



Handouts for Week of September 10 2023- "Matter"

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A revolutionary statement and its backstory

By George Moffett

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“The scientific statement of being”—Mary Baker Eddy’s resounding affirmation of the allness of Spirit and the nothingness of matter—is the most revolutionary paragraph ever penned by the hand of man.

The six-sentence, 62-word declaration, authored by the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science (see *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 468), contains the very pith or essence of Christian Science, the twin premises from which the entire theology of Christian Science issues forth. As history indicates, the statement was not written capriciously nor without a due appreciation on Mrs. Eddy’s part of the response it would almost certainly command from a world steeped in the scientific materialism of the age, predicated on the perceived incompatibility of religion and science (see *Science and Health*, p. 268).

As one of Mrs. Eddy’s students recounts, she was aware of the profound implications of what she was writing and the extent to which this radical statement would fly in the face of everything that seemed so apparent and logical to human sense—even, initially, her own.

“I could not at once bring myself to write down the thoughts which surged in upon me that substance was not matter,” she recalled to this student, Irving Tomlinson. “I would lay down my pen and say, ‘I cannot write it.’ It seemed so contrary to all my experience and yet there was the heavenly message, ‘There is no life, truth, intelligence nor substance in matter.’” After further reflection, she concluded, “I saw ... that the true man was spiritual and that the fleshly body was but the false belief of the false material sense” (Reminiscences of Irving C. Tomlinson, p. 125, The Mary Baker Eddy Collection, The Mary Baker Eddy Library).

Nor was the statement written under entirely hospitable circumstances. During one of the years Mrs. Eddy was engaged in writing her textbook, *Science and Health*, she was forced to change lodgings no fewer than eight times because her work generated such mental resistance.

The particular home where “the scientific statement of being” was written seemed welcoming at first, owing to Mrs. Eddy’s healing of the landlord’s daughter, whose life was imperiled by a severe illness. But, as she told Tomlinson: “I was to have a rude awakening. One day when I was lifted heavenward in writing the Scientific Statement of Being, I left the home at noon for my dinner at a neighboring home. When I returned I found my trunk, the chair in which I did my writing and a few personal articles thrown out of doors. It seemed as though the more the love of God blessed me, the more was the wrath of man visited upon me” (Tomlinson reminiscence, p. 120).

Her statement was incorporated into “The Science of Man,” a pamphlet she published in 1876. The statement appeared in the third edition of *Science and Health* in 1881 when “The Science of Man” was added as the chapter titled “Recapitulation,” which is the permanent basis for Primary class instruction in Christian Science. She deemed it sufficiently important that she also ordained that it be read at the conclusion of every Christian Science Sunday service and every Sunday School session. It is one of the first things young students of Christian Science are taught in Sunday School.

The ultimate significance of “the scientific statement of being” is that it removed Christian Science completely from all vestiges of relativism—the belief that truth is merely subjective. The statement was an expression of what Mrs. Eddy insisted was the absolute, unchangeable, invariable truth of God and His creation. It placed Christian Science squarely on the side of the spiritually scientific account of creation contained in the first chapter of Genesis. It separated Christian Science from all human theories that posited the notion of dualism, or the coexistence of matter and Spirit. And in the end, it showed Christian Science to be more than a creed or dogma, because it set forth propositions that could be verified by anyone who understood the divine Principle of Christian Science.

Over the generations since “the scientific statement of being” was first published, its veracity has been demonstrated by countless students of Christian Science—in lives healed, regenerated, and restored by comprehending the central truth that the human senses are slow to grasp: that the true status of man is in Spirit, not in matter (see *Science and Health*, p. 476).

As to its acceptance in world thought, Mrs. Eddy understood that it was only by such demonstration, not through human reasoning alone, that humanity could really begin to accept the reformatory premises embraced in her theology—God’s allness and matter’s insubstantiality.

For her part, she quickly grasped that the sentences she hesitated at first to write bore the imprimatur of God, the sanctity of divinity. She wrote, “The works I have written on Christian Science contain absolute Truth, and my necessity was to tell it; therefore I did this even as a surgeon who wounds to heal. I was a scribe under orders; and who can

refrain from transcribing what God indites, and ought not that one to take the cup, drink all of it, and give thanks?” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 311). She was confident that in the face of accumulating evidence, through healing, world belief was “slowly yielding to the idea of a metaphysical basis, looking away from matter to Mind as the cause of every effect” (*Science and Health*, p. 268). And she predicted that, in time, the simple but profound premises that caused her to be expelled from the home in which they were written would eventually be seen as verifiable truth. That they would lay down the ultimate challenge to the working assumption of human science, theology, and medicine: that life is material, and therefore inevitably tends toward deterioration and death.

The propositions embedded in “the scientific statement of being” reverberate through every page of Mrs. Eddy’s writings, defining reality with perfect, unmatched, and unadulterated clarity. They stand as the consummate scientific declaration of the Word as taught and demonstrated by Christ Jesus. They explain the basis of his mastery over sin, disease, and death. The basis upon which his apostles and followers were able to emulate his works. The basis upon which primitive Christianity has been restored to the world. The basis upon which securely stands the Church of Christ, Scientist.

Some years after writing “the scientific statement of being,” Mrs. Eddy wrote on [page 34](#) of *Unity of Good*, “Here comes in the summary of the whole matter, wherewith we started: that God is All, and God is Spirit; therefore there is nothing but Spirit; and consequently there is no matter.”



“Scientific Statement of Being”

Question: What is the scientific statement of being?

not WAS or SHALL be, but what IS

- present tense

being:

- my identity, my being
- my essence
- who I am

statement:

- series of facts expressed
- set down in detail in writing
- fully in words

scientific:

- comprehension of Truth
- Principle: self-evident truth
- understanding according to rules or principles

Answer. There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter.

- matter is absolutely nothing: illusion, fantasy, vapor, shadow, hypnotism, mesmerism, suggestion, presentment, spell, sleep, lethargy, belief, dream
- matter is misconception, mortal mind

(misconception, mortal mind)

Matter has no place, no location, no presence, no power, no law behind it, no cause, no condition, no authority.

(mortal mind, misconception)

Matter cannot speak, move, see, hear, touch, do anything.

Matter is what seems to be and is not.

Matter is the opposite of truth,

a lie and the father of it.

All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all.

Not some, but ALL, the universe is mental! Every bit of everything is mental. It is God, Mind, knowing Himself. God thinking—knowing—seeing—acting. Mind is awareness, intelligence, wisdom. In all the universe there is only one Mind and it is God.

Mind is omnipresent, limitless, complete. Mind is first and last, the source of all things, the source of sight, movement, action, joy, supply, dominion. Mind is the law of God, the only healer, the only remedy, the master of all reality, the “one on the throne”.

And I am Mind's manifestation. I am the awareness of everything Mind is. I express infinite understanding, infinite intuition, infinite spiritual sense, clarity of thought, acute mental vision, clear sight. I reflect everything Mind is, everything Mind does.

I never dream, believe, fear, but I understand all things. I can never err or sin, but I know and acknowledge that “all is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation.”

Spirit is immortal Truth;

Spirit: Holy ghost, breath, movement

immortal: deathless, eternal, imperishable, incorruptible, indestructible, undecaying, unchanging, everlasting, undiminished

Spirit is independent of matter. It is the only true substance, the only creator. It has no beginning and no ending. It is immortality brought to light, the only presence. Spirit is holiness, light, harmony, the source of being, the source of supply. It is the only law, the divine, nature and the only power.

matter is mortal error;

- mortal mind, matter, is a lie, an error, a myth, a belief
- it is mortal, temporary, fleeting, impermanent, fatal
- error is a mistake, an inaccuracy, misconception, a false belief, an illusion, delusion, a deception, a mirage
- matter is a temporary, self-deception, fleeting lie
- matter is nothing, no thing, no presence, no power, no cause, no condition

Spirit is the real and eternal;

- *real*: the true, actual, fact, what truly exists
- Spirit is legitimate, lawful, authentic
- Spirit is eternal, imperishable, unending, permanent, perfect, undying, indestructible

matter is the unreal and temporal.

- *unreal*: imaginary, illusory, deceptive, unsubstantial, dreamlike, fake
- false, spurious, artificial, make-believe, fraudulent, pretense
- *temporal*: nonspiritual, secular, material, carnal, mortal, temporary, passing, impermanent, fleeting

Spirit is God and man is His image and likeness.

I am the exact image and likeness of my Father. I am everything that He is. I have everything He has, and it is ALL good!

Therefore, man is not material; he is spiritual.

This is law to every case! I am not in matter. I was never born into matter. I cannot die out of matter. I never grew up in matter. I was never conditioned or influenced by matter. I am nobody's child. I am nobody's sister, nobody's wife, or mother or grandmother. I have no material history, no past in matter. I "live and move and have my being in God". God is my source, my Father-Mother, my creator. And "I am more precious than fine gold!"

Ps 8:5,6

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.

Ziggurat (elevated tower)



Sea of Galilee - Capernaum

