

The Christian Science STANDARD

**“Again, without a correct sense of its highest visible idea, we can never understand the divine Principle.” — Mary Baker Eddy
(*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p.560)**

Volume 15, Number 2
Christian Science *Endtime* Center

September 2007
P. O. Box 27539, Denver, CO 80227

“And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.” (Mark 9:2)

**In her 1889 Normal class
Mary Baker Eddy
taught:**

“Transfiguration is impersonalization.”

Like Jesus, we must all resume our spiritual being through the process of impersonalization or transfiguration. Jesus showed us how to do this on the Mount of Transfiguration. He showed us that as we transform our minds, we transform our bodies, sacrificing the material beliefs for our true spiritual identity which God knows and sees.

The Christ has come to us in this age in Christian Science and Mary Baker Eddy, and the question arises, are we in this age going to stand by our Master’s resurrection, and transform our thinking as he has showed us? and ascend with him the Mount of Transfiguration?

EXCERPTED FROM *THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE STANDARD*
STANLEY C. LARKIN, EDITOR (1989-2001)

***MRS. EDDY'S TEACHING:
"TRANSFIGURATION IS IMPERSONALIZATION."***

In Mrs. Eddy's Normal class in the Massachusetts Metaphysical College she taught the following, as recorded by one of her students:

Mrs. Eddy opened with thoughts brought out by the 14th chapter of Matthew. . . . Jesus constrained them [his disciples] to go before him and they were not ready, because they were not transfigured. Transfiguration is impersonalization. He went apart to pray. God has done all for us, all that He is going to do [i.e., in transfiguration]. He will work with us, but we must each one do our work [in transfiguring]. If we do not, God will not do it for us; He will never do our work for us. [*Editor's note*: Everyone has to work out his own transfiguration by impersonalizing. It will not be done for us after we pass on, as so many people think.] The disciples were looking only at the personal Jesus. They went out on the sea and met the contrary winds. One was Truth, the other animal magnetism, and they were tossed about. Then in the fourth watch, the last watch, Jesus came, but it was the impersonal Jesus that walked the waves, and they called him a spirit and cried out in fear, but Jesus spake saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Then Peter asked him to bid him come, and he did so, but Peter all the time believing in the personality of Jesus, failed, and cried again, "Lord, save me" and Jesus stretched forth his hand (the only power) saying, "Oh thou of little faith (understanding)." Why did he cry, Lord, save me? The dependence upon personality instead of Truth. We can learn nothing from personality.

In the Primary class the intellect is trained. We learn the letter and as much of the Spirit as we are able to grasp, but the Normal [class] is our spiritual awakening [to our impersonalization]. Was she constraining us to go before? Were we able to bear what she had to say? The disciples were not ready. They went back to the old nets [because they did not impersonalize or transfigure] and toiled and suffered on until after the morning meal when he came to them again [and they saw in some degree the impersonal Jesus], and then they went out to do their great work. Her students were looking to her to do their work [transfigure or impersonalize] for them, and she saw that the only way for her was to withdraw herself from them. This she is going to do [by moving to Concord, NH]. While they have her they will not fast and pray [i.e., impersonalize]. We can never do anything until we impersonalize both

good and evil. There is no personality in this warfare; it is all Mind, the eternal, omnipotent Principle of Truth, impersonal good, God, the omnipotent All. The impotent false claim of the principle of evil, impersonal, ignorant and malicious animal magnetism you must meet. You must pay your tribute to Caesar first. Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's in order to render to Truth the things that are Truth's.¹

TWO ARTICLES ON TRANSFIGURATION EXPLAINED ACCORDING TO MRS. EDDY'S TEACHING

To elucidate Mrs. Eddy's teaching regarding the transfiguration, we bring you (beginning on page 4) a composite of two articles from *The Christian Science Journal* on that subject by two of her students.

The first article² published in 1888 is by Mr. Frank Mason, CSB, assistant pastor of the Church of Christ (Scientist), Boston. The quotation below from Robert Peel serves to authenticate the genuineness of the teaching in this article on transfiguration. Note the close association Mr. Mason had with Mrs. Eddy as she was preparing him to succeed her as head of the Metaphysical College. According to Mr. Peel, Mr. Mason was "quick to respond to Mrs. Eddy's teaching and became a prolific writer for the *Journal*, contributing especially a series of lengthy biblical expositions. Soon he was assistant pastor of the Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, preaching most of the time except when Mrs. Eddy herself took the pulpit. She encouraged him to embark on English studies that would help him to improve his literary style and devoted time and care to his spiritual education, with the hope that he might succeed her as head of the Metaphysical College."³ Mr. Mason became editor of *The Christian Science Journal* in 1888.

The second article⁴ published in 1892 is by Rev. Lanson P. Norcross. Rev. Norcross was pastor of the Church of Christ (Scientist), Boston, and later when it was reorganized in 1892, he became the first pastor of The Mother Church.

¹ Martha H. Bogue, CSD, "Notes," *Miscellaneous Documents*, comp. G. C. Carpenter (Providence, 1961), pp. 80-82 (emphases added).

² Frank Mason, CSB, "The Transfiguration," *The Christian Science Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 7 (October 1888): pp. 331-339.

³ Robert Peel, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Trial* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 221.

⁴ Rev. Lanson P. Norcross, "The Transfiguration," *The Christian Science Journal*, Vol. X, No. 1 (April 1892): pp. 1-9.

Both articles are transcripts of two Sunday sermons delivered in Mary Baker Eddy's Church. Although metaphysical, they were open to the public and, therefore, given in language which the public could understand. They appeal not only to the student of Christian Science, but to the stranger as well.

These articles represent the class teaching of Mrs. Eddy in her College on the subject of transfiguration and are genuine statements of Christian Science.

COMPOSITE OF ARTICLES

Following is the composite of excerpts from the two articles together with editorial notes.

The Transfiguration belongs to Christianity; its interpretation, however, belongs to Christian-Science alone, for nowhere save in Christian-Science can we gain the understanding that will unfold its glories. Theology, as we have heretofore understood that term, has never been able to bring within our grasp the marvelous spirituality which belongs to this subject. Human learning and speculation are utterly inadequate to comprehend it, — in fact, any knowledge belonging to the five personal senses is at a loss when attempting to express it to men. (Norcross, 1892; emphasis added)

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION PURPOSELY WITHHELD

The disciples, in narrating the events in the life of the Master, usually tell us where these took place, and quite often the time at which they occurred; but why this expressive silence here? — a silence so profound that it would seem the Holy Spirit had guided their withholding these minor details, lest in after times men should make pilgrimages to the spot and deify what could be only an accessory. (1892)

Editor's note: The location of the transfiguration scene seems obviously omitted so that people would not come and deify the personal Jesus.

Doubtless, the Transfiguration did have a "locus"; but this is of small consequence beside the vital fact that its chief significance consisted in its taking place in the glorified consciousness of those who were exalted to be its witnesses. Let it be conceded that the Master did actually go upon some mountain elevation, as a concession to the needs of these three disciples who were still very material in their consciousness; but, suppose that some of our

worldlings had been with them on that mount of transfiguration, would these same worldlings have been able to perceive what the three disciples finally saw? Certainly not; for what can mere altitude do for one whose thought is wholly gross and material? True, our human sense does say that there is uplifting, inspiration, in being taken to high altitudes; yet, the hour will come when it will dawn upon us that to be with Christ in the Spirit, is in itself a transfiguration-mount whereon to behold all the glories of earth and of Heaven. (1892)

The Mount of Transfiguration is an elevation of thought, a condition of Mind. The unknown location of the Transfiguration scene shows that the condition of Mind necessary to reproduce such a spiritual vision has not since been reached. Christian Scientists only can reproduce such a condition. No physical perception can reveal the Mount of Transfiguration. Its *locale* is mental. (Mason, 1888)

The location of the most sacred events of Jesus' life are today unknown. This clearly proves them to be conditions of mind, invisible to human eye. (1888; emphasis added)

Editor's note: We must think of these events as conditions of mind or else we are personalizing (personifying) them.

Physical phenomena obey spiritual dictation. The altitude of spiritual thought for such a celestial vision suggests a material point correspondingly elevated, like Mount Hermon. (1888)

At the foot lay Herod's domain. Herod is the type of mortal mind. How true it is that on the mountain-summits of Truth we see only spiritual sights. Looking from the world's level, we are in the domain of Herod. (1888)

**PETER'S CONFESSION
(RECOGNITION / ACKNOWLEDGMENT) OF
THE IMPERSONAL CHRIST JESUS**

Editor's note: Six days prior to the transfiguration,⁵ the disciples were with Jesus at Caesarea Philippi which is situated at the base of Mount Hermon.

⁵ Matthew 17:1; Mark 9:2

Just before this Transfiguration-scene, Jesus had questioned the disciples as to whom men believed him, Jesus, to be. Various opinions were expressed. (1888)

Seeing the diversity of thought expressed through mortal sense, Jesus turned to his disciples with the inquiry, "Whom say ye that I am?" Simon, the usual spokesman for the twelve, promptly answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Quickly the Master responded to Peter's answer: "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah; flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but my Father, who is in Heaven." (1888)

Editor's note: When Peter confessed Christ, it put him on a different level. The disciples, in order to transfigure or even to witness the transfiguration, had to see Jesus in his highest human level. As Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This came not from flesh and blood reasoning and logic, but as a spiritual revelation from God. He had to rise to this level of thinking before he could witness the transfiguration of Jesus and thus before his own transfiguration. He could not become transfigured himself without his recognizing the human or personal Jesus as Christ in a higher level. This recognition makes it possible for us to grasp the fact that the Christ is God's subjective thought of Himself, which fact we must apply in all of our healing and demonstrating work.⁶ If it were only necessary for each man and woman to transfigure by spiritualizing their thought only, Jesus would have taken all twelve disciples with him up the mount. But he took only those who saw him in his highest personal level, becoming prepared to see him in his original impersonal being.

Christ is God's subjective thought of Himself, and the objective state of His idea, Christ, is man and the universe. Since the objective is the result of the subjective, you must first get that subjective thought. So we transfigure Christ in our thought and find Christ as the subjective thought of God before we can transfigure ourselves.

To repeat, Peter's acknowledgment or confession was a revelation from God regarding the highest level of the personal Christ Jesus. He gave an exalted conception of the personal Christ Jesus. As an interim step, it is essential that we acknowledge the exalted Saviour, the personal Christ Jesus, and also the representative of the Second Advent, the personal Mary Baker Eddy, before we can

⁶ See *The Christian Science Standard*, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 2, for Mrs. Eddy's teaching on the subjective and objective.

reach the impersonal transfigured two-in-one Christ, or our own transfigured state.⁷ Mrs. Eddy states in the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, “This goal is never reached while we hate our neighbor or entertain a false estimate of anyone whom God has appointed to voice His Word. Again, without a correct sense of its highest visible idea, we can never understand the divine Principle.” (S&H 560:15)

MORTAL MISCONCEPTION OBLITERATED

Editor’s note: Peter’s experience was an exalted experience because it was a revelation from God. This was followed by the transfiguration. There is no record of what the disciples did during the six intervening days.

The six days preceding the Transfiguration typify the reign of mortal mind. . . . When we see the immortal Jesus, all record of mortal sense will be lost, and all consciousness of the six days, or periods of mortal misconception, will be obliterated, erased from the tablet of our consciousness. (1888)

[In this impersonal spiritual experience] the three disciples saw Jesus in a new light. They had never fully known him before. They had been ignorant of his true mission, — ignorant as are many of us today concerning the position of our dear Pastor and Teacher. Not one of them really knew the Saviour. Even Peter, who so boldly acknowledged him to be the Son of the living God, almost in the same breath adopted material methods, and attempted to hinder the consummation of Jesus’ mission. This expression of worldliness the Master rebuked, saying: “Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me.” (1888)

Peter, notwithstanding this severe rebuke, faltered not. Forgetting the things of the past, he saw only the glorious goal, and he pushed forward toward the prize. Peter knew that Jesus spoke only to his error. He had caught a glimpse of the Pearl of Great Price. He had for a moment recognized the Christ. Peter had risen to a consciousness that man could not be separated from God, his Father. (1888)

Editor’s note: One never really knows a person (a friend, acquaintance, relative, etc.) from a personal “flesh and blood” standpoint. The only way we really know anyone is through impersonalization.

⁷ See article: “The Second Advent” by Mary Baker Eddy, *ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

The Transfiguration of Jesus was witnessed only by Peter, James, and John, his three most spiritual disciples. (1888)

They were the most advanced in the understanding of Jesus and his kingdom. (1888)

He took the three who were nearest to his thought; the ones who would be most apt to see and interpret aright the true meaning of the glorious scene. (1892)

The chosen three who did accompany him represent those qualities which the glorified man possesses; and so we may say that they were all there “in esse.” Look closer, and see what each disciple represents in himself. Peter . . . stands for earnestness, firmness, zeal, devotion and constancy; the cool-headed James expresses qualities of the glorified man such as solid sense, tact, experience, sagacity and wisdom; while John represents those qualities of intuition, spiritual insight and Christly Love, which are the very highest manifestation of man’s nature. In this complete combination of qualities is to be seen the rounded, symmetrical expression of that which is to be manifested not only in these disciples, but also in every man when, — the mortal and material sense having disappeared, — the spiritual sense becomes disclosed in divine loveliness and beauty. (1892)

Editor’s note: The “glorified man” is the impersonal man. Rather than looking for glorious material bodies, or spiritual bodies with personal outlines, we must look for the “glorified man” that is constituted of qualities in specific combination. God outlines but is not outlined. (cf. S&H 591:19) This is not material outlining for He outlines with qualities.

In these three disciples we see represented the human qualities necessary to perceive a higher concept of the personal Christ Jesus. Each of these disciples was expressing his own particular, individual combination of qualities of the glorified man. All men and women have a complete combination of qualities that they represent impersonally, distinct from other men and women, and known as individuality.

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to “. . . rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. . . . Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. . . . For our conversation [i.e., behavior, manner of living,

lifestyle] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious [transfigured] body, according to the working [transfiguring] whereby he is able even to subdue [i.e., in steps and stages] all things unto himself.”⁸

Paul is telling us that our vile body, which is material and therefore personal, has to be changed into a glorious, impersonal, transfigured body, a form of infinitude, by means of transfiguring or impersonalizing in steps and stages.

THE DAWNING OF “MAN’S TRUE UNFOLDMENT”

Notice that the Master’s raiment became white and glistening, while his countenance became changed before them. How are we to interpret this? This change, taking place before our eyes, is one in which they are beginning to catch a clearer view than had ever dawned upon them. It is the person of their Master which they are still beholding, but in a new sense, — not in the old sense in which they formerly regarded him. Up to this very hour they had seen him as a man of sorrows; weary, footsore and subject to all the limitations of mortal man [false personal qualities]. Now they begin to catch a glimpse of something more glorious, something nearer the divine and exalted Being which their Master really was. Are they not also gaining a first glimpse of themselves — that is, of the glorified, the real man who was, is, and forever shall be? This is what they saw, and what we must see in this transfiguration-story. Yet, it is the personal Jesus which they see at this precise point, for they have not risen high enough to discover the impersonal Saviour. The impersonal Jesus will become more apparent later on in this history of man’s true unfoldment. (1892)

The entire scene of the transfiguration . . . is an unfolding in successive disclosures of man’s real being. At this particular time in the narration, they had reached a middle plane whence they could look down upon what had, up to this hour, been their conception of the Master [personal]; while there was also placed before their vision the fact that there were still heights to which they must attain [impersonal], ere they could understand all that it taught them; and this we ourselves must perceive, or we shall miss its divine import. There are successive stages of revealing throughout this marvelous event. They must gain the highest sense of the personal man, before they would be enabled to discern the impersonal Man. We must not mistake the manifestation at this precise point for what it is not. They have risen high enough in thought to

⁸ Philippians 3:3, 15, 16, 20, 21

perceive that all of their former conceptions of Jesus were misleading and false. (1892)

Editor's note: The disciples had to rise to the highest understanding of the personal Jesus before they could recognize the impersonal Jesus. Likewise we must rise to the highest understanding of the personal Mrs. Eddy before we can recognize the impersonal Mrs. Eddy. We must rise to the highest understanding of the two-in-one Christ (cf. S&H 577:4-8) before we can reach or attain our impersonal selfhood.

Six days before the transfiguration the disciples saw Christ in the highest light as a person, before they could go on and see the Christ in its highest nature as impersonal on the Mount of Transfiguration. As you understand the transfiguration of Christ, what you have been believing about your personal history from birth, you learn is “misleading and false.”

According to the Bible pictures, the Transformation took place in the night; and so it did, — in the night of mortal mind, the darkness of material belief. Through this opaque ignorance the sunlight of divine Truth penetrated, dispelling the clouds of superstition and faulty education, illuminating the Saviour with the light of Spirit's splendor. They saw Jesus as the perfect idea of God, spiritually, not materially. The personal Jesus was now revealed to them in a higher sense. (1888; emphasis added)

Peter, James, and John, from the spiritual height they had attained, saw Jesus anew. Heretofore, like the other disciples, they had looked upon him as human; now they saw him in his immortal manhood. (1888)

Into this holy height Truth carried the three disciples. Up to its very summit they climbed, beyond all the human conception and earthly din. Matter and the world lay beneath their feet. The other nine disciples, not so spiritual as the trio, were at the foot of the mountain, striving to heal an epileptic, trying to impress mankind with a sense of divine intelligence which the world did not afford. Although these nine were not spiritual enough to carry their thoughts into the lofty spiritual height with their companions, still they were in the way whose end was Christ. They were demonstrating the efficacy of divine understanding, for only by demonstration can mortal claims be overcome. . . . We must look upon Jesus as a condition of Mind, the manifestation to mortals of Divine Truth, the expression of the infinite idea. (1888)

Editor's note: We must think of Jesus as a condition of Mind or else we are personalizing him. Impersonalization is a translating into a condition of Mind.

This spiritual supremacy revealed to them the new light, the angelic vision of Truth. Divine consciousness was leading them. Jesus' exalted thought, ever conscious of his eternal oneness with the Father, touched the consciousness of the faithful three. They saw in him the Christ. On this holy height Jesus was transfigured before them. (1888)

His face shone as the sun. His garments were white and glistening. His true spiritual identity was revealed. The infinite fulness of the Spirit of God shone in him. (1888)

MOSES AND ELIAS

Proceeding with the account, there appear two celestial participants in the scene which occurred on this mount of vision. Who are these participants, and why are they here? The record tells us all we can know, until we ourselves have gone high enough in understanding to have every thing revealed to us. They are Moses and Elias, come to discourse with their Master on what was to be the crowning manifestation of his earthly career. It requires the highest Love and Wisdom to reveal what this is, so we will not attempt to portray it; yet we may dwell on two features of this visit to our Lord and Leader [Jesus]. Can we not see that Moses stands for the expression of Majesty and Power which, in its spiritual sense, the word Law so fittingly represents; while Elias, in like manner, represents the prophetic and inspirational element which Prophecy or Poetry should express? History and prophecy, the past and the future, unite in the sacred personalities of these two in a way that expresses the highest unity and harmony. (1892)

I have called them sacred personalities — but were they persons at all? Yes; in the ascending scale of unfoldment to these disciples, it seemed that they [Moses and Elias] were persons; yet they are to reach a point, ere they descend that mount of vision, whence this false sense of personality begins to disappear. From beginning to end, it is a rapidly shifting scene wherein they go from height to height of spiritual perception. The Moses and Elias who are persons to us, just as at this point they were to the disciples, will finally disappear with everything which savors of the human and the material; and we shall discover that they are not material personalities, — that they are the embodiment of Law and Prophecy in the infinitely higher manifestations of the Spirit. (1892; emphases added)

At this stage, there occurs something which has puzzled all who have ever attempted to explain it by the current theological methods of interpretation. We are told by these enraptured narrators that their eyes became heavy with sleep. . . . The usual explanations have never satisfactorily

accounted for this condition in which the three found themselves. Do men usually fall asleep amid scenes such as this of the transfiguration must have been? How was it possible for the disciples to do so? What can its real interpretation be? The only one suggesting itself as any proper explanation, is the one which would occur to a Christian Scientist, viz: they were passing through a heavy “chemicalization,” so that they were unable at this point to apprehend all that the transfiguration meant. Its full realization did not dawn upon them. They were overwhelmed by its significance; overcome completely! (1892)

Editor’s note: While the full significance of this aspect of the transfiguration may not have dawned on the disciples’ thought, they were shifting to a higher level, from the personal to the impersonal. The fact that their eyes got heavy showed that they were chemicalizing. In Christian Science chemicalization means a changing of base on the part of the individual from the material to the spiritual. The appearance of sleep was not sleep at all but an indicator of shifting levels of thought.

They certainly were not asleep in the common meaning of that term; but were undergoing that spiritual transformation which must come to every one passing out of darkness into light. There must have been such a stirring up of “the old man” in them, that they were completely overpowered by it. All the errors of their past lives were coming to the surface: so that the lusts of the fleshly nature were beginning vividly to show themselves to their awakened sense. This blinded them to the higher significance of what was taking place before their eyes; but that they did emerge from it afterwards, and saw the higher lesson which this transfiguration scene contained, is made apparent by the last point which remains to be considered. (1892)

They have reached a plane where, on looking up, they saw no man but Jesus only; but who is the Jesus whom they now perceive? Is it the one seen at the commencement of the glorious unfolding? No; for to them that Jesus has disappeared, — or rather their former sense of that Jesus has faded away. They now are beginning to gaze upon the impersonal Lord and Master, — a higher manifestation of the Christ than had ever been disclosed to them. You remember it has already been declared that these three disciples went up onto the mount of transfiguration with no sense of their Master other than the human, material one, which is held by the world to-day, — the impression entertained by the religious world. Little by little this has faded out, until they reach a point whence they are beginning to catch a sense of him as he really is. (1892)

In the higher unfolding Moses had disappeared. Elias had disappeared; showing that Jesus alone remained to express the perfect idea, or conception of a complete, rounded, symmetrical man — the real man of God's creating who forever has existed. In the divine individuality of Jesus, they beheld united their fragmentary sense of Moses and Elias; but in larger, more spiritual manifestation, so that they became better able to discern who and what the real Man is. The Christ now made manifest to their purified vision is shown to them to be the only begotten of God — the spiritual Man. Thus Jesus became the "elder brother," and "princely leader." (1892)

Editor's note: Mr. Mason expresses this incident of the disappearance of Moses and Elias in language of great beauty as follows:

Lifting their eyes, they beheld only Jesus. Moses and Elias had vanished. Demonstrating the falsity of material beliefs, we are always touched by Truth. Lifting our eyes above sensible phenomena, we open them to the glories of the heavenly verities. From this spiritual summit we behold only the immortal Jesus, Truth's perfect idea. The waymarks leading to this divine result disappear in the hallowed light of celestial beauty. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and David are only waymarks, leading to Christ. When we awake in the image and likeness of God, the physical landmarks, leading to this glorious climax, disappear [as persons] from our consciousness. We behold only perfection. Jesus, the sinless, is our only guide. Him only must we aim to imitate. (1888)

Editor's note: To the disciples, Moses and Elias are still existing, but they are existing in the Christ consciousness. The "fragmentary sense of Moses and Elias" was the one with personal qualities. The only begotten of God was not the personal Jesus, but the Christ that they saw then.

Mr. Mason concludes his article thus:

Every star, every satellite, every planet, revolves around some central sun. Stars seem but twinklings of light. Planets reflect a higher degree of light. The sun itself is the prime cause of physical light in our universe. So men first catch the twinklings of Truth, then more and more of the heavenly sunshine, until the sunburst of Life overpowers the lesser lights, and we see only the one great light, Spirit. (1888)

Such was the vision [spiritual experience] of Peter, James, and John, on the Mount of Transfiguration. When they lifted their eyes above matter, they beheld the idea of God in the light of Divine Science. The atmosphere of God

surrounded Jesus. Henceforth their higher understanding of Jesus, as the mediator, is apparent. Henceforth they can proclaim that which they know, and bear witness to what they have seen. The outer Jesus has disappeared to us. From the mount upon which our Teacher and Pastor has placed our consciousness, we see only the immortal Jesus. Really, he has never left us. He lives in the consciousness of mankind. Every utterance of Truth is but the immortal [impersonal] Jesus, declaring, "Lo, I am with you always." (1888)

The good which men do lives forever. The evil destroys itself, in obedience to Spirit's law, "Nothing to nothingness." (1888)

Do we Christian Scientists realize the responsible position we occupy in the realm of mind today? On us depends the resurrection of the world. We who realize the all-in-all of God must let our "light so shine before men that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father," Mother, God. We must love our neighbor as ourselves, by holding them in thought as perfect expressions of the Infinite, immutable and eternal. We must realize that they are only conscious of what God also is conscious of. (1888)

In this way are they transfigured. We behold them as God beholds them. We see them in the new light of Divine Science. We must erase from consciousness the fancy that sight is physical, and declare the divine fact that sight is in Soul, — spiritual, not material. This is the only method of re-establishing ourselves spiritually. (1888; emphasis added)

Human claims must be nullified. Let us then only be conscious of the one eternal fact, that man is the perfect expression of infinite goodness, never changing, "the same yesterday, today, and forever." An ever-present consciousness of Good frees us from moral contagion, and lifts us to heavenly heights, where, ever-present before us, we behold mankind filled with celestial beauty, — our Transfiguration. (1888)

Rev. Norcross concludes his article thus:

Out of many practical suggestions which could be drawn from this lesson, but one is offered. The transfiguration is for us, and for all mankind. Its significance is to impress upon our feeble, sick, sinning, dying senses that *these senses* cannot behold the real Christ. He is to be discerned only as we rise completely above the illusions of the material mind which is of the flesh. The Jesus of human speculation and human systems is not the Jesus who reveals the Christ of God. That Jesus is divine, perfect and immortal; and he is the way-shower out of the mortal and sinful senses which the mind of man conceives itself to be. The transfiguration is taking place to-day, no less than

it did eighteen hundred years ago. It is taking place in our own consciousness, if so be that, with eyes open to behold its illuminated meaning, we discern in the Christ therein revealed the Jesus who is revealing to us the only perfect, complete sense of manhood and womanhood. Thus it is, that the transfiguration becomes a revelation, an unfolding of the spiritual creation. (1892)

End of Composite

MRS. EDDY'S TEACHING BASED ON IMPERSONALIZATION

As stated on page 1, Mrs. Eddy taught "Transfiguration is impersonalization." The basis of her teaching in the Massachusetts Metaphysical College in the 1880s was impersonalization. She said, "Impersonalization of thought is what the cause now [1881] demands, and I see little growth in that direction."⁹ In a letter to a student in October 1891, Mrs. Eddy wrote: "Our basis in Science is IMPERSONALITY."¹⁰ Notice that Mrs. Eddy capitalized every letter in the word "impersonality." When she emphasized impersonalization in the 1880s, she was revealing a fact that always was. She was not changing any spiritual fact.

God has always been divine Principle (the opposite of personality). He is not becoming Principle because of Mrs. Eddy's discovery of Christian Science, any more than the flat earth ever became a round earth because of the discovery of Columbus. It simply never was flat. But in Bible history, the human personal consciousness could not at that period comprehend this fact. In order for it to comprehend this, it had to grow spiritually by means of sequent divine revelations to communities of advancing spiritual thought which were receptive to the growing spiritual light. The only way they could understand God, was as a personality, although God was never for a moment a person. Mortals were personalities, but not God. In a sermon by Mrs. Eddy in 1883, she said:

Believing that God is a person, hinders the understanding of this divine Principle and its demonstration. We cannot demonstrate a person, therefore a person is not the power that heals the sick in Science; we can ask a person to doctor our sicknesses and to forgive our sins, and that is all we can do, but

⁹ Richard Oakes, comp., *Mary Baker Eddy's Six Days of Revelation*, Christian Science Research Library (Richmond, Surrey: King-print Limited, 1981), p. 115.

¹⁰ Peel, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Trial*, p. 297.

we can do more than that with a Principle, we can work it ourselves to this result, and following its divine rule . . . we can destroy sickness, sin, and death, and this is in accordance with the Scripture, “Work out your own salvation . . . For it is God which worketh in you.” . . .

. . . A person believed in is insufficient . . . this is Science and no man cometh to the Father, that is, can understand the Principle of being except through Science.¹¹

Mrs. Eddy states, “Principle and its idea is one, and this one is God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Being, and His reflection is man and the universe.”¹² A divine, living, infinite Principle which is the Mind and Life and Love of all Being has to have an idea of its own great and wonderful Being. The subjective state of the idea of Principle is the center and circumference of the universe. (cf. Hebrews 1:2) It unfolds as the operation and mission of the Principle, but could not for a long period of time in history be so comprehended because of error, the darkness of thought “upon the face of the deep.” In order for the human consciousness to become aware of God as Principle, it had to be interpreted and presented, step by step, in a form comprehensible by human personality. This idea was thus presented in revelation as a personal Son of God but it was never a person because God is and always has been Principle. To illustrate: the first chapter of Hebrews refers to the Son (subjective idea) as that by means of which the worlds were created.¹³ That was the only way that the advancing human consciousness of that time could derive any idea of the Christ or subjective thought of Principle.

Since Principle is both Father and Mother, Christ had to appear a second time in the form of a woman, and the human consciousness was required to accept this revealed woman in her highest personal presentation. Mrs. Eddy says of Christ, the spiritual idea, “This immaculate idea, represented first by man and, according to the Revelator, last by woman, will baptize with fire; and the fiery baptism will burn up the chaff of error with the fervent heat of Truth and Love, melting and purifying even the gold of human character.”¹⁴ This “fiery baptism” is a condition forcing the acceptance of the impersonality of God, Christ, man, and the universe.

¹¹ Mary Baker Eddy, “Life,” *Christian Science Sentinel*, Vol. XX, No. 23 (February 2, 1918): p. 443.

¹² Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 465:17-1.

¹³ Hebrews 1:2

¹⁴ *Science and Health*, p. 565:18-22

Mrs. Eddy knew and taught that the time would come when the advancing human thought could comprehend the fact that man was entirely impersonal and that God was always a divine Principle reflected by man and the universe. It is the same as when the world believed that the earth was flat, and they were limited for thousands of years because of that belief until it was discovered that the earth was round. It is a fact that whatever is true in one period of time but is regarded later as being untrue was never true. No one had ever lived on a flat earth, and likewise the fact remains today that no one has ever been a person. Christ was never really a person but was always Principle's subjective thought which is reflected by man and the universe.

A "REIGN OF PERSONALITY" ARISES

In 1901 the "reign of personality" was unwittingly instituted as described by William Lyman Johnson, one of the early workers in the Movement, son of the first Clerk of The Mother Church and friend of Mrs. Eddy. Writing in 1926, he states that about 1901 there grew up in the Christian Science Movement a teaching which was said to be a "modern method," "an easier method of obtaining results by a short cut," "a cold and mathematical process." The many who subscribed to this teaching considered the students taught by Mrs. Eddy to be "antiquated" and not equipped to properly teach and carry on the Movement. This teaching, instead of calling for impersonalization as Mrs. Eddy had taught, brought forward "the reign of personality."¹⁵

It was mistakenly said in higher circles in the Christian Science Movement that this new teaching at the turn of the century was in advance of Mrs. Eddy's College teaching and that Mrs. Eddy had prepared a student to give this teaching in her stead. Between 1898 and 1909, this new teaching became entrenched in the church's teaching system and eventually became the official teaching in the Christian Science Movement.¹⁶

IMPERSONALIZATION TO BE REINSTITUTED IN THE FUTURE

In her final year Mrs. Eddy culminated her repudiation of the "reign of personality." When a proposed statue of a woman in an attitude of prayer to be

¹⁵ William Lyman Johnson, *The History of The Christian Science Movement*, Volume II (Brookline, MA: The Zion Research Foundation, 1926), pp. 85-86.

¹⁶ Robert Peel, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Authority* (NY: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1977), p. 252.

placed in the edifice of The Mother Church was under discussion, Mrs. Eddy wrote the Church Directors in December 1909, “Do nothing in statuary, in writing, or in action, to perpetuate or immortalize the thought of personal being; but do and illustrate, teach and practice, all that will impersonalize God and His idea man and woman. Whatever I have said in the past relative to impersonation of thought or in figure I have fully recalled, and my Church cannot contradict me in this statement.”¹⁷

The continuation of the “reign of personality” was a contradiction of this statement. As we look back over the history of the years from 1901 to 1910, the reign of impersonalization was evidently not to take effect in that era as the “reign of personality” continued on and eventually became the official teaching in the Movement. Although Mrs. Eddy continually corrected the teaching, beginning in 1902 and culminating in her letter of December 1909, giving up the belief in personality seems difficult to do, and therefore it is understandable that her correction in various ways did not take immediate effect.

The teaching of impersonalization that Mrs. Eddy taught in her College in the 1880s and emphatically prescribed in 1909, is due to take effect in these latter days.

WHAT SHOULD BE OUR DAILY PURSUIT?

St. Peter, who was in the group of three that witnessed the transfiguration, has much to say in regard to the end of the world in his Second Epistle; and he reminds his readers that the Lord taught them the process of transfiguration. He writes:

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle [body], to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle [body], even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me [on the Mount of Transfiguration].¹⁸

Here is one of Jesus’ students, many years later reminding his fellow apostles that they are going to have to put off the body in transfiguration. We can only be exalted to the degree that we transfigure as the disciples did.

¹⁷ *Notes on Mary Baker Eddy’s Course in Divinity Recorded by Lida Fitzpatrick, C.S.D. and Others* (New Jersey: Rare Book Company), p. 129; (often known as “Blue Book”) emphases added.

¹⁸ II Peter 1:12-14

THE BIBLE IMPERATIVE

We must remember that in the very dawn of Bible history, the seventh generation from Adam was Enoch who transfigured under materially prosperous circumstances. This shows that the process of transfiguration is not at all a new concept but has been a Scriptural demand on everyone from the very beginning of history.

THE TIME HAS COME

The need of today is to take up and go forward with Mrs. Eddy's original teaching on the subject of transfiguration which she gave in her College.

When Jesus took the three disciples up the mount and was transfigured, he was not making an exhibition of supernatural dimension. Rather, it was as a teacher giving a course and selecting students who would be the most receptive and understanding for this subject. Jesus characterized this transfiguration to his disciples as his rising from the dead. He said to "tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." (Matt. 17:9) He was showing them the only means of escape from the "wrath to come," (Matt. 3:7) that is, the end of the world, which Malachi describes in the words, the earth "shall burn as an oven." (Mal. 4:1) In its spiritual significance, this is God's gracious means and expression of His love in urging and showing us how to return to our preexistence, — resuming our individual, impersonal identity.

Regarding the theme of impersonalization, Mrs. Eddy wrote, "His [our Master's] physical sufferings, which came from the testimony of the senses, were over when he resumed his individual spiritual being, after showing us the way to escape from the material body [i.e., through impersonalization]."¹⁹

Like Jesus, we all must resume our spiritual being through the process of impersonalization or transfiguration, and the Christian Science *Endtime* Center is established to show the followers of Jesus and Mrs. Eddy and all mankind the scientific way to make this transfiguration, and escape the dangers of the latter days.

Mrs. Eddy states, "The compounded minerals or aggregated substances composing the earth, the relations which constituent masses hold to each other, the magnitudes, distances, and revolutions of the celestial bodies, are of no real

¹⁹ Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 105:8

importance, when we remember that they all must give place to the spiritual fact by the translation of man and the universe back into Spirit. In proportion as this is done, man and the universe will be found harmonious and eternal.” (S&H 209:16) We translate our thinking into the spiritual and give up the material. It does not mean translating our bodies, houses, lands, personal possessions, etc. into Spirit or spiritual formations.

The following passages from *Science and Health* show us that the only reality of our being is the transfigured being.

Spirit and its formations are the only realities of being. Matter disappears under the microscope of Spirit. (S&H 264:20)

The fading forms of matter, the mortal body and material earth, are the fleeting concepts of the human mind. They have their day before the permanent facts and their perfection in Spirit appear. The crude creations of mortal thought must finally give place to the glorious forms which we sometimes behold in the camera of divine Mind, when the mental picture is spiritual and eternal. Mortals must look beyond fading, finite forms, if they would gain the true sense of things. Where shall the gaze rest but in the unsearchable realm of Mind? (S&H 263:32)

These are the things that were shown to the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. The forms of matter were fading and the formations of Spirit were coming into view.

The need in the endtime is to utilize the teachings of Jesus and Mrs. Eddy to arouse ourselves from the world. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (I John 2:15) We either love the world or we love the kingdom of heaven and are striving to reach it.

* * *

“When from the lips of Truth one mighty breath
Shall, like a whirlwind, scatter in its breeze
The whole dark pile of human mockeries;
Then shall the reign of Mind commence on earth,
And starting fresh, as from a second birth,
Man in the sunshine of the world's new spring,
Shall walk transparent like some holy thing.”

(*Miscellaneous Writings* 51:22)