THE COMFORT OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

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**IN** response to a request from one who seemed interested in Christian Science, a copy of the text-book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," was supplied him, and after some days the book was returned with the comment that to this inquirer Christian Science seemed but cold comfort; that he did not propose to believe in it until he could see the dead raised.

Over nineteen hundred years ago the Master said substantially that if people did not believe the works which he did, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead. And at least twice during his ministry, when tempted by the Pharisees to give them a "sign," he replied, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it save the sign of the prophet Jonah." His statements are in force today, and will stand for all time. As a matter of fact, enough persons have already been raised from the dead and returned to abide again among the living to convert the entire human race if the phenomenon had been spiritually interpreted. There are seven cases of individual raising of the dead in the Bible: that of the widow's son by Elijah, and the son of the Shunamite woman by Elisha, as recorded in I and II Kings. Three cases of raising the dead are accorded to Christ Jesus by the four evangelists,—the raising of the ruler's daughter, the restoration of the son of the widow of Nain, and the wonderful story of Lazarus, while the Acts of the Apostles records the raising of Dorcas by Peter, and Paul's restoration of the young man Eutychus.

Standing out alone, greatest of all as proof of spiritual causation, is the resurrection of our Lord, the final, sublime proof of the divine metaphysics which resolves matter and its asserted laws into nothingness, and at the same moment checks the inroads of human grief with the Master's own words: "He that believeth on me shall never die." And, as though to attest that fact for all time, Matthew tells us that after Christ Jesus had cried with a loud voice, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." With significant silence the sacred record pauses here, but if after the lapse of almost two thousand years, we let thought travel back to that event and dwell on the awe-inspiring scene, there comes sweeping down through the ages the sweet assurance of the Christ: "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."

For upward of two hundred years after the ascension the early Christian church included the raising of the dead among its wondrous works, or "miracles," and not until Constantine, in the third century after Christ, laid his hand upon the church and substituted for spiritual understanding material forms and ceremonies, did the wonder-working power of the zealous and pure-minded die out. After the fourth century the "miracles" that sprang up had their foundation in other methods, and need not be considered here. It is almost needless to add that the raising of the dead passed entirely with the primitive church.

Both sacred and profane writers of the first and second centuries after Christ concede the raising of the dead as readily as any other acts of the early Christians, and they are included in narratives of other works, such as the healing of the sick, the casting out of evil spirits, and virtually all the works attributed to the apostles. All the ante-nicene fathers make these allusions. Irenaeus, a disciple of Poly-carp, who was a disciple of St. John, says: "Yea, even the dead were raised and abode with us many years." Augustine does not mention names, but says that the dead were raised. After the loss of spiritual power in the early Christian church, the world fell into darkness on this subject until our beloved Leader restored the spiritual, scientific sense of life to suffering humanity and again shed the glow of the resurrection over the graves of all the world. The thought of every Christian Scientist on the globe bows in tender reverence before the pure life of Mrs. Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science and author of its text-book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," and it seems fitting to consider the question of "endless life" in the light of Christian Science, for its teaching has tenderly comforted many who were bowed in grief. This teaching calls for ever increasing purity of thought and motive, and for clear, steady insistence on the great truth which Mrs. Eddy rediscovered and established for all time, the spiritual fact that there is no death.

This statement is founded on the account of the spiritual creation in the first chapter of Genesis; namely, that God created man "in his own image." This creation of man as God's child, not a mortal, should lift the thought of the entire human family, for there remains but one deduction, namely, that God is Life, and man is deathless. The manifestation of life in matter may disappear, but true consciousness, the individual reflection of the divine Mind, remains forever unchanged. Mrs. Eddy says: "Man reflects infinity, and this reflection is the true idea of God;" and again, "The chief stones in the temple of Christian Science are to be found in the following postulates: that Life is God, good, and not evil; that Soul is sinless, not to be found in the body; that Spirit is not, and cannot be, materialized; that Life is not subject to death; that the spiritual real man has no birth, no material life, and no death" ([Science and Health, pp. 258, 288](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=The+chief+stones+in+the+temple+of+Christian+Science+are+to+be+found+in+the+following+postulates%3A+that+Life+is+God%2C+good%2C+and+not+evil%3B+that+Soul+is+sinless%2C+not+to+be+found+in+the+body%3B+that+Spirit+is+not%2C+and+cannot+be%2C+materialized%3B+that+Life+is+not+subject+to+death%3B+that+the+spiritual+real+man+has+no+birth%2C+no+material+life%2C+and+no+death&book=tfccs.main.sh)). On page 468 of the text-book is an exhaustive and illuminating answer to the question of the ages, What is death? Indeed many pages of quotations might be cited to show the chain of unbroken life that runs like a golden link through the scientifically perfect logic of existence restored to the world by Christian Science after centuries of neglect by Christianity, but a full knowledge of the subject can be gained only in the same way that every Christian Scientist has acquired it—by diligent study of the Bible with Science and Health and other works by our Leader. Those who are sincerely inquiring after Truth may take the first step by reading the first chapter of Genesis and the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of Revelation, followed by Mrs. Eddy's exposition of them in our text-book; and any wounded heart crying out for solace, any honest thinker seeking the light, will find it, and may turn from death unto life as surely as the flower turns to the sun.

This is the glory and the triumph of Christian Science,— to know one's self as one of God's perfect ideas; to know that the real man is incapable of sin, suffering, sickness, poverty, grief, deformity, or death; to begin to realize here, on this plane of consciousness, a foretaste of heaven in better health, uplifted thought, peace of mind, a sense of the ever-presence of God; a practical religion for the needs of every-day life, and a philosophy that we can take down the street with us. As a matter of fact, the uncovering of the illusion of the alleged law of life in matter is one of the most comforting things in Christian Science, and the criticisms of those who make merry at the expense of the doctrine of the unreality of matter fall harmlessly into the ears of those who have heard anew the ringing declaration of the Christ: "I am the resurrection, and the life," and its tender echo breathed over the world by Mrs Eddy: "God is divine Life;"and,"Death and finiteness are unknown to Life" (*Ibid.,*pp. 331, 469).

With the illusion of life in matter torn away, as symbolized by the rending of the veil of the temple when Christ Jesus rent the veil of belief in the flesh for all time there is exposed one more delusion, that of death as a "friend." Under this guise more alleged comfort has been offered suffering humanity than in any other way known to Christendom, yet when analyzed it is seen to be nothing but a mesmeric lie, an ultimate form of hypnotism which, if persisted in, would rob us of the true sense of life. Literally, this argument is a mental drug, an opiate, and its supposed soothing effect is in reality a deadly lethargy of the senses in which mortal mind, so stupefied that it cannot perceive the resurrection, falls by the open grave and sinks into the nothingness of matter. For two thousand years Christian churches have chanted this sense-requiem into the ears of stricken mourners, who between paroxysms of grief have sobbed out their gratitude to God for this "friend." Yet what manner of God would He be who would kill because He could not cure! How could any power be omnipotent that would or could destroy life? If death really be the benefactor, why should we not air die as soon as we are born, and be spared any trouble at all? This time-honored assertion has deceived the world long enough, and even though it seems to be one of the essentials of modern religious faith, Christian Science lifts anew the one true standard and cries with trumpet tones: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Christian Science furthermore declares that human consciousness is not changed by death, that at most it is merely a transition to another plane of consciousness with the same beliefs which we take with us, until the uplifted and spiritualized thought has parted with all sense of life and sensation, pain or pleasure in matter, and has risen to the full realization of Life as Spirit. Then, and then only, does death cease. To "die" physically is only to exchange one set of material sensations for another, and Mrs. Eddy's teachings on this phase, founded as are all her writings, on the Bible, are most illuminating, comprehensive, and convincing statements, irrefutable in logic and heavenly in comfort, for Christian Science is the one science known to the world which binds up the broken-hearted. Above and beyond all the shifting scenes of matter, the Christian Scientist is enabled to behold the perfect man, dwelling unharmed in "the secret place of the most High," and chanting with David, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Exactly in proportion as we are able to rise in consciousness into this blessed understanding do we bring this experience into our lives, and to do so even in a small degree causes heaven to begin to appear here and now. Surely there is comfort here.

There is a lurking cruelty in this favored assertion that death is a "friend," for those who are deluded by it are mesmerized into a belief that death means an end of such consciousness as obtained here, and that a full-fledged angelic being springs from the inert clay and wings its way heavenward. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Christian Science reveals the glorious fact of man's immortality now as well as hereafter, and cites in proof the words of the Master: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Forty-four triumphant years of Christian Science have so uplifted human consciousness that there is a very general change of thought about many things, and there is now a wide acceptance by thousands who are not Scientists of its physical healing, its higher standards of life, and mental poise; but the dark seeming fact of death still staggers humanity's faith in God. Statistics show that not fewer than one hundred and forty thousand persons die every twenty-four hours, and the wail of the bereaved echoes around the world day and night in ceaseless grief. To this mourning multitude Christian Science comes and says: Man is spiritual now; we dwell in God's presence now, and we shall dwell there forever. God's children are all coexistent with Him, and it is impossible that they should be separated from Him for even an instant. If this could happen, the universe would be annihilated, but even the uninstructed human mind is incapable of conceiving this wondrous truth.

Christian Science restores the missing life-link by showing that man, as the reflection of spiritual substance, is indestructible, and that its false semblance, matter, never had any real existence. This, too, solves the problem of man's entity and individuality, and reveals a glorious continuity of being, never dependent on the mortal sense of personality. Only those on whom the light of immortality has begun to dawn can understand the sense of freedom which this knowledge confers. We have begun to exchange blind belief for faith, then faith is increased to spiritual understanding, which rests on as sure a foundation as the city that "lieth four-square," and can no more be shaken than the pillars of heaven itself. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever."

Death is the darkest thought, the darkest phase of mortal experience. Is it not time that the world began to see that this belief must yield to the divine law, as well as sin, sickness, pain, grief, deformity, or misery of any kind? God never made" any of them. He made all that was made and saw that it was "very good." Let every mourner in the world hear the tender and comforting assurance that as God's child nothing can harm him. Death has too long been accepted as a fact. The only fact about it is that it is a transitory stage from one illusion to another, and is neither logical nor conclusive. Mortal belief is destructive. Christian Science is constructive. A full, clear, and convincing statement of the subject may be found in Science and Health, pages 426 to 430, inclusive, and the eighth chapter of Romans spiritually interpreted reflects enough light to illumine the whole world.

Mrs. Eddy has laid again in human consciousness the broad, deep, sure foundation of the law of God, and supplants the belief in the unreality of matter with the understanding of Spirit, God. as true substance. Nothing is taken away, and everything that has seemed to be lost is restored. Christian Science unfolds the unity of man with God. The truth is that human consciousness is awaking out of the sense dream of the centuries. The trumpet call of old is ringing over every grave and over every dead consciousness on the globe: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."