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A SEASONABLE WORD ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

FROM BROTHER W. E. PAGE.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Meeting so much "Christian Science" out this way, I was led to investigate the basis of its claims by the lamp of the Word, and I find it a most noxious weed. First, for my own profit, I wrote out what I found, and have since remodeled and chiseled it down. You may find good use for it as it is, or can use it as a foundation for a criticism in the TOWER on this most manifest perversion. I send it to you for such use as you deem best. Put it in the waste basket if that is the best place for it, and do not hesitate a moment to tell me so, if these articles bother more than they help. I only want to do good work, but with our weak judgments we cannot always discern where we help and where we hinder.

The Lord is gracious to us, bearing with us in our infirmities, and ever and anon giving us deep draughts at the fountain of truth, and its blessings of peace and love in justification and sanctification. O! that this year may prove the one of most sincere consecration and abundant zeal to us all, who are of this way.

May grace and mercy and peace be multiplied to you, your household, and the brethren and sisters with you.

Yours in fellowship,

W. E. PAGE.

When presenting various features of the Father's great "Plan of the Ages," we have not infrequently met professed believers in Christ who seemed to accept the truth, and apparently warranted

expectations of full fellowship. However, as the acquaintance grew, an almost indefinable barrier to communion would arise; and being anxious to receive those whom the Lord sends (Matt. 10:40), and desiring to esteem all professed brethren as most worthy (Phil. 2:3), we have often been perplexed and in straits as to what course we should pursue in our association with them. The grounds of the older sects are so well defined that we have but little difficulty in understanding our proper attitude toward them; nor is there particular danger of confusion from those forms of error which plainly and fairly present their teachings in well defined terms. Since our eyes were anointed that we might understand present privileges and labors (Rev. 3:18), we have been most perplexed and confused by the newer forms of doctrine which, on investigation, we find deny the Lord that bought them (2 Pet. 2:1), while with much feigned reverence and humility they profess allegiance to him, thus falsely presenting themselves as angels of light – messengers of truth. (2 Cor. 11:13-15.) However considerate we may desire to be, when we meet such false, seductive teaching, we must, without strife and to the best of our ability, unmask **[R1304 : page 72]** it (2 Tim. 2:24-26), and be careful neither in word nor deed to wish it God-speed (2 John 9-11), remembering that it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. – 1 Cor. 4:2.

One of the most wide-spread of these later forms of subtle error that we meet is "Christian Science." Many of its votaries are kind, well-intentioned people, but they are completely blinded by the perversions of the system; and we believe many such will gladly free themselves from this dominion of the Devil, when the shackles of ignorance and prejudice which now bind them are stricken off in the advancing light of this dawning day. As our conclusions and the grounds for them may be of use to some others of the brethren who may be perplexed as to the proper attitude they should assume towards this heresy, we have decided, with the Lord's help, to present what we have found. Our quotations on the subject are

wholly from the writings of a Mrs. Eddy, who is the chief apostle of the various forms of this doctrine, which are legion.

When setting forth our faith regarding the "restitution of all things," and God's wonderful plan for selecting the "Seed" which is to bless all nations, to those entangled in this doctrine, we almost invariably meet with the claim, "That is just what we believe; you must be a Scientist." The claim is so sincerely made that we are led to hope that we have met with another grain of wheat. To make sure of our ground, we present the ransom and its necessity, which seem to meet their approval, yet from various remarks, especially those made in a general way, we are conscious of a vital disagreement, somewhere, on the fundamental principles of the Lord Jesus' work. A short investigation into Mrs. Eddy's work disclosed the cause for this, and developed the fact that her teachings are based upon *private meanings put upon words*. Hence, when we present our views to one of her followers, the words we employ do not convey our meaning to them, and until we learn this, and find out what interpretation they put upon our words, we are sorely perplexed. Mrs. Eddy very cunningly lays the foundation for her master-piece of word-jugglery, as follows:

"Aside from the opposition to what is new, the greatest difficulty in introducing our metaphysical system is to express metaphysics in physical terms and then be understood physically. *This difficulty is overcome only by teaching the student the metaphysical meaning of terms in common use.*"

What a preparation to deceive! Surely any teaching that must rest on special meanings placed on "terms in common use," should arouse the suspicions of those who are sincere and pure in heart. The Master did not find it necessary to employ so questionable a course, but so taught that the "common people heard him gladly."

In examining Mrs. Eddy's teachings, we do not follow the order of her books, but take up the essential truths she perverts, as

seems best. Among Webster's definitions of *person* we find, "A self-conscious being;" and *being* is defined as "existence, opposed to non-existence; that which exists in any way, whether it be material or spiritual;" and we submit that the universally accepted meaning of *person* today is, "a self-conscious being." Again, we submit that to the unprejudiced and candid reader the unqualified teaching of the Bible, in language in common use, is that God is *the* great and only self-existent, "self-conscious being."

But Mrs. Eddy says, "Jehovah is not a person. God is principle." How elusive and vague this is! The first meaning in Webster given to *principle* and which is marked obsolete and rare, is, "beginning, commencement;" second, "hence a source or origin; that from which anything proceeds; fundamental substance or energy;" and third, "an original faculty or endowment of the soul." Ah yes! "The serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field." (Gen. 3:1.) How this cunningly-laid perversion illustrates his full subtlety! While we stand aghast at the bold belittling of the great Jehovah, we cannot but wonder at the consummate skill shown. (Read Ezekiel 28:12-19.) We know that God is *the* source of all good things: he from whom every right thing proceeds: the self-existent, "self-conscious being," possessing and originating all qualities of moral perfection. Owing to the inexactness of language, the wedge of error here introduced (if, as common people, we follow Webster) is very slim, and not readily [R1304 : page 73] detected at first glance. If not detected, the next step will entangle the unwary very seriously. To the alert, however, the danger is not so great as it seems; for Mrs. Eddy does not accept the common meaning of the word *principle*, but proceeds to put a private interpretation upon it. Following her statement regarding Jehovah, she defines *principle* as "life, truth, love, substance and intelligence." These (in language in common use) are all qualities or attributes of beings; and thus God is reduced to the position of the sum of certain qualities of conscious existence, and is dethroned from his rightful position as the Creator of all these qualities. Those

misled by these teachings are speedily so befogged that they are utterly unable to discern between honest treatment of the Scriptures and this woful perversion of them.

Having dethroned God, the next natural step is the deification of man; and this work these teachings do in a less subtle form, and in one more easily followed, although the word-twisting is dexterously kept up. Webster defines *entity* as "a real being, whether in thought or in fact: being, essence, existence." Mrs. Eddy says – "*Entity* signifies the particular nature of being; and *God, without the image and likeness of himself*, NAMED MAN, would be nonentity" – without existence. Following this we give from her book a series of quotations deifying man.

"God cannot destroy man, because he is the reflection of God." "The science of being reveals man perfect, even as the Father is perfect." "If man went out for a single instant in death, or sprang from nothingness into existence, there was an instant some time without man, when Jehovah was without entity and there was no reflection of Mind or Soul, and Principle had no idea." "God, Soul, is, and was, and ever will be; and man is co-existent and co-eternal with this Soul." "The science of man, understood, would have eradicated sin, sickness and death in a less period than six thousand years."

Surely pride and boastfulness could assume no more than is here claimed. None of the "meek" would arrogate such position and virtue to themselves. To show the foolishness and the fruit of such exaltation of man, we quote the following:

Man is "The infinite idea of infinite Spirit,... the spiritual image and likeness of God,... the full representation of Mind: hence the idea of Principle, not person. [Man is] The compound idea of God, including all other ideas, the generic term for all that reflects God's image and likeness....Woman is the highest term for man....[Man is] The conscious identity of being as found in Science, where man

is the reflection of God, Mind, and therefore is eternal; that which hath no separate mind from God; that which hath not a single quality underived from Deity; that possesses no life, intelligence, or creative power of his own, but reflects all that belongs to his Maker."

"And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth' (Gen. 1:26) – what is incapable of sin, sickness and death, in so much as it derives its *esse* from God, and possesses not a single original or underived power: hence, cannot depart from holiness. Nor can God from out himself, whence man was evolved, engender a capacity or freedom to sin. *In divine Science, God and man are inseparable, as PRINCIPLE AND ITS IDEA.*"

Of course this enthronement of man necessitates a perversion of the entire Scripture teaching regarding his creation and fall. To allay the suspicions that might arise if this work were too abruptly done, the approach is very gradually made, and the error introduced under high pretensions to spirituality and learning. As a sample we quote the following:

"As crude forms of mortal mind yield to higher significations, the metaphysical Genesis of the Scripture will be hailed with head and heart. The following brief comments are the spiritual or scientific version of the text."

Space forbids full quotation, and we simply give the "spiritual or scientific version" of the fall, set forth by Mrs. Eddy as the true meaning of the account in Genesis 3:1-5, as follows:

"The serpent is introduced into the Scriptural record without any specified origin; but some maintain he was a veritable demon, even the climax of subtlety and falsehood, created by a perfect and

divine spirit...Adam, or error, even the belief of mind in matter, began this reign of mortal man somewhat mildly, increasing in jealousy and falsehood until his days were numbered by the law of Truth, and the mortality of error made manifest. The garden [R1304 : page 74] was a term used to signify the body, in the first records of Mythology; sexuality and self-abuse the forbidden knowledge. Man was not to presume upon the prerogatives of his Creator, but to recognize God, the Father and Mother of us all. – Compare with Genesis 3:4,5.

"This Allegory represents error in every one of its beliefs, always asserting itself as Truth and over Truth: and giving the lie to Truth, saying, I can open your eyes, I can do more for you than God (good) has done. Bow down to me, have other gods, admit I am right, and more real to the senses, pleasant to the eyes and more to be desired than Truth. The history of Adam, or error, is a dream without a dreamer: first, a supposition of assertion; secondly, that nothing says I am something; and third, that something springs from nothing, and is life, substance and intelligence. The order of the allegory describing the mythological creation, even a creation springing from dust instead of Deity, is maintained in about this form. Mortal man, starting from chaos, or old night, from the lowest propensities; non-intelligence becoming intelligence; the basal portions of its formations of mind indicating the appetites and passions: its upper portions the sentiments, implying the hope that mind will sometime escape from matter, giving a material sense of things as the sense of mind, and matter having dominion over mind: body originating in non-intelligence, and mind afterward inserted, the creation a propagating principle in vegetable and animal, *alias* God in matter, or matter without God: a man's life consisting of the things that he eateth, and having no connection with God, Spirit; his senses unable to perceive Spirit, and matter dooming them to die. This mythological history of man, so unlike the scientific record of man as the image and likeness of God, having dominion over the earth, and whose Mother is Spirit, first

creates man of dust, and without a Mother, afterwards gives him a Mother who is governed by mesmerism, controlled by a belief, called serpent, her origin a rib, her capacity for knowledge gathered through material sense and from the tree of knowledge, whereof if a man eat he shall die, and her progeny, self-constituted suicides, hastening towards death in pursuit of life. The word Adam, divided into two syllables and reading A-dam, indicates more closely the character and the curse of the divine spirit, or Mother of man bestowed upon it."

The fall being "spiritualized" out of existence, and man being "perfect even as the Father," there is no necessity for a man, Christ Jesus, to give his "life," a ransom – a corresponding price – "for the life of the world," and to redeem the race with his precious blood. Hence Christ Jesus, the Anointed Savior, simply becomes a fine example, a "good man." We quote again from Mrs. Eddy:

"Jesus was the son of a virgin mother by whom scientific being was so far understood that she knew that God was the Father of man, and man the offspring of a divine Principle. Jesus was the name of the man, and Christ but another name for God, the Principle and creator of that man. The signification of God being 'good' (?!), the term Christ Jesus may be rendered as good man, or God-man."

Christ not being a ransom-sacrifice, no atonement work was done by him, and a new signification must be found for the Scripture teaching that he is the "propitiation [satisfaction] for the sin of the world." (1 John 2:2.) To keep the case clearly before us we will give Webster's definition of the word *atonement*, and then its "spiritual" signification as given by Mrs. Eddy.

"Atonement: (Webster) Reconciliation after enmity or controversy. Satisfaction or reparation made by giving an equivalent for an injury."

"Atonement: (Mrs. Eddy) The teachings, demonstrations and sufferings of the man Jesus, when *showing* mortals the way of salvation from sin, sickness and death....Soul's triumph over material sense. The supremacy of spirit asserted, man reassuming the image and likeness of God in his scientific atonement with him. Jesus of Nazareth gave the all-important proof that when God is understood, it will be seen that Soul creates its own body, and cannot for the smallest instant do without a body. This divine Science overcame death and the grave, and was Jesus' final demonstration that the body is the same after as before death: hence there is a state of probation and progress, whereby to grow out of a material and into the spiritual sense of existence beyond the grave. The meek, mighty Nazarene exhibited a material body after the crucifixion, to show his followers the great need there is of spiritualizing thought and action to make man God-like before death, that after it he may be fit for the higher school of the just made perfect. Not death, but the understanding of Life, God, spiritualizes man, and determines forever his progress and the state of his body. Mortality disappearing, and immortality coming to life. Self-abnegation and love blessing its enemies. Not blood flowing from the veins of Jesus, but his out-flowing sense of life, truth and love, so much higher, purer and more God-like than mankind's, shedding its hallowed [R1304 : page 75] influence on the whole human race and marking out the only way to heaven. Not the death of the cross, but the cross-bearing deathless life, that Jesus left for the example of mankind, ransoms from sin all who follow it."

Salvation from the present "evil world" Mrs. Eddy thus makes a matter of works, and is not through faith in Jesus, as taught by the apostles. Thus the Adversary again undertakes to set forth "another gospel, which is not another." – Gal. 1:8,9.

Again she says, "The way is straight and narrow that leads to the understanding that God is life. It is warfare with the flesh whereby *we conquer* sin, sickness and death, now or hereafter; but

certainly before we can reach the goal of Spirit or Life, which is God. The truth of man makes a new creature. Old things have passed away, behold all things become new. Passions, selfish appetites and every sensuality yield to spirituality, and the balance of being is on the side of God. Christian perfection is *won* on no other basis. The scientific unity between God and man must be *wrought out in demonstration.*"

Man being "co-existent and co-eternal with God," death must be an illusion, and is so set forth:

"Death: an illusion; there is no death. Matter has no life, hence it cannot die, and mind is immortal. The flesh warring against spirit frets itself free from one belief only to be fettered by some other one, until all belief yields to the understanding of God. Any material evidence of death is false, for it contradicts the spiritual facts of life. The unreal and untrue. The opposite of God, or life."

The fall and death being done away with, there cannot, of course, be any resurrection from among the dead, or raising of the race up to something lost in Adam. Hence in this new "Science" resurrection becomes mere development. We quote her definition of resurrection as follows:

"Resurrection: spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality or spiritual existence. Material belief yielding to spiritual understanding."

Those taught of God can have no difficulty in tracing the sinuous course of that "old dragon," in these unstable and unlearned perversions of Scripture, which soon cause their teachers to become "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame." Those who have watched the effect of these doctrines upon those proclaiming them readily discern that the "evil tree" is yielding its proper fruit.

Again, Mrs. Eddy sets forth her claimed many miracles of healing as the basis of her religion, and the proof of its divine origin. To those uninstructed in the way of truth, this claim is very weighty, and many are ensnared by it. These, seeing no wisdom in the permission of evil, and having no conception of the great things God has in store for those who, under the severest tests, maintain a love for righteousness and a hatred of wickedness, quickly fall in this evil day of subtle sophistries. Supposing "Godliness to be gain," *i.e.*, a means to secure present temporal ease in finances or social life, freedom from aches and pains, etc., some, in their eagerness to escape from the hardship of enduring unfavorable conditions, are blinded to the opportunity for discipline thus offered, and rush headlong into any specious promise of relief that is made, without applying the rules and tests provided in the "sure word of prophecy," and are quickly ensnared by the Adversary. Being one of the highest order of God's created beings, who wilfully left his first estate and does iniquity (Ezek. 28:12-15), the devil can loosen the bonds of suffering on those who give heed to his seductive teachings, until he gains full and complete control of their moral powers, and can thus use them as his pliant, even if unsuspecting, tools, simply releasing them temporarily to gain his own purposes. When these are served, or when the time for binding him has fully arrived (Rev. 20:2,3), he will execute his full malignity, not only upon his own willing coadjutors, but also upon those who have been his dupes. We unhesitatingly brand this whole system of Christian Science, so-called, as another form of spiritualism put forth by the father of lies, who is a liar from the beginning. That there is a power, even superhuman, in it, we admit; but we believe it is the power of Satan, the great deceiver of men, which will be used only for the destruction of man.

[Satan's dominion is a dominion of death, and he undoubtedly has the power to slightly relieve the sick when his delusive purposes and doctrines would be best subserved thereby. (Heb. 2:14.) The fact that Satan's kingdom **[R1304 : page 76]** and its methods are

thus divided and in opposition – working evil, sin and death as ever, and at the same time turning in to heal the sick in order the more securely to bind and blind his dupes in subtle errors – shows that "the god of this world" realizes that his reign of sin, ignorance, superstition and death is nearly at an end. – EDITOR.]

Let God's children beware lest they be entangled by this siren song. The system perverts everything it touches, and not even the Lord's prayer escapes its contamination. For the information of the brethren, we give the following "spiritualized" version of it.

"Principle, eternal and harmonious,
Nameless and adorable intelligence,
Thou art ever present and supreme.
And when this Supremacy of Spirit
Shall appear, the dream of matter will disappear.
Give us the understanding of truth and love;
And loving we shall learn God,
And truth will destroy all error,
And lead us into the life, that is soul,
And deliver us from the errors of sense,
Sin, sickness and death.
For God is life, truth and love, forever."

Trusting completely in our Lord, the Anointed Savior, who has bought us with his precious blood, we can quickly escape this evil, and enter into and retain a present rest in Christ, and be prepared for that perfect and everlasting rest that "remaineth for the people of God." – Heb. 4:9,10; Isa. 26:3; Psa. 91.
