Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures
vs. *The Bible—*
Twenty-Five Points of Contrast

Michael McClymond / Saint Louis University

Most of the quotations below are taken from Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston: The First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1971) [abbreviated at S&H], or from the *New American Standard Bible* (1995 ed.). Certain other Christian Science texts, cited below, are listed at the end.

1—Rejection of the Authority of the Bible

- ***Thesis: While S&H claims to be based on the Bible, it also explicitly rejects the Bible.***
- *"The Bible has been my only authority. I have had no other guide in 'the straight and narrow way' of Truth" (S&H, 126).*
- Nonetheless, S&H rejects key parts of the Bible—such as Genesis 2, which said to be "false" or a "lie" (S&H, 521-24).
- S&H also implies that the Bible as we have it today is unreliable: *"The manifest mistakes in the ancient versions; the thirty thousand different readings in the Old Testament, and the three hundred thousand in the New—these facts show how a moral and material sense stole into the divine record, with its own hue darkening to some extent the inspired pages" (S&H, 139).*

2—Rejection of Human Individuality

- ***Thesis: While S&H addresses its reader as a responsible, decision-making, individual human being, the book denies that responsible, human individuals exist.***
- *"Here is found the pith of the basal statement, the cardinal point in Christian Science, that matter and evil (including all inharmony, sin, disease, death) are unreal" (Eddy, Miscellaneous Writings, 27). "The belief that man has existence or mind separate from God is a dying error" (S&H, 42). "There is but one Mind or intelligence" (S&H, 216). "Mortal existence has no real entity, but saith 'It is I'" (S&H, 250). "Mortals…believe themselves to be independent workers, personal authors, and even privileged originators" (S&H, 263). "Generically man is one, and specifically man means all men" (S&H, 267). "All is Mind, and that Mind is God" (S&H, 275). "There is but one Spirit, for there can be but one infinite and therefore one God" (S&H, 334). "The term souls or spirits is as improper as the term gods. Soul or Spirit signifies Deity and nothing else" (S&H, 466). "It should be thoroughly understood that all men have one Mind" (S&H, 467). "All is infinite Mind" (S&H, 468). "There can be but one Mind, because there is but one God" (S&H, 469). "The children of God have but one Mind" (S&H, 470). "God is Mind, and God is infinite, hence all is Mind" (S&H, 492).*

- If only infinite Mind is real (S&H, 468), then there is no place for individuality outside of this infinite Mind. The material body is unreal, and so the body does not differentiate one human being from another. And, on the spiritual level, the only mind is Infinite Mind.
- Not only is my body an illusion or delusion, but my own sense of being a distinct self or "I" is likewise an illusion or delusion. This conclusion follows from the teaching.
- ***Logical Problem***: If only God exists, then would that not imply that every action that I might ordinarily ascribe to myself is in fact the action of God in and through me? How is that possible?

3—Rejection of Sense Experience and of the Empirical Observation of the World

- ***Thesis: While S&H is a physical object (i.e., a printed book) read with physical eyes by physical people, it denies the value and legitimacy of bodies and of sense experience.***
- *"To develop the full might of this Science, the discords of corporeal sense must yield to the harmony of spiritual sense" (S&H, viii). "Jesus…laid the axe of Science at the root of material knowledge" (S&H, 27). "There is no material truth…Hence the enmity between Science and the senses, and the impossibility of attaining perfect understanding till the errors of sense are eliminated" (S&H, 273). "Unnecessary knowledge gained from the five senses is only temporal…and symbolizes all that is evil and perishable. Natural science, as it is commonly called, is not really natural nor scientific, because it is deduced from the evidence of the material senses" (S&H, 274). "All the evidence of physical sense and all the knowledge obtained from physical sense must yield to Science, to the immortal truth of all things" (S&H, 493).*
- "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?...And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow" (Mt. 6:26, 28).
- "Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her ways and be wise" (Prov. 6:6).
- The so-called "nature psalms" show a keen delight in the human observation of the creatures that God has created: "O Lord, how many are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your possessions. There is the sea, great and broad, in which are swarms without number, animals both small and great" (Ps. 104:24-25).
- ***Logical Problem***: How can a physical, material person live in a physical, material world while denying and ignoring the existence of matter? A cell phone is just as much a material object as an aspirin pill. Why would it be forbidden to take an aspirin, while one is allowed to use a cell phone—or eat food, breath air, or look both ways when crossing a street? Can anyone actually put *this teaching* into practice?

4—Rejection of the Reality of Pain, Suffering, and Death

- ***Thesis: While S&H claims that suffering, pain, and death are nonexistent now, the Bible says that these things will only pass away in the future, after Christ returns.***
- *"Now is the time for so-called material pains and material pleasures to pass away, for both are unreal, because impossible in Science" (S&H, 39). "The universal belief in death is of no advantage…Death will be found at length to be a mortal dream, which comes in darkness and disappears with the light" (S&H, 42). "Man is immortal, and the*

body cannot die, because matter has no life to surrender…If it is true that man lives, this fact can never change in Science to the opposite belief that man dies…Death is but another phase of the dream that existence can be material. Nothing can interfere with the harmony of being nor end the existence of man in Science. Man is the same after as before a bone is broken or the body guillotined…Life is real and death is the illusion" (S&H, 426-8).

- The Bible teaches that material pains will pass away, but not until after Christ has returned again (Rev. 20) and when God has established "a new heaven and a new earth": "And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and he will dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be among them, and he will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4).
- "For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it" (Rom. 8:24-25).
- "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (1 Cor. 15:52).
- "For indeed while we are in this tent [i.e, physical body], we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life" (2 Cor. 5:4).

5—Rejection of the Teaching that Human Beings are Sinners

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that man is sinless and perfect, the Bible teaches that human beings are sinners.***
- *"The chief stones in the temple of Christian Science are to be found in the following postulates: that Life is God, good and not evil; that Soul is sinless" (S&H, 288). "If there was ever a moment when man did not express the divine perfection, then there was a moment when man did not express God…If man ever existed without this perfect Principle or Mind, then man's existence was a myth" (S&H, 470). "Is there no sin?...All reality is in God…Therefore the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human, erring belief, until God strips off their disguise" (S&H, 472). "Man is spiritual and perfect…Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death" (S&H, 475). "Man is the ultimate of perfection and by no means the medium of imperfection. …The spiritual man is that perfect and unfallen likeness, coexistent and coeternal with God" (Miscellaneous Writings, 79).*
- "There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes…For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10-18, 23).
- "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? (Jer. 17:9).

- "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us…If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us" (1 Jn. 1:8, 10).

6—Rejection of the Historical Life of Jesus as Unimportant

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that the events of history do not matter for salvation or our spiritual life, the Bible teaches that Christ's bodily death and bodily resurrection are essential for our salvation and spiritual life.***
- *"If there had never existed such a person as the Galilean Prophet, it would make no difference to me. I should still know that God's spiritual ideal is the only real man in His image and likeness" (First Church, 318-9).*
- *"The material record of the Bible…is no more important to our well-being than the history of Europe and America; but the spiritual application bears upon our eternal life" (Miscellaneous Writings, 170).*
- If S&H is correct, then Jesus's birth did not matter, nor his early life, nor his miracles, nor his calling and teaching of the disciples, nor his death, nor his burial, nor his resurrection from the dead.
- "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve…Now if Christ is preached, that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:3-5, 12-17).

7—Rejection of the Materiality or Physicality of Jesus of Nazareth

- ***Thesis: S&H teaches that the Virgin Mary conceived Christ as an "idea" or "ideal," while the Bible teaches that Mary conceived Christ as a flesh-and-blood human being. The denial that Jesus "has come in the flesh," according to the Bible, comes from "the spirit of antichrist."***
- *"The Virgin-mother conceived this idea of God, and gave to her ideal the name of Jesus…The Christ dwelt forever an idea in the bosom of God, the divine Principle of the man Jesus, and woman perceived this spiritual idea" (S&H, 29). "The individual ideal of Truth, Christ Jesus" (S&H, 30). "Jesus is the human man, and Christ is the divine idea; hence the duality of Jesus the Christ" (S&H, 473).*
- "While they were there, the days were completed for [Mary] to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk. 2:6-7).
- "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14).

- "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us" (1 Jn. 1:1-2).
- "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world" (1 Jn. 4:1-3).
- ***Logical Problem***: In light of her general teaching, Eddy's "duality" of "Jesus" as "the human man," versus "Christ" as "the divine idea," makes no sense (S&H, 473). Because matter does not exist, "Jesus" cannot be bodily, while "Christ" is ideal. Nor can one say that "Jesus" is one Mind, while "Christ" is another Mind, since there is only one Infinite Mind or Spirit. Thus, it seems to be impossible to make such a distinction.

8—Rejection of the Physical, Bodily Incarnation of God's Eternal Son

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that the Infinite God "cannot be limited" in any way, the Bible teaches that God in the person of Jesus "became flesh" (i.e., an individual human being), and that God in his "fulness" dwells in Jesus.***
- *"Infinite Mind cannot be limited to a finite form, or Mind would lose its infinite character and inexhaustible Love, eternal Life, omnipotent Truth. It would require an infinite form to contain an infinite Mind" (S&H, 257). "A portion of God could not enter man; neither could God's fullness be reflected by a single man, else God would be manifestly finite, lose the deific character, and become less than God" (S & H, 336). "The corporeal man Jesus was human. Jesus demonstrated Christ…The word Christ is not properly a synonym for Jesus, though it is commonly so used. Jesus was a human name…By [his] sayings Jesus meant, not that the human Jesus was or is eternal, but that the divine idea or Christ was and is so…Not that the corporeal Jesus was one with the Father, but that the spiritual idea, Christ, dwells forever in the bosom of the Father, God (S&H, 332-34). "Jesus is the human man, and Christ is the divine idea; hence the duality of Jesus the Christ" (S&H, 473). "The spiritual Christ was infallible; Jesus, as material manhood, was not Christ" (MW, 84).*
- "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14).
- "Christ Jesus…although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:5-8).
- "Since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death he might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).
- "For in him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form" (Col. 2:9).
- Note that this last verse is a specific contradiction of the claim in S&H—"neither could God's fullness be reflected by a single man" (S&H, 336).

9—Rejection of Jesus as Being Fully God or Divine

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that Jesus is not fully God—or assigns to Jesus a lesser title, such as "son of God"—the Bible states plainly that Jesus is God.***
- *"A portion of God could not enter man; neither could God's fullness be reflected by a single man, else God would be manifestly finite, lose the deific character, and become less than God" (S & H, 336). "The spiritual Christ was infallible; Jesus, as material manhood, was not Christ" (MW, 84). "The Christian who believes in the First Commandment is a monotheist. Thus he virtually unites with the Jew's belief in one God and recognizes that Jesus Christ is not God, as Jesus himself declared, but is the Son of God" (S & H, 361). "Jesus was the highest human concept of the perfect man. He was inseparable from Christ, the Messiah—the divine idea of God outside the flesh. This enabled Jesus to demonstrate his control over matter" (S&H, 482).*
- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being. In im was life, and the life was the light of men….And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:1-4, 14).
- "I and the Father are one" (Jn. 10:30).
- "Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father'" (Jn. 14:8-9).
- "Then he said to Thomas, 'Reach here with your finger, and see my hands; and reach here your hand and put it into my side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.' Thomas answered and said to him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Because you have seen me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed'" (Jn. 20:27-29).

10—Rejection of Miracles or Supernatural Acts Performed by Jesus and His Followers

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that Jesus's life and deeds were "not miraculous," the Bible clearly refers to "miracles" performed by Jesus and by other people.***
- *"The life of Christ Jesus was not miraculous" (S&H, 270). "Jesus instructed his disciples whereby to heal the sick through Mind instead of matter…The power of healing was not a supernatural gift to those learners, but the result of their cultivated spiritual understanding of the divine Science, which their Master demonstrated by healing the sick" (S&H, 271).*
- "When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, 'Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to him, and such miracles as these performed by his hands?" (Mk. 6:2)
- "But Jesus said, 'Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in my name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of me" (Mk. 9:39).
- "As soon as he was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen" (Lk. 19:37).

- "At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico….And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number, to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them. Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed" (Acts 5:12, 14-16).

11—Rejection of the Facticity of Jesus's Death

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that Jesus did not die before going into the tomb for three days, and that Jesus healed himself while in the tomb, the Bible repeatedly states that Jesus died on the cross.***
- *"Jesus overcame death and the grave instead of yielding to them…To him, therefore, death was not the threshold over which he must pass into living glory" (S&H, 39). "Because of the wondrous glory which God bestowed on His anointed…death had no terror for Jesus. Let men think they had killed the body! Afterwards he would show it to them unchanged" (S&H, 42)."The magnitude of Jesus' work, his historical disappearance before their eyes and his reappearance, all enabled the disciples to understand what Jesus had said…He was acting under spiritual law in defiance of matter and mortality, and that spiritual law sustained him" (S&H, 43). "Jesus' unchanged physical condition [came] after what seemed to be death" (S&H, 46).*
- Sometimes the language used in S&H is vague, with the words "disappearance" and "reappearance" substituting for "death" and "resurrection." The text never states clearly that Jesus died, and this fits with the teaching of S&H on the unreality of death. There only "seemed to be death" (S&H, 46).
- *"The lonely precincts of the tomb gave Jesus a refuge from his foes, a place in which to solve the great problem of being. His three days' work in the sepulchre set the seal of eternity on time" (S&H, 44). "The disciples believed Jesus to be dead while he was hidden in the sepulchre, whereas he was alive, demonstrating within the narrow tomb the power of Spirit to overrule mortal, material sense" (S&H, 44).*
- These statement on Jesus' "three days' work" make it obvious that S&H regards Jesus not as dead but as alive inside the tomb.
- "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly….But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6,8).
- "Christ Jesus is he who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:34).
- "For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom. 14:9).
- "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3).
- "For if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly" (Gal. 2:21).
- "For Christ also died for sins once for all" (1 Pet. 3:18).

12—Rejection of the Facticity and Supernatural Character of Jesus' Resurrection

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that Jesus—as he was in the tomb—healed himself from his wounds by using the principles of Christian Science, the Bible states instead that Jesus died on the cross and that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead by an act of supernatural power.***
- *"He did not require the skill of a surgeon to heal the torn palms and bind up the wounded side and lacerated feet…Could it be called supernatural for the God of nature to sustain Jesus in his proof of man's truly derived power? It was a method of surgery beyond material art, but it was not a supernatural act" (S&H, 44).*
- S&H teaches that Jesus did not die before going into the tomb, and that he remained alive in the tomb for three days. Instead of resurrection from the dead, there was a healing process. In S&H Jesus healed himself in the tomb, by applying to himself the principles of Christian Science.
- In the Bible, though, the resurrection of Christ from the dead is said to be a divine and supernatural act by God the Father—not merely a matter of healing, nor an act that Jesus performed on himself, but something accomplished by the power of God the Father.
- "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross" (Acts 5:30).
- The statement that "God raised Jesus" appears *no less than fifteen times in the New Testament*—in Acts 2:24, 2:32, 3:15, 3:26, 4:10, 5:30, 10:40, 13:30, 13:33, 13:37; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14, 15:15; Gal. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:21.
- Jesus is said to have "died" and "rose"—"Jesus died and rose again" (1 Thess. 4:14). "He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose again on their behalf" (2 Cor. 5:15).
- S&H speaks of Jesus's body, after his crucifixion, as "unchanged" (S&H, 42, 46). But the Bible says otherwise. Jesus showed the Apostle Thomas his "hands" and his "side"—pierced by the nails and by the lance—so that Thomas could see the marks of his sufferings. Similarly, the Gospel of Luke states that Jesus showed his disciples his "hands" and his "feet"—both of which had been pierced by nails (Lk. 24:40).

13—Rejection of the Idea of God as a Trinity or Tri-Unity of Distinct Persons

- ***Thesis: While S&H denies the doctrine of the Trinity or Tri-Unity of God, the Bible teaches this doctrine.***
- *"The theory of three persons in one God (that is, a personal Trinity or Tri-unity) suggest polytheism, rather than the one ever-present I AM" (S&H, 256). "Life, Truth, and Love constitute the triune Person called God—that is, the triply divine Principle" (S&H, 331). Note that S&H teaches a three-ness of name or function in God—as Life, Truth, and Love—but not a three-ness of distinct persons—Father, Son, and Spirit.*
- The doctrine of God as Trinity or Tri-Unity is difficult to demonstrate without examining many different passages of scripture, and only a few of the more important texts are given here. On Jesus as fully divine, see under #9 above.
- "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19).

- "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).
- "There is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through him" (1 Cor. 8:6).
- "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).
- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1).
- "I and the Father are one" (Jn. 10:30).

14—Rejection of the Need for Faith in God or in Christ

- ***Thesis: While S&H says that salvation comes through knowledge or understanding, and "precludes the need of believing," the New Testament speaks of salvation by faith, and states that "without faith it is impossible to please him [i.e., God]."***
- *"You speak of belief. Who or what is it that believes? Spirit is all-knowing; this precludes the need of believing. Matter cannot believe, and Mind understands…The Scriptures often appear in our common version to approve and endorse belief, when they mean to enforce the necessity of understanding" (S&H, 487-8).*
- In responding to the question as to whether Christian Science has a "creed," the answer in S&H does not use the phrase "we believe" but rather "we acknowledge," followed by a series of propositions (S&H, 496-7). The word "acknowledge" stresses knowledge or understanding, rather than faith or belief as such.
- The Old and New Testament contains hundreds of references to "faith."
- "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him" (Heb. 11:6).
- "The righteous will live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4).
- "And he said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace'" (Lk. 7:50).
- "Jesus said to [Thomas], 'Because you have seen me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.' Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (Jn. 20:29-31).
- "We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies" (1 Cor. 8:1).

15—Rejection of the Need for the Confession of Sins

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that confession of sins is not necessary, the Bible gives many examples of confession of sins and instructs us to confess our sins to God.***
  "Prayer is not to be used as a confessional to cancel sin" (S&H, 5).
- What of the innumerable, biblical prayers of confession?
- "Be gracious to me, O God, according to your lovingkindness. According to the greatness of your compassion blot out my transgressions" (Ps. 51:1).
- There are dozens of other such prayers of confession contained in the Bible.

- The prayer of confession of Nehemiah: "I am praying before you now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against you; I and my father's house have sinned. We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which you commanded your servant Moses" (Neh. 1:6-8).
- The prayer of confession of Daniel: "We have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from your commandments… Righteousness belongs to you, O Lord, but to us open shame…O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For your own sake, O my God, do not delay" (Dan. 9:5, 7, 19).
- "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

16—Rejection of the Teaching on Salvation by Grace

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that no one will be forgiven until they have "corrected" their "sins or mistakes," the Bible teaches that human beings are saved by grace while they are still sinners, and while they are spiritually helpless and unable to escape from their own sin and guilt.***
- *"Divine Principle never pardons our sins or mistakes till they are corrected" (S&H, 11). "Justice requires reformation of the sinner" (S&H, 22). "One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part" (S&H, 23). "To remit the penalty due for sin, would be for Truth to pardon error. Escape from punishment is not in accordance with God's government" (S&H, 36). "The way to escape the misery of sin is to cease sinning. There is no other way" (S&H, 327).*
- "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law" (Rom. 3:28).
- "Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness" (Rom. 4:4-5). Note that this passage does not speak of a God who "justifies the godly" but who "justifies the ungodly."
- "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly…While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:6, 10).
- "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:1-5).
- "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).
- ***Logical Problem***: Eddy writes that "the way to escape the misery of sin is to cease sinning" (S&H, 327). But this is impossible. Why? Sin, Eddy says, is unreal and nonexistent, and one cannot "cease sinning" because there is nothing to "cease" from.

17—Rejection of Atonement as Requiring the Death of Jesus

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that "atonement" means "man's unity with God" and that it existed prior to Jesus's death on the cross, the Bible teaches that it was through the death of Jesus that atonement was accomplished for the sake of sinners.***
- *"Atonement is the exemplification of man's unity with God…Jesus of Nazareth taught and demonstrated man's oneness with the Father" (S&H, 18).*
- In this passage S&H suggests that human beings—apart from the cross of Christ—may be in a state of "oneness with the Father," whereas the New Testament teaches that this "oneness" occurs only because of Jesus's atoning death on the cross, together with faith in Jesus's atoning death.
- "According to the Law…all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22).
- "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn. 1:29). This verse suggests that "the sin of world" had to be "taken away" by the death of Jesus.
- "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly…While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:6, 10).
- "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood through faith" (Rom. 3:23-25).
- As these verses from Romans 3 show, the sacrifice to turn away God's displeasure (i.e., propitiation) required the "blood" of Christ to be shed, and calls for the response of "faith."

18—Rejection of Jesus's Death as an Atonement for Our Sins

- ***Thesis: While S&H denies that Jesus's death on the cross and his shed blood annuls sin or cleanses from sin, the Bible frequently states that Jesus's death on the cross and Jesus's shed blood is the specific means for the cancelation and annulling of sin.***
- *"Jesus suffered for our sins, not to annul the divine sentence for an individual's sin" (S&H, 11). "One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part" (S&H, 23). "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). "To remit the penalty due for sin, would be for Truth to pardon error. Escape from punishment is not in accordance with God's government" (S&H, 36).*
- Christ "canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Col. 2:14).
- "And he himself bore our sins in His body on the cross…for by his wounds you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).
- "To shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).
- "Having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through him" (Rom. 5:9).
- "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7).

- "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in him, and through him to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven" (Col. 1:19-20).
- "Not through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, he entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12).
- "Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb. 13:12).
- "If we walk in the Light as he himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).
- "To him who loves us and released us from our sins by his blood" (Rev. 1:5).

19--Rejection of Any Need for Audible Prayer

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that prayer does not need to be "audible," the Bible encourages us to "shout joyfully to the Lord," states that Jesus welcomed the shouting of his own followers, and says that Jesus himself "offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears."***
- *"Prayer…has little need of audible expression. It is best expressed in thought and in life" (S&H., 11).*
- "Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; break forth and sing for joy and sing praises" (Ps. 98:4).
- "As soon as he was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen…Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.' But Jesus answered, 'I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!'" (Lk. 19:37, 39-40).
- "In the days of his flesh, he [i.e., Jesus] offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the one able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his piety" (Heb. 5:7).

20—Rejection of the Effectiveness of Intercessory or Petitionary Prayer

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that intercessory or petitionary prayer does not accomplish healing or other observable effects, the Bible teaches that "the effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much," and stresses the powerful prayers of Elijah.***
- *"A mere request that God will heal the sick has no power to gain more of the divine presence than is always at hand" (S&H, 12).*
- "The prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit" (Jam. 5:15-18).

21—Rejection of Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Eucharist

- ***Thesis: While S&H interprets baptism and the Lord's Supper in a purely spiritual way, and Christian Scientists do not celebrate these rites in any physical fashion, the Bible teaches that believers are to baptize with water and to celebrate the Lord's Supper with bread and wine in remembrance of Christ's death.*** *"Baptism [is] Purification by Spirit; submergence in Spirit" (S&H, 581). "Our baptism is a purification from all error" (S&H, 35). "The true sense is spiritually lost, if the sacrament is confined to the use of bread and wine" (S&H, 32). "His followers, sorrowful and silent, anticipating the hour of their Master's betrayal, partook of the heavenly manna…Their bread indeed came down from heaven" (S&H, 33). "Our Eucharist is spiritual communion with the one God. Our bread…is Truth…Our wine is the inspiration of Love" (S&H, 35). "What a contrast between our Lord's last supper and his last spiritual breakfast with his disciples in the bright morning hours at the joyful meeting on the shore of the Galilean Sea!" (S&H, 34).*
- S&H denies the reality of death generally, so it is not surprising that Jesus's death is denied (see #11 above), nor surprising that S&H says little about Jesus's Last Supper, celebrated as the Lord's Supper, in commemoration of Jesus' death. Jesus's reference at the Last Supper to "the new covenant in my blood," touches on the theme of atonement, which is also rejected in S&H (see #18 above).
- In place of the Lord's Supper, some Christian Scientists practice a mental meditation on the "morning meal"—i.e., the meal Jesus shared with his followers in the Gospel of John after his resurrection (Jn. 21). This too is a way of avoiding any focus on Jesus's death.
- "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19).
- "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4).
- "And when he had taken some bread and given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood'" (Lk. 22:19).
- "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).
- "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

22—Rejection of Teaching on Christ's Second Coming

- ***Thesis: While S&H denies that people should "prepare for a future-world salvation," the Bible tells us to be living daily in the expectation and "blessed hope" of Christ's glorious return.*** *"'Now,' cried the apostle, 'is the acceptable 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 in life" (S&H, 39).*
- *"The second appearing of Jesus is unquestionably, the spiritual advent of the advancing idea of God, as in Christian Science" (Retrospection and Introspection, 70).*
- *"It is authentically said that one expositor of Daniel's dates fixed the year 1866 or 1867 for the return of Christ—the return of the spiritual idea to the material earth or antipode of heaven. It is a marked coincidence that those dates were the first two years of my discovery of Christian Science" (First Church, 181).*
- "Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'" (Mk. 13:35-37).
- "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And he will send forth his angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other" (Mt. 24:29-31).
- "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober" (1 Thess. 5:2-6).
- "For the grace of God has appeared…instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:11-13).
- ***Logical Problem***: Eddy defines Christ's second coming as "the return of the spiritual idea to the material earth." But since there is no such thing as a "material earth," this statement appears to be meaningless, according to Eddy's own teaching.

23—Rejection of Teaching on the Resurrection of Dead

- ***Thesis: While S&H interprets "resurrection" as a form of "spiritual understanding," the Bible teaches that Jesus's dead body rose again from the grave, and that believers in Christ will likewise rise again from their graves and receive glorious new bodies when Christ comes again.*** *"No resurrection from the grave awaits Mind or Life, for the grave has no power over either" (S&H, 291). "Resurrection [is] Spiritualization of*

thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence; material belief yielding to spiritual understanding" (S&H, 593).

- "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:2-3).
- "Now if Christ is preached, that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep…But someone will say, 'How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?' You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as he wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own…So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power… Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (1 Cor. 15:12-20, 35-38, 42-44, 50-52).

24—Rejection of Teaching on the Final Judgment, Heaven, and Hell

- ***Thesis: While S&H denies the reality of a final judgment, and of heaven and hell as distinct realities after death, the Bible affirms all of the above.*** *"No final judgment awaits mortals, for the judgment-day of wisdom comes hourly and continually, even the judgment by which mortal man is divested of all material error" (S&H, 291). "Universal salvation rests on progression and probation, and is unattainable without them" (S&H, 291). "Heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there" (S&H, 291). "Heaven [is] Harmony, the reign of Spirit; government by divine Principle; spirituality; bliss; the atmosphere of Soul" (S&H, 587). ="Hell [is] Mortal belief; error; lust; remorse; hatred; revenge…self-imposed agony; effects of sin" (S&H, 588). "I am asked, 'Is there a hell?' Yes, there is a hell for all who persist in breaking the Golden Rule or in disobeying the commandments of God….Hidden unpunished sin is this internal fire, -- even the fire of a guilty conscience" (First Church, 160).*
- "But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10-12).

- "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).
- "Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).
- "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and he will dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be among them'… I saw no temple in [the holy city], for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:1-3, 22-27).

25—Rejection of the Finality of One's Eternal State at Death

- ***Thesis: While S&H teaches that people continue to strive toward their own salvation after death, the teaching of the Bible suggests that one's eternal state becomes fixed and final at the time of one's death.*** *"If the change called death destroyed the belief in sin, sickness, and death, happiness would be won at the moment of dissolution, and be forever permanent; but this is not so. Perfection is gained only by perfection….The sin and error which possess us at the instant of death do not cease at the moment, but endure until the death of these errors" (290). "As death findeth mortal man, so shall he be after death, until probation and growth shall effect the needed change" (S&H, 291). "Man is not annihilated, nor does he lose his identity, by passing through the belief called death. After the momentary belief of dying passes from mortal mind, this mind is still in a conscious state of existence" (Miscellaneous Writings, 42). "This period [after death] will be of longer or shorter duration according to the tenacity of error" (S&H, 77). "Man's probation after death is the necessity of his immortality; for good dies not and evil is self-destructive, therefore evil must be mortal and self-destroyed. It man should not progress after death, but should remain in error, he would be inevitably self-annihilated" (Miscellaneous Writings, 2). "The sin and error which possess us at the*

instant of death do not cease at that moment, but endure until the death of these errors. To be wholly spiritual, man must be sinless, and he becomes thus only when he reaches perfection" (S&H, 290).

- S&H denies the teaching on salvation by grace (see #16 above) and affirms that human beings are saved by their own moral and spiritual striving, when they become "sinless" and reach "perfection." S&H extends this process of struggle and striving beyond the earthly life into the afterlife.
- But never does the Bible present any hint or suggestion that there is any postmortem progress in salvation.
- "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Heb. 9:27).
- "Because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation" (Rom. 2:5-8).
- "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). This text states that the postmortem judgment by God is based on "deeds [done] in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10)—that is, the "deeds" done during the earthly life—and is not based on anything occurring after death.
- Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish virgins contradicts the notion that people have unlimited time in which to make their spiritual decision to accept or reject Christ. This passage suggests the urgency of turning to Christ here and now and not waiting until it is too late: "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour" (Mt. 25:1-13).
- ***Logical Problem***: Since S&H speaks of death as unreal and non-existent, how can one speak of "the instant of death," "passing through…death," or a condition "after death"? Likewise, if evil too is unreal and non-existent, then how can one speak of it as subject to a "self-destructive" process? Something *non-existent* cannot be "destroyed."

Texts Cited

First Church = Eddy, Mary Baker. *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*. Boston: Trustees, 1941 [first published 1913].

Miscellaneous Writings = Eddy, Mary Baker. *Miscellaneous Writings*. Boston: Trustees, 1924 [first published 1896].

Retrospection and Introspection = Eddy, Mary Baker. Retrospection and Introspection. Boston: Trustees, 1920 [first published 1891].

S&H = Eddy, Mary Baker. *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Boston: The First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1971 [first published 1875, revised many times].