

QUARTERLY UPDATE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION

“It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church by the daily press, by periodicals or circulated literature of any sort.” Church Manual, Article XXXIII, Section 2

A Message from the Manager:

Based on the first chapter of Genesis, Christian Science teaches the omnipresence and omnipotence of God as the source of all good, and that we can each rely on and witness this infinite good even in the face of challenging or even dire circumstances. This is the spiritual law behind Christ Jesus’ core teaching: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48).

It is so simple but actually quite thrilling that everything in our experience that does not appear to be at the level of this divine perfection can — must — yield to ever-present good when we see more clearly that we are each the full reflection of infinite God, good. And yet sometimes this approach is caricatured or even criticized as dangerous by those who claim Christian Scientists ignore evil or deny “mainstream reality” and think that we thereby contribute to a problem of misinformation or disinformation being spread in society.

Committees on Publication regularly have opportunities to correct this notion that Christian Scientists are “reality-deniers.” In one recent case, our Manager’s office provided this explanation to someone who inquired about the Christian Science view of “reality”:

Mary Baker Eddy does encourage students of Christian Science to “look deep into realism instead of accepting only the outward sense of things” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 129:22–24). But this does not mean we deny the world around us or hide from problems. Instead, it means one can go deeper in making Christianity, or spiritual living, practical by reasoning logically that a world created by God as divine Love must be in the nature of Love itself — spiritual, good, and harmonious, even if it does not seem that way on the surface. And through this spiritual reasoning — this looking deeper into God’s creation — we not only change our point of view but witness changes in our lives for the better.

Along these lines, the Committee on Publication office is sometimes asked on a more academic level to explain how Christian Science views the “problem of evil” and how to reconcile the view of a benevolent God with suffering seen throughout the world. If you or your church are asked this question, we hope you will find inspiration in the example below of the response given by a Committee on Publication, which helps to explain that Christian Science does not callously dismiss the suffering of others. The Committee also explains that by understanding the nature of God as infinitely good and loving, we see that God is not the cause of the problem, but is the solution that reveals good even in the face of evil, and that relieves suffering. Even when the question feels academic, the real answer is one that we feel deep in our being — that pure, divine Father-Mother Love embraces us all and meets our every human need.

Sincerely,

Kevin E. Ness, C.S.B.

Manager, Christian Science Committees on Publication

“The substance, Life, intelligence, Truth, and Love, which constitute Deity, are reflected by His creation; and when we subordinate the false testimony of the corporeal senses to the facts of Science, we shall see this true likeness and reflection everywhere.”

(*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 516:4)

Fruitage

A college professor in India wrote an extensive and quite encyclopedic blog post on the problem of evil, broadly exploring what a wide range of theologies and philosophies have to say on the topic of theodicy, the question of “how to reconcile the existence of evil and suffering with an omniscient, omnibenevolent and omnipotent God.” Along with brief summaries of key positions from a variety of philosophical and religious perspectives, the author includes a section entitled, “Evil as illusory — Christian Science.” The three paragraphs under this heading begin on an accurate note, but go on to include the following imposition on the public in regard to Christian Science:

The illusion theodicy has been critiqued for denying the reality of crimes, wars, terror, sickness, injury, death, suffering and pain to the victim. If evil is simply ontologically unreal, how can one explain Hitler killing six million Jews? Didn't it truly cause substantial pain and suffering to them and also to others who survived the Holocaust? Why God would create this "illusion" of crimes, wars, terror, sickness, injury, death, suffering and pain; and why God does not stop this "illusion."

The Committee on Publication for India was invited to take this up in prayer and consider a healing response that addressed the impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science contained in the article. The message to the professor included the following:

I am both grateful for and impressed by your thorough and in-depth look at the problem of evil from a wide range of theological and philosophical perspectives.... The article is truly encyclopedic in its scope....

As a Christian Scientist for over 40 years, I wanted to offer a different perspective on how Christian Science addresses the questions of theodicy. It is true, as you noted, that “According to Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), founder of Christian Science, evil is ontologically unreal in the world created by God who is absolutely good and perfect.” But it does not follow that Christian Science blandly denies “the reality of crimes, wars, terror, sickness, injury, death, suffering and pain to the victim.” Christian Scientists do not wish away the moral horrors of the Holocaust nor other atrocities. At their best, they humbly and compassionately respond to human needs, seeking answers through a growing understanding of the all-good God, who “saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Any real help in alleviating suffering simply cannot happen from a place of callous dismissal of another’s experience.

“Sickness is neither imaginary nor unreal, — that is, to the frightened, false sense of the patient,” writes Mary Baker Eddy. “Sickness is more than fancy; it is solid conviction” (see *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 460:14–18). But then she goes on to say how moral and physical ills can be dealt with “through [a] right apprehension of the truth of being.” In other words, through striving to understand more of the nature of God as infinitely good and loving, we will be better able

to see, and demonstrate by degrees, that the evil in human experience is not caused by God. It results from false human theories about God and reality. By following Jesus' command to "know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32), more and more we find practical solutions and healing in the face of evil and all sorts of problems.

As the Christian Science Committee on Publication for India, I would be happy to serve as a resource if you ever find yourself writing about Christian Science and would value an insider perspective.

The professor replied shortly thereafter with an appreciative and respectful response.

Inspiration and updates from your Committee on Publication:

The quality of listening is something I've been cherishing deeply. I've been thinking about how and when the Ten Commandments and Beatitudes were shared, the people that were blessed by those revelations if they listened, obeyed and claimed their guidance as their own. The Ten Commandments not only give practical guidance on how to have a prosperous and fulfilling framework for living with others and for ourselves, but also declare how we are truly created to be God's reflection. We cannot have more than one God because God made us in His image and likeness. We cannot bear false witness against each other or ourselves since

we all reflect/see only His creation - "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31 (to 1st .)). Each commandment guides and reminds us of who we truly are as reflections of the one, almighty God, good.



The Beatitudes as well reveal our true nature and the true nature of all creation. They declare the power of grace and our innate innocence. As we listen and cherish their message, we become better transparencies for Truth, and this

enables us to perceive what needs to be corrected in thought to lift an imposition. The platform of Christian Science (S&H 328:20-340:29), reinforces this foundation with the revelation of Truth shared by our dear Leader. Our Leader assures us: "One infinite God, good, unifies men and nations; constitutes the brotherhood of man; ends wars; fulfils the Scripture, "Love thy neighbor as thyself;" annihilates pagan and Christian idolatry, — whatever is wrong in social, civil, criminal, political, and religious codes; equalizes the sexes; annuls the curse on man, and leaves nothing that can sin, suffer, be punished or destroyed." (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures: 340:23*).

Mary Baker Eddy was the greatest listener of our age and shared this revelation - the Comforter/Divine Science - with all mankind. Currents in public thought would suggest that Mrs. Eddy's words are not a revelation, but possibly a good human assessment. Detractors of her discovery argue that Christian Science might have been beneficial in its day, but it is no longer relevant due to advancements in the medical field, and thus Christian Science is dying out.

How important it is for us to prayerfully acknowledge, cherish and demonstrate that this revelation is as true and as effective today as ever. Each testimony of healing shared at our weekly Wednesday church meetings are proofs of the efficacy of this revelation and are correcting and lifting impositions in public

thought. I am so grateful for you, dear fellow Florida Christian Scientists, for your expressions of support, love, dedication and demonstration.

This year the Florida legislative session began March 7, and concluded on May 5, 2023. The qualities of listening and grace were foundational to reveal which Florida legislation to be aware of, watch and potentially engage with. The Manager's Office expression of love, wisdom and grace were also integral to this activity. I was impressed with the respectful and courteous discussions our elected Florida representatives had with each other during these sessions. The existing religious accommodations which have been available under law in Florida in recent years remain intact.. In addition, a religious accommodation was included in a new bill protecting discrimination against an individual's Covid-19 status which became law during this legislative session.



I am also grateful to share this update from the U.S. Federal Office of the Committee on Publication:

The U.S. Federal Office of the Committee on Publication was grateful to work with Congress and the Administration to successfully pass legislation at the end of 2022. The new law preserves access to Christian Science nursing facility services for those Medicare beneficiaries who require this care and later choose to be vaccinated or boosted for COVID-19. The effort provided many opportunities to correct misconceptions about Christian Science, including the belief that Christian Scientists make health care decisions based on adherence to dogma. While highlighting that our Church neither encourages nor discourages vaccination and values the individual decisions of each of its members, we were grateful to be able to share how the practice of Christian Science is informed by the Golden Rule and has been proven in the lives of many to “indeed [be] adequate to unclasp the hold and to destroy disease, sin, and death.” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 412:14)



I have been very grateful for our dear Leader's request and guidance to; “Pray for the prosperity of our country, and for her victory under arms; that justice, mercy, and peace continue to characterize her government, and that they shall rule all nations. Pray that the divine presence may still guide and bless our chief magistrate, those associated with his executive trust, and our national judiciary; give to our congress wisdom, and uphold our nation with the right arm of His righteousness.” (*Christian Science versus Pantheism*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 14:11)

Gratefully,

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“In Science, divine Love alone governs man; ...”
 (Manual of The Mother Church, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 40:7–8 (to ;))