



LONA INGWERSON, C.S.

How Old Is a Spiritual idea?

So how old is Daystar? Did it begin with the doors opening or the ground breaking ceremony? I believe it began with an idea... with a statement by Mary Baker Eddy made in 1909 when she requested that "The Mother Church shall establish and maintain a Christian Science resort for the so-called sick." with the caveat that a resort was not a Disney World concept but a place "frequented for a particular purpose," Chestnut Hill was the first, completed in 1916. Many other like facilities followed in Europe, California, Colorado, Missouri, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, New York, etc. The audience was reminded that Apopka had at one time had a facility, but it had closed, and as Daystar is now the only one in Florida it needed to be supported.

The reason for Daystar's existence then followed. Why would such a facility be needed? Why would anyone need auto insurance? Folks invest in neither anticipating their use. However, if either be needed it's great to have them available. The Christian Scientist who has need for spiritually supported nursing help has no viable alternative, even if surrounded by a caring, loving family. There's no home substitute for a trained Christian Science nurse.

So Daystar did not begin with the opening of the doors but with an idea proposed by Mrs. Eddy. And where did you begin? On the day that you, like Daystar, appeared on the scene, your birth date, or did you begin as an idea as well?

Many people record their beginnings in the family Bible, with references to the births and deaths of their ancestors. Christian Scientists find their history in the Bible itself, in Genesis One, where they are told that they were created in God's own likeness. For those who have heard that Christian Scientists are not Bible students because we have that "other book," Mrs. Eddy herself once said "I went, being driven by my extremity, to the Bible and there I discovered Christian Science." (*1907 Reminiscence*) I'm sure she found it threaded through the entire Bible but surely Genesis One was the paramount in the search.

And if everyone, reading or hearing this, is God's own likeness, what does that mean? Does it mean we look like a bearded man in the sky on a throne? No, we do not see God as manlike; we see man as Godlike. Quite a difference. For those who have heard we are not Christian because we do not believe Jesus is God, evidently Jesus didn't believe he was either because in (*John 4:24*), he referred to God as a "Spirit."

So, if God is Spirit and man is his image and likeness, we naturally go to the next step and that is that man is spiritual. That is where Christian Science came into the picture. Folks will identify us Christian Scientists as the people who don't go to doctors. Actually I've never read that in our literature, but I have read something far more revolutionary and that is that man is spiritual and not material.

Man as an ageless idea

That which is spiritual is eternal. We glibly repeat that life is eternal, but do we stop to realize that eternity is ageless?

When we come to talks we usually anticipate the “What’s in this for me” concept. That’s fine, so think for a moment of a problem you might have, trivial or significant, and then apply what

we’re going to address to that situation. Your problems will be various and sundry, each a bit different...except for one which impacts everyone in this room, the Goliath problem, AGE. Let’s talk age for a moment.

The following poem appeared in the Christian Science Journal on this subject some years ago:

YOUR LIFE SPAN

(Lona Ingwerson, C.S., Christian Science Journal - May, 1985)

*The passage of time -
It seems such a Goliath.
It tells me that life is a downhill trip,
That at a given point
Strength, companionship, resources, inspiration,
begin to wane.*

*The realization of eternity -
It seems such a David.
It tells me that life is an uphill trip,
That as we journey from sense to Soul
Our strength, our resources, our joy...
grow with us.*

*The time theory has such clout behind it
Medical research, universal belief, the
media. The eternity promise has only the Word
of God behind it, Seems helpless as a slingshot
against a spear, A youth...
against a Goliath*

*Funny thing about this one -
The end is already written.
The eternity of good, like David, will win.
The Goliath of life in fading matter, will fall.
Don't let those six cubits scare you...
much less the span!*

And what did Mrs. Eddy have to say about age? “The added wisdom of age and experience is strength, not weakness, and we should understand this, expect it, and know that it is so. Then it would appear.”
(CSJ 8/1884, Vol. II, p. 3)

Reference was made to several instances regarding age which included two isolated areas, one in Pakistan, one in Ecuador, where researchers were sent to find out what was enabling the people to live healthy, active lives into their 140’s and the conclusion was that it was due to a lack of

greed. “The longevos’ superb health seems to reflect an absence of greed which keeps their surroundings pure, their wants simple and their lives purposeful.”(Parade magazine, 4/4/76
“The Old Men and Women of the Mountains.”)

Several examples of handling age were given, such as the practitioner who, when asked by a cashier how old he was replied, “I don’t really know. I’ve never considered it any of my business.”

This portion of the talk concluded with another poem, this one from the Sentinel:

HAPPY UN BIRTHDAY!
(Lona Ingwerson, C.S., Sentinel 7/25/77)

*I'm to record my birth date on line 3. Sure.
But I'll tell you where I'm not recording it..*

*In my consciousness.
I refuse to be trapped into the
Birth, Maturity, Decay syndrome,
The adolescent/senile cycle
With a brief space in the middle
To hurry up and be prosperous
no way.
I am who I am,
Created by God
In his own likeness
Not approaching nor retiring
but there, now, always.*

Man as Spiritual and not Material

Because the concept of agelessness is based on man's spirituality, some healings were then shared which focused on Genesis One. One was the healing of a broken bone by a young man, a college kid, who found Christian Science on Sunday, had a broken bone during the week which was put in a cast to be left on for 6 weeks,

asked for Christian Science help so he could go to Sunday School the next week without the cast and had an instantaneous healing of the break. He had to cut the cast off with a saw. Another healing of a massive heart attack occurred when a gentleman was reminded of a line from a poem he had heard in a testimony meeting, "Where did it begin this idea called you? In Genesis 1 or Genesis 2?"

The entire poem reads:

GENESIS 1 OR GENESIS 2
(J. Woodruff Smith, C.S.)

*Where did it begin
This idea called you?
In Genesis 1,
Or Genesis 2?
Which one of these concepts
Will prove to be true?
If you know what is what,
Do you know who is who?
In Genesis 1 in the 26th verse
There's a man with never a taint' of a curse.
But in Genesis 2 in verse number seven
There's a dust man conceived...
He'll never see heaven.
So it really comes down
To which one you will claim,
What thou see'st thou be'st...*

*So what is your name?
There they both stand.
Which one is you?
Is it immortal man one,
Or mortal man two?
If you're immortal man
You know what you're worth.
For according to law
You'll inherit the earth.
But if you're just a mortal
And made out of dust...
Is there anything to you
That's worthy of trust?
No, the thing they call man
In Genesis 2
Is the dream of the dreamer.
It never was you. So know what you are.
Take your place in the sun,
You're the immortal man
Of Genesis 1.*

The 3rd healing shared was one regarding a poisonous scorpion bite, the healing thought came from Science and Health, (p. 463) “A spiritual idea has not a single element of error, and this truth removes properly whatever is offensive.”

And why do we share healings?? Mrs. Eddy once said, “Unless we have better healers, and more of this work than any other is done, our Cause will not stand and having done all stand. Demonstration is the whole of Christian Science, nothing else proves it, nothing else will save it and continue it with us.” (Mary Baker Eddy, copyright 1936, Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy)

But what about matter?

And for those skeptics who cannot grasp the concept that man is spiritual and not material, further documentation was provided by statement from leading physicists and medical doctors. Those included such things as:

“There’s nothing out there. It’s all happening on the back of your eyeballs.” (an M.D. stating it’s all whatever you believe and no more). And more than a century prior to that? -- “Christian Science explains all cause and effect as mental and not physical.” (Mary Baker Eddy, *World Parliament of Religions talk*)

It was pointed out again and again that Mrs. Eddy was light years before her time, that the things she discovered are things leading scientists are just now discovering, that “It’s mostly space...the idea that there’s something real out there is a mistake...we’ve examined the physical world and found that there’s nothing there...consciousness is all there is, just consciousness.”

The concept was introduced that learned scientists believe we are approaching the second paradigm since the world’s creation, that the first was the conclusion

that the world was not flat but round and the second will be that there is no matter. The concepts shared from many leading physicists of today were that all was consciousness, a concept introduced over 140 years ago by a lady in New England who said, among many other things, “Consciousness constructs a better body when faith in matter has been conquered. Correct material belief by spiritual understanding, and Spirit will form you anew.” (S&H p. 425)

Speaking of those who refused to stand “aghast at nothingness” before matter’s claims, a healing was told of a child who had drowned and was brought back as the mother held tightly to the fact that “whatever is governed by God is never for an instant deprived of the light and might of intelligence and life” (S&H p. 215), a man who had lost his ability to speak and had to introduce the President of the United States on nationwide TV held to “He performeth the thing which is appointed for me,” a girl who was totally paralyzed was healed within hours as her family held tightly to the fact that “there is no metastasis, no stoppage of harmonious action, no paralysis.” (S&H p. 420)

Reference was made to a philosopher, Krishnamurti, who had pointed out that we’re very careful around rattlesnakes because we know what they’re capable of. He said if you knew what your thoughts were capable of, you would be even more careful around them that you are around rattlesnakes. The suggestion coming down from the best minds in the scientific community today is that the world is crystallized thought, that what you think creates your world, and that we need to be very careful about what suggestions we take in. Mrs. Eddy would have referred to them as aggressive mental suggestions; they’re the TV ads about drugs, age, disease, etc., the conversations with the neighbor describing their ailments, etc. An example was given of an Indian legend about a boy who was told if he

could be alone on a mountaintop for 7 days with no adult aid, surviving on his skills alone, he would be a man. He did it and at the end of his 7th day, on beginning his trek back to the village, a rattlesnake coiled up to him and begged to be taken back to the village, lest he freeze to death on the mountain. The boy immediately refused him, but the snake pled with him, assuring the lad that he would protect him for the rest of his life if he would only take him down where he could be warm. The boy wrapped him in his jacket and took him down, only to be bitten by the snake on arrival. "You told me you would be my friend"! said the shocked boy. "You knew I was a snake when you took me in," replied the rattler. Again the need to watch thought was advised.

And if we've taken these suggestions in, how do we get them out???

Resurrection! Mrs. Eddy defined resurrection as "Spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence; material belief yielding to spiritual understanding." (S&H p.593)

The spiritual understanding, as it grows, simply displaces the suggestions, the false beliefs, the fears we've taken in.

The thrust of the talk was that life is not in matter and that Christian Science represents the wave of the future, the spirituality millennials are seeking. The thinking going on in the scientific community was summed up in the scientific statement of being (S&H p. 468) and the concept of discouragement handled by a reminder that what might appear as a last supper for a small congregation may well be the forerunner of a resurrection, aka:

THE MORNING MEAL

(Jacqueline Shaw)

*Yes, it was here. We pulled the boat up there,
And here he had made the fire, just such a morn
as this. I remember his hands moving
to and fro, giving us the bread and the fish;
and the water lapping. It was as clear as now;
It lapped against the boat, half in, half out
of the water, just as you hear it, lap, lap, lap.
We were tired after the night. I lay on the grass
And ate and watched those hands. He was talking then;
It might have been the same as before but it wasn't.
I tried to think It was, that it had never been..
That dreadful night, those days when all seemed lost,
And then his coming again, It was all a dream,
But I knew it wasn't, that he wouldn't stay, he'd go;
That when the light got stronger, he would go.
Yes, I heard what he said, I wasn't drowsy,
I was awake, only It was so peaceful there..
Heaven come down to earth? Yes, that was it.
I heard him and I seemed to hear everything else.
As if my thought touched his in some clear radiance.
Do you understand? As If It was all new,
That I'd never heard it before.*

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A bird sang and I saw

*A caterpillar crawl across the grass and it was new
And lovely; and still his voice went on. I sat up then, I
think; he was talking to Peter, talking of love, and I saw Love,
I saw what he meant. I saw that we were to be
shepherds and fishers too. I looked at him again, straight up
this time and saw once more those well remembered eyes; It
was like sinking in a well of love. And yet it seemed as if
They pierced me through. And I thought: "yes, I can, I can
love, I can do what he wants me to; I won't fail." and all
The hate and spite and wariness and bitter sense of failure
went. I didn't hate anyone, not the priests, nor Herod, no,
not even Judas. I knew the Christ was greater than them all.
I felt whatever happened I'd not fear, not in the same way
ever again. I'd heal, and guide and save, that's what he
meant; that's what he wanted all of us to do. I saw It, It
Was like a light from heaven, so clear, so bright, I had to
Close my eyes, and when I'd opened them again, he'd gone.
Peter and John were standing by the fire, it was ashes now,
The fish and bread were done. Peter was gazing out across
The lake, John's head upon his shoulder; the sun's rays fell
softly on his face. I never saw so sad a look before, but
underneath it seemed as if there was a mighty calm.
John raised his head and spoke, and Peter smiled as if a blessing
broke upon them both. A still clear light was glowing in
John's eyes. I thought, "how like the master he has grown."
Then Peter said, "come, gather up the catch. We must be
going. We have work to do."*

And so do we!