

Why I Am Not In... Christian Science

This gets so insane it's hard to fit it into one lesson!

I. History

A. Not to be confused with Scientology

B. Christian Science comes from an attempt to blend metaphysics and Christianity.

C. Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866)

1. Son of a blacksmith and clockmaker by trade
2. Believed to have suffered from tuberculosis as a youth. He suffered through some of the standard treatments of the day until experimenting with his own. Thought he cured himself.
3. Was greatly influenced by the fad of mesmerism (hypnosis) and healing through it.
4. Abandoned mesmerism when he came to the conclusion that diseases were a mental state.

D. Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910)

1. Grew up in poor health in a Congregationalist family.
2. First husband, George Washington Glover, died 6 months after their marriage. A son was born after his death that she lost custody of.
3. Second husband, Daniel Patterson, left after thirteen years or marriage.
4. Third husband, Asa Gilbert Eddy, died after five years of marriage. He claimed he had been murdered by malicious animal magnetism. More on that later.
5. Became a patient of Phineas Quimby's in 1862. She absorbed much of his teaching which became basis for Christian Science.
6. After a fall in 1866, she claimed to have healed herself after reading Matthew 9:2-8. She stated "As I read, the healing Truth dawned upon my sense; and the result was that I rose, dressed myself, and ever after was in better health than I had before enjoyed."
7. Began practicing mental healing and teaching others. At one time she charged \$300 (roughly \$6000 in 2018 dollars) for the three week course.
8. In 1875 she published "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures". This book through its many editions has become the foundation for her followers.
9. Led in building the building for The First Church of Christ, Scientist in 1894 in Boston.
10. Started various Christian Science publications. Most famous is *The Christian Science Monitor* started in 1908.

E. Further information

1. "Science and Health"

a) Composed of three sections

- (1) Main section of about 500 pages which defines and describes the tenants of Christian Science.
- (2) Key to Scriptures, about 100 pages. This has notes on the Creation account in Genesis and also on revelation. Most import is a glossary that redefines 114 Biblical terms.
- (3) Fruitage, 84 testimonials of healings

b) There were 411 editions of the book produced during Eddy's lifetime.

- c) Was largely reworked through numerous editions by former Unitarian minister James Henry Wiggin
 - d) Over ten million copies have been sold.
2. **Growth and decline**
- a) Chartered in 1879 with 26 followers
 - b) Over 270,000 members in 1936
 - c) Today they claim 400,000 thousand members though other estimate it to be closer to 100,000.
 - d) Over 1,000 churches worldwide, of which 900 are in the United States. Over 2,000 Reading Rooms worldwide.

II. Sampler of False Doctrines

A. One famous quote says that Christian Science is badly named for it is neither Christian nor Science.

B. Problem with Theology

1. "God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love... [these] refer to one absolute God. They are also intended to express the nature, essence, and wholeness of Deity. The attributes of God are justice, mercy, wisdom, goodness, and so on." (S&H p. 465)
2. "Jesus meant; not that the human Jesus was eternal, but that the divine idea or Christ was and is so and therefore antedated Abraham, not that the corporeal Jesus was one with the Father." (Misc. Writings p.333)
3. "This Comforter I understand to be Divine Science" (S&H p. 55)
4. "Life, Truth, and Love constitute the triune Person called God, — that is, the triply divine Principle, Love. They represent a trinity in unity, three in one, — the same in essence, though multiform in office: God the Father-Mother; Christ the spiritual idea of sonship; divine Science or the Holy Comforter. These three express in divine Science the threefold, essential nature of the infinite. They also indicate the divine Principle of scientific being, the intelligent relation of God to man and the universe." (S&H p.331-332)
5. See Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, among others.

C. Problem with Reality and Matter

1. "All reality is in God and His creation, harmonious and eternal. That which He creates is good, and He makes all that is made. Therefore the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human, erring belief, until God strips off their disguise. They are not true, because they are not of God. We learn in Christian Science that all inharmony of mortal mind or body is illusion, possessing neither reality nor identity though seeming to be real and identical." (S&H p. 472-473)
2. Basically that everything good is from the God-idea and that evil such as sin or sickness can be purged through returning to harmony with God.

D. Mental Healing and Malicious Animal Magnetism

1. "The cause of all so-called disease is mental, a mortal fear, a mistaken belief or conviction of the necessity and power of ill-health; also a fear that Mind is helpless to defend the life of man and incompetent to control it. Without this ignorant human belief, any circumstance is of itself powerless to produce suffering. It is latent belief in disease, as well as the fear of disease, which associates sickness with certain circumstances and causes the two to appear conjoined, even as poetry and music are reproduced in union by human memory." (S&H p. 377-378)
2. "Their methods of operation are to infuse silently into the thoughts of those they wish to use as instruments, a false sense of the individual selected as their victim." ("Malicious Animal Magnetism", CSJ, February, 1889).