

QUARTERLY UPDATE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION

“It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church by the daily press, by periodicals or circulated literature of any sort.” Church Manual, Article XXXIII, Section 2

A Message from the Manager:

While the Committee on Publication’s work is primarily governed by Article XXXIII of the *Church Manual*, I’ve appreciated witnessing the healing power and spiritual authority of the whole *Manual*, as well as the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy’s other writings, as they guide and govern this Committee on Publication corrective healing work.

For instance, the By-Law titled “Christ Jesus the Ensample” (Article VIII, Section 3) guides each of us on how to show the distinction between Christian Science and other belief systems — but without criticizing others — and to do so in the spirit of the Bible’s counsel that “a soft answer turneth away wrath ...” (Prov. 15:1). This allows for the love and true Christianity of the response to shine through and bless even our so-called enemies.

It is deeply inspiring to see how divine Mind unfolds responses that are gentle in separating fact from fable about Christian Science, but still firm in our spiritual conviction for divine Truth, just as described in II Timothy: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Tim. 2:15)

I found the following recent Committee on Publication response an inspiring example of how to address a mischaracterization of Christian Science with Christly love and fairness, and with healing results.

Sincerely,
Kevin E. Ness, C.S.B.
Manager, Christian Science Committees on Publication

Fruitage

An academic paper written by a university student analyzed the attraction to what the author called “American pseudo-religions” and included the assessment that, “The Christian Science religion is an interesting amalgamation of Christianity and New Age beliefs. What makes Christian Science revolutionary is that while Mormonism is based on faith turned outward, toward Jesus Christ, Christian Science turns that faith inward toward self. Essentially it has taken the traditional Christian faith, turned it inward and sprinkled in some metaphysical beliefs.”

Having a sense of compassion and unselfed love for the writer, based on how First John 3:1-3 in the Bible brings out the “nowness” of each one of us as a child of God, the following letter developed naturally from the Committee on Publication in that jurisdiction:

I recently came across your blog post and was interested in your article “Four Trends in American Religion that Made Gwyneth Paltrow’s Goop a Pseudo-Religion.” I enjoyed your paper and your analysis, but hope you might appreciate a different perspective on Christian Science. Perhaps I misunderstood your point, but I’ve tried to let my religious experience be outward-looking and expansive of others. As sincere students of Jesus, Christian Scientists strive, as do so many Christians, to let their light shine in service of humanity. Don’t get me wrong, I do pray for myself and my family. I’m glad to do that and am grateful for the blessings, but I also love including my community and others in my prayers. And in focusing on gratitude and faith in God’s grace and goodness, as a decidedly Christian practice, I’ve seen how these prayers do make a difference. Also, if you aren’t already familiar with it, The Christian Science Monitor, an international news organization published by my church (though not religious) offers calm, thoughtful, award-winning coverage for independent thinkers, and is an example of this outward view with a motive to bring to each news story qualities that can lead to solutions and unite us — qualities such as respect, resilience, hope, and fairness.

There is one other point I would like to share regarding your link between Christian Science and New Age beliefs. While comparisons have been made between the healing principles of New Age and Christian Science, it perhaps is important to note that New Age emerged about a century after Christian Science as a type of Western esotericism, following along the lines of New Thought more than Christian Science .”

The Committee received the following kind response from the author within a few days:

Thank you for your email regarding my essay. I appreciate reading the perspective of someone inside the religious tradition of Christian Science... I apologize if my interpretation of what I read insulted you in any way. My essay was solely written to demonstrate a grasp of classroom materials. Should my research and writing ever include Christian Science again, I will remember your words, and will read the resources you suggested. Again, thank you so much for taking the time to read my essay, and to email me to share your perspective.

Inspiration and updates from your Committee on Publication:

Annual Meeting was an inspiring opportunity to come together and celebrate “The discovery today – where hearts catch fire!” So far in my brief tenure as the Committee on Publication for Connecticut, I’ve found that praying with this theme helps lift public thought by affirming that Christian Science is forever relevant, that Christian Science treatment is just as effective and applicable as it ever has been, and that Christian Scientists know and feel the power and presence of the Comforter.

With every opportunity to enlighten the public and clear away false impressions of Christian Science, such as the example provided above on page two in the fruitage report where the Committee was able to correct an inaccurate depiction of Christian Science in an academic paper, we see blessings not only for the author of the article, but for the wider community – the ripple-effect of the Christ in action. These opportunities to engage with the public are the mission driving the work of this office. Please join me in supporting the leavening work of the Committee on Publication!

Sincere gratitude,
Kristina Schwarz, CS
Committee on Publication for Connecticut