

Idolatry

Welcome to Fourth Church of New Orleans Wednesday Healing service. Today I will read selections from the Bible and from Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy. Later we will have time for testimonies or other thoughts you may have on Christian Science.

We will begin today with Hymn _____.

Hymns 601, 593, 443

THE BIBLE

(Exodus 32:7–24)

¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it *is* a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit *it* for ever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. ¶ And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written. And the tables *were* the work

of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, *There is a noise of war in the camp.* And he said, *It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.* ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder, and strawed *it* upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink *of it*. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they *are set on mischief.* For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break *it* off. So they gave *it* me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

(Exodus 20:1–6)

And God spake all these words, saying, I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

(Acts 17:15–30)

And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed. ¶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, *is*? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 146:5–5 (np))

The first idolatry was faith in matter. The schools have rendered faith in drugs the fashion, rather than faith in Deity. By trusting matter to destroy its own discord, health and harmony have been sacrificed. Such systems are barren of the vitality of spiritual power, by which material sense is made the servant of Science and religion becomes Christlike.

Material medicine substitutes drugs for the power of God — even the might of Mind — to heal the body. Scholasticism clings for salvation to the person, instead of to the divine Principle, of the man Jesus; and his Science, the curative agent of God, is silenced. Why? Because truth divests material drugs of their imaginary power, and clothes Spirit with supremacy. Science is the “stranger that is within thy gates,” remembered not, even when its elevating effects practically prove its divine origin and efficacy.

Divine Science derives its sanction from the Bible, and the divine origin of Science is demonstrated through the holy influence of Truth in healing sickness and sin. This healing power of Truth must have been far anterior to the period in which Jesus lived. It is as ancient as “the Ancient of days.” It lives through all Life, and extends throughout all space.

Divine metaphysics is now reduced to a system, to a form comprehensible by and adapted to the thought of the age in which we live. This system enables the learner to demonstrate the divine Principle, upon which Jesus' healing was based, and the sacred rules for its present application to the cure of disease.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 466:23)

Heathen mythology and Jewish theology have perpetuated the fallacy that intelligence, soul, and life can be in matter; and idolatry and ritualism are the outcome of all man-made beliefs. The Science of Christianity comes with fan in hand to separate the chaff from the wheat. Science will declare God aright, and Christianity will demonstrate this

declaration and its divine Principle, making mankind better physically, morally, and spiritually.

(SH 158:1–30)

It is recorded that the profession of medicine originated in idolatry with pagan priests, who besought the gods to heal the sick and designated Apollo as “the god of medicine.” He was supposed to have dictated the first prescription, according to the “History of Four Thousand Years of Medicine.” It is here noticeable that Apollo was also regarded as the sender of disease, “the god of pestilence.” Hippocrates turned from image-gods to vegetable and mineral drugs for healing. This was deemed progress in medicine; but what we need is the truth which heals both mind and body. The future history of material medicine may correspond with that of its material god, Apollo, who was banished from heaven and endured great sufferings upon earth.

Drugs, cataplasms, and whiskey are stupid substitutes for the dignity and potency of divine Mind and its efficacy to heal. It is pitiful to lead men into temptation through the byways of this wilderness world, — to victimize the race with intoxicating prescriptions for the sick, until mortal mind acquires an educated appetite for strong drink, and men and women become loathsome sots.

Evidences of progress and of spiritualization greet us on every hand. Drug-systems are quitting their hold on matter and so letting in matter's higher stratum, mortal mind. Homœopathy, a step in advance of allopathy, is doing this. Matter is going out of medicine; and mortal mind, of a higher attenuation than the drug, is governing the pellet.

(SH 173:30–21)

The idols of civilization are far more fatal to health and longevity than are the idols of barbarism. The idols of civilization call into action less faith than Buddhism in a supreme governing intelligence. The Esquimaux restore health by incantations as consciously as do civilized practitioners by their more studied methods.

Is civilization only a higher form of idolatry, that man should bow down to a flesh-brush, to flannels, to baths, diet, exercise, and air? Nothing save divine power is capable of doing so much for man as he can do for himself.

The footsteps of thought, rising above material standpoints, are slow, and portend a long night to the traveller; but the angels of His presence — the spiritual intuitions that tell us when “the night is far spent, the day is at hand” — are our guardians in the gloom. Whoever opens the way in Christian Science is a pilgrim and stranger, marking out the path for generations yet unborn.

The thunder of Sinai and the Sermon on the Mount are pursuing and will overtake the ages, rebuking in their course all error and proclaiming the kingdom of heaven on earth. Truth is revealed. It needs only to be practised.

(SH 186:5–5 (np))

Christian Science destroys material beliefs through the understanding of Spirit, and the thoroughness of this work determines health. Erring human mind-forces can work only evil under whatever name or pretence they are employed; for Spirit and matter, good and evil, light and darkness, cannot mingle.

Evil is a negation, because it is the absence of truth. It is nothing, because it is the absence of something. It is unreal, because it presupposes the absence of God, the omnipotent and omnipresent. Every mortal must learn that there is neither power nor reality in evil.

Evil is self-assertive. It says: "I am a real entity, overmastering good." This falsehood should strip evil of all pretensions. The only power of evil is to destroy itself. It can never destroy one iota of good. Every attempt of evil to destroy good is a failure, and only aids in peremptorily punishing the evil-doer. If we concede the same reality to discord as to harmony, discord has as lasting a claim upon us as has harmony. If evil is as real as good, evil is also as immortal. If death is as real as Life, immortality is a myth. If pain is as real as the absence of pain, both must be immortal; and if so, harmony cannot be the law of being.

Mortal mind is ignorant of self, or it could never be self-deceived. If mortal mind knew how to be better, it would be better. Since it must believe in something besides itself, it enthrones matter as deity. The human mind has been an idolater from the beginning, having other gods and believing in more than the one Mind.

As mortals do not comprehend even mortal existence, how ignorant must they be of the all-knowing Mind and of His creations.

(SH 339:20–29 As (np))

... As the mythology of pagan Rome has yielded to a more spiritual idea of Deity, so will our material theories yield to spiritual ideas, until the finite gives place to the infinite, sickness to

health, sin to holiness, and God's kingdom comes "in earth, as it is in heaven." The basis of all health, sinlessness, and immortality is the great fact that God is the only Mind; and this Mind must be not merely believed, but it must be understood. To get rid of sin through Science, is to divest sin of any supposed mind or reality, and never to admit that sin can have intelligence or power, pain or pleasure. You conquer error by denying its verity. Our various theories will never lose their imaginary power for good or evil, until we lose our faith in them and make life its own proof of harmony and God.

This text in the book of Ecclesiastes conveys the Christian Science thought, especially when the word duty, which is not in the original, is omitted: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." In other words: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: love God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole of man in His image and likeness. Divine Love is infinite. Therefore all that really exists is in and of God, and manifests His love.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus xx. 3.) The First Commandment is my favorite text. It demonstrates Christian Science. It inculcates the tri-unity of God, Spirit, Mind; it signifies that man shall have no other spirit or mind but God, eternal good, and that all men shall have one Mind. The divine Principle of the First Commandment bases the Science of being, by which man demonstrates health, holiness, and life eternal. 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.

(SH 466:23–26)

Heathen mythology and Jewish theology have perpetuated the fallacy that intelligence, soul, and life can be in matter; and idolatry and ritualism are the outcome of all man-made beliefs.

(SH 469:12–10)

Question. — What is Mind?

Answer. — Mind is God. The exterminator of error is the great truth that God, good, is the only Mind, and that the supposititious opposite of infinite Mind — called devil or evil — is not Mind, is not Truth, but error, without intelligence or reality. There can be but one Mind, because there is but one God; and if mortals claimed no other Mind and accepted no other, sin would be unknown. We can have but one Mind, if that one is infinite. We bury the sense of infinitude, when we admit that, although God is infinite, evil has a place in this infinity, for evil can have no place, where all space is filled with God.

We lose the high signification of omnipotence, when after admitting that God, or good, is omnipresent and has all-power, we still believe there is another power, named evil. This belief that there is more than one mind is as pernicious to divine theology as are ancient mythology and pagan idolatry. With one Father, even God, the whole family of man would be brethren; and with one Mind and that God, or good, the brotherhood of man would consist of Love and Truth, and have unity of Principle and spiritual power which constitute divine Science. The supposed existence of more than one mind was the basic error of idolatry. This error assumed the loss of spiritual power, the loss of the spiritual presence of Life as infinite Truth without an unlikeness, and the loss of Love as ever present and universal.

(SH 535:10–14)

Divine Science deals its chief blow at the supposed material foundations of life and intelligence. It dooms idolatry. A belief in other gods, other creators, and other creations must go down before Christian Science.

We will now have a moment of silent prayer to be followed by the audible repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

Fourth Church of New Orleans is a branch of The Mother Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, MA. This church is committed to understanding and practicing the works of Christ Jesus and his disciples. Our church is a healing church and all mankind is included in the blessing this service imparts.

In addition to this Wednesday Service, we have Sunday Service right here on Zoom at 10:30 am and we also have on Zoom our Sunday School for young people up to the age of 20.

Information for all these Church Services can be found on the Church website:

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