

# Christian Science Reveals Man's Unlimited Abilities

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Man's real abilities are unlimited and have a divine source, Neil H. Bowles, C.S.B., of Atlanta, Ga., told a large audience in Boston, March 29.

Scientific prayer brings to light hidden talents and "gives us a better appreciation of our true and unlimited selfhood - a selfhood we can love and respect," Mr. Bowles stated.

He described two incidents of healing. One concerned a man who was desperately ill and beset by financial difficulties. The other, a woman who had such a severe case of high blood pressure her vision and kidneys were seriously affected. Both individuals were completely healed through prayer. A member of The Christian Science Board of Lectureship, Mr. Bowles spoke in The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, on the subject "Christian Science Reveals Man's Unlimited Abilities." He was introduced by Mrs. Josephine Carver, Second Reader of The Mother Church.

## God, Life, Includes All Intelligence

The lecturer spoke substantially as follows:

We often hear it said that someone is in need of finding himself. Well, finding oneself is a task that has to be accomplished by everyone sooner or later. Why? Because to the mortal sense of life everyone seems to be born into limitation and imperfection. Perhaps one may have a very limited sense of his abilities and capabilities. Perhaps some have an unhappy sense of their accomplishments and their achievements. Maybe some think they cannot get along well with others. These, and other limited views, are the cause of much unhappiness and illness. Christian Science reveals man's true spiritual nature to be without restriction, imperfection, or limitation. It shows man's abilities to be unlimited and unrestricted because they originate in God, the one infinite source of Life. So finding oneself really means learning why and how our abilities are derived from God. But what is God? On page 587 of the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy, God is defined as "The great I AM; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all substance; intelligence." The basis of all Christian Science reasoning is the Biblical teaching that God is All-in-all. Think for a moment of the term Life, spelled with a capital L. Based on the fact that God is All-in-all, Christian Science teaches that He is, He must be, the only Life or Being. He is the All-in-all of every aspect of Life. It teaches that God, Himself, is the one and only Life, and that that Life includes within itself all intelligence, all substance, all consciousness, all reality, and all power. It teaches that the Life that is God is the source and origin of all manifestations of Life and is the governor of them.

Now students of theology know that throughout the ages people have endeavored to give God a name. The various religions of the world have given many names to their concept of Deity or the Supreme Being. Moses, as you will recall, sought a name for God. He prayed that he would be shown a name that would describe God's nature and authority to the Hebrew people. Here is what we read in Exodus was God's reply to Moses' prayer: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel. I AM hath sent me unto you" (Exodus 3:14).

## Christian Science Interprets the Bible

Jesus gave a name for God that would describe His nature. He called God our Father. As we have seen, Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, has used a number of terms for God in her writings. She found her authority for them in the Bible. They were there for anyone to read, but because of her great spiritual perception she discovered that these names are explanatory of what God is and of His all-inclusive nature. Through her spiritual and scientific interpretation of the Scriptures, she has revealed the real meaning of God, thus making Him understandable.

The terms for God used in Christian Science do not depart from the Mosaic concept of God as the great I AM, nor from the Christly concept of God as Father. They are rather an explication of the Mosaic and Christly concepts and reveal the Science of God's allness and Fatherhood.

It is important to understand that the teachings of Christian Science are based on a discovery and that Mrs. Eddy made this discovery in the year 1866. It was a spiritual discovery, not a theory, a discovery that came to her solely through searching the Bible. This discovery revealed the true nature of Life and man and the system of metaphysical healing Mrs. Eddy later denominated Christian Science. Coincident with her discovery she, herself, was healed of a physical injury that had been pronounced fatal by her attending physician. Since she presented Christian Science to the world in 1875 by the publication of her textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," students of her writings in every part of the world have been able to demonstrate her metaphysical system in the healing of sickness as it was done by Christ Jesus. The teachings of Christian Science are really simple when understood in their spiritual and scientific significance. What has made spiritual teaching difficult to understand has been the human tendency to make the spiritual conform to the human. This tendency has obscured the nature of God throughout the ages, producing thousands of erroneous concepts of Him.

## **Facts Represent Continuous Existence**

Now all truth is a discovery, not an invention. We call certain human contrivances and processes inventions, but if you will stop to think about it every human invention is the result of some discovery. It is the discovery of some basic fact that has always existed and needed only to be brought to light. The principles of aerodynamics have always existed. They were available for use any time human thought had expanded to the point of discovering them. The one all-important point to understand about any discovery is the unalterable principle supporting it and demonstrating it. It is the principle of mathematics that makes its equations true and demonstrates them. Well, my friends, every discovery points to the importance of intelligent reasoning. For example, the idea of a wheel first appealed to reason, did it not? It was called an invention, but the idea was discovered. There was no mystery about it. The idea of the wheel and its utility dawned on some human thought, and the world has reaped its benefits in constantly expanding form ever since. Where did the idea come from? It came through enlightened reasoning.

Getting back now to the discussion of God's names, one of the names as it was revealed to Mrs. Eddy is Life. This is not only one of His names but it describes His nature. Something that all Christians agree on is that God is our Father. Remember, Father is another name for God. It also describes His nature. Now as you think about it, God as Father is the source of our life. If God is the source of our life, He is that which sustains our life, so He actually is our Life. People have been accustomed to thinking in terms of your life and my life, but we do not really own a life all our own, separate from God. We express Life, the only Life there is, the one All-in-all, the ever-present, over-operative Life that is God Himself.

## **Soul Is Infinite Source of Identity**

Have you ever reasoned on what the word Life really means? Let us see what it means. It means that which exists, the opposite of not existing. Life is continuous existence. It is omni-action, the All-in-all of action. Life to be

continuous existence can have no beginning or ending. If Life ever had a starting point or an ending, it would be something other than Life, a false sense of life. So ask yourself and reason, "Is there, can there be, more than one Life?" No, there is just one. Let me illustrate. Is there more than one Truth? No, only one! If something is true it belongs to the one all-inclusive Truth, does it not? It does not belong to one of a variety of truths. It belongs to just one Truth, the only Truth there is. Is there ever a need for more than one Truth? Certainly not; So reason tells us there is just one Truth. But it is shared by everyone. You can have all of the Truth you want without depriving another of it. That is the way it is with Life. There is just one Life, and it is the Life of everyone. It is God.

Mrs. Eddy says in Science and Health (p. 336), "Allness is the measure of the infinite, and nothing less can express God." Thus you can see how Christian Science scientifically interprets the Bible teaching that God is All-in-all. It reveals the fact that for order and harmony to prevail in man and the universe, there can be but one supreme Life or God who is All and governs all. That supreme Life includes all the intelligence, all the consciousness, all the substance, all the truth, all the love, and all the good in the universe. That is why all the abilities, all the manifestations of intelligence are of and from God, and it is man's expression of these abilities we are talking particularly about tonight.

Another name for God that was revealed to Mrs. Eddy as descriptive of His nature and character is Soul, spelled with a capital S. Now people have also been accustomed to thinking in terms of your soul and my soul, just as they have been accustomed to thinking in terms of your life and my life. But Mrs. Eddy also revealed that we do not really possess a soul all our own separate from God. We express Soul, just as we express Life. The word Soul as it was revealed to Mrs. Eddy means consciousness. So God as Soul is the All-in-all of consciousness, the ever-present, ever-operative source of consciousness. Soul also is the infinite source of identity and individuality. Let us reason on this point a little. No two people are alike, are they? Yet they express Life and intelligence, do they not? Just as they express Life and intelligence, they also express consciousness, individuality, and identity. Well, man the true likeness of God partakes of God's nature and character. He partakes of or expresses God's infinite intelligence, His infinite consciousness, His infinite individuality, substance, and abilities. So you see you are not the source of your own individual nature and character, nor are your abilities resident in a mortal, material body. They could not be. They are actually the reflection of the omniactive Soul that is God. Jesus certainly acknowledged that his abilities were of and from God. Here is what he said (John 5:19), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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."

Now it is most important to clearly understand that the carnal, material natures and characters, we see expressed in mortals do not have their source in God. Indeed not! The ignorance of the ages has too long believed that God is the originator of both the evil and the good, the mortal and the immortal, the material and the spiritual. That is one reason why some intelligent people think they are atheists. They have never found a satisfying explanation of God or man. They want an explanation that appeals to reason, one that dispels mystery and superstition. The whole world is moving in the direction of enlightened reasoning. With the coming of enlightenment, people everywhere are demanding something better than superstitious creeds and an unexplainable concept of man's origin. The religion of Christian Science is a radical departure from those superstitious creeds and concepts that would credit God with making man both mortal and immortal.

## **Reasoning Leads to Spiritual Discovery**

Christian Science provides a method with which the human sense of man can be spiritually awakened, awakened to comprehend the nature of God, of His allness, and of man's wholly spiritual nature as God's child. The teachings of Christian Science appeal to reason. In fact it requires its students to reason. Remember it is not an invention, it is a discovery. Christian Science is educational. It spiritually and scientifically interprets the Bible



and thus shows us how to spiritually educate the human consciousness out of the false belief that man is material. It reveals the scientific fact that man must in truth be spiritual since Spirit, God, is the source of all life.

Here is a simple example of the method of Christian Science reasoning. We are told in Proverbs (3:5, 6) to "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." How can we do this? By letting scientific reasoning tell us that there can be only one source of intelligence. Then with this acknowledgment turn our thought in the right direction to discover the answer to every human problem. You see reasoning in Truth stimulates spiritual discovery, just like reasoning in mathematics brings the discovery of right answers.

Let me tell you the experience of a man who greatly needed to learn that his nature and his abilities were not resident in his mortal body but were the reflection of infinite Soul or God. It was during the time we call the great depression, and he was having many financial problems. He was sick too, desperately sick. He was one of those men who was afraid of mental conflicts with other people, afraid he could not cope with them. What made him sick was the fear and tension he lived in, and his resentment toward those with whom he thought he could not cope.

### **Man Expresses Infinite Resources**

Then one day he got a glimpse of the scientific fact that his nature and abilities were really of and from Soul or God. He had been reading the Christian Science Lesson-Sermon from the Bible and Science and Health, and this statement in Science and Health (p. 571) stood out to him, "Know thyself, and God will supply the wisdom and the occasion for a victory over evil." He saw that he must know himself as the son of God, not as a limited mortal. He saw that he must claim his abilities as coming from God and act as if he believed it. He read this statement too from Science and Health (p. 60), "Soul has infinite resources with which to bless mankind, and happiness would be more readily attained and would be more secure in our keeping, if sought in Soul."

He realized that he had been trying to match wits with people rather than listening for divine intelligence to direct him. You see he had been thinking that his dealings with others were mental contests or conflicts. This put him under constant pressure. He had to give up the belief that his abilities were resident in a mortal body and gain the understanding that he was really the expression of divine illimitable intelligence. So he learned to turn to divine intelligence for guidance for the right things to say and do. Then he began to get that guidance. Ideas that worked toward the solution of knotty problems began to unfold to him. He held to a right sense of his fellowman and rejected his former belief that, those with whom he dealt were harsh and dishonest. In this way he gained their friendship, most of all he gained their respect, and solved his problems too. He learned to sing with the Psalmist (Psalms 84:1,2,5), "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. . . . Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." When we lose the false theological sense of God as a personal Deity and gain the scientific sense of Him as the one infinite, divine source of our substances and intelligence, we will be blessed by the assurance that our strength and abilities are indeed unlimited.

### **Jesus Showed Reality of Faith by Works**

Jesus had that scientific sense of God as the one infinite source, but few understood him or his teachings. It has been said of him that he was a mystic, a miracle worker who captured the imagination of the people. Some still believe him to have been a worker of miracles. His works are still referred to as miracles; not to be repeated. Christian Science offers a reasoning concept of Jesus and shows his acts to be the outcome of his understanding of the Christ, his spiritual and eternal nature.

The spiritual meaning of the Christ as defined in Science and Health is as follows (p. 583), "The divine

manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error." Now, Jesus was human (the name Jesus was in common use among other Hebrew families); whereas; Christ is Truth. Jesus lived and demonstrated the Christ, Truth, in his healing and saving ministry. Thus the Christ is not merely another name for Jesus but is his divine title as the teacher and Way-shower who explained and demonstrated man's spiritual and eternal nature. Through his spiritual origin, and his obedience to God, divine Principle, Jesus was endowed with a perfect spiritual comprehension of God and man, and this understanding enabled him to utilize the divine power. In other words, Jesus knew life to be spiritual. He knew that divine law governs man. When you and I have caught a glimpse of this same understanding, we have gained something of the Christ, and we do not know the Christ until we have gained something of this understanding.

In the process of mankind's emergence from the sickness, the misery, and the strife of mortal existence, it was necessary that there be a Jesus, someone to show us the way. Someone had to point the way, or enlighten human consciousness, that is advance human consciousness beyond and above its own limited sense of existence. There was a great difference between Jesus' efforts to lift mankind out of suffering and the efforts of the physicians and theologians who scoffed at him. Jesus sought help from an intelligent spiritual understanding of God as perfect Life, while others thought that help could come through material means, through what could be taken out of the ground. They thought, and the world still thinks, that matter can heal matter.

But Jesus' methods required a letting go of the materiality the world believes to be real. In order to understand and employ Jesus' methods, there had to be a change of mental base. In fact his teachings were educational. It is true, of course, that he talked much about God and about obeying God. This was natural because he understood God to be the supreme law of Life. He told the people that they had to be good and obey the Commandments if they were to be well and find eternal Life. Why? Because the Commandments supplied the first method with which the human, mortal sense of life could be uplifted. Jesus' every act was to demonstrate the power of God's absolute, unvarying law to destroy the many forms of human suffering.

So Jesus had an intelligent understanding of what God really is. Mrs. Eddy calls his understanding a spiritual sense as opposed to the physical or material sense of life. Jesus had no sense of God as a humanized being, but his life purpose was to make God understood as Spirit by awakening this spiritual sense in mankind. This awakening did come in varying degrees to those who were his followers. Writing about this spiritual sense, Mrs. Eddy says in *Science and Health* (p. 209), "Spiritual sense is a conscious, constant capacity to understand God. It shows the superiority of faith by works over faith in words. Its ideas are expressed only in 'new tongues;' and these are interpreted by the translation of the spiritual original into the language which human thought can comprehend."

## **Soul, Spirit, Reveals Hidden Talents**

My friends, Christian Science is that new tongue. It is the new tongue of Soul, of Spirit. Its teachings awaken in the student that spiritual sense that enables him to understand the language of Spirit. It enables him to understand the beauty and loveliness of the universe. It awakens in him a joyous comprehension of the infinite resources of God or Soul, just at hand. As he progresses in this spiritual awakening, it will unfold all around him the loveliness of things hidden and unseen to the physical senses. It will unfold the true, the spiritual meaning of beauty, outline, form, and color imperishable and eternal. It will unfold to him the infinite capacities of his being. An awakening sense of Soul as spiritual perception and awareness, which is true consciousness, makes the businessman more efficient, the student more alert and teachable, the artist more aware of accuracy, of beauty, and originality. It enlarges known talents and brings to light hidden talents. And, most important of all, it gives us a better appreciation of our true and unlimited selfhood, - a selfhood we can love and respect. Yes, we must love ourselves, because if we do not, we are not seeing ourselves as the sons of God. That is not self-love, but love of

God's image and likeness.

It was the Soul-sense of Mary, the mother of Jesus, that enabled her to perceive the Fatherhood of God and thereby bring forth her child without the human processes. Christian Science teaches that. It was Jesus' Soul-sense that enabled him to heal the sick, raise the dead, triumph in the resurrection and ascension, and overcome the so-called laws of the physical universe. It was Mrs. Eddy's Soul-sense that enabled her to discover Christian Science, which is the Comforter promised by Jesus. It is the Science that reveals God as the Soul, the Mind, and the Life of man and the universe.

Mrs. Eddy, from very early childhood, was an unusually spiritually minded child, an original and independent thinker. She was unable to accept the orthodox views regarding soul and salvation. The commonly accepted teaching that man could lose his soul through sin, that some were to be saved, and others were to be consigned to eternal hell and damnation, was unacceptable to her. Nor could she accept the teaching that God is a God capable of wrath. After her discovery of Christian Science, she called such a concept of God a man-projected God. She saw this concept of God could only have its origin in the sensuous thought of mortals who pictured God as capable of hate and revenge. By sensuous thought I mean the thought that is based solely on the sense impressions or the physical sense of life. Mrs. Eddy taught as John did, - that God is Love. She proclaimed that punishment, was not God-sent but the result of ignorance of God and His love.

### **Understanding Refutes Human Values**

Mrs. Eddy has gained world-wide recognition as a religious leader, but she was a great scientific thinker, too. Unlike other religious leaders she taught the scientific fact that Life, its substance, and law are wholly spiritual. She braved the wrath of her contemporaries when she declared that matter, sin, sickness, and death are unknown to God. There are those who still object to these teachings. They object because they have not gone far enough into the study of Christian Science to comprehend it. Yes, it is understandable that without an understanding of Christian Science they should object. But the new tongue of Spirit explains on a scientific basis the unreality of all that is finite and discordant.

In order to present her revelation to the world, Mrs. Eddy had to use human words and language with which to explain the spiritual and scientific facts of Life. Human values and spiritual values are two entirely different concepts, and it takes the Soul-sense to comprehend the unreality of sickness, sin, and death. What is required in order to gain this Soul-sense revealed in Christian Science is an open mind, a desire to know and understand God, not just believe in Him.

Because Christian Scientists have gained something of this Soul-sense and have demonstrated Mrs. Eddy's teachings, they naturally have a deep love for their Leader. Before Mrs. Eddy presented her discovery to the world, she herself proved its Principle by consistently healing the sick by spiritual means alone. The world's advancement in spiritual enlightenment will one day bring a universal recognition of Mrs. Eddy's immense contribution to the salvation of mankind.

### **Jesus Disproved Claims of Physicality**

Like any other subject, Christian Science requires study in order to be understood. No casual or cursory reading of Mrs. Eddy's writings will enable one to understand them. But any sincere investigator of Christian Science will find from the very start of his study that he is gaining a usable understanding of God. Children, too, easily grasp the teachings of Christian Science, and the entire Sunday School period in every Church of Christ, Scientist, is devoted to instructions from the Bible and Science and Health. In fact, it is doubtful if any religion in the world does as much to encourage its followers to increase their understanding of God through systematic study and practice.



consciousness. It comes through a change of mental base, from the physical sense to the Soul-sense or spiritual sense. The willingness to turn unreservedly away from material means and methods and trust the healing power of God is in itself an indication of some degree of the Soul-sense awakening in the human consciousness. One must turn unreservedly to Christian Science for healing if he is to see its system demonstrated. Any clinging to material means and methods renders impossible the use of this metaphysical system. Why? Because the practice of materia medica and the system of Christian Science healing are diametrically opposed. One is based on the belief that matter is intelligent, is self-acting; the other is based on the fact of the all-power of Spirit or God.

### **Spiritual Thinking Purifies and Heals**

A case of extreme high blood pressure that was said to have affected the vision and the kidneys was declared by an attending physician to be in need of immediate surgery in order to save the sight of the patient. The patient had made an appointment to enter the hospital to have one kidney removed. Then she recalled a healing she had heard of that had come about through Christian Science treatment. So she went to a Christian Science practitioner and asked if he thought Christian Science would heal her case. She said her appointment to have the operation was just three days away, and asked if the practitioner thought the healing could take place before it was necessary for her to go to the hospital.

The practitioner assured her that all things are possible to God, but that man's ways are not God's ways. He explained that healing in Christian Science came about as a result of the human consciousness being purified or corrected by spiritual truth. He assured her that if the error in human consciousness could be corrected in three days he was sure the healing could take place in three days. He told her, however, that she had better not try to put Christian Science in a race with the prognostications of materia medica. He pointed out this statement of Mrs. Eddy's in *Science and Health* (p. 167), "The scientific government of the body must be attained through the divine Mind. It is impossible to gain control over the body in any other way. On this fundamental point, timid conservatism is absolutely inadmissible. Only through radical reliance on Truth can scientific healing power be realized." She saw what he was endeavoring to show her and then and there decided to rely completely on God without mental reservation. She canceled her appointment for the operation and began at once the serious study of Christian Science. In a very short time she felt herself completely free from physical problems and said she felt like a girl of sixteen.

Through her talks with the practitioner and the Christian Science treatment given, it became clear to her what it was she needed to correct in her thinking. She saw that all through her human experience she had carried a great sense of false responsibility for her husband and her children, and that she had always felt herself under a pressing sense of drive. She too needed to learn that man's abilities are of and from God as we have been discussing in this lecture, and she did learn this lesson. She also learned to have great confidence in God's allness. This lifted her out of the sense of pressure and anxiety in which she had always lived. Then she was healed.

### **Prayer Solves Every Human Problem**

Those who have tasted the healing power of prayer as employed in Christian Science have come to have great confidence in it. We should make large demands on prayer. We should trust it in solving every human problem. Do you have a mystical sense of prayer? Do you pray and then expect the answer to your prayer to come in some mysterious way? In Proverbs (16:1) we read, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." One of the aspects of prayer as taught in Christian Science is communion with God. Do you know what the word communion really means? To some people it means a ritualistic religious observance, but that is not what it means in Christian Science. In Christian Science it means communication with God, with divine Mind. One of the synonymous meanings of the word communion is communication. You will find that in the

dictionary. When you communicate with someone you expect an answer, do you not? Well, you should expect a clear answer when you pray. But this communication, as it is explained in Christian Science, is not man talking to God; it is man desiring to hear God talking to him; to hear the unfolding of divine intelligence, and obeying it.

### **True Selfhood Found in Soul-Sense**

Let us consider this prayer of the Psalmist (Psalms 51:10,12), "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. . . . Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." Do you think if we pray that prayer, God is going to create a clean heart in us and renew a right spirit within us without our doing something about it? Do you think He will create a clean heart in us just for the asking, while we continue to hold to an unclean heart? How could that be? What we have to do when we pray that prayer is to listen for Him to tell us what a clean heart is and then accept it. In other words, we have to listen for Soul's unfoldment. The desire for purity does stimulate in us a listening spiritual sense, a Soul-sense, and a spiritual discernment. It stimulates the unfolding of spiritual thoughts that purify and heal. This, in a real sense, is God talking. It is answered prayer. Such prayer reveals to us what is wrong and corrects the error with truth. It replaces fears and frictions with calm trust in God's impartial goodness and omnipotence. True prayer restores tranquility and heals all manner of human suffering. It also unfolds a clear sense of direction that enables us to make wise decisions. Above all, it shows us man's true relationship to God. This spiritualizes the human selfhood and reveals man's true capacities and capabilities. But remember we must listen with our Soul-sense when we pray.

Now, let us summarize tonight's discussion. Our subject concerns man's unlimited abilities. But we also talked about Soul because your abilities are of and from Soul, and the only Soul we have is God. We learned that Soul has nothing to do with a fleshly personality, but that all individuality is identified spiritually. We learned that Soul is the source of true consciousness and not the physical senses. We learned that an understanding of this scientific fact unfolds our latent abilities and capacities. We learned that through this Soul-sense we are healed of sin and suffering. And finally we learned that this Soul-sense enables us to perceive spiritual reality and the harmonies and beauties of Life. My friends, Soul-sense is the source of your real joy. Seek it, and you will find your true selfhood.

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