

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. III.

OCTOBER 1899.

No. 4.

Doctrinal Theology.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

ETHICS.

III. THE MORAL SPHERES.

All the various states, relations, and acts of men determined by the moral law may be variously referred to various spheres. They are the spheres of moral *rights* and moral *duties*, and these rights and duties are either *religious*, or *domestic*, or *civic*.

The Spheres of Rights and Duties in General.

The moral law imposes duties and establishes and secures rights. God created man and gave him existence and human endowments; he has established various relations between man and man; he has ordained that man as a moral being should in all his ways and days live in conformity with the divine will. By the law, the utterance of his will, God would determine man's relations, disposition and conduct toward God and toward his fellow-men, and inasmuch as the divine law is authoritative in all its demands, it is man's *duty* in all these respects to fulfill the requirements of the moral law. And in still another aspect the moral obligations are duties. By the divine law men

Practical Theology.

SERMON ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

Gospel VIII p. Trin. Matt. 7, 15—23.

“Beware of false prophets.” This is the great warning which our Lord Jesus has posted up for all times to protect the Christians from the murderers of their souls. When in some public place we read the sign: “Beware of pickpockets and thieves,” we know that there is danger and keep on our guard. How much the more should we be careful as to our dealings with religious leaders after Christ has issued the warning: “Beware of false prophets.” According to Christ’s distinct prediction these false prophets will abound especially in the latter days of the world. For He says of these latter days, “There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, *and shall shew great signs and wonders*: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

Now to-day I would call your attention to a class of false prophets that have but recently developed, have already made great headway during the brief period of their existence, and are still gaining ground and luring Christians into their anti-Christian fold. I mean the so-called Christian Scientists. I know that it is a grave accusation to class their healers with the false prophets, but I shall fully prove my charges against them, and not wishing to be numbered with the dogs that do not bark and with the shepherds that do not understand, as Jeremiah the prophet says, I feel myself in duty bound to warn those that have been committed to my charge that they should beware of Christian Scientist healers and have nothing to do with these deceivers. The subject of our discourse shall be with the aid of God’s Holy Spirit:

CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST HEALERS—FALSE PROPHETS OF
WHOM CHRISTIANS SHOULD BEWARE,

1. *Because they wear the sheep's clothing of false prophets.*
2. *Because they bring forth the evil fruits of false prophets.*

1.

Many Christians form a wrong idea in their minds as to the true character of false prophets. In their opinion false prophets must be such as plainly show by their godless lives or by their open denunciation of Christ and His Gospel that they are ravening wolves. When, therefore, a man professes to believe in Christ, and praises Christ, and quotes the Scriptures in support and defence of his doctrine, and leads an outwardly pious life besides, it is a foregone conclusion with many Christians, that such a man cannot be a false prophet.

But what does Christ say? "*Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*" False prophets do not make an open display of their true character. They do not expose to public view their wolf's skin. They come to us in sheep's clothing, that is, their outward appearance is pleasing, winning, Christian-like, and that is the very reason why they are so dangerous and why Christ has told us to beware of them.

Christ, however, not only tells us in a general way that the false prophets come to us in sheep's clothing, but He also describes their sheep's clothing piece by piece and mentions four different parts of the same.

First He says, "*Not everyone that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" He tells us that the false prophets will say to Him, "Lord, Lord," that is, they will mention His name, call upon His name, and speak of Him as reverently as do the true prophets. Now, if you read the books of Christian Scientists, or hear

them speak, you will find upon them this very piece of sheep's clothing. They repudiate the idea that they were not Christians. They claim to be the real true followers of Christ.¹⁾ They speak of the Lord Jesus in the highest terms of praise and honor.

Furthermore, Christ tells us that the false prophets will say to Him, "*Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?*" To prophesy, in this connection, does not mean to predict the future, but to expound the Scripture. Christ tells us that the false prophets will not openly reject the Bible, but declare their allegiance to the Word of God. Now if you examine the books of the Christian Scientists you will find them full of quotations from the holy Scriptures. They seem to base all their theories on the Bible. They claim that the Word of God is a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path. In their public service, if service it may be called, they have no sermon on a scriptural text, but in place of that one person reads portions from the Bible and another responds with reading from their text book: Science and Health. So they apparently show the greatest reverence for the holy Word of God.

Furthermore, Christ tells us that the false prophets will say to Him, "*Lord, Lord, have we not in Thy name cast out devils?*" False prophets can even cast out devils, that is, they can successfully combat the devil's work in man. Not only can they cast out unclean spirits, if the devil deems it expedient to yield, but they can also induce men to leave off from gross sins and from blasphemy and to lead a pure moral life in the eyes of man. Do not the Christian Scientists produce such results? Do not many of those that have joined their ranks show apparently the most beneficent effect of Christian Science teaching upon their character? Do they not lead a strictly moral life and

1) "Christian Science and Christianity are one." Science and Health with Key to Scriptures by Mary Baker G. Eddy. Boston, 1897, p. 371.

assure us that now their mind was at ease and that they were happy and contented?

Finally, Christ tells us that the false prophets will say to Him, "*Lord, Lord, have we not in Thy name done many wonderful works?*" The most wonderful works, bordering on the miraculous, can be accomplished by false prophets. And what is it that has insured the rapid growth of the sect of Christian Scientists within the last years? Was it not their wonderful works? They claim that they can do exactly what Christ did and His apostles, that they can heal all manner of diseases without the use of medicine, by the superior influence of the mind over the body. They denounce all the physicians as imposters that do more harm than good by the way they treat their patients with all sorts of medicines and nauseous drugs. They promise that the time will come when by their way of treatment man's life will be prolonged so that he will attain to the age of the people of the primeval world and live as long as Methuselah, and that, if their teaching were universally adopted, disease would be practically eliminated and no more known upon this earth. We often hear and read of Christian Science victims, that some poor deluded individual could have been saved from death, had he consulted a good physician in due time and been properly treated. But so great was his faith in Christian Science that he would not permit a physician to cross his threshold and then died under the hands of the Scientists. Christian Scientists, however, make light of such failures, which lately have grown very numerous, and attribute them to the fact that their system as yet is not fully developed and is still in the stage of infancy.¹⁾ They proudly point to millions of accredited cures and broadly assert that there is not a disease in the world that has not been successfully treated by Christian

1) "Entire immunity from sin and suffering cannot be expected at this period, but we may look for some abatement of them; and these Scientific beginnings are in the right direction." Ibid. p. 115.

Science.¹⁾ Now how much of this is real, true, and genuine, and how much exaggerated, dubious, and false, this is not for us to decide. But the claim of Christian Scientists is that they do many wonderful works, and that is sheep's clothing by which they deceive even Christians. They are false prophets, ravening wolves, murderers of souls of whom every Christian should beware, with whom he should have nothing to do, because their devotion to Christ, their reverence for the Bible, their Christian-like appearance, walk, and conversation, their wonderful work is but a sheep's clothing, a temptation and a snare for the Christians.

2.

This is fully borne out by the fact that they bring forth the evil fruits of false prophets.

Christ says of the false prophets, "*Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*" Here we must, first of all, answer the question: What does Christ mean by the fruits of false prophets? The most common explanation is that the fruit of a false prophet is his unholy living, his godlessness. But this explanation is utterly wrong. Does not Christ distinctly say that the false prophets would come to us in sheep's clothing and wear the garb of outward piety and holiness of life? No; as the fruit of a tree or shrub is the peculiar crop of that particular tree or shrub and cannot be some other fruit, so the fruit of a prophet

1) "To-day there is hardly a city, village, or hamlet, in which are not to be found living witnesses and monuments to the virtue and power of Truth, as applied through this metaphysical system of healing disease."¹⁾ Ibid. p. 43.

is his prophecy or teaching. If he is a false prophet, his prophesying, his teaching must be false and cannot be otherwise. And in this sense we must also take the following words of our Lord: "*Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*" We must remember that Christ is speaking of false prophets, and in his capacity as a prophet a man does not do the will of God, if he deviates from the clear words of the Bible and proclaims doctrines inconsistent with the Word of God. "Preach the Word," this is God's command to prophets or religious teachers, and he that does not do this will of the Father in heaven, or brings forth the evil fruit of false doctrine, is a false prophet.

Now as to the claim of Christian Scientist healers that they do the very same thing which Christ and His disciples did, healing the sick, is not this as false an assertion as can be made? How can these deceivers claim for themselves the power which the eternal Son of God manifested upon this earth and with which He endowed His disciples for the purpose of establishing the Christian Church? Healing the sick was but a part of Christ's miraculous work to show before the world that He is the Son of God and Savior of all men. He stilled the tempest, He turned water into wine, He multiplied the bread, He knew the thoughts in men's hearts, He predicted the future, He raised the dead. And similar deeds His disciples performed in His name. Why do not the Scientists perform these same miracles? Why is their power confined to the healing of the sick if they really possess the same power which Christ had? Why are they unable to replace a member that has been severed from the body, as Christ replaced Malchus' ear which Peter had cut off with a sword?¹⁾ Their healings,

1) Mrs. Eddy's book is full of promises of what Christian Science will do yet, but promises are cheap. Her cunning way of eluding the point at issue is shown in the following passage: "Until the advancing age admits

therefore, have nothing to do with Christ. Some of their alleged cures are effected by the same treatment which the physicians whom they so violently denounce resort to in many cases, when the patient imagines all sorts of ills, or when the disturbed nervous system requires quiet and ease to be restored to its normal condition.¹⁾ And if they do perform a cure which smacks of a miracle (though they object to this word and say that even Christ's cures were only miracles so-called), it is done with the aid of the evil one, the prince of darkness, "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." It is done by what St. Paul at the end of his first epistle to Timothy terms "science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith."

It is impossible to enumerate the false doctrines of the Christian Scientists in a short sermon. While they continually quote the Bible, there is scarcely a Bible truth which they accept in its true literal meaning.²⁾ They deny

the efficacy and supremacy of Mind, it is better to leave the adjustment of broken bones and dislocations to the fingers of a surgeon, while you confine yourself chiefly to mental reconstruction, and the prevention of inflammation or protracted confinement. Christian Science is always the most skillful surgeon, but surgery is the branch of its healing which will be last demonstrated. (Why surgery comes last, Mrs. Eddy does not condescend to say.) However, it is but just to say that the author has already in her possession well-authenticated records of the cure, by herself and her students, through mental surgery alone, of dislocated joints and spinal vertebrae." Ibid. p. 400.

1) See "An English View of Christian Science. An Exposure of Christian Science by Anne Harwood." Miss Harwood suffered from nervous prostration, was temporarily relieved, relapsed, and was finally healed—but not by Christian Science.

2) Here is a specimen of Mrs. Eddy's interpretation of Scripture, picked out at random: "*Now*, cried the apostle, is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation,—meaning, not that now men must prepare for a future-world salvation, or safety, but that now is the time in which to experience that salvation, in Spirit and Life. Now is the time for so-called material pains and material pleasures to pass away; for both are unreal, because impossible in Science." Ibid. p. 344. Neither does Mrs. Eddy accept the whole Bible, but, following the tempter in the wil-

every Christian doctrine and proclaim the rankest heathenism. They do not believe in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and they have no use for the holy sacraments, these divine institutions, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. To their minds there is really no personal God, although they speak of God as being infinitely personal, and there is no personal devil. God is Mind, and the devil, evil, sin, illness is merely a delusion. Here are a few quotations from their code of religion, their textbook: Science and Health:

"What is *God*? God is divine Principle, supreme incorporeal Being, Mind, Spirit, Soul, Life, Truth, Love." p. 461.

"The theory of *three persons* in one God (that is, a personal Trinity or Tri-unity) suggests heathen gods, rather than the one ever-present I Am." p. 152.

At the same time Mrs. Eddy retains scriptural phraseology for the purpose of delusion. She says p. 227, "Life, Truth, and Love constitute the triune God, or triply divine Principle. They represent a trinity in unity, three in one, —the same in essence, though multiform in office: God the Father; Christ the type of sonship; Divine Science, or the Holy Comforter. These three express the threefold, essential nature of the Infinite. Father is the name for Spirit, God. . . . Jesus was born of Mary, Christ was born of God. . . . The Holy Ghost, or Spirit, reveals this triune Principle."

Here is a definition of the word "*Devil*": "Devil: evil; a lie; error; neither corporeality nor mind; the opposite of

derness, she omits and disclaims what does not suit her. She says, "This latter part of the second chapter of Genesis, wherein Spirit is supposed to co-operate with matter, in constructing man, must be based on some hypothesis of error, for the Scripture just preceding declares God's work to be finished. Do Life, Truth, and Love produce death, error, and hatred? Does the Creator condemn His own creation? Does the unerring Principle of divine law change or repent? It cannot be." Ibid. p. 515. The divine account of man's fall in sin she calls a myth. Ibid. p. 523.

Truth; a belief in sin, sickness, and death; animal magnetism; the lust of the flesh which saith: 'I am life and intelligence in matter,' etc. p. 575.

Angels are thus defined: "Angels are God's impartations to man—not *messengers* or persons, but *messages* of the true idea of divinity, flowing into humanity." p. 195.

Of *judgment* we are told, "No final judgment awaits mortals; for the judgment of Wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error. As for spiritual error, there is none." p. 187.

Of *sin, sickness, and death* we are told, "Jesus strips all disguise from error, when his teachings are fully understood. By parable and argument he explains the impossibility of Good producing evil; and he also scientifically demonstrates this great fact, proving, by what are wrongly called his miracles, that sin, sickness, and death are beliefs, illusive errors, which he could and did destroy." p. 289.¹⁾

But the worst feature about the Christian Scientists is that they rob man of faith in the Savior Jesus and deny the great work of His redemption whereby He has saved the fallen human race with His holy precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. Since in their opinion there is really no sin, there is no Savior from sin, and Christian Science leaves man to remain in his natural, unconverted state, and to die in his unforgiven sins, and to be summoned before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge of the world without hope of eternal life. Christian Science teaches: "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

1) The holy sacraments are thus done away with: "Our baptism is a purification from all error." . . . "Our eucharist is spiritual communion with God." p. 340.

went daily about his Father's business." p. 330. "There is but one way to Heaven and harmony, and Christ shows us this way. It is to know no other reality than Good, or God and His reflection, to have no other consciousness of Life's demands, and to rise superior to the so-called pains and pleasures of matter." p. 138. "If sickness and sin are illusions, the awakening from this mortal dream, or illusion, will bring us into health, holiness, and immortality. This awakening is the coming of Christ, the appearing of Truth, which casts out error and heals the sick. *This is the salvation* which cometh through the divine Principle demonstrated by Jesus." p. 126. Can there be any teaching which is more anti-Christian? Are not the Christian Scientists false prophets of the boldest type?

May the Lord preserve us all from the pernicious doctrines of this new sect which denies almost everything and is in itself one great flagrant lie. Let us remember Paul's words to the Galatians: "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed." Let us be faithful unto death, and we shall receive the crown of life. Amen.

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