

World Religions, Cults, and Aberrant Beliefs
Lesson 10 – Christian Science and Scientology
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
www.valleybible.net

The Church of Christ, Scientist (Also known as The Christian Science Church)

History

Christian Science was begun in 1897 by Mary Baker Eddy in Boston, Massachusetts. She was born Mary Baker in New Hampshire in 1821 to a Congregationalist church member. In her youth, she was from various ailments and was frequently ill. At age 22, she was married, but her husband died soon after from yellow fever leaving her poor and with an infant son whom she gave up to foster care. In 1853, she married again in an attempt to regain custody of her son. In 1862 (~41 years old) she suffered from an illness and visited a mind science healer named Phineas Quimby. Quimby taught that the mind had the power to heal the body and had a significant influence on her thinking regarding spiritual matters. In 1866, she was seriously injured in a fall and was not expected to recover. She supposedly read Matthew 9:2, pronounced herself healed, and experienced a miraculous healing.

²And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven." Matt 9:2

She claimed to have discovered the secret to health. It was this experience that convinced her of the "truth" of Christian Science. In 1873, she divorced her second husband. In 1875, when she was 54, she founded the Christian Science Association and published *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (S&H). Here she set forth her teachings on health and philosophy. She claimed it was the final revelation of God to mankind and asserted that her work was inspired of God. The word "Key" in the title of her book is in reference her book being the "key" to unlocking the Bible which she claimed had many mistakes. She placed her own writings on par with Scripture.

In 1877, she remarried again to Asa Albert Eddy and in 1879 founded The First Church of Christ, Scientist, of Boston claiming to be the restoration of the original New Testament church. In 1881 she opened a healing college and charged \$300 for 12 healing lessons. In 1908, Baker Eddy founded *The Christian Science Monitor*, an international newspaper, whose employees have won 6 Pulitzer prizes. Mary Baker Eddy died a millionaire in 1910. Authority for the Church of Christ, Scientist now rests with its board of Directors.

Christian Science membership has been dwindling for decades. The number of practitioners and teachers has dropped from ~5000 in 1971 to ~1200 in 2005. The number of Christian Science churches has dropped from ~1800 in 1971 to ~1000 in 2005.

Of all the biblically based cults in America today, Christian Science is one of the most interesting. Not only does it deny the essential doctrines of Christianity, but it has completely reinterpreted the Bible. It drastically redefines the Bible's culture and terminology and rips thousands of scriptures out of their historical and biblical contexts. The result is a non-Christian mixture of metaphysical and philosophical thoughts. Christian Science is so foreign to the Bible that, if it didn't use words like Jesus, Trinity, Love, Grace, Sin, etc., you'd never suspect it had anything to do with the Bible at all. Additionally, the book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which is the Christian Scientist's mainstay of spiritual knowledge, reads with a rhythm of pseudo-logical statements that has the tendency to dull the senses when read long enough. Is Christian Science Christian? Definitely not. *Is Christian Science Christian?* www.carm.org/christian_science/cult.htm

The Source of Authority

Mary Baker Eddy maintained that “as adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life” (S&H p497). However, Eddy questioned the textual reliability of the Bible saying, “the manifest mistakes in the ancient versions ... these facts show how a mortal and material sense stole into the divine record, with its own hue darkening to some extent the inspired pages” (S&H p139). In addition, Christian Scientists interpret the Bible in a radical way according to their metaphysical presuppositions – eliminating any semblance of historical Christianity. Eddy ascribes arbitrary spiritual meaning to biblical terms. For example “Jerusalem” is defined as “Mortal belief and knowledge obtained from the five corporeal senses” (S&H p589). “Holy Ghost” is defined as “Divine Science; the development of eternal Life, Truth, and Love” (S&H p588).

Concerning S&H she stated, “I should blush to write of Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures as I have, were it of human origin and I apart from God its author, but as I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of Heaven in divine metaphysics, I cannot be super-modest of the Christian Science Textbook” (Christian Science Journal, Jan. 1901).

The Nature of God

Mary Baker Eddy taught that “God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love” (S&H p465). These are synonymous terms that “refer to one absolute God. They are also intended to express the nature, essence, and wholeness of Deity. The attributes of God are justice, mercy, wisdom, goodness, and so on” (S&H p465). To the Christian Scientist, God (the Father-Mother) is a Principle known as the Divine Mind. It has no personhood and no personality. A catch phrase used in their literature is that God is “All in All.” In other words, God is all that exists and what we perceive as matter is an interpretation of divine mind. Since God is love, it means that sin and sickness are only errors of interpreting the Divine Mind and have no true reality. Since God’s essential essence is spirit or mind, and only that which reflects His nature is real, then matter does not really exist. “Spirit is immortal Truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal; matter is the unreal and temporal” (S&H p468).

Concerning the Trinity Eddy taught that the Trinity was “life, truth, and love”. She wrote that, “The theory of three persons in one God (that is, a personal Trinity or Tri-unity) suggests polytheism, rather than the one ever-present I AM” (S&H p256).

The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

To the Christian Scientist, Jesus is a Way-shower. He is someone who epitomized the true principle of the Christ Consciousness which indwells us all. Therefore, Jesus did not really die on the cross. He was not God in flesh. He made no atonement in shedding His blood (S&H 25:6). There is an essential difference between Jesus the man and the “Christ Principle” which came upon Him as He comprehended it. Concerning Jesus Christ, Eddy wrote:

“The word *Christ* is not properly a synonym for Jesus, though it is commonly so used” (S&H p333).

“...and recognize that Jesus Christ is not God, as Jesus himself declared, but is the Son of God” (S&H p361).

“One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner’s part. That God’s wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son, is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made” (S&H p23).

“The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon ‘the accursed tree,’ than when it was flowing in his veins as he went daily about his Father’s business” (S&H 25).

“We acknowledge Jesus’ atonement as the evidence of divine, efficacious Love, unfolding man’s unity with God through Christ Jesus the Way-shower” (S&H p497).

The Nature of Man

In Christian Science, matter does not exist. The body is not real. It is an illusion of the "mortal mind" of man. Man originally existed with God and is an expression of the Divine Principle (of God).

"An error of physical belief; a supposition that life, substance, and intelligence are in matter; an illusion." (S&H p335)

"Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material; he is spiritual" (S&H p468).

Since only those ideas that reflect God's nature actually are real, then sin, death, disease, and pain are not real, but only illusions. To the Christian Scientist, there is no sin.

"The only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human, erring belief . . . They are not true, because they are not of God" (S&H p472).

"The cause of all so-called disease is mental, a mortal fear, a mistaken belief or conviction of the necessity and power of ill-health" (S&H p377).

"There is no sin." (S&H p447) and "The soul is sinless." (S&H p288) and "Man is incapable of sin, sickness and death." (S&H p475)

"Evil has no reality" (S&H p71)

"We shall learn that sin and mortality are without actual origin or rightful existence." (S&H p281)

Since God and man are immortal spirit or mind, death is also only an illusion. It is a transition from the illusion of the material to ultimate reality of immortal spirit.

"So, when our friends pass from our sight and we lament, that lamentation is needless and causeless" (S&H p386).

The Means of Salvation

Since sin does not exist, then salvation has no purpose and also does not exist.

"Final deliverance from error...is not reached through paths of flowers, not by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort." (S&H p22)

To achieve "salvation," the Christian Scientist needs only to find the true reality of understanding, as revealed in Christian Science teachings. Since sin and death are false beliefs (illusions), salvation involves overcoming the false idea that they exist with a realization of our divine spirit and mind.

"We acknowledge that the crucifixion of Jesus and his resurrection served to uplift faith to understand eternal Life, even the allness of Soul, Spirit, and the nothingness of matter" (S&H p497).

Witnessing Strategies for Christian Scientists

Let's remember some of our general strategies:

1. Sanctify your heart. (1 Pet 3:15)
2. Pray – this is a spiritual battle for the truth. (2 Cor 10:3-5)
3. Be ready with a good understanding of the Scriptures.
4. Do not argue. Do not attack the person. (2 Tim 2:24-26)
- 5. Make sure you define words.**
6. Do not get off on tangents. The important points are the source of authority, the nature of God, the person and work of Jesus, the nature of man, and the means of salvation.
7. Avoid Christian jargon – it has no meaning for the unchurched.
8. Share your testimony and your assurance of eternal life through Christ.

Some specifics:

1. Establish the unique authority of the Bible.
2. Show the Christian Scientist that the only for them to be consistent is to stop clothing or feeding the body since the body itself is only an illusion.

Scientology

History

Scientology was founded in 1954 by science fiction author Lafayette Ronald Hubbard. Hubbard was born in Nebraska in 1911. He is the youngest Boy Scout Eagle Scout in history, earning the rank at age 13. In his late teens he traveled all over Asia and was influenced by the eastern religions of Buddhism and Hinduism. He was also influenced by a student of Freud. In his 1950 book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* he formulated his novel psychological theories.

The Church of Scientology is a controversial new religion developed by L. Ron Hubbard as an extension of his earlier psychological theories of Dianetics. Drawing on ideas from Buddhist and Hindu religious philosophy, science fiction, and Western concepts in psychology and science, L. Ron Hubbard produced a religion ...

Although the church claims its beliefs are not incompatible with Christian faith, an evaluation of what Scientology teaches in the areas of God, man, the creation, salvation, and death proves this is not so. Scientology is a powerful new religion whose teachings are inconsistent with the beliefs of orthodox Christian faith. SCIENTOLOGY: From Science Fiction to Space-Age Religion by John Weldon at www.equip.org

Many do not use "religion" when describing Scientology, but instead it is a business. Hubbard is quoted as saying:

"Writing for a penny a word is ridiculous. If a man really wants to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion" Reader's Digest

Scientology is also a strict religion, and very punitive against those who would try to leave behind its teachings and membership. It also takes to court many to conceal its secrets and to keep people from digging too deep into it. Scientology is a religion for those with means. It is extremely expensive since every aspect of Scientology has some sort of fee associated with it. Scientology has created a special church that caters to artists, politicians, leaders of industry, sports figures, etc. Among its adherents are many celebrities including: John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, Lisa Marie Presley, Jason Lee (star of *My Name is Earl*), Tom Cruise, and Katie Holmes.

Commonly Used Scientology Terms (from www.4truth.net)

Analytical mind: The conscious, rational, and problem solving part of one's mind.

Auditing: Scientology's personal counseling using dianetic techniques and utilizing an E-meter for reading engrams.

Auditor: Counselor who conducts auditing session.

Clear: State of person who has completed auditing. Person is supposedly liberated from all engrams and their ill effects on the mind and body.

Dianetics: Method developed by L. Ron Hubbard for removing engrams and their negative effects from the mind.

E-Meter (Electropsychometer): Instrument invented by L. Ron Hubbard for utilization in auditing process.

Engram: Unconscious, prenatal impressions accumulated by the soul (or thetan) during past lives; a mental image recorded in the reactive mind that has negative effects on a person's life.

MEST: Acronym coined from the initial letters of matter, energy, space, and time which compose the physical universe and hold the thetan captive.

Preclear: A person undergoing Dianetics auditing progressing toward Clear.

Reactive mind: The part of the mind not under a person's rational, conscious control or awareness.

Thetan: The immortal human soul or spiritual being. It is the true, timeless identity of the individual.

The Basis for Scientology

This story is the basis for the business/religion of Scientology.

75 million years ago, the galactic overlord for this sector of the galaxy was called Xenu. He was in charge of 76 planets, including Earth (at that time known as Teegeack). All of the planets Xenu controlled were over-populated by, on average, 178 billion people. Social problems dictated that Xenu rid his sector of the galaxy of this overpopulation problem, so he developed a plan.

Xenu sent out tax audit demands to all these trillions of people. As each one entered the audit centers for the income tax inspections, the people were seized, held down and injected with a mixture of alcohol and glycol, and frozen. Then, all 13.5 trillion of these frozen people were put into spaceships that looked exactly like DC8 airplanes, except that the spaceships had rocket engines instead of propellers. Xenu's entire fleet of DC8-like spaceships then flew to planet Earth, where the frozen people were dumped in and around volcanoes in the Canary Islands and the Hawaiian Islands. When Xenu's Air Force had finished dumping the bodies into the volcanoes, hydrogen bombs were dropped into the volcanoes and the frozen space aliens were vaporized.

However, Xenu's plan involved setting up electronic traps in Teegeack's atmosphere which were designed to trap the souls or spirits of the dead space aliens. When the 13.5 trillion spirits were being blown around on the nuclear winds, the electronic traps worked like a charm and captured all the souls in the electronic, sticky fly-paper like traps.

The spirits of the aliens were then taken to huge multiplex cinemas that Xenu had previously instructed his forces to build on Teegeack. In these movie theaters the spirits had to spend many days watching special 3-D movies, the purpose of which was twofold: 1) to implant into these spirits a false reality, i.e. the reality that WOGS (Hubbard's term for anyone not a Scientologists) know on Earth today; and, 2) to control these spirits for all eternity so that they could never cause trouble for Xenu in this sector of the Galaxy. During these films, many false pictures and stories were implanted into these spirits, which resulted in the spirits believing in all the things that control mankind on Earth today, including religion. The concept of religion, including God, Christ, Mohammed, Moses etc., were all an implanted false reality that to this very minute are used to control WOGS on Earth.

When the films ended and the souls left the cinema, they started to stick together in clusters of a few thousand and remained that way until mankind began to inhabit the Earth. Today on Earth all the spirits of these aliens have attached themselves to our bodies and are the root cause of the false reality that all but Scientology's "Homo Novis" or OT 8's on earth experience. It is the job of all Scientologists to remove this false reality from the world by auditing each and every space alien spirit and human on earth and the entire universe to clear.

The loyal officers of the Marcab Confederation finally discovered how evil Xenu was and overthrew him. He is now locked away in a mountain on one of the planets and kept in by a force-field powered by an eternal battery. From cs.cmu.edu/~dst/OTIII/minton-essay.txt

The Source of Authority

For the Scientologist, the sources of authority are the writings and speeches of L. Ron Hubbard. Of special importance is his book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Scientology continued on after Hubbard's death and now is publishing new materials and producing educational/promotional material.

The Nature of God

The Church of Scientology International has no clear definition of the nature or person of God. References to a Supreme Being are rare in Scientology literature. The Supreme Being is defined in vague, pantheistic terms as embracing the "allness of all." All that exists is a manifestation of the universal spirit, which is all that actually exists.

The Person and work of Jesus Christ

Scientology denies the deity of Christ. He is assigned the characteristics of some sort of lesser god who has obtained a sort of legendary status over the years.

The Nature of Man

People are immortal, divine beings. They are composed of three dimensions: soul (thetan), mind (an accumulation of all past experiences in this and past lives), and body (the physical component). Engrams are stored in one's "reactive mind" and learned from one's past lives, prenatal experience, and early childhood. These prevent individuals from realizing their innate divinity and experiencing a happy and fulfilled life using their analytical minds. Scientology believes in the inherent goodness of man and that it is despicable and utterly beneath contempt to tell a man he must repent, that he is evil.

The Means of Salvation

Scientology believes in reincarnation and that personal salvation in one's lifetime is freedom from the cycle of birth and death associated with reincarnation. They believe that religious practice of all faiths is the universal way to wisdom, understanding, and salvation. Engrams are removed from the mind only by an expensive process of dianetic counseling. This process, called "auditing," involves the utilization of an "E-meter" that supposedly indicates when a person has discovered an engram and helps the client expunge it from his or her unconscious reactive mind in order to achieve "Clear." The path to salvation, or enlightenment, includes achieving states of increasingly greater mental awareness--Pre-Clear, Clear, and ultimately Operating Thetan. An Operating Thetan is a spirit who can control matter, energy, space, time, thought, and life. A person who has attained Clear may need further auditing to remove engrams held over from previous lives. A person will experience many thetan reincarnations in many lives over thousands of years. (Thus, auditing often must include clearing the client of engrams from past lives.) Eventually, the thetan can liberate itself completely from matter, energy, space, & time (MEST) and attain total spiritual awareness and become one with infinity.

Why is Scientology Attractive

It gives a sense of self-empowerment; you can become one with the universe by clearing your mind of bad thoughts; sin is not an issue; there is a methodology (works) that allows you to obtain spiritual awareness; and there is no God that you are accountable to.

Witnessing Strategies for Scientologists

Some specifics:

1. Establish the unique authority of the Bible.
2. Show the uniqueness of Jesus.
3. Do not bring up the strange stuff – lower-level members do not know about it.
4. Do not deny Scientology is a religion – they will likely tune you out.
5. Don't smear Hubbard's character – they will defend his character and consider you part of a "conspiracy"
6. Ask about some internal Scientology inconsistencies (e.g. higher-level people getting sick/cancer/dying)