

*"... Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"*

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## WHAT CULTIC GROUPS DO NOT UNDERSTAND

*Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor*

In dealing with the cults there seems to be a tendency among writers to present them as being nearly invincible in ensnaring people. One must concede, of course, that these groups have demonstrated great capabilities in gaining followers. Usually they achieve in this more rapidly than the established denominations. And, in addition, some of the cults are active in nearly every area of the world. Estimates of their numbers have varied among different writers. It is fair, nevertheless, to state that they have reached the figure of fifteen million in our country. Some of the cultic groups refuse to provide any exact numerical figure; hence this above statement is only correct, broadly considered.

It is well known that these spurious groups are gathering up enormous funds, and they skillfully use the printed page in order to influence as many people as possible in responding favorably to their propaganda. Moreover, the more successful cultic groups have on the field many thousand emissaries who enter nearly every community in the land, and

also in the regions beyond this hemisphere. In these many areas the false groups demonstrate an amazing determination in reaching their objectives. Informed Christians have discovered, however, that despite their great zeal, there are certain fundamental areas where the cults fail completely to meet the spiritual challenge of this generation.

### No Cultists Grasp the Grace of God

In nearly three decades as director of Religion Analysis Service, I have yet to meet the first cultist who understands the grace of God as revealed through Jesus Christ. Somehow, they do not grasp Paul's vital statement "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). With the Jehovah's Witnesses salvation means following their leaders blindly and being faithful in the distribution of the literature placed in their hands. In Herbert W. Armstrong's system salvation may be achieved only through their legalism, and a complete conformity to their rigid rules. None of these misguided people who

come to your door has any understanding of the simplicity and beauty of the Gospel message. Bible-believing Christians are convinced that the historical strength of the Church has been in the proclamation of the Gospel of the grace of God. It has led to countless millions who have been saved in every generation.

The cults continue to require of their followers conformity to these man-made regulations. None of them comprehends God's grace and that salvation cannot be earned through good works. For example, the Seventh Day Adventists demand complete adherence to the Sabbath keeping. It was required of the Jewish people only during the time of the law economy. It appears nearly impossible for this cult to break out from the legalistic barrier. In fact all the cults, the major groups as well as the lesser organizations, have this in common, namely diluting the Gospel with works and restrictions. Paul calls this "another Gospel." None of the cults proclaim the glad tidings, and they are unable to declare with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). When have you heard a cultic representative set forth in a personal manner these words? "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

### **Cultists Simply Are Unable To Let Go Of Works**

We have just pointed out that God's grace is the primary truth to be proclaimed, and it must never be coupled with works, that is, with

regard to the teaching of the way of salvation. Even those cults which are more enlightened than the others fail to understand that works are not required in order to be saved. In all of the groups works and conformity to certain regulations are necessary in order to satisfy the demands of God. They fail to look directly at the Scriptural message. We read: "Knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). On this vital teaching the cultic groups have departed from the Scriptural message. The works required by the cults may involve Sabbath keeping, baptism, tithing, the distribution of literature or some other regulations arranged by these spurious leaders. Somehow, all the cultic groups are committed to works as being essential elements in salvation. Works are proper and in order following the acceptance of Jesus Christ. In other words, we work from the cross, but never in order to be saved. Paul writes, "We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus **unto** good works which God hath ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). The preposition in the verse makes it perfectly clear that we are saved by grace and not by or through good works. This position separates the cults from Bible-believing Christians.

### **Cultists Do Not Experience The Joy Of The Lord**

The personal commital of a believer to Christ produces a joy that is truly incomparable. The magnitude of the inner rejoicing of

the redeemed believer is distinct and without any parallel in human experience. In contrast, the cultist who has come under the dominance of a false system may be zealous, loyal, and determined to promote the teaching of that cult. But I have never known one of these people motivated by genuine spiritual joy. Jesus refers to this delightful experience of His followers in the words, "These things have I spoken unto you that your joy might be full" (Jn. 15:11). In emphasizing the inner satisfaction and blessedness of the believer, Paul writes "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing..." (Rom. 15:13). Perhaps no one has given a clearer expression to this inner attribute of the children of God than the Psalmist who writes, "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

In contrast to this joy of the believer, we find the cultist is dominated and intimidated by unscrupulous leaders who do not understand at all the joy of the Lord. The testimony of many of these people who have been set free from the false systems reveal the lack of joy and peace while being members of such organizations. The people who have been ensnared are actually brain-washed by the self-appointed leaders of the cults. The abundant life about which Jesus spoke is

unknown to the cultists. But to the followers of Christ, the words of the Lord are blessedly real: "I am come that they may have life and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). The inner joy of the believer is like an artesian well which flows forth refreshing waters continually. Despite all the cunningness and resourcefulness of present-day cults, they are unable to produce the blessed spiritual element designated in Scripture as joy.

I have now pointed out three distinct areas where Christianity has no competition with the cults. They are simply unable to experience the blessed and lasting elements which characterize the Christian religion. Let us not be hesitant in pointing out these shortcomings to the people who have been ensnared by the cults. Without a doubt many of these misguided people are still searching for a satisfaction which they are unable to find in the false systems with which they are identified. I have summarized for you especially those areas where the cults have been unable to match the great satisfaction and joy found within the Christian religion. My discussion is verified by the numerous books written, as well as through pamphlets and personal testimonies given by those who have been set free from the tyranny experienced while being associated with the cultic groups.

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# A FRESH LOOK AT MORMONISM

*By Rev. Ewald Eisele*

Cults flourish in America for three simple reasons. First, Christians know little about the various cults and fail to recognize that they are **not** Christian but Satanic. Secondly, Christians do not know enough about the Truth, the doctrines of the Bible and so fail to feel able to give "an answer to every man that asketh them, a reason of the hope that is in them" (I Peter 3:15). Thirdly, because of the first two, Christians feel overwhelmed, or at least threatened, when they are approached by an adherent to a cult. So they try to ignore, or avoid them, or worse, fall for their line and "go along" with them hoping for some way out of the confrontation.

There is nothing we can do for the second reason. All Christians are exhorted to "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Each Christian is on his own to learn, to saturate his heart and mind with the Word, and to wait on the Lord for the wisdom, strength and boldness to be an effective ambassador for Christ.

Perhaps we can do something about number one and three. In the next several issues we will deal with one major cult, giving in the most simple language what that cult believes and then giving some tips on how the average, ordinary Christian can meet them and give an answer that will bear fruit unto the Lord.

In this issue we will take A Fresh

Look At Mormonism. The Lord willing, this will be followed in the next issue with A Fresh Look at The Jehovah's Witnesses. We do not anticipate any great new revelations in these articles but rather a fresh examination of what the various cults believe and practice. We trust that these will be a challenge to believers to be real contenders for the Faith.

Mormonism took from 1830 until 1947, 117 years, to gain one million members. It took only 16 years to gain the second million, only nine years for the third million, and only four years to gain the fourth million. There are many reasons why this is the fastest growing cult in the world, but probably the main reason is that people don't know the truth about Mormonism and so believe what the well dressed "missionaries" (proselyters really) say when they come calling. There are over 25,000 of these full time "converters" out trying to convert Christians from the Gospel revealed in the inspired New Testament to another "gospel," which, as Paul warns in Galatians 1:7-8, "is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

If Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, had been a Christian and had believed those verses there would never have been a Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.

The first thing that must be said of this church is that **it is not** Christian! The only relationship they have with Christianity is in their name and their use of Christian terms. They reject the Bible, since anything in it that does not agree with Mormonism practice and Mormon doctrine is regarded as "a faulty translation." They do not **have**, or **worship** the God of the Bible. Their Jesus is not the One in the Bible, and the fundamentals of their faith are not biblical. Their doctrine of the Bible, since anything in it that does not agree with Mormonism practice and Mormon doctrine is regarded as "a faulty translation." They do not **have**, or **worship** the God of the Bible. Their Jesus is not the One in the Bible, and the fundamentals of their faith are not biblical. Their doctrine of the Bible says, "We believe the Bible to be the Word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."

It does not take very much discernment to notice that there is a rejection of the Bible as **the** inspired Word of God, but not one bit of questioning regarding the Book of Mormon.

The sacred books of the Mormons are *The Book of Mormon*, *The Doctrine and Covenants*, and *The Pearl of Great Price*. However, if the President of the church wants to, he can by-pass these and other writings and "reveal" and enforce some totally new "doctrine." Brigham Young, the second President of the church, taught that, as have many other leaders over the years. Last Oct. 19, 1981, there was an article in *Newsweek* magazine in which Ezra Taft Benson, next-in-line for the

Presidency of the church said that "the Prophet (President) is the only man that speaks for the Lord in everything." He also said that the Prophet could receive a new revelation on any matter, including civic matters, and that the Prophet is of greater importance than any of the writings, including the Bible. The Mormons not only have a distorted view of the importance of the Bible but they also reject the plain meaning of the words used in the Bible. No one should be fooled by the terminology that they use. Much of it **is** Christian and some is out of the Bible itself. But when Mormons use the words God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Bible, faith, works, Gospel; when they speak of sin, or salvation, or heaven, they do not mean what a Christian means when using the same terms. And they certainly do not mean what the Bible is saying when we find those same words in the text.

One thing to keep in mind is that whenever a person is going to use a Bible in witnessing to Mormons the King James version should be used. The missionaries carry a King James and should any other version be used it gives them just one more opportunity to ridicule the "many faulty translations" in the churches.

Incidentally, regarding the churches, no matter what the church may be, Mormons believe that theirs is the only true church and that all others are an abomination to the Lord, as are all so-called Christians. It is well to remember that they believe that **they** are the "saved" ones and all others, including Christians, are the lost. They may, on occasion, also ridicule, or at least call attention to, the many denominations in Christen-

dom. If they do, they may be reminded that after Joseph Smith died, 64 Mormon denominations came into existence with about 16 still existing today.

Mormons do not worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of the Bible. They believe that God was once a child who grew into manhood and "advanced" until he became God. They believe that every man on earth can become a god and that there are not only many gods but also mother-gods. Their doctrine of God is this: "As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become." They believe that their God is Adam who became God because of his good works. Their Adam-god is also the father, through physical intercourse with his many wives, of the spirits of countless men who take on a body when they are given one by their earthly parents. The other gods in like manner reproduce in the celestial kingdom so that mankind can keep on reproducing on earth.

When they say Jesus, the Christian thinks of the Saviour, the only begotten of the Father, who died for their sins and was raised for their justification. When a Mormon says Jesus, he thinks about a common man who was begotten by their Adam-god through physical intercourse with Mary. They think of a man who practiced polygamy and was married to Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene. They believe that only those whose marriages are "sealed for eternity" will rise above the status of angels and attain the position of gods. They believe that at the marriage of Cana in John 2,

Jesus and the disciples attended HIS wedding. And because He **was** married He has risen to be an equal with Adam and the others who in like manner have become gods. They also believe that Satan and Jesus are brothers and that they contended in their pre-existent state for the privilege of taking a body so that one of them could become the redeemer of men. Needless to say, Jesus won the contest—so say the Mormons. Now **that** is their Jesus.

When it comes to salvation, the Mormon writings say nothing of an Ephesians 2:8-9 type of salvation but rather speak of good works, baptism and complete loyalty to Joseph Smith and his successors. In his *Journal of Discourses*, Brigham Young wrote, "If you will believe in your hearts, and confess with your mouth Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was a prophet, and that Brigham is his successor, you shall be saved in the Kingdom of God." He also said, "No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter the celestial Kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith." In the *Doctrine and Covenants* it states, "Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it." The main emphasis in the salvation of Mormons is on works. Because of Christ's atonement every man will receive immortality—which means that they will be raised from the dead. But not everyone will receive salvation. So their doctrine of salvation is in two parts. That which comes to all men—even if they do not believe, and that which is for the

individuals who merit a place in one of the three Mormon heavens through obedience to the laws of the church and compliance to the ordinances of the "gospel."

Very closely related to individual salvation is the opportunity, or rather duty, of every Mormon to become a savior in his own right. This is in connection with their doctrine of Baptism for the Dead. Joseph Smith supposedly received the revelation regarding this in 1841. It is based in part on a misapplication of I Corinthians 15:29. Their doctrine states that baptism is essential for salvation, and since there were many who died before Joseph Smith came on the scene with his "revelations," one of the duties, and works, of a Mormon is to make sure that he is baptized for his ancestors. However, not all who are baptized by proxy will end up in the celestial kingdom, but only those who are worthy, since even in **this** baptism salvation is based on merit.

Now having covered this much, it must be admitted that only the surface of the matter has been scratched. But how should the Christian react to a visit by a pair of Mormon missionaries, or how should one act toward a Mormon neighbor or relative, knowing that they believe with all their hearts and souls and minds these and many other anti-Christian doctrines? In the case of missionaries, don't close the door in their face. As for the neighbor or relative, don't ignore and avoid them. They believe that this is a type of persecution and it just strengthens them in their faith.

Greet the missionaries with a smile and, using their terminology, say, "Before you begin, let me bear my

witness." They will stop to hear you out, because they will probably think that you are a Mormon! Then give a positive and straightforward testimony of your faith, using all the Scripture you can possibly put into it. Don't be afraid to make it lengthy. The more sure of yourself you appear to them the more they will remember. Don't argue, and if possible, don't let them put you on the defensive. **They** are the ones that need salvation, and if your testimony is positive and personal, with plenty of Scripture, it will someday bear fruit. The missionaries are not used to meeting with aggressive Christians who know what they believe and why. That is why it is so important to be really intimately familiar with the fundamentals of Christianity. If you are well founded in the Bible doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, man, sin, salvation, and the hope of eternal glory with Christ, you can be in command on any occasion when you encounter a member of this lost denomination.

Of course, everyone is not that prepared. Even so, meet them, friend, relative, or missionary, with a smile and tell them that you don't want to hear their story, and hand them a good tract that will speak to their need. In our office we have, among the many items concerning Mormonism, a sample packet of Mormon tracts which sells for \$1.25 plus (now) 85¢ postage. Get the packet, read the tracts over, decide which one would be best for you to use and then order a supply to have on hand. But with the tract, give at least one verse of Scripture for a testimony. After all, it is not our word but the Word of God that will accomplish His purpose (Is. 55:11).



# CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: CULT FOR THE CULTURED

By Carolyn Poole

The religion is called "Christian," but there's mystery behind the facade.

People are impressed by the dignity and refinement of its adherents. Its edifices are grand, and its "reading rooms" well appointed. Its newspaper is known for its journalistic excellence. Its members company with kings.

Its founder, the late Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, said Christian Science was her revelation and she was the "revelator." She built walls around her church with laws that mandated obedience and secrecy.

She decreed that her followers cannot disclose membership figures, discuss church business with outsiders, or allow anyone to read their notes from Class Instruction.

No one (except a few appointed for the job) can give talks on Christian Science. Only a small number of teachers can conduct classes and these only once a year for only thirty students.

The bylaws of the *Church Manual* prevent members from holding inter-church conferences with each other. They are also forbidden to conduct weddings or funerals or to serve any kind of food or beverages in their edifices.

Every Christian Science church in the world performs identical services, allowing no individuality, no personal opinion, and no leadership other than Mrs. Eddy's. On Sunday mornings two people take turns reading from the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health With Key To*

*the Scriptures*. That's the sermon for the week.

To a large extent, the members live closed lives, keeping to themselves. When they are ill or have any problems, they are generally secretive, since they are taught that it would endanger them for other people to know about their problems.

They believe that everything is a result of one's thinking. So they feel they must guard against other people's thoughts.

Mrs. Eddy helped popularize the concept of "mind over matter"—a teaching that has led to jokes:

One lady attended a party where all but her escort were Christian Scientists. As they sat down they noticed someone had left a thumbtack on an empty chair.

When the young lady asked her companion to remove it, he just sat there and said with a twinkle in his eye, "They won't feel it. It's not there."

But not all non-Christian Scientists joke about these teachings. Christian pastors preach against Mrs. Eddy's theology, claiming it is not even Christian. Those in mainstream churches view Mrs. Eddy's interpretation of the Bible with alarm.

Medical personnel criticize the religion, recalling seriously ill Christian Scientists who refused medical treatment. They tell, too, of children excused from immunizations and physical examinations because of special medical laws the church has sponsored.

Christian Science has also received special treatment from Congress. Under President Richard Nixon (whose closest advisers included two Christian Scientists: Bob Haldeman and John Ehrlichman), a copyright law, S1866, was passed to extend the copyright on Mrs. Eddy's textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

The law, unique in American jurisprudence, passed over the objections of Senator Javits and Senator Hart and the Committee on Civil Rights of the New York Bar Association, which claimed that it violated the First Amendment (Congressional Record, page 46070, December 10, 1971).

Christian Science has also made inroads in language. The most widely-used dictionary, *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (eighth edition), presents Mrs. Eddy's own altered definitions for more than 35 words, a privilege not granted other religions.

Many of these words and their definitions bear little relationship to religion. These "re-defined" words include angel, atonement, baptism, Christian Science, Christ, death, devil, error, Eucharist, First Reader, God, heaven, hell, idea, intelligence, Jesus, life, love, man, matter, mind, miracle, mortal mind, practitioner, principle, prophet, resurrection, salvation, science, scientist, Second Reader, soul, spirit, substance and truth.

Ardent followers of Christian Science are generally peaceful, educated, and financially successful. Many are prominent. Some news, movie, and television celebrities reportedly are—or have

been—Christian Scientists. These have included Senator Charles Percy, Congressman John Rousselot, Kay Kyser, Ginger Rogers, Doris Day and Joan Crawford.

The Christian Science church publishes a respected newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor*, started by Mrs. Eddy when she was 87. Widely used in schools, it is a subtle tool for spreading Christian Science doctrine.

But most significant for Christians is the metaphysical "can of worms" that Christian Science doctrine has opened. Mrs. Eddy's docetecgnostic concepts, similar to those that overtly challenged Christ's disciples in the first centuries, have reappeared to work their way through a nation founded on Christian teachings. Mrs. Eddy has made such concepts appear respectable and acceptable to those not well aware of what the Lord Jesus taught.

The Mind Science religions have grown out of Christian Science—Unity, Religious Science, and Divine Science. These have helped make people responsive to receive Eastern religions such as Hare Krishna, Transcendental Meditation, and Zen Buddhism.

Christian Science in precept and practice satisfied the accepted definition of a cult by meeting eight conditions.

1. It has a strong leader, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, who through her writings controls the minds of her devotees.

2. The "Jesus" it teaches is not the Jesus of the Bible. Mrs. Eddy said that He was only a person and not the Christ, whom she claimed in-

stead was impersonal.

3. It isolates members by encouraging them to concentrate exclusively on Christian Science pamphlets, newspaper, literature, bookstores (reading rooms), schools, camps, nursing homes, retirement centers, college youth organizations, and churches.

4. It practices censorship, in effect, by discouraging members from reading any unauthorized literature, which means any religious material that is not sold in the reading rooms or printed by the Christian Science publishing house.

5. It keeps members busy, expecting them to read their lessons daily, to attend church services and lectures, to subscribe to church periodicals, and to work on committees.

6. It expresses loyalty to the leader (Mrs. Eddy) through testimonies that voice gratitude for her in periodicals and Wednesday night meetings. Devotion is also heightened by the biographies of Mrs. Eddy. They extol her, while castigating her enemies.

The adherent is instructed to read daily the manual's Article VIII, section 6, that says he is not "to forget nor to neglect his duty to God, to his leader (Mrs. Eddy), and to mankind. By his works he shall be judged—and justified or condemned."

All this implies a penalty if he neglects his duty to Mrs. Eddy. It puts her on the throne where normally the Lord Jesus would sit.

7. It applies "carrot and stick" discipline. The enticing carrot is the offer of healing and protection through studying Christian Science. The stick is the threat of evil that

comes to the person who rejects it.

Mrs. Eddy wrote, "Alas, for those who break faith with divine Science. . . what must the end be? They must eventually expiate their sins through suffering" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 569).

This is, of course, unscriptural, for it promotes righteousness by works.

8. Its adherents study Mrs. Eddy's book (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*) along with the Bible and in practical application allow it to take precedence over the Bible.

The Church Manual states: "As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life." Members read it daily, but Mrs. Eddy's "spiritual interpretation" violates the Bible's clear statement and decides for Christian Scientists what the Bible "really means." She justified this by claiming hers was the only true Christianity because she had healings.

The Scriptures tell of God's creation of earth and man; of the fall of man with the introduction of sin; of Satan's taking rulership of earth; and of God's plan to bring a Savior to redeem man from his sin, defeat Satan, and prepare the church to be the Bride of Jesus Christ.

In order to accept the Bible's truths, one has to recognize (contrary to Christian Science) that all men are sinners (Romans 3:23); that sin, Satan, and evil are real (Eze. 18:4; Rev. 20:2, 10; Eccles. 9:3) that there is a future judgment day with a real heaven and a real hell (Rev. 20:11-15); and that God the Son came in real flesh (John 1:14) (which gnosticism ultimately denies).

But Christian Science opposes

such Biblical truths. Mrs. Eddy taught that the first chapter of Genesis is the true account in which man is made in the image and likeness of God. But she called the second chapter of Genesis a false account, labeling it the "Adam Dream."

She explained the mist that arose was the false belief that matter is real.

Christian Science says that all is Mind, and that God is Mind, and therefore God is All. (This is pantheism, although Mrs. Eddy would be adamant in denying the label.)

Christian Science claims that man is made in God's image and likeness, and that the real man is like God. Therefore because God is Mind, Spirit, and perfect, then man is spiritual (not material) and perfect.

But this teaching is refuted by any honest comparison of Genesis 1:26, 27 with Genesis 5:1-3.

Where did sickness, sin, disease, and death come from? According to Mrs. Eddy, they are part of the "Adam-dream," the false belief that came from the "mortal mind" lie.

According to her "revelation," man purportedly grows spiritually to know his real being as spiritual and to overcome the "false claims" of matter.

She claims that there is no heaven and no hell, except as a state of mind; that death is only an illusion; and that the only thing that dies is the "belief" of the body, because the body only exists as a belief in the first place.

Mrs. Eddy claims that God, being Spirit, does not know matter (which includes the physical man). Therefore He is greater than matter, is different from matter, and cannot be in matter.

These thoughts, repeated throughout Mrs. Eddy's writings, show why it is nearly impossible for the Christian Scientist to believe when the Bible repeatedly says that God, who is Spirit, deliberately became man; or that Jesus was God the Son, come in the flesh (physical).

Like the gnostics whom the apostles called heretics, Mrs. Eddy separates Jesus from Christ. She declares, 1) that the Christ is the truth that has always been here and always will be, 2) that Jesus was only a way-shower, a perfect man who served as a teacher and model for man.

As a result the Christian Scientist does not believe in Jesus as the Bible presents Him. By calling Jesus the way-shower instead of the Way, Mrs. Eddy sidetracks a Christian Scientist's thinking.

It sounds close, but it's not at all the same. Anyone can be the way-shower if only he shows the way to God. But only Jesus is the Way.

Christian Science convolutes the message of the Bible by such devices as adding the word "Truth" to the name Christ, referring constantly to the "Christ, Truth," and defining Christ and Jesus as two different entities.

Mrs. Eddy will also quote Bible verses about Jesus and either omit His name or change it to "Christ."

For example, she said in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (p. 23): "Believe. . .and thou shalt be saved!" Her quote left out the important part: "Believe *on the Lord Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

In quoting the Lord's clear statement that He is the Way (John

14:6), Mrs. Eddy many times calls Him Christ. But the Christian Scientist does not realize that the human man Jesus was both Christ and the Way.

Jesus Himself referred to Himself as the Christ (Luke 24:25-27).

And the Apostle John said, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-Christ, that denieth the Father and the Son" (I John 2:22).

Christian Scientists find it difficult to understand how God, who is Spirit, became man. Yet that is precisely what the Bible claims.

John in his Gospel (John 1:1, 14) said that the Word was God and the Word became flesh. In many places the Bible proclaims the deity of Jesus (see *Moody Monthly*, July/August 1979, "Why We Believe in the Deity of Christ").

Although the Christian Scientist believes Jesus performed the miracles He did, he refuses to believe what Jesus said about hell. He described it, warned of it often, and said that's where a person is going

who doesn't receive Him.

When Mrs. Eddy attempts to describe hell as only a temporary state of mind, she denies the very words of Jesus in Matthew 13:49, 50; 25:46.

Since they have been misled from even taking the first step of seeing who Jesus is, followers of Christian Science can't believe He is who He said He is. And if they don't believe in Him, they can't have eternal life.

These nice, quiet, law-abiding people are deceived. It is imperative that Christians stop having a "hands-off" attitude toward Christian Scientists. With love, we must show them who Jesus Christ really is and what He has done.

Mrs. Poole directs Christian Way, an organization of former Christian Scientists. She and her husband are members of First Baptist Church, Lancaster, California.

This article originally appeared in *Moody Monthly*, October, 1981 and is used by permission of the publisher and author.

## **THE SALVATION ARMY MADE THE RIGHT DECISION**

The Salvation Army withdrew its membership in the World Council of Churches during the past year. This decision was based on the political radicalism of the WCC in providing the Black Guerilla Movement in Africa (known as SWAPO) with \$125,000 to help that armed band in its struggle, many of whom are trained and supported by the Russian Communists. We commend the Salvation Army for this positive step in severing its relationship with the liberal WCC which has no gospel to offer the needy world. The WCC is interested mainly in liberal political, economic, and social panaceas for such areas.

# DELUSIONS OF THE END TIMES

*Prof. John E. Dahlin*

It is extremely important that each Christian has an awareness these days of significant developments throughout the realm of Christendom. It is our purpose to identify certain characteristics of the period which is often designated as the End-Times.

As we deal with Bible prophecies pertaining to the Latter Days, we find a remarkable uniformity among the various New Testament writers in the portrayal of the delusions in the end-time. In fact, all the New Testament authors depict distressing times at the conclusion of the present age. The delusions gain additional momentum following the rapture of the church, and the climax will be reached in the last half of the Tribulation period. Unquestionably the latter days referred to so often in the New Testament include the last period of the church, just prior to Christ's return.

Events in our own times reveal conditions never equaled in church history—obviously the latter days are upon us. The apostacy described in clear language in the Word of God seems to develop very rapidly. The apostacy is something in addition to the signs of the times such as, e.g., the Jewish, commercial social and political developments characterizing the end-time. It seems clear that the religious sign is the most impressive one among the many signs discussed by the New Testament authors. These delusions will follow three distinct paths.

## **Expanding Skepticism**

First is the brazen spirit of skepticism (II Peter 3:3, 4). The open rejection of the major doctrines of the Bible is evident throughout Christendom. Such rejection often follows a pattern of refinement in expressions by liberal writers. Disbelief in inspiration, and in the validity of Scriptural authority are widely manifested. In many religious areas it has risen as a tide during the present generation.

## **Numerous Heresies**

Then, too, heresies are mentioned as leading characteristics of the latter days (II Timothy 4:3; I John 2:7-9). Cults, Isms, and false systems are flourishing throughout the domain of Christendom. Already more than fifteen million are ensnared in our country, most of whom are church people. With our present-day ignorance in the Bible, millions of others will be victimized. These heresies are drawing millions away from the old historic positions in Christianity.

## **Fanaticism Increasing**

Moreover, fanatics will take on increasing strength in the latter days. The fanatics often lay claim to an acceptance of the Scriptures. But they distort or give excessive emphasis to certain teachings. Conscientious souls often fall prey to the enthusiastic and dynamic impact of the fanatics. Wild extremism is in the air; it will increase rapidly at the end-

time. Taken together, these forms or paths of delusion will become so impressive that the very elect are in danger of being deceived (Matthew 24:24).

### **The Coming Climax**

Present-day delusions simply will pave the way for the great *falling away* (II Thess. 2:1-3). They are already appearing with satanic magnetism (II Thess. 2:9-11). Usually such delusions are spear-headed by respectable and renowned leaders who occupy strategic positions in religion. Within the present World Council of Churches we see the full ear-marks of apostasy. Not only are these apostate forces led by skillful leaders, but they are given pre-eminence through great organizations. Usually at the key posts you find the most resourceful leaders. This large-scale religious federation will help to pave the way for the apostate church of Revelation 17. Paul speaks of their appearance, "after the working of Satan with all power and lying wonders. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:9-10). The apostle also refers to their teachings as "doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1-2). The apostates will be directly energized by unseen forces from the fallen domain. In fact, Paul mentions that we already are in combat with "principalities, against powers, against the

rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

As we make comparisons and evaluations of present-day trends and the apostacy in Christendom, we must conclude logically that the end-time is approaching. Our Lord says, "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth" (Luke 21:35). Only the presence of the Church and the Holy Spirit keeps the great falling away from suddenly enveloping mankind. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only He who now letteth will let, until He be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:8). It could be translated "only there is One that restraineth now." Our present-day generation is being conditioned for the great falling away. The apostate church will move into final action when the true church is raptured. Meanwhile, World Councils, Federations and the spirit of ecumenicity will gain further momentum. Only those who have spiritual discernment and great convictions will be kept from these ensnaring activities of the apostate forces which often have gained leadership in the church. We need to be alerted as the midnight hour is approaching. A kind of spiritual blindness is gripping church people in our day. It is popular to move with the spirit of the times. Let us pray God for stamina to remain with the minority as the delusions of the latter days are overmastering large areas of the visible church.

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## **PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

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**QUESTION.** . . . How do certain weaknesses among cultic groups provide an opportunity for Bible-believing Christians?

**ANSWER.** . . . Since the weaknesses of the cultic groups are general in their lack of understanding of the grace of God and in the assurance of salvation, it opens the way for a positive presentation of the Gospel of Christ to them. None of the members of these groups know the grace of God which is available in Christ or the assurance of salvation and the joy of the Lord. It is therefore possible to witness effectively to these misguided people in matters on which they are totally ignorant.

**QUESTION.** . . Are the old line cults manifesting a renewed activity which they have lacked in past decades?

**ANSWER.** . . . Yes, as an example, the Mormon Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses, which were moving slowly for a long time, are now expanding and have made extra-ordinary gains in membership. The Mormon Church is now the strongest among the false systems in gaining new followers. There is a resurgence of aggressiveness among the old line cults.