith and confidence in a particular drug combine with the collective belief in it held by the whole medical profession, and this produces an improvement in his condition. The success of medical treatment rests on belief; we cannot call this a true healing, because what takes place is merely a change in human thinking – by taking a drug the patient exchanges a belief of sickness for a belief that he is now getting better. This

may lead – since consciousness governs the body – to a temporary improvement in the body, but not in man’s consciousness. In contrast, scientific Mind-healing brings about an improvement in man’s spiritual and moral condition, the outward expression of which is physical healing. “The genuine Christian Scientist is adding to his patient’s mental and moral power, and is increasing his patient’s spirituality while restoring him physically through divine Love.” (375:17)

The healing-process. The twelfth chapter of the textbook, ‘Christian Science Practice’¹, deals with the question of how a scientific understanding makes practical use of the ideas of God, divine Mind, to solve the problems of everyday life. Here Mary Baker Eddy explains what the basis of Christianly scientific healing is and how such healing can be achieved:

1. *The healing consciousness.* The power of healing does not lie in material remedies or in thought, but it lies in man’s conscious unity with the perfection of divine being. This is not simply a matter of being one with God in thought alone. Rather it is a matter of gaining a Godlike consciousness, which involves far more than just right thinking. As God is Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love, the healing consciousness must include Mind-like, Spirit-like, Soul-like, Principle-like, Life-like, Truth-like and Love-like qualities. If the practice of healing depended only on changing one’s thinking, then every sinner and wrong-doer would be able to heal; for it is possible to think Godlike thoughts without being Godlike. One can change one’s thoughts from one moment to the next, but not one’s whole inner attitude. What brings about a healing is clearly not thought, but consciousness reflecting the one divine Being. The practitioner – that is, anyone who uses God’s ideas with scientific understanding for solving human problems – is not someone who merely thinks differently from

¹ For a thorough analysis of this chapter see: John W. Doorly, *Christian Science Practice*.

Also: Max Kappeler, *The Structure of the Christian Science Textbook – Our Way of Life*, pp. 116 ff.

others about God, man and the universe; rather it is someone whose consciousness and inner attitude reflect the nature of the seven synonyms for God.

Thus true practice does not depend only on the holding of good or Godlike thoughts by the practitioner in a particular case, but it requires of him a constant effort to allow divine consciousness to grow within him, and to increase his spiritual stature.

The practitioner's goal is that Christ-consciousness which is completely identical with the Word of God, as expressed by Jesus. Yet we must not suppose that we cannot begin to practise Christianly scientific healing before attaining this high standard. "Truth has a healing effect, even when not fully understood." (152:8)

Thus being a practitioner is not so much a profession as a vocation – but a vocation which is open to everyone who has touched the Science of being. Every student, sooner or later, will become his own helper and healer and grow to the tasks which are set him. All difficulties and problems serve to strengthen us in our devotion and loyalty to divine Principle and in our perseverance in Truth. "If students do not readily heal themselves," however, "they should early call an experienced Christian Scientist to aid them." (420:4)

2. *The truth which the practitioner must know* lies in an understanding of God, in an ever growing realization of what Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love is. In a Christian Science treatment we first turn away from the problem completely and then fill our consciousness with the truths of being revealed to us by the seven synonyms for God, so that instead of a sick and suffering mortal we behold the perfect man as God's idea. This scientific concept of God and His true creation enables us to see the perfect man, where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. (see 476:32) Thus every treatment must always start with Truth, which holds true for every case, because it gives us the fundamental right concept of what man really is. Each of the seven synonyms for God illumines the true concept of 'man' from a different angle, so that the

perfect image of man begins to appear in consciousness. This Truth refutes the erring, mortal concept and dissolves it. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

3. *The method of treatment* applicable to a specific case is always based on a general recognition of Truth. In this the practitioner must firmly abide, and not let uncertainty creep in through the contrary arguments raised by the individual case confronting him. What he knows fundamentally to be true in general – namely, the true concept of perfect man – also holds true individually, hence for the particular patient whom he wishes to help in an actual case. Armed with the Christ-consciousness, which has established within him an understanding of what man really is, he approaches the individual patient also with that attitude which clings steadfastly and unshakeably to what is always true everywhere – and therefore true in every specific case.

It is not enough, however, for the practitioner just to turn away from the error, wishing to hear and see nothing of it. "Look away from the body . . ." is a clear direction which must by all means be observed; but it is followed immediately afterwards by a second rule, which is no less important: "Look away from the body into Truth and Love, the Principle of all happiness, harmony, and immortality." (261:2) Turning away from error is therefore only the first step. Having done this, we must next turn consciously to the perfection of being, and consciously claim for the individual case what we have recognized as universally valid divine Truth. Thus it is essential to abide steadfastly in the knowledge of Truth and not let ourselves be affected or influenced in any way by contrary arguments. The facts of being must be recognized as immutable and inviolable, and the counter-arguments must be proved to be false.

4. The knowledge of Truth which the practitioner has established in his consciousness, and which he embodies in his whole mental and spiritual status, must *reach the patient*. How is this possible?

Before answering this question we must first deal with another: What is our patient? We must never ask: *Who* is our patient? For what has to be handled is never a person, but always mortal mind, the claim of evil per se. "Evil . . . is neither person, place, nor thing, but is simply a belief, an illusion of material sense." (71:2) So it is never a specific person that must be treated, for basically no problem is ever the problem of a human being; it is always simply a belief of mortal mind. The patient asking for help feels sickness or experiences discord as his own personal problem, because he does not consciously refute the belief of mortal mind. "The believer and belief are one and are mortal." (487:17)

It is not, then, primarily a question of a particular mortal being freed from a particular disease or inharmonious situation, but rather the belief of mortal mind, the "illusion of material sense", being translated into the divine Mind. It has already been explained in some detail that no thought, however strong, can cope with individual, collective or universal beliefs, since the superior power of all material beliefs can be handled only through an understanding of the Science of the one divine Mind. The Truth recognized by the practitioner (see points 1. 2. and 3.), does not come from his own brain and is not based on his own personal views, but is God, Spirit. It is not only believed to be true, but is consciously recognized as Truth, Spirit; it is therefore superior to all beliefs, however widely held and however powerful they may appear to be. This Truth pervades all space and is everywhere the same Truth. It is both the Truth which the practitioner knows and understands, and also the Truth which operates in the patient's consciousness, when it is open to it. It is not the practitioner's thought, but this one Truth, that performs the healing.

This scientific understanding of the one divine Mind acts upon a problem in a purifying way, thereby changing every false belief and re-establishing wholeness or health for the patient.

Some fundamental questions

In the practice of Christian Science every case is unique. In solving a problem the practitioner can never refer to previous cases; his work is founded, not on human experience, capable of being repeated any number of times, but on the inspired discernment of Truth, which never repeats itself, because it is in its very nature infinite. Every treatment is always a new revelation of God, a deeper penetration into the facts of being.

For this reason it is not the purpose of the Christian Science textbook to provide a rigid set of rules and regulations for treating each of the various problems; rather it must present the Principle of healing, which can then be applied individually to each specific case. Thus Christian Science teaches spiritually scientific rules and methods for treating disease.

Analysing, uncovering and annihilating error. In Christian Science practice it is necessary, not only to correct the general claims of mortal mind, but also to handle the patient's specific problems. Every problem appears in a different form; therefore every treatment involves knowing the Truth as such, but also the specific truth as the correct solution to the specific problem concerned. A problem is always the objective expression of an erroneous concept; and indeed it always occurs when some specific truth has been misunderstood or not recognized. Thus a specific error is solved by the specific truth which lies behind it. Here again we must do as we would in arithmetic. When faced with the wrong proposition that twice two is five, we are not dealing with just any false calculation; it is the wrong view of that quite definite, specific fact which declares that twice two equals four. Thus to correct the mistake we need a right understanding of the particular correct fact which has been misunderstood. It is not enough to know just any right fact, such as the fact that six times six equals thirty-six. However many sums we may be able to do correctly – for correcting the mistake twice two is five we must know just the one right calculation to wipe out that particular mistake.

Similarly in Christian Science we cannot expect that just any truth will provide the right solution to a specific problem. Our whole mentality must indeed be imbued with the Truth which is valid for every situation, as explained in point 1. of the section on 'the healing-process'. But the solution of an individual case results from the substitution of the specific truth (applicable to this one special case) for the error in question. *The error must therefore be analysed by Truth.* How does this happen?

Analysis or diagnosis plays an important part in medicine and psychology. But both of these start from the assumption that it is human thinking, human knowledge and experience, that can provide a correct diagnosis. Christian Science, on the other hand, follows a quite different route. "Truth, through her eternal laws, unveils error." (542:7) The only correct diagnosis to provide a true analysis of a problem can be furnished solely by Truth. Let us take, for example, any ailment, such as gastric trouble, gall-stones or a broken leg. These ailments do not themselves constitute the specific error, for countless people suffer from the same disorders for quite different reasons. They are simply the physical manifestation of a belief of mortal mind. Or again, three patients may be suffering from the same condition, although in each case a different specific belief of mortal mind will have induced their outwardly identical condition. It is therefore useless to concentrate on the disease which has taken hold of the body, and try to make a proper diagnosis or analysis for the individual case from a physical condition which may be wide-spread. The cause of disease is always mental; and this cause can be properly analysed only by Truth. In contrast to doctors and psychologists, the Christian Science practitioner always turns to Truth to arrive at a correct analysis of error. Instead of making a thorough examination of the patient's physical condition, or studying the patient's human psyche and thoughts, he turns towards Truth and fills his consciousness with God and God's ideas.

The specific truth which will heal the case is revealed, not by a knowledge of all the material details connected with the

problem, but rather by the consciousness of ideas which the practitioner has cultured within himself. When the practitioner's consciousness is deeply anchored in Truth, then, out from the abundance of divine facts, emerges that specific truth which is the solution for the case. *The underlying error is then uncovered.*

Once the mental cause of the disease has been exposed by Truth, *the error can be corrected by the specific, divine fact and annihilated.* A wrong human sense of activity, for example, is the opposite of the idea of the omni-action of divine Mind, which heals the erroneous concept and hence the symptoms it produced. But if, to take another example, the task is to free the patient from fear and anxiety, then Love will handle the case, because Love wipes out all fear, and man as the idea of Love is always held secure in Love's infinite plan of salvation.

Draw no conclusions from the medical diagnosis. As already mentioned, the physical condition is not cause, but effect. Even if medical diagnoses were always correct, they would not be of much help to us, since the cause is always mental. Moreover we have to take into consideration, not only the exciting (direct or immediate) cause, but also the predisposing cause of the problem. A patient may perhaps have a deformity, and such a case may be due to very different causes. It may for instance be the direct result of the belief of a prenatal shock suffered by the mother. But the same condition could also be the effect of a predisposing cause, such as a belief of heredity running in the family.

It is also easy to understand that an erroneous mental attitude does not manifest itself always in the same way in the body. Thus great sorrow or worry may bring on gall-stones in some, gastric ulcers or cancer in others. If we could regard a specific physical symptom as related to a particular mental cause, then the practitioner might always heal the same disease with the same realization of truth. But, as we have already seen, nothing repeats itself in divine being, and error, the counterfeit of true being, also manifests itself in innumerable forms, which must always be treated and remedied individually.

Why is the patient under treatment healed and not all those who

are sick along with him? The Christian Science practitioner's medicine is always the universally available divine Mind. Why then, one might protest, are not all the sick healed by a Christian Science treatment? It is true, as we saw above, that the first requirement in Christian Science practice is a general understanding of Truth; but this always then reveals itself as the specific truth which is the effective remedy for a particular patient and his problem.

Fundamentally every Christian Science treatment affects all mankind. But whereas the patient who has asked for help opens his mind expectantly to Truth, most people close their minds, either knowingly or unwittingly, against the spiritual saving power, by looking for the solution almost entirely from material or human sources. But every treatment based on the healing power of divine Mind radiates a universal blessing, not only on the patient who has asked for help, but also on all who are essentially open to Truth. They receive the blessing without knowing where it comes from.

Finally, the question may be asked, how is it that we can help others as well as helping ourselves? This question is best answered by reminding ourselves again that, in contrast to all material and human healing-methods, Christian Science practice recognizes and uses the divine Mind as its one and only medicine. It is not the practitioner's thought and knowledge that heals, but the Mind of Christ, with which he is in complete unity. Mind, God, being unfettered by time or place, is ever-present; thus it operates everywhere simultaneously – hence, not only in the practitioner's consciousness, but also in the patient's. It includes everyone. This operation of the Mind of Christ, as we have seen, goes on in all circumstances, even when we are not aware of it, or even reject it. But for the patient who is open to this divine healing-method, this operation appears as the solving of his problems, as healing, as spiritual progress. Distance therefore plays no part in a treatment, for after all it is not primarily the sick body that needs to be changed, but consciousness, and this is independent of place and time.

The patient's attitude. So far we have been discussing what

makes a healing possible, and what attitude we must adopt if we wish to solve a problem with the Science of Mind-healing. So now let us deal briefly with the part played by the patient in a treatment.

The patient cannot be expected to have attained a scientific understanding already, for he is turning to a practitioner for the very reason that he does not understand how to solve the case scientifically himself. Thus in many cases it is wiser and more loving just to begin by removing the patient's fear, and to leave explanation of the scientific facts of being until he is able to receive them.

The patient must however welcome the operation of Truth. This attitude may for instance express itself in the following ways:

The patient who turns to Christian Science *expects the solution of his problem to come from Truth*; he never excludes the possibility of a healing, but is always full of hope and anticipation. He can help himself in this by not dwelling on the symptoms of his problem, and by not talking to others about his worries or his complaint.

Like the practitioner, the patient shows humility and is willing to change his false views and attitudes. Healing power lies in one's readiness to accept the chastisement of Love and to stop trying to carry out one's own will at all costs.

The patient *strives to express a higher humanity*. This presupposes that he is honest with himself and can make up his mind, as far as possible, to give up his mistakes and refuse to accept any negative suggestions. Although he does not fully understand Truth, he dismisses beliefs of sickness and puts his full trust in Truth.

As far as his physical and psychological condition allows, the patient endeavours *to understand the Principle of Christian Science*. It will greatly help the patient if he occupies himself with the teachings of Truth, imbibing them and pondering them as well as he can.

This honest, open-minded attitude is essential in someone seeking help. Then he can be touched by Truth more easily

and receive a healing through Christian Science. Although at the pool of Bethesda there lay "a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered" (John 5:3), Jesus healed only one of them. His spiritual sense had seen that only this one was as yet ready for his help. Often the divine plan requires that the sick must first take other steps, and undergo further experiences, before they are fully prepared for the methods of spiritual healing. In Christian Science it is of primary importance to be able to read this plan of salvation; thus from case to case it must be left to the practitioner's spiritual sense whether it is right for him to accept a particular patient or not.

Chapter 9

The Scientific Approach to the Understanding of the Science of Being

We were introduced, at the very beginning of this book, to Science as that factor of the divine Being which explains for us the Life-principle to which we turn (Word), to which we submit in all things (Christ) and in accordance with which we act (Christianity). Science is of paramount importance to mankind, because it is only through a scientific understanding of what constitutes Word, Christ, Christianity and Science that we can make ourselves consciously one with the truth of being.

Here, however, we must consider again what the office of Science is as the fourth side of the Holy City, looked at from the divine standpoint; for clearly God Himself does not need to be led – as we do – by a gradual apprehension of Truth to the divine facts of being.

Science unites all the modes of operation of being in one divinely structured whole, wherein every detail has its divinely determined place-value. Science is indeed most important, for it includes Word, Christ and Christianity. The *Word* presents God as self-existent Being; *Christ* is the power-potential for the realization of Being; *Christianity* is the infinite universe of ideas as the self-expression of Being; *Science* is that function which integrates the nature of Being (Word), its operative power (Christ) and its infinite expression (Christianity), into one infinitely structured whole, and interprets the divine laws inherent in it.

If Being could not be seen through scientific structure, it could not be understood and its divine laws could never be grasped. But through this important fourth side Being does not only exist and operate in its own realm; it can also be experienced

by man as a saving agent. For Science interprets the infinite whole in all its detail as a divine system of ideas, and an understanding of this divine system of ideas makes it possible for us to apply it scientifically to human problems in a practical way.

Methods of the Science of being

To be able to apprehend God scientifically we need methods which are commensurate with the magnitude of the theme; for like alone can understand like. The Science of being requires scientific methods of comprehension, methods of a sufficiently scientific nature to be able to reveal the infinite One in all its detail, without at the same time limiting it¹.

Definition of 'science'. We begin to get a good idea of what constitutes the essential character of a science, if we keep in mind what science is not. "Knowledge of a single fact, not known as related to any other, or of many facts not known as having any mutual relations or as comprehended under any general law, does not reach the meaning of science." (Funk & Wagnalls) A great change has taken place since the 19th century, when the main task of the sciences still seemed to be analysing all the single facts in each respective field and studying them in the greatest possible detail, but detached from the coherency of the whole. Today something very much wider is meant by science. Study of a single fact or the knowledge of isolated facts does not, according to the dictionary, reach the meaning of science. Science, the definition continues, means rather "knowledge reduced to law and embodied in system". The primary object of a science, therefore, is not to find isolated facts and analyse them more and more minutely; it is rather to find out how these facts are interrelated and to discover the structural principles by which they are integrated into an ordered whole. Thus science is not so much fact *finding* as, above all, fact *ordering*.

¹ See on this subject: Max Kappeler, *Why Study Christian Science as a Science?*

Mary Baker Eddy called her discovery 'Science'. She too was fully aware that science means infinitely more than a mere accumulation of isolated truths; for, speaking of her discovery as Science, she says: "Divine metaphysics is now reduced to a system, to a form comprehensible by and adapted to the thought of the age in which we live." (146:31) A scientific understanding of being, therefore, does not consist in knowing a host of single facts about divine being; it lies rather in a perception of the interrelation and intercommunication of these facts, and accordingly in a grasp of the whole with its structural principles. "Principle is not to be found in fragmentary ideas." (302:1) The chief concern of every science – including the Science which interprets divine being – is to give an understanding of the whole, in which all the single facts are harmoniously integrated. "The divine Science of man is woven into one web of consistency without seam or rent." (242:25)

Two methods of teaching and learning. Every subject can be tackled in two different ways. Either one can take isolated facts from a subject indiscriminately and try to commit them to memory, which is an unsystematic and hence laborious way of learning; or one can first learn the fundamental laws and rules which hold good for all the data in a given field, and then apply them to the special case, which is the methodical, and therefore easier, way – the scientific way.

Thus a student of arithmetic, for instance, might try to memorize as many calculations as possible. Even if he had an exceptional memory, this would not stand him in very good stead in everyday experience; for the odds in favour of his having learnt the right examples to suit his later practical needs would be very slim indeed. But it is very different when he follows the scientific method and learns the system of arithmetic; when he acquires a knowledge of the laws and rules governing the elements of arithmetic (the numbers from one to ten) – that is to say, when he learns these ten numbers and also the four fundamental processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. With this knowledge of the system he possesses

the key which will fit every one of the infinite variety of arithmetical problems he is likely to meet, without ever having previously learnt specific computations for use later on.

Science is creative. From the example of arithmetic we can draw the following conclusion. Science is that marvellous instrument which reduces an infinite subject to a few fundamental categories, and their laws of interrelationship, without limiting it or making it finite; only by means of science is there any possibility of grasping an infinite subject through its inherent categories. Science is the simplest and quickest way of advancing in any subject. This is also true of the Science of being, which reduces divine metaphysics to a system, thereby making it comprehensible to human thought.

A further essential characteristic of a science is illustrated by the analogy with arithmetic mentioned above: science is creative. It is the basis for new discoveries; it enables the student working intelligently with categories to find the new knowledge which he specifically needs. If the student is familiar with the science of arithmetic, he can set himself any arithmetical problem he wishes, irrespective of whether it has been worked out before or not. Thus he can use science creatively for the discovery of new knowledge.

This aspect of science is emphasized by the definition in the Oxford Dictionary: “[Science] includes trustworthy methods for the discovery of new truth within its own domain.” This also applies in full measure to the Science of divine metaphysics. Through an understanding of this Science each student is able to come to new conclusions, or in other words, to work creatively and independently with these scientific methods. But, just as the student of arithmetic does not discover something outside the domain of arithmetic, or add anything new to arithmetic, when he works on a problem which no one has previously tried, so the student of divine metaphysics can never add to divine being something from outside of it. Through the cognitive methods of Science, being itself is not augmented; it is only the student’s insight into the infinite relationships of being which is enlarged. Working creatively, therefore, does

not mean that we call into being something which does not already exist, but that we apprehend being more and more profoundly and accurately, and in ever new relationships.

Science reveals. Thus Science is also the source of infinite revelation; for it is Science which, by reducing infinity to a system, makes it possible for us to attain new and deeper insights. Thus Science is not, as many suppose, something rigid and cold. On the contrary, it is something very living and creative; for it ensures that the one infinite Being can never be restricted to an unintelligible, mystical, and hence finite, human concept.

It is significant that in her textbook, Mary Baker Eddy never writes 'God reveals', but always '*Science reveals*', 'divine *Science reveals*' or '*Christian Science reveals*'. True revelation or, in other words, a clear insight into the whole of being can only come moreover to a scientific, understanding consciousness. Certainly God does not reveal Himself to us through vague conjecture, but through Science. The Science of God is, accordingly, the Science of the method for receiving infinite divine revelation, revelation which is available to all, and which comes to everyone who touches the system – the "one web of consistency without seam or rent".

Scientific revelation. Divine revelation is infinite. It is not contingent on time or place, and does not therefore suddenly cease. How can this statement be equated with the usual opinion that revelation is final? Mary Baker Eddy writes: "God had been graciously preparing me during many years for the reception of this *final* revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing¹." (107:3) Every revelation presents in a final way the knowledge it imparts. Thus it was finally, definitively, revealed to Mary Baker Eddy, as she declares in the quotation above, that the Principle of mental healing is God; before this revelation medicine, hygiene, diet, hypnotism and other mental practices were regarded as healing principles.

¹ Author's italics

The realization that the only true healing-power lies in divine Principle is indeed a final insight, which cannot be reversed. This claim of finality does not however imply that after so great a realization nothing else can be realized. It is true that the textbook presents the final revelation that Being is divine Principle. But this does not mean that all the infinite facts of being – constantly coming from Principle, for ever revealed anew – are also explained in the textbook. It has already been pointed out (p. 54 f.) that the “Comforter” appears to every age in a form adapted to that particular age. The fundamentals of divine Being as revealed in Science are indeed final, and: “Centuries will intervene before the statement of the inexhaustible topics of Science and Health is sufficiently understood to be fully demonstrated.” (Ret. 84:1) Yet Mary Baker Eddy foresaw that, within the system shown in her book, her revelation is capable of further development. She knew that it is a Science and therefore “includes trustworthy methods for the discovery of new truth within its own domain”. The real greatness of the discovery of Christian Science lies precisely in the fact that with it was discovered the Science of being, which never stagnates, but which must, from its very nature, always lead to further discoveries within the Principle of divine being.

The basis of Christian Science. Two revelatory books form the basis of all scientific research in Christian Science: the Bible and the textbook, ‘Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures’, by Mary Baker Eddy. To gain an understanding of the Science of being, the student turns to these inspired texts and seeks there alone for the answer to all fundamental questions.

Here the question of text-interpretation becomes very important. The Bible as well as the textbook can be variously interpreted, according to the understanding and the thought-model with which the reader approaches the text. It is necessary, however, to find the method of interpretation which is adequate for these books.

Scientific text-interpretation

For growth in the knowledge of the Science of being, the first essential is the existence of available inspired texts, such as we have in the Bible and the textbook; but secondly, a scientifically correct interpretation of these texts is also needed, one which grasps the intended meaning of the revelation.

Without such a spiritually valid interpretation these books cannot show the full import of what being is, which is contained in them. From the one text, which has remained unchanged, countless churches and religious groups derive totally different doctrines, all of which, they claim, can be substantiated by the Bible itself. Many of their wars, feuds and mutual misunderstandings arise from the circumstance that one and the same Bible text, when interpreted from different standpoints, assumes completely different meanings. And the same naturally is true for the textbook of Christian Science.

Already in biblical times it was a source of great contention, that the same inspired text could be read in different ways and thereby lead to quite different conclusions. The prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the coming Messiah are a case in point; when these prophecies were fulfilled, the professional interpreters of the Scriptures, the Scribes and Pharisees, could not recognize this Messiah and could see no similarity between him and Old Testament descriptions of their expected deliverer. But, at the same time, others saw in the same Old Testament texts confirmation of the legitimate claim of Jesus to be the Son of God. Saul, being steeped in the Scriptures, was not prepared to acknowledge him as the Messiah, and persecuted his followers. To him the text of the Old Testament seemed to prove that Jesus had been a blasphemer. As Paul, however, he approached the same text with a completely new consciousness, making it the foundation on which he built his great teaching. This shows that an inspired text alone is not enough for a revelation to be correctly understood; it also depends on the consciousness of the reader.

A revelatory text is only revelatory to the spiritually inspired con-

sciousness. We see, even in human experience, that only like can understand like. All contracts, settlements and agreements only make sense if both parties to the agreement understand the same thing by the terms used, and interpret these terms from the same higher frame of reference. It is the same with the interpretation of the Bible and the textbook. We can only speak of a right understanding of these books, when we are able to read them as the other 'party to the agreement' intended – or, to put it differently: we can only understand correctly the Science of being revealed in the Bible and the textbook, and interpret the revealed texts rightly, when we read them with a spiritually and scientifically cultured consciousness. The Bible and textbook are not humanly invented and contrived. Their author is the divine Mind. Only that Mind which dictated the books can give a true interpretation of the texts. Thus the interpreter who wishes to obtain a true understanding of the Bible and the textbook must not approach them with a human thought-model, but rather he must read them with the same Mind that wrote them – with the Mind of God: for "divine Mind is its own interpreter" (577: 21). Paul is speaking from his own experience when he writes: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) Only a spiritually and scientifically cultured consciousness, at one with divine Mind, can arrive at this 'spiritual discernment', which is indispensable for the interpretation of any inspired text.

What steps must the interpreter take to achieve a true interpretation? All text-interpretation of the Bible and the textbook rests on the double support of first, a scientific understanding of the divine system of reference, and secondly, spiritual sense, which is able to discern intuitively the inner spiritual relationships.

Without a knowledge of the categories of Being (as the seven synonyms for God and the four modes of operation), the Bible and textbook must remain for the reader books sealed with seven seals. The more thorough the knowledge of this system

of reference, to which the texts themselves refer, the easier the task of grasping their message in its true spiritual meaning.

Spiritual sense also plays an important part in interpretation. It gives the interpreter a clear idea of the message contained in the text as a whole. But relationships seen intuitively, and interpretation born of spiritual sense, must be backed by scientific sense, and be verified through divinely scientific criteria. In the interpretation of revealed texts, therefore, *scientific sense and spiritual sense are equally important*, if we are to achieve a spiritually scientific elucidation.

Literal and spiritual meaning. In the case of the Bible it is especially noticeable that word-for-word interpretation of the Scriptures does not make for clarity; and what is more, the uninspired reader is given the impression that many stories and passages contradict each other, even that some of them are of questionable morality. Of the Bible as well as of the textbook it is true to say that the text – when read literally and thinking only of the meaning of the words – is soon out-dated and useless for new generations. For the illustrations which every text has to use to make its message clear naturally belong to its own day and reflect the world-view of the time – and this view changes more and more rapidly. In so far as we fail to bring to light, through spiritually scientific interpretation, the spiritual facts originally intended by these symbols and illustrations, we shall – like many others today – look upon the Bible and the textbook as very interesting historical documents, but we shall not see that these texts – when their imagery can be properly interpreted – concern all men in every age.

Mathematicians are in a similar situation. They too express their conclusions in symbols which are foreign and unintelligible to the layman. But every mathematician, who knows how to read this symbolism, can understand the calculations expressed in mathematical formulae. A plus-, integral- or differential-sign, for example, is interpreted by every mathematician in the same way; so that all arrive at the same results.

As mentioned briefly on p. 36 f. the Bible, also, is written

in a symbolic language which was generally understood at the time. But over the centuries the meaning of the symbols it uses has been lost, the more so as the biblical texts were made accessible to quite different cultures, for whom the symbols were strange from the first. So gradually the inspired interpretation of the Bible faded and in its place came largely literal exposition. The inspired text remained, but the key to its symbolism was lost. This key for interpreting the spiritual meaning of the biblical texts was rediscovered by Mary Baker Eddy. This is why she added 'with Key to the Scriptures' to the title of her textbook 'Science and Health'.

When we use this key to translate the symbols of the Bible into a symbolism which we can understand today, it becomes apparent that the Bible is a great edifice of spiritual teaching, which at no point contradicts itself. It also becomes clear that the Bible is not a collection of separate stories or ethical precepts and wise sayings, but that from Genesis to Revelation it presents a great spiritual unfoldment. Once the symbolism has been unlocked, the illustrations and parables also become intelligible, whereas their spiritual meaning would be lost to us if we took the text literally.

To illustrate this briefly: The Bible uses certain symbols to represent certain ideas. For example, a stone stands for an idea. A corner-stone is a particularly important stone; it indicates the Christ-idea. Dust, or stone in a state of decay, symbolizes nothingness. But it is not always a question of explaining just a single quality, as for instance 'power'. Often the text shows how different ideas work together in combination. To express this various symbols have to be linked together, producing pictures with which we are unfamiliar. This occurs mainly in apocalyptic writings. Here, for example, we find the lamb "having seven horns and seven eyes" (Rev. 5:6). Here the four symbols 'lamb', 'seven', 'horns' and 'eyes' are united in one image. The 'lamb' symbolizes "the spiritual idea of Love" (590:9); 'seven' indicates 'perfection'; 'horns' stand for 'irresistible power', and 'eyes' represent "spiritual discernment" (586:3). Thus the complete image, as used in Revelation,

shows us that the spiritual idea of Love possesses complete power and perfect discernment.

Should the symbols from revealed texts be translated into everyday language? Since we are dealing with divinely inspired texts, we are to a certain extent in awe of the words used – reluctant to translate the symbols into a totally different idiom, or dissect them to find their meaning. So we should think seriously about the question whether it is permissible to use the text of the Bible as we are doing.

What is the aim of Bible texts? In them the Principle of being reveals itself as the divine Life-principle, which throughout thousands of years remains always the same and is inviolable. The divine laws behind these utterances have eternal value; but the human symbols by which these spiritual laws reveal themselves in any particular age are, by comparison, of secondary importance. Indeed, their function is only to translate the spiritual; eternally valid content in a form which is comprehensible to human understanding at any particular time. But the faculty of human comprehension changes; and so must the form change in which the spiritual content can be made comprehensible. It is therefore not of great importance by what symbols divine facts are illustrated. It is only important that we apprehend the Principle of being to which these symbols point. Then we have perceived the essential part of the inspired text, the divine Principle, which never dates. Once we have understood this Principle, we can teach it and explain it in different, new, contemporary symbols, without humanly changing or violating the spiritual meaning of the text.

When a teacher of arithmetic wants to explain to his pupil, for instance, that twice two is four, he can illustrate this fact by taking twice two bananas. But twice two pencils would make it equally clear. A banana and a pencil are totally different things and neither has anything to do with arithmetic; yet both can be used to symbolize abstract facts.

In the same way the divine idea which, for example, the prophet Hosea proclaimed, can today be taught by means of a quite different symbolism. It need make no difference to the

content of the message, whether one uses the symbols belonging to the eighth century B.C. with which to present it, or those of the twentieth century A.D., as long as the idea of Hosea's message is correctly understood.

Structural and atomistic text-interpretation. A truly scientific text-interpretation, however, demands more of the reader than an ability to interpret the symbols used in the text correctly. Science, being "knowledge reduced to law and embodied in system", is closely related to the concept of structure and requires a structural method of interpretation.

Structure can be described, in general terms, as the arrangement of parts within a thing or a subject. According to Webster structure signifies "the interrelation of parts as dominated by the general character of the whole". Another definition describes structure as: "a network of relationships of elements and elementary processes. Structures appear wherever elements combine into a meaningful whole whose arrangement follows definite laws." (Wolfgang Wieser in 'Structure in Science and Art', ed. Kepes) The *structural method of interpretation* always sets out to find the specific laws which are determined by the meaningful whole. Its primary object is not to investigate elements or parts, but to discover their relationships to each other and to the whole; for it is these relationships which then produce the meaningful whole. This goes a considerable step further than merely translating single symbols and images from a text into contemporary, understandable language – it investigates besides in what relationship the symbols, when understood, stand to each other and what the "meaningful whole" is to which they point.

In contrast to this there is the *atomistic method of interpretation*. This is concerned mainly with single parts of the whole, therefore with single paragraphs, verses and separate statements in the text. To discern spiritually the Science of being revealed in the inspired texts the structural method is essential, because only recognition of the structure of a text brings to light the true meaning of the whole message.

We can see this more easily from the following example:

Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' consists of hundreds of sentences. We could cut the play into separate sentences, shake them up in a hat, take them out in a haphazard way and then put them together in that random order. We will not have left any sentences out; the separate parts of the work are still all there. Nonetheless, instead of one of the world's greatest plays, we now have a collection of separate utterances, certainly not a meaningful work which would rank as a masterpiece. The sense of the work is lost, although all its parts are there. What gives a text its meaningfulness is clearly not the parts, but their arrangement and interrelation – in fact, the structure of the text. Structure (although not literally expressed in the text) is the vital principle of ordering, which makes a meaningful whole out of the separate parts. But this whole is always more than the sum of its parts; for it comprises not only the elements, but the elements *plus* their specific order.

This analogy can also be applied to the reading and study of the Bible and the textbook. As long as we read only isolated spiritual facts, verses and sentences taken out of context, we can never recognize the "meaningful whole" of these texts. If the spiritual structure of these books is not discerned, their isolated statements must appear contradictory. As with 'Hamlet', we can only appreciate the meaning and value of a text if we do not merely concentrate on its parts, but try to discern its ordering principle.

As every synonymous term for God has not just an amorphous but a structural meaning, it also needs a spiritually structured understanding of these synonyms in order to interpret the message of the text aright. Otherwise the reader works only with a mystical inspiration when pondering a revelatory text.

Results of scientific text-interpretation

Divine metaphysics is reduced to a system. As we have already seen, Mary Baker Eddy states that "divine metaphysics is now

reduced to a system, to a form comprehensible by and adapted to the thought of the age in which we live" (146:31). Before we explore this divine system more deeply, there are three main questions to which the inspired texts must provide an answer:

First: What are the basic elements of divine Being?

Secondly: What are the modes of operation of these elements?

Thirdly: How do they operate on every level of being, in the realm of the divine as well as in the realm of the human?

1. We have already come to know the seven synonyms for God as the elements of Being: Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love.

2. These seven synonyms for God, as we have seen, operate in accordance with a definite fourfold *modus operandi*, which is illustrated in the Bible by the symbol of the city foursquare. The four sides of the city symbolize four modes of operation: Word, Christ, Christianity, Science:

- *The Word* needs the seven synonyms for God to define the self-existent nature of Being;
- *The Christ* needs the seven synonyms to bring about the self-manifestation of divine Being;
- *Christianity* needs the seven synonyms to express the outcome of the Christ-idea, namely the infinite, harmonious universe of ideas.
- *Science* needs the seven synonyms to give us that scientific, structured understanding with which we can comprehend and demonstrate Word, Christ and Christianity.

3. The Science of the infinite One, however, must be comprehensive enough to embrace all levels of understanding and experience. We have several times already pointed out that one and the same process must be differently explained and presented according to the standpoint from which we are looking. Thus, for instance, when speaking of the Christ (p. 39 f.) we were able to state that, from an absolute standpoint, Christ always has an impelling potential power; but from the relative standpoint of the human level this irresistible force can appear as a saving power, when we yield to it.

The Science of the one Being can be looked at from four different levels of consciousness:

- *Science itself* is the level on which the consciousness of divine Being knows only itself;
- *divine Science* is the level on which the oneness of being knows itself as All-in-all – as being which includes within itself its infinite universe of idea;
- *absolute Christian Science* is the level on which consciousness contemplates infinite ideas in their interrelationship, and sees that these divine facts provide the specific answers to all life's questions.
- *Christian Science* is the level of human experience on which the divine facts are applied to humanity's problems and discords.

For a detailed explanation of these four levels of consciousness the reader is referred to further literature on the subject¹.

The divine system of reference. The system of the Science of the infinite One, as revealed in the textbook, results from the interrelation of these three main divine categories of Being. That is: 1. Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love operate as 2. Word, Christ, Christianity and Science; and 3. they operate on all levels of conscious experience by translating their operation from the level of Science itself to the level of divine Science, to the level of absolute Christian Science and finally to the level of Christian Science. This divine system of reference constitutes the basis of the Science of being, with which we can handle all the inadequate, human systems of reference and their phenomena.

The divine, infinite calculus of being. Within the divine system of reference each category is connected with the others. Thus, for example, each of the seven synonyms for God is related with all the other synonyms. Similarly, the seven synonyms for God always reflect the four modes of operation. It is a task for an in-depth study, to get a clearer and clearer grasp of these divine categories of Being and their infinite spiritual calculus, so that consciousness becomes more and more familiar with this

¹ See: Max Kappeler, *The Four Levels of Spiritual Consciousness*.

spiritual calculus of the divine system and is able to relinquish the human, false calculus.

Just how much richer our concept of an idea becomes, when we see it in connection with all the other synonyms for God, is shown in the following example.

We have seen that divine Mind is the creator of all; therefore its creation must be divinely perfect. If we wish to gain a full concept of what is meant by perfect creation, we must contemplate creation in the light of the seven synonyms for God. Then we can, for instance, see that:

- The divine Mind is the All-creator, the creator of the whole creation (Mind);
- This creation flowing from divine Mind is purely spiritual, therefore only good (Spirit);
- this Mind-engendered, purely spiritual creation is always sinless (Soul);
- the spiritual, sinless creation which emanates from divine Mind is impersonal (Principle);
- the creation of Mind, spiritual, sinless and impersonal, is deathless, eternal (Life);
- this Mind-engendered, spiritual, sinless, impersonal, deathless creation is faultless and healthy, whole (Truth);
- Mind's creation, which is purely spiritual, sinless, impersonal, eternal and whole, is therefore perfect (Love).

We can, however, look at the same fact of being, divine creation, from the standpoint of the Word, the Christ, Christianity and Science, that is to say, we can relate it to the divine modes of operation:

- The Word gives – as shown above – the divine declaration of a concept: divine creation emanating from the All-Mind, is purely spiritual, sinless, impersonal, eternal, whole, perfect.
- From the standpoint of the Christ we see that this perfect creation does not only exist in being itself, but also manifests itself; so that in every situation the true concept of creation is being expressed.
- In the light of Christianity this divine creation appears as the true universe and as man, the image and likeness of God.

Man is therefore a creation of Mind, purely spiritual, sinless, impersonal, eternal, healthy or whole, and perfect.

- Science then teaches us that this perfect creation exists in being, from eternity to eternity; that every other concept of a mortal, material, transient creation is false and is transformed into the true concept through the understanding of Science.

What is the use of such exercises as these? Through these spiritual 'calculations' the student gradually becomes familiar with the fundamentals of Science in a natural way and cultures in himself a divinely scientific consciousness. As with the student of arithmetic, the primary concern is not one of usefulness, although naturally a consciousness filled in this way with the divine facts of being will have a positive experience of life very different from that of a consciousness full of negative beliefs. But the beginner initially learns his multiplication-tables without having to apply them to a specific problem. In Christian Science, as in any other science, the first step is to become familiar with the fundamental categories, without being constantly concerned with their application in the solving of difficulties. The subject must be studied for the sake of knowing Truth; when the subject becomes a living operation in consciousness, that knowledge applies itself of its own accord. This is called preventive practice.

Preventive practice. "The prophylactic and therapeutic (that is, the preventive and curative) arts belong emphatically to Christian Science" (369: 23). It is not only a question of healing visible error and palpable disharmony; our much more important task consists in bringing our consciousness so closely into line with Truth, through the 'divine calculus', and so structuring it, that all the false calculations of the mortal system of reference are made null and void before they can manifest themselves as visible or palpable error. Thus when we ponder divine ideas, in the way briefly indicated above, and combine them with the other categories of the divine system of reference, we are not carrying out a merely theoretical exercise. Even if we have no specific problem to solve, we are handling latent, not yet visible, error. We are then modelling

our consciousness according to Truth; and mortal consciousness with all its individual, collective, universal, conscious and unconscious beliefs, can no longer be manifested in our experience. By filling our consciousness with the true concept of God and His creation, in accordance with the divine categories of Being, we are involved in preventive practice.

The Bible and the textbook in the light of Science

Spiritual interpretation of the Bible. The Bible – like the Christian Science textbook – can only be discerned in its deeper meaning by a consciousness well schooled in the divine categories of Being. A literal interpretation must in every case be unsatisfactory. Also, from the historical point of view the Bible is thoroughly inexact and unreliable; and natural science does not agree with the biblical explanation of creation. It is not surprising that many unprepared readers of the Bible get the impression that texts written thousands of years ago can supply none of the answers to the questions facing twentieth century man.

Yet in the light of spiritually scientific interpretation the same text shows what the real aim and goal of the Bible is: the biblical writers did not set out to chronicle historical events; nor were they interested in giving a correct explanation of so-called mortal man and his universe in terms of natural science. They intended their narratives to declare something much more profound and fundamental. They meant to symbolize in words the spiritual nature and laws of God, the universe, including man, as it had been revealed to them, making it intelligible to all mankind.

When we follow this great spiritual theme throughout the Bible, in its multifarious symbolical representations, we find a more and more clearly recognizable line of development leading up to the knowledge which comes to us today in the form of the Science of being.

A brief survey of the Bible. The great line of development

running through the Bible makes it clear that the order follows the four sides of the Holy City. Who wrote the individual books, and how they evolved one by one, is not always certain. But, for an interpretation of the text, exact information about the writers and a detailed knowledge of how each book was compiled are not what really matters. The Bible as we have it today stems from countless writers, and the various records are not placed in chronological order. Thus the Bible is rather like a kind of library, collected from the abundant sacred literature which existed at the time. We owe the divine order we are able to find in it today to the spiritual sense of those who chose and arranged the books, not following any humanly devised construction, but obeying the dictates of a higher authority.

The first books of the Bible, from Genesis to the beginning of the prophetic age, present the *Word* of God. The accent here is on the self-declaration of God. These books show how God reveals Himself as what He is, and how He requires man to know and accept Him as He is.

In the prophetic age the prophets discerned something of the *Christ-nature of God*. Their prophecies show that God always translates Himself to every level of human existence, and that this translation impels itself with such power that everything which opposes the demands of the Word of God is 'ground to powder' and swept away. Their insistent message is that in the long run all opposition must yield.

The New Testament presents *Christianity*. These books centre on the life and works of Jesus, who proved that we can live, use and practise the Christ-nature. The Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles show how practising divine qualities brings true dominion over the problems of daily life.

With Revelation we then get a glimpse of *divine Science*. Here Jesus shows John the promised Comforter, the spirit of Truth, as a book in the hands of the angel – the symbol for the teachings of divine Science. This points to the Comforter through which, in this scientific age, and adapted to our present comprehension, we are able to touch the hem of the Science of God – namely, the Christian Science textbook.

For the textbook contains the "Key to the Scriptures" (499 ff.), which makes it possible to translate biblical symbolism into the modern, Christianly scientific language of divine metaphysics, and thereby discern the original meaning that the inspired writers of the Scriptures intended to convey.

The Science of the Bible. It remained for John W. Doorly¹ to open a door to the understanding of the Bible, by finding this key in the textbook and using it to unlock the Bible texts. The first step was the discovery of the divine system of reference contained in the textbook, based on the seven synonyms for God and the four sides of the Holy City. Doorly was also able to recognize the same system of reference in the Bible, when he translated the Bible language into the language of metaphysical ideas. This was a discovery as fascinating as it was significant; it was found that each book of the Bible has a definite spiritual structure conforming to the divine system of reference, which is depicted in the typical imagery of the time. It became apparent that in all its themes the Bible follows the laws and orders in which the divine infinite calculus of being manifests itself in its timeless operation.

The ordered development of the Bible. The Bible no longer appeared to be a heterogeneous collection of narratives, but was found to contain a great spiritual unfoldment, the step by step revelation of ordered divine facts of being, extending from Genesis to Revelation.

This order follows the order of the seven days of creation, which repeats itself in the thousand-year periods of Bible history, thus proving that the spiritual value characterized by "a day" of creation is an eternal, universally fundamental fact. The definition of God by the seven synonyms, as given in the textbook, also follows this order.

There is, moreover, an ordered, spiritual lay-out in each of the books of the Bible. Each book reveals a fundamental fact of being by taking a definite question through a spiritually

¹ See Peggy M. Brook, *John W. Doorly and the Scientific Evolution of Christian Science.*

logical development to its final solution. Frequently the lay-out follows the order of the seven synonyms for God; it may however correspond to the four divine modes of operation, or it may be a more elaborate structure combining, for instance, the seven synonyms with the four modes of operation, or often one synonym in combination with all the other synonyms¹.

The Bible as spiritual teacher. Once it has been recognized that the Bible narratives in no way set out to present the happenings and problems of bygone ages, but that they illustrate the divine Principle and its system of ideas, then it is easy to accept the Bible as our spiritual teacher. It is not the symbolic presentation of the Bible, with its frequent use of historical events, that is important, but the Principle it teaches: it is the true problem-solving Principle, eternal, ever-present, and applicable to every problem.

This newly found, scientific approach to the Bible and its meaning shows it to be a textbook which coincides with the "numeration table of Christian Science" (Mess. '01, 22:15). Through the study of the Bible we can culture our understanding spiritually, so that our consciousness becomes more and more moulded by divine ideas and their infinite ways of operating.

Consonance between Bible and textbook. Mary Baker Eddy foretold "that every advancing epoch of Truth will be characterized by a more spiritual apprehension of the Scriptures, that will show their marked consonance with the textbook of Christian Science Mind-healing" (Mis. 363:30). This "marked consonance" was demonstrated fully by John Doorly in his thirteen volumes of talks on the Bible. He was able to show that the system of Christian Science, as revealed in the textbook, is not a humanly constructed platform of teaching, but that the Principle of being is interpreted to our age anew in the form of Science; and that, far from being in opposition to the revelations contained in the Bible, it is in complete spiritual

¹ For a detailed statement see: John W. Doorly, *Talks on the Science of the Bible* (9 Vols.) and *Talks at the Oxford Summer School 1948 and 1949* (4 Vols.).

agreement with them. "Christian Science, understood, coincides with the Scriptures, and sustains logically and demonstratively every point it presents." (358:9) Spiritually scientific interpretation of the Bible and of the textbook is bringing this consonance more and more clearly to light.

The Christian Science textbook. The textbook is a scientific and inspired book. In it "reason and revelation were reconciled" (110:15). It explains the Science of the Word, the Science of Christ and the Science of Christianity, as revealed in the Bible, and in so doing presents the facts of being in their Science. Its teaching shows how divine being can be explained and understood as Science, and applied in every age to all life's problems. It reveals to our day how infinite divine revelations can come to us infinitely – namely, through Science.

*The structure of the textbook*¹. The textbook, like the Bible, can only be comprehended in its full meaning through spiritually scientific understanding. The unprepared reader of the textbook (as of the Bible) will frequently read the text sentence by sentence, imbibe only the meaning of isolated sentences, and then regard the book as a mere collection of wise sayings, metaphysical aphorisms and single truths. Consciousness which is familiar with the divine categories of Being, on the other hand, can see in the same text an orderly lay-out. Then the textbook proves to be a textbook in the real sense of the word – a book which teaches the fundamentals of the Science of being in ordered sequence and in a systematic way. Hence it does not deal haphazardly with unconnected themes, constantly repeating itself, as the critics maintain. Rather the textbook shows a well-balanced, spiritual structure by means of which the student, step by step – from the first chapter 'Prayer' to the sixteenth chapter 'The Apocalypse' – is introduced to the profound relationships of the Science of being.

The sixteen chapters of the textbook, in which the structure of the Science of being is revealed, follow the order of the four

¹ For a detailed analysis of the textbook see: Max Kappeler, *The Structure of the Christian Science Textbook – Our Way of Life*.

prime factors of divine Being. The textbook expounds the system of Christian Science in four times four chapters. Each chapter has its own ordered lay-out, which mostly follows the order of the seven synonyms for God, allowing the theme in question to develop stage by stage.

The textbook: our way of Life. Yet our primary aim in studying the textbook is not to look for its lay-out; this by itself would be a mere theoretical exercise. The structure of the textbook is not something to be known for its own sake. But it is of great practical importance for every reader, because it unfolds the ordered approach to an understanding of the one divine Being, and at the same time the ordered way for experiencing man's true being. The student who is beginning to see the spiritual structure of the textbook is also getting to know his own true, spiritual life-story. The textbook does not present a human intellectual system or human philosophy, but rather that living, practical metaphysical system which is inherent in all true being and in which the student himself has part. In studying the textbook we are not learning something 'about' divine metaphysics, but we are giving birth, more and more consciously, to our own true being. The textbook teaches us how we can make the form and the divine structure of our true manhood our own. The structure of the textbook of Christian Science is therefore also at the same time the ordered way of Life and leads us by gradual ordered progression to our perfect being.

Thus a purely intellectual grasp of the textbook is not sufficient. We must make it our own life. We are not free to choose our own way of life, and to live it 'as *we* wish. This would never lead us anywhere. Christ, Truth is the way, and it forces each one of us to take this way and no other. This divine way begins with 'Prayer' (the first chapter of the textbook) and leads us on to a state of rest and peace, which we gain through a knowledge of the Holy City, as illustrated in 'The Apocalypse' (the sixteenth chapter of the textbook). In this spiritual development our true manhood evolves to the point of perfection.

Study of the textbook. The self-imposed task of the Christian Scientist is a devoted study of the textbook and the Bible. Since the textbook is an inspired book, we cannot assimilate what it teaches all at once. On the contrary, the more thoroughly we study it, the clearer it becomes to us that we are still a long way from understanding it completely. Each stage in our apprehension is only another new step in preparation for the next step higher. Mary Baker Eddy knew that "Centuries will intervene before the statement of the inexhaustible topics of Science and Health is sufficiently understood to be fully demonstrated." (Ret. 84:1) Even she herself never grew tired of studying and exploring the textbook; referring to the inexhaustible nature of the subject, she declared of herself: "To-day, though rejoicing in some progress, she still finds herself a willing disciple at the heavenly gate, waiting for the Mind of Christ." (ix:16)

The beginner does well to start by simply reading the textbook straight through, to familiarize himself somewhat with the subject and the terminology. He will at first be attracted by certain individual sentences or paragraphs. It is important that he should not linger too long on what he does not understand, but ponder over the statements he responds to most readily.

Also the concordance to the textbook will help him with single terms used in the textbook and with specific subjects. Systematic study, however, begins when he enters upon a thorough research into the seven synonyms for God, with the help of the textbook, and also into the four divine modes of operation, Word, Christ, Christianity and Science. In this way he begins to master the scientific fundamentals which then enable him to see the textbook, from the first page to the last, as a great coherent whole and to explore its scientific structure.

Christian Science should be taught in schools

Church organization. In general it is churches that are regarded as the proper institutions for religious education. They are the

places where God is proclaimed and worshipped. But now that the subject of 'God' is revealed in its Science as the universally available Life-principle, which operates according to divine laws, which are teachable, learnable and also applicable and demonstrable, the church in the ordinary sense can no longer serve this new concept of God. The Science of God can only be truly served by spiritual understanding, and not by church services. For it is not to be blindly believed in and worshipped, but must be discerned in its scientific nature. It does not contain dogma, dating from centuries long ago, that must be preserved in its original form; it is in its very nature something living, dynamic, even revolutionary. This Science is not a rigid set of rules, regulations and doctrines – on the contrary, it is a system of divine facts of being, susceptible to constant restructuring, whereby it provides always new answers to new fundamental questions. The churches, however, tend to keep rigidly to an outworn form and hold fast to it.

The newly discovered Christian Science was felt to be almost too revolutionary and too advanced for its time and, so that it could gain a foothold, Mary Baker Eddy at the beginning chose the form of church organization.¹ Only by this wise step could she slowly familiarize her students with the new conceptual system, the new paradigm, and the completely new interpretation of God by Science. Yet she left no doubt that this organized church was only a temporary stage, and that the material institution should be done away with as soon as the Science of Christian Science was seen. Although in her other writings she gives many instructions for the optimum running of an organized church, she does not mention this subject at all in her textbook, which presents the Science of Christian Science. For a humanly organized church is no part of the divine system of ideas. It is merely a concession, at a particular period of development, and will therefore give way in an age which has a higher understanding of true, spiritual, divine service.

True church. The textbook gives a concept of church which

¹ See: Max Kappeler, *Christian Government – its Scientific Evolution*.

implies no material organization, no temple. 'Church' is translated into a spiritual structure, as the definition of 'church' clearly shows: "CHURCH. The structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from divine Principle. The Church is that institution, which affords proof of its utility and is found elevating the race, rousing the dormant understanding from material beliefs to the apprehension of spiritual ideas and the demonstration of divine Science, thereby casting out devils, or error, and healing the sick." (583:12) This spiritual form of church is the form of the scientific consciousness of the divine system of reference; it consists of a spiritual understanding of the Word of God, the Christ-operation, Christianity and the Science of being. This can be illustrated by paraphrasing the passage about 'church' in the textbook (35:19) as follows: "Our church is built on the divine Principle, Love" (our foundation is the Word of God). "We can unite with this church" (this is the Christ-attitude which is demanded of us), "only as we are new-born of Spirit, as we reach the Life which is Truth and the Truth which is Life by bringing forth the fruits of Love, - casting out error and healing the sick" (showing practical Christianity which flows from the Christ-attitude).

Places of learning and institutes are necessary. Thus the true concept of 'church' lies in using the Christ-understanding, based on divine Principle, for blessing and elevating the human race. 'Church' is everything that leads to the understanding of Science. We should employ every means possible to help us succeed in reaching this goal. Today, in the scientific age, schools and other educational institutions are best suited to acquaint the student step by step with the system of Christian Science, and train him in the "numeration table of Christian Science" (Mess. '01, 22:15). The humanly organized church has fulfilled its important task for the idea; through it the new paradigm of Christian Science was able to survive in an age imbued with the concept of material science. Yet today, a hundred years later, schools and institutes are better coping with the great task of leading mankind from uplifting faith into scientific understanding. That is why Mary Baker Eddy

in her writings constantly points to the fact that spiritual understanding, and the proofs arising from it, can only be achieved through instruction, through systematic learning and fundamental study. "The education of the future will be instruction, in spiritual Science' (Mis. 61:4).

Further study

The answer to key questions. Thought which is searching for Truth has always sought the answer to two fundamental questions: first, What is the reality of the one Being? and secondly, How can we unite with this reality and be in harmony with it? In Part I of this book we discussed the first of these questions and introduced the four prime factors of Being – Word, Christ, Christianity and Science – in their essential characteristics. In Part II we set out to answer the question how man can partake in the reality of being. We saw that what is shown us by the scientific approach to the Word of God, the saving power of the Christ, the practice of Christianity and the understanding of Science, is the very way to be one with divine being.

Thus we have been able to answer both the central questions which are vital to mankind, from the standpoint of the Science of being, while examining the system of this Science.

Thorough study is necessary. But a general survey of the system of divine metaphysics, however helpful, can be no more than a preliminary guide to the student of Christian Science, to show him more clearly in which direction his next steps should go¹. The purpose of study is to become thoroughly familiar with the divine content of the system of Science, here only sketched in broad outline. The best way of doing this is to take one topic or section of study at a time, and so gain, step by step, a deeper

¹ For detailed study an extensive literature is available to students through The Foundational Book Company Limited, London (England), and also tape recordings on different fundamental subjects.

apprehension of this vast subject. As he does this the student is experiencing more and more his oneness with reality.

The seven synonyms for God. A knowledge of the seven synonyms for God, and the ideas by which they are characterized, forms the basis for all work and research in the Science of Christian Science. Hence it will be one of the student's first and chief objects to gain an exact and comprehensive concept of each of the synonyms. For the great question concerning the reality of the infinite One can – as we have seen (p. 32 f.) – be answered only by the self-revelation of the Supreme Being through the seven synonyms for God. By finding out what each of these seven aspects of Being tells us about the one infinite God, we are forming the right concept of God; and this divinely-scientific, correct concept of what constitutes the nature and essence of divine Being is the only correct starting-point for answering all other questions.

The four divine modes of operation. When we acquaint ourselves with the true nature of the infinite One through a thorough study of the seven synonyms for God, we do not remain at the stage of investigating what Being is, but begin to look equally thoroughly into how Being operates. Our question is then: How does it operate, this Principle of divine being, which we want to learn to recognize as the universal Life-principle for solving all our problems? We shall find the answer to this question by studying the four divine prime factors – Word, Christ, Christianity and Science. These are the four divine modes of operation by which the infinite One fulfils its different tasks, namely: to declare itself (Word), to express itself (Christ), to fulfil itself (Christianity), and to interpret itself (Science).

The four spiritual levels of consciousness. When we have begun to understand Being in its sevenfold nature and in its fourfold operation up to a certain point, a further question arises: How is the operation of divine Being able to reach all levels of understanding, so that even in the realm of human existence we can experience it as an irresistible problem-solving power? In other words: How can the infinite One translate itself to human experience, with all its questions and problems? This brings

into focus the subject of the four spiritual levels of consciousness. It shows the student the way in which the seven synonyms for God operate, in their fourfold modus operandi, not only in the realm of the divine, but also in the human, so providing the solution to all questions on all levels of understanding and experience.

Interpretation of the Bible and the textbook. The basis for study is always the Bible together with the Christian Science textbook. These two books present the whole divine system of reference, consisting of the seven synonyms for God, the four divine modes of operation, and the four spiritual levels of consciousness. A scientific understanding of these inspired texts, enabling the student to perceive the divine system of ideas, is therefore indispensable. Why? We saw in an earlier chapter that only spiritual consciousness can comprehend the nature and essence of spiritual being; that we can only be saved from our false concept of existence, and thereby from all the material phenomena arising from it, when we gain the true concept of reality. But spiritual being can never be grasped with the limited, human thinking method of mortals. If we wish to understand the infinite One - that is, if we wish to attune ourselves to the harmony of divine Principle, then we must approach the Principle of being with a structured consciousness of like nature. Therefore we must gradually learn to give up human reasoning, deliberations and opinions, and, in their place, think in accordance with the categories of the divine system of reference. This means that our whole consciousness must become structured in a new way. This happens when, through the spiritually scientific interpretation of the inspired texts, we understand their inherent divine system of reference, make it our own frame of reference, and always make a practice, when dealing with these texts, of seeing spiritual being, not as humanly, but as spiritually structured. Thus a thorough study of the Bible and the textbook not only gives us the facts of being, but at the same time forms our whole consciousness anew.

The laws of being. The aim of this study, however, is not only

to introduce the divine system of reference to the student, but also to fulfil a far greater aim. For the Bible and the textbook – when read as scientifically structured texts and understood in their deepest meaning – are both textbooks in the true sense of the word. This means that they are not intended to give an exhaustive statement of all the infinite divine facts or truths, but rather to present the Principle of the Science of being, and to teach the basic method for using this Principle to solve all life's problems. Once the student has grasped this divine method, then its range of application is infinite. Anyone who has learnt the fundamentals of Science can use the laws of being contained in the Bible and the textbook for solving his own questions and problems. It then becomes less a matter of understanding the inspired text scientifically, than of applying – independently of the text – the laws of being which have come to light through the divinely structured interpretation of both these revelatory books. Indeed, the Bible and the textbook fulfil their meaning for the student only when he learns through them, not only how to interpret their text, but also to understand the divine laws of being in their basic statement, and to apply them infinitely to his ever recurring questions and problems.

The scientific way. This understanding of the divine structure of the one Being, and its ever available laws, cannot be attained overnight. The scientific way of understanding leads rather – as our brief survey of topics for further study shows – in an ordered progression from one stage to the next of spiritual development. But with each subject we always touch the whole of Truth, which shows itself, at every stage of our spiritual understanding, as the truth which solves life's problems. For: "Truth has a healing effect, even when not fully understood." (152:8) So, with every subject that we study, we shall also experience from the very beginning the healing effect which is inherent in the Science of Christian Science as the universal Life-principle for solving all problems.



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