



THE FACTS ON THE MIND SCIENCES



What You Need to Know About

- *Silva Mind Control*
- *New Thought*
- *Unity School of Christianity*
and more

**John Ankerberg
& John Weldon**

THE FACTS ON THE MIND SCIENCES

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Eugene, Oregon 97402**

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THE FACTS ON THE MIND SCIENCES

Copyright © 1993 by The Ankerberg
Theological Research Institute
Published by Harvest House Publishers
Eugene, Oregon 97402

ISBN 1-56507-153-0

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Printed in the United States of America.

Contents

Section One: Defining the Mind Sciences

- 1. What are the Mind Sciences, and what do they believe? 5
- 2. How influential are the Mind Sciences? 8
- 3. What are some examples of contemporary Mind Science groups and individuals? 9

Section Two: Examples of the Leading Mind Science Religions

- 4. What is Religious Science (Science of Mind)? 10
- 5. What is Christian Science? 12
- 6. What is New Thought? 14
- 7. What is Divine Science? 16
- 8. What is Unity School of Christianity? 17
- 9. What is Silva Mind Control? 19
- 10. The fruit of est: What are The Forum, Lifespring, and Actualizations? 20

Section Three: The Theology of the Mind Sciences

- 11. What do the Mind Sciences teach about God? 22
- 12. What do the Mind Sciences teach about Jesus? 25
- 13. What do the Mind Sciences teach about man? 26
- 14. What do the Mind Sciences teach about sin and salvation? 27

Section Four:
The Mind Sciences and Christianity

15. How have the Mind Sciences influenced Christianity? Have they restored true Christianity? 28
16. Is there a connection between the Positive Confession/Faith Movement and the Mind Sciences? 30

Section Five:
The Mind Sciences, the Occult, and the Spirit World

17. Does the philosophy of the Mind Sciences constitute an occult belief? 32
18. How has spiritism and the occult influenced individual Mind Science groups? 34

Section Six:
The Mind Sciences: A Critique

19. Does the mind really have psychic or divine powers? 39
20. How do the Mind Sciences lead individuals to self-deception? 41
21. What are the moral implications of the Mind Sciences? 42

Conclusion and a Personal Word
 Notes

Section One

Defining the Mind Sciences

“I am God. I am not a god—I *am* God.”

—United School of Christianity
 minister Robert Sikking¹

1. What are the Mind Sciences, and what do they believe?

The term “Mind Sciences” refers to a large number of groups which stress that the mind has special powers available to anyone who will apply the teachings of these groups. In general, the Mind Sciences believe that the mind of man is innately divine because man, in his true nature, is one essence with God. Therefore, the true mind of man is literally the mind of God expressed on an individual level.

What is God? God is everything. God is characteristically held to be some form of pantheistic, impersonal divine consciousness that functions by cosmic law—and that may also be personified. By following the teachings of the Mind Sciences, it is claimed that the individual mind is brought into harmony with Divine Mind or cosmic law, unleashing the mind’s innate powers.

Most Mind Sciences teach a belief called *monism*, that everything consists of or is reducible to one substance. There is only One True Power in the universe (Divine Consciousness or God) and that this omnipresent Power alone comprises true Reality. It is the essence of all Goodness. Thus, in its *true* nature, everything in the world is already divine and perfect. Further, since only divine perfection exists, any contrary perception must be the result of mental error. Evil, suffering, war, crime, disease, disharmony, etc., simply have no reality in Divine Mind; they are the product of mental “illusions” or false perception. The purpose of the Mind Sciences is to correct these mental aberrations so that people can see and live the divine perfection that is their spiritual birthright.

Thus, Mind Science groups place primary emphasis on human potential—the powers of the mind to correct what they believe are false perceptions about oneself, life, the nature of reality, and God.

Just as in Hindu belief, the fundamental problem of humanity is seen not as sin before a holy God, but merely as ignorance. In their true nature, man and the world are already perfect and divine. One only need realize this by applying the proper teachings and practices. Thus, man's true problem is mental, not moral.

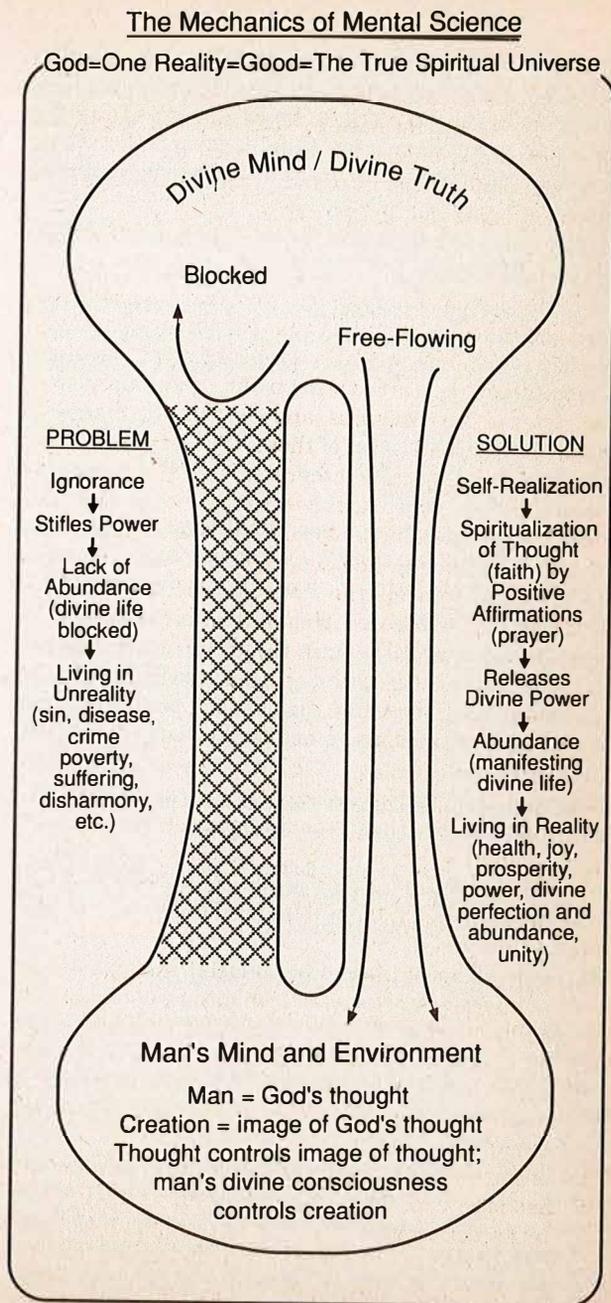
Mind Science practices involve various means to "correct" one's false thinking and specific methods to replace it with the knowledge and/or awareness of one's own personal godhood and the understanding that only divine perfection exists. These methods include various forms of visualization, meditation, psychic development, manipulation of altered states of consciousness, and positive affirmation—also termed "spiritualization of thought," "decreeing," etc. Such practices are typically integrated with the particular doctrines of a given group. In other words, the practices are designed to experientially reinforce Mind Science teachings.

For example, Religious Science and many other groups claim, "Thought controls the image of thought." God is conceived as Divine Idea or Thought, in other words, as Infinite Consciousness. The universe is seen as the emanation of God, conceived of as the *image* of God's thought or consciousness. Even though this universe is perfect (having emanated from Divine Consciousness or God), we misperceive the universe by faulty thinking. By meditation, visualization, positive confession, etc., one learns to "control" the image of thought. Thus, "thought controls the image of thought"—once the human mind is linked by new awareness to its true nature (as part of the Divine Mind), it can regulate proper perception of the creation because it now operates divinely.

All the problems of life can be solved if one will simply realize the innate power of one's true nature and manifest divine consciousness in the world. Only personal ignorance will inhibit this divine manifestation on a personal level. Man thus has the potential to control the creation because he is an individualized expression of the Divine Idea (or God) that made it.

This, of course, is one of the principles of occultism and magic: that man is divine and can control or manipulate creation by proper occult knowledge or technique. Not surprisingly, Mind Science philosophy also undergirds a great deal of the New Age Movement which also stresses the power of the mind and mankind's latent divinity.

The diagram here illustrates the basic philosophy of the Mind Sciences:



The universe (God's emanation) functions by a divine law of cause and effect. Obedience to this law constitutes accepting the principles of Mind Science (positive thinking) which brings spiritual success. Disobedience to law constitutes a rejection of the principles of Mind Science (negative thinking) which brings failure.

In conclusion, the common themes of the Mind Sciences include the following basic tenets:

- ◆ A philosophy of religious humanism stressing the truth of monism—that Mind or Divine Consciousness is the only reality and that in his true nature man is divine;
- ◆ God as cosmic or universal law, with “faith” as the mental power that regulates perception to bring spiritual success;
- ◆ A reliance, often in modified forms, on Eastern/occult philosophy—for example, many who write the popular Mind Science books are also occult practitioners;
- ◆ Practices involving such things as affirmation, visualization, meditation, and psychic development—all stressing the idea of unleashing the powers of the divine mind leading to greater “self-realization”;
- ◆ The acceptance of spiritistic revelations which “confirm” the Mind Science worldview;
- ◆ The personal accumulation of power, wealth, success, health, happiness, etc.—in other words, the manifestation of divine life.

2. How influential are the Mind Sciences?

In one form or another, Mind Science philosophy has had a significant impact on American life. When we consider 1) the different Mind Science religions, such as Religious Science, Christian Science, and Unity School of Christianity, 2) the many offshoots of Mind Science belief, such as The Forum/est, Lifespring, Actualizations, Silva Mind Control, etc., 3) the influence of the popular Mind Science authors (e.g., Norman Vincent Peale, Emile Coue, Emmet Fox, Joseph Murphy, Rev. Ike, Harold Sherman, Napoleon Hill), many of whom have had their books sell in the multiple millions, and 4) the influence of Mind Science in the New Age Movement, only then can we begin to see the power of the Mind Sciences in modern America.

Consider one major branch of the Mind Sciences, New Thought. In the 1930s and 1940s New Thought was brought to millions of people by Frank B. Robinson, head of the Psychiana Movement. Today, millions more have been reached with its message through dozens of leaders and hundreds of churches and organizations that make up INTA, the International New Thought Alliance. Further, Dr. J. Gordon Melton, an authority on religion, points out the influence of New Thought among mainline churches: “Also significant in the spreading of New Thought has been the propagation of its ideas and perspectives by ministers in mainline churches. These ministers would be headed by Norman Vincent Peale, whose *Power of Positive Thinking* is a New Thought classic.”²

Thus, no one can deny the influence of the Mind Sciences in modern American life. Collectively, in their various forms, these teachings have reached tens of millions of people.

3. What are some examples of contemporary Mind Science groups and individuals?

It may be helpful here to divide Mind Science influence into four basic categories. First, we have the Mind Science religions, such as Religious Science, New Thought (a large consortium of groups), Christian Science, Unity School of Christianity, Silva Mind Control, and various New Age/Mind Science seminars such as est/The Forum, Lifespring, Actualizations, etc. We discuss these topics in more detail in Section Two.

Second, we have what could be termed the more academic approach to Mind Science. This includes those with an intellectual or scientific background who stress the scientific “confirmation” of human potential/positive thinking. These “findings” are often dependent on parapsychology and consciousness research and may involve a commitment to Eastern/occult metaphysics.

The Science of Mind publication, *The Creative Power of the Mind: The Scientific Use of Thought for Abundant Living*, is illustrative. This text is a compilation of some 50 articles by various scientists, medical doctors, philosophers, Nobel laureates, psychologists, religious leaders, and prominent personalities. Many of these individuals accept at least some form of the basic principles of Mind Science. For example, we find such pantheistic sentiments as, “There can be no positive thinking based on [the idea of] separation: We are one with God, Man is Spirit, God is that Spirit,” and “God is everything.”³

Other examples of the literature would include Dr. John Taylor's *Superminds*, Dr. Jean Houston's *The Possible Human*, Masters and Houston's *Mind Games*, Adam Smith's *Powers of Mind*, and Dr. Barbara Brown's *Supermind: The Ultimate Energy*.

In addition to the academic or scientific approach to Mind Science, we also find the influence of some popular authors. We will discuss this further in Section Three.

Finally, we have the influence of what may be termed, for lack of a better word, the "Christian" Mind Sciences. In this category, we have the influence of the Positive Confession/Faith teachers, such as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Paul Yonggi Cho, Robert Tilton, Benny Hinn, Oral Roberts, etc. Although these men do not teach Mind Science per se, no one who has studied the origins of the Faith Movement through E.W. Kenyon can deny that they have frequently been *influenced* by Mind Science philosophy. Despite denials, in many places the Faith teachings *are* either similar or nearly identical to those found in the Mind Science religions. The concepts of prosperity and success, divine health, sensory denial, manipulation of creation, positive confession and the tentative or implicit rejection of medical science can all be traced to the Mind Science theologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Section Two

Examples of the Leading Mind Science Religions

4. *What is Religious Science (Science of Mind)?*

Religious Science and its teaching, Science of Mind, are the syncretistic brainchild of Ernest Holmes (1887-1960). Holmes weaved parts of Eastern religion and occult philosophy into a "power of positive thinking" worldview. The influential Norman Vincent Peale, himself a promoter of occult/Eastern philosophy, said of Holmes, "Only those who knew me as a boy can fully appreciate what Ernest Holmes did for me. Why, he made me a positive thinker."⁴

In his early spiritual life, Holmes studied Christian Science, hypnotism, psychic phenomena, theosophy, and

spiritism. He was influenced by all of them. In fact, he regularly attended seances held by a "Mr. Wiggins" and was "terrifically impressed by him."⁵ According to his brother's biography, Ernest Holmes attended seances "on unnumbered occasions" although he ultimately concluded spiritism had certain limitations and decided to trust his own direct links to Divine Mind.⁶ Thus, Holmes confesses, "I didn't like any of the religions I was acquainted with and so I . . . made up one that I did like."⁷

Although Holmes claims his philosophy was truly Christian and, "fundamentally follow[s] the teachings of Jesus," this is not true.⁸ First, Holmes teaches that the essence of all religions is the same: "Truth is One. There is One Reality at the heart of all religions, whether their name be Hindu, Muhammadian, Christian or Jewish."⁹ This idea is not only not Christian, but it is also intellectual nonsense because the core teachings of the major world religions are inherently contradictory.

Second, Religious Science teaches that man and God are one essence. It emphasizes the practice of "spiritualizing" one's thoughts so that they now come into harmony with the divine laws of the universe (Divine Mind) and therefore supposedly "manifest" these laws on an individual level in daily life. Thus, Holmes explains, "Religious Science not only emphasizes this unity of God and man, it teaches us that in such degree as our thought becomes spiritualized, it actually manifests the Power of God. . . . Religious Science teaches that right thinking can demonstrate success and abundance . . . and that true salvation comes only through true enlightenment. . . ."¹⁰

Third, Religious Science denies the biblical teaching that Jesus is "God's one and only Son" (John 3:16,18). Holmes wrote, "Every man is an incarnation of God. . . . Not *some* men, but *all* men are divine. But all men have not yet recognized their divinity."¹¹ (See Romans 3:10-18.) Thus, Holmes rejected the biblical teaching on the uniqueness of Jesus Christ: "Jesus never thought of Himself as different from others";¹² "To think of Jesus as being different from other men is to misunderstand His mission and purpose in life. He was a way shower and proved His way [according to Holmes, Religious Science] to be a correct one."¹³

In other words, Jesus was just a man like the rest of us who used His mental powers to realize "the Christ" or the truth of His own divinity: "Jesus is the name of a man. Christ means the Universal Principle of Divine Sonship. . . . Jesus became increasingly the Christ as His mentality

increasingly perceived the relationship of the man Jesus to the [divine] Christ principle which is inherent in all people."¹⁴

Thus, Jesus was not incarnate deity as the Bible teaches (John 1:1; 5:18; 10:30; Philippians 2:1-9) but simply a normal man who because of His astute use of cosmic law and positive affirmation eventually became "the Christ," thereby fulfilling the divine potential that resides within all men.

A fourth reason Religious Science cannot be considered Christian is its acceptance of pantheism, the belief that everything is part of God. Holmes once said, "Someone asked me: what do you think God is? I looked out the window and said, 'I think God is that tree.' And there was a squirrel running up the tree and I said, 'I think God is that squirrel.'"¹⁵ Thus, "Everything we see is God—the buttercup, the sunset, the morning dew nestling in the petal of a rose, and love and laughter, they are God."¹⁶

The fifth reason Religious Science cannot be considered Christian is that it denies the biblical view of salvation. Because of man's sinfulness and separation from God, the Bible teaches, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself as a ransom for all men" as the "atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 Timothy 2:5,6; 1 John 2:2). But in contrast to this, Holmes taught, "There is no separation between God and man. There is only God, and God is man."¹⁷ Thus, "Today is the day of salvation. This does not mean a salvation of the soul as though it were lost. . . ." ¹⁸ No soul is lost because the true essence of the soul is already divine and perfect. Man's only salvation is from ignorance (not sin) through self-realization of his preexisting divinity.

In conclusion, although Holmes claimed that his teachings were Christian and consistent with those of Jesus Christ, he was mistaken.

5. What is Christian Science?

Christian Science is the abstruse brainchild of Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) who stressed the metaphysical "truth" of the illusion of everything but God (Divine Mind) and the importance of "divine" healing through mental affirmation. In her characteristically obscurantist manner, she attempted to distill the essence of her philosophy as follows: "The fundamental propositions of divine metaphysics are summarized in the four following, to me, self-evident propositions:

1. God is All-in-all. [Only God exists.]
2. God is good. Good is Mind.
3. God, Spirit, being all, [means that therefore] nothing is matter [i.e., matter is an illusion].
4. Life, God, omnipotent good, deny [the reality of] death, evil, sin, disease."¹⁹

Thus, the central premise of Christian Science is the monistic idea that only God is real. Thus, "Spirit . . . is the only Life."²⁰ Further, because "Divine Mind *is all there is*," and since it is already defined as the "all good," everything else—everything that is not Divine Mind or "all good"—is an illusion or "evil."²¹ Thus, any belief that something exists as a power or reality apart from God and good is a belief in error.

For example, since God is Spirit, matter (which is not spirit) must therefore be unreal. In fact, since matter is the *opposite* of Spirit (which is God and by definition the only good), it is ultimately something "evil." Again, if spiritual reality or God is the only reality, and if whatever it is, is good, then by definition whatever it is not, is not good and must be unreal or "evil."

Thus, the true manifestation of Spirit (God) is not the imperfection-laden physical universe which is ultimately unreal, but the true spiritual universe which is real and which constitutes the *ideas* of God. Hence, the only reality is 1) Mind and 2) its Ideas or, put another way, the omnipresent divine spiritual essence and the true spiritual nature of man and the universe.

Although Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science claim that their teachings are biblical and in harmony with those of Christ, this is not so. Consider the following statement about Jesus Christ:

Jesus came to rescue men from these very illusions to which He seemed to conform; from the illusion which called sin real, and man a sinner, needing a Savior; [to] the illusion which called sickness real . . . [to] the illusion that death is . . . real. . . .²²

Further, Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science stress that Jesus Christ was *not* God and He was *not* the Savior of the world: "Jesus Christ is not God, as Jesus Himself declared. . . ." ²³ But the Bible clearly teaches Jesus Christ is God (John 1:1,14; 5:18; 10:30; Titus 2:13), and that He really is the "Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14).

Thus, "Christian Science presents God as the triune Principle—Life, Truth, Love—but does not accept the trinitarian Christian view of the godhead as three Persons in one. . . ."24

Christian Science also denies the biblical view of salvation: "Man as God's idea is already saved with an everlasting salvation."²⁵ This is why Mrs. Eddy so forcefully denied the vicarious atonement of Christ: "Christ never died. . . the fleshly Jesus seemed to die though He did not."²⁶ And, "The real atonement—so infinitely beyond the heathen conception that God requires human blood to propitiate His justice and bring His mercy needs to be understood. . . He atoned for the terrible unreality of a supposed existence apart from God."²⁷

All this is why Mary Baker Eddy taught that the atonement was a demonstrable falsehood, only a "man-made theory" because "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. . . ."28

In other words, Jesus Christ could hardly die for sin when sin does not exist. Thus, Christian Science only attempts to "cure" people from the *illusion* of sin, disease, death, etc., by the practice of "mental treatments" which attempt to convince people that only the false perceptions of their "mortal mind" have deceived them. These negative conditions are ultimately unreal and will supposedly be manifested as unreal if the practitioners' thoughts are brought into harmony with Divine Mind.

6. What is New Thought?

New Thought is an umbrella designation covering hundreds of churches and organizations in the International New Thought Alliance, plus hundreds more outside it. Most of the groups in this booklet could be covered by the designation New Thought. New Thought organizations include names such as The Center for Positive Living, Association of Creative Thought, Golden Key Ministry, Church of Christian Philosophy, Teaching of the Inner Christ, Association of Progressive Christianity, Metaphysical Bible Institute, Church of Universal Truth, Unity of the Infinite Presence, Christ Haven Center, Church of the Healing Christ, All Faith's Church, Foundation of Living, Esoteric Truth Center, The Science of Awareness, Symphony of Life Association, Christ's Circle for Better Living, Sanctuary of Light Church, Center for New Age Living, Truth Temple, and Center for Positive Prayer.

In general, the basic philosophy of New Thought may be distilled as follows:

1. God is One divine essence or divine law, the only Reality, and man is part of that Reality.
2. The true nature of life is divine perfection. The world is not necessarily an illusion, but its true nature is divine. Thus, all things are perfect, even though the "unenlightened" do not yet realize this truth and continue to falsely perceive the imperfections around them.
3. Thought is capable of creative power and is the central goal of "higher" consciousness. Man's mind can be omnipotent since man's true mind is one essence with God or Divine Mind. Potentially, all men can control their lives and environment since their own consciousness is ultimately the cause of their experience and condition in life. Thus, to alter consciousness is to alter life conditions.
4. Personal success is realized by achieving (recognizing) one's already existing wealth, health, happiness, love, fulfillment, etc.

It should be emphasized that because there is no "official" New Thought doctrine, there may be slight variations among New Thought beliefs on a given issue. Still, the basic philosophy we've outlined is representative. For example, some characteristic statements of New Thought are:

Man, who is a child of God is God . . . so, if man, who is a child of God, is God, then man is Infinite Power. When we awaken to the Infinite Power which God has given us, all disease will be healed, and poverty will no longer exist.²⁹

Nothing is ours except by right of consciousness. . . . So we work diligently to build our consciousness. All good is ours by right of consciousness.³⁰

To know we are the Principle of Being, the I AM consciousness, instead of trying to become It, clears the consciousness of much doubt and confusion. You can never become what you already are.³¹

Finally:

God's will is the recognition of that which *is*—not of that which *will be*. Peace is, joy is, love is, harmony is, wholeness is, right action is, wisdom is. . . . So claim your good now. . . . When your wish or desire for harmony, health, peace, joy or abundance becomes a conviction in your subconscious, then it is God's will and it is no longer man's wish or choice. . . .³²

Thus, New Thought employs "spiritual treatments" or "affirmations." By these, it attempts to "integrate" man's "fallen" consciousness with Divine Truth. For example, "Today, I realize my true perfection in my God-nature. I affirm truth and goodness are mine always. I now visualize divine abundance as my true heritage. No evil or lack shall come my way. Health, joy, and peace are mine forever." The goal is to affirm the divine truth of things as they really are (as interpreted by New Thought), stressing the mind's ability to "uncover" the true spiritual world of Reality—the world where there is no evil, disease, sadness, or lack of any good thing, the world where there is only joy, abundance, health, wealth, goodness, etc.

Thus, as is characteristic, the faithful do not trust in God as much as they trust in their own minds. They believe what they have been told—that their minds are already one with God and will manifest divine abundance if the proper formulas are followed.

Although New Thought also claims to be "true Christianity," it denies the basic teachings of Christianity as the following illustration reveals:

If someone asks you, "Are you a Christian? Do you believe Jesus died for your sins? Are you born again and know that you are a sinner?" . . . You can honestly answer, "Even though I may not believe in those humiliating denials, I am a Christian. I am a New Thought Christian because I am developing an awareness of God and my true nature."³³

7. What is Divine Science?

Divine Science was founded by the Brooks sisters—Nona, Aletha, and Fannie—who were influenced by the famous New Thought teacher and psychic healer/mystic Emma Curtis Hopkins, a former Christian Scientist practitioner. Divine Science has similarities both to Christian

Science and Religious Science. It stresses the proper awareness of God or "Good" as a means to counter life's problems. Four of the 14 "essential truths" of Divine Science include: "1) God is Spirit Omnipresent: The One Perfect Mind. . . . 7) There is but One Presence and Power in all the universe—the Good Omnipotent. . . . 9) Spirit is the Substance of all form. It is the Only Substance. The One Perfect Mind and It manifests ALL there is. . . . 13) to know the Truth of my being, I must turn to my Source, which is Perfect."³⁴

Although Divine Science claims to be Christian and that it stresses "Jesus' idea of salvation," this is not the case.³⁵ For example, we find a false view of Jesus Christ. The man Jesus attained "Christhood" by His knowledge and proper use of divine laws through metaphysical thinking. The "Christ" is the divine essence of man's true nature. As such, Jesus was only a man like all men who achieved what all of us have the potential to achieve.³⁶ Thus, "Jesus attained His Christhood by recognizing and by being true to the divine nature of the Christ. Jesus became Christ Jesus, because He completely accepted the truth that the Christ is the universal divine nature of mankind, the image of God, the true Self of every man."³⁷

In Divine Science we also see the characteristic Mind Science misinterpretation of the Bible. For example, "Forgiveness of sin is the biblical term for correcting our misconceptions of life to the Truth [of Divine Science]. We correct our material errors [i.e., belief in sin, sickness, death] in direct ratio to our perception of God's finished Creation [i.e., the Divine Perfection of all that is]. This is another of Christianity's revolutionary ideas, that it is man, not God, that forgives sin."³⁸

8. What is Unity School of Christianity?

Unity School of Christianity was founded by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in 1889. It is one of the largest of the Mind Science religions with an influence on millions of people.³⁹ Both Norman Vincent Peale and occultist Emmet Fox were heavily influenced by Charles Fillmore and, in a sense, are his spiritual children. Indeed, in a 1964 Unity Village seventy-fifth anniversary address, Peale himself stated that he had been an orthodox preacher *until* reading Charles Fillmore.⁴⁰

Like many founders of Mind Science religions, Fillmore was greatly influenced by Ralph Waldo Emerson, the prominent Unitarian and New England Transcendentalist. As a result of the psychic healing of his wife, Charles began an intense study of New Thought, Christian Science, theosophy, occultism, and Eastern religion. Theologically, Unity

is closer to New Thought than to Christian Science. For example, Unity does not necessarily deny the reality of matter, but believes that God and matter are united and accepts a provisional reality of sin, disease, poverty, etc. These negative conditions are formed by faulty consciousness. In other words, they would not exist apart from the people who created them by their harmful patterns of thinking.

Thus, Unity teaches that if we want to be content, happy, and have the abundant life, we must learn to revise our thinking and perception to bring them into harmony with Divine Law and Life. This can be accomplished by understanding the truth that God is already within us, and that God is the All-Good. Anything not good is false and unreal—or at least unnecessary because God is ultimately an impersonal, creative law of cause and effect subject to mental power. Thus, if we can come to see Reality as it is, we can move into a state of harmony with the All-Good (God) with life-changing impact. Although we should not expect instant results, Unity claims we will notice changes as we begin to see the truth that everything really is all divine goodness. Thus, Charles Fillmore emphasized, “Pronounce every experience good, and of God, and by that mental attitude, you will call forth only the good. What seemed error will disappear, and only the good will remain.”⁴¹

According to Unity, the true nature of reality is revealed by Divine Intelligence as perfect Ideas. If we accept into our consciousness any ideas other than perfect ones, this will lead to “disharmony” manifesting as the various problems we see in the world about us. Thus, instead of manifesting the only good, there comes into being good and “evil.” Sense consciousness (the mental state accrued through believing in the senses or outer appearance) is simply another name for Satan—the serpent in the Garden who deceived man. Thus, believing in what our senses tell us causes us to “fall” into disharmony. The result is that evil “appears.”

To hold to these false or less-than-perfect ideas is to follow “the delusive suggestions of the serpent instead of listening to the word of God. Pain, disease and finally death always result from ignorant transgression of the divine law.”⁴² What does Unity suggest? This negative force is to be countered by “spiritual growth” through various means such as meditation, prayer (positive affirmation), “treatments for self development,” etc. Thus, Unity teaches that the divine life of Christ is waiting for all who have the courage to take it.

Although Unity claims to be “a movement based on the teachings of Jesus Christ” and “stresses its agreements with traditional Christianity,” this is not true.⁴³ Unity teaches God is an infinite spiritual Mind or Intelligence which is the “higher self” of man.⁴⁴ Unity rejects the concept that God is an infinite person: “We must relieve our minds of a *personal* God ruling over us. . . . God is not person but Principle. . . . The fundamental basis of practical Christianity [i.e., Unity] is that God is Principle.”⁴⁵

Unity further claims that Christ was a metaphysically advanced individual who recognized and appropriated “the Christ” within Him—as all men have the potential to do: “This Christ, or perfect-man idea existing eternally in Divine Mind, is the true, spiritual, higher self of every individual. Each of us has within him the Christ, just as Jesus had and we must look within to recognize and realize our sonship, our divine origin and birth even as He did.”⁴⁶ In other words, everyone has the potential to become the Son of God just as Jesus did.

9. What is Silva Mind Control?

Silva Mind Control (SMC) was founded by Jose Silva with a goal to help people expand the powers of their mind and solve the problems on earth through psychic development. SMC claims to represent the next phase of human evolution on our planet. Some eight million people around the world, including many celebrities (e.g., Richard Bach, Loretta Switt), have been through Silva Mind Control, and many of them have encountered actual spirit guides in the process. SMC graduates have gone on to found several New Age or Mind Science seminars including est/The Forum (Werner Erhard) and Mind Dynamics (Alex Everett).

Jose Silva claims to be a Christian (he is Roman Catholic), and also believes that there is nothing in Silva Mind Control inconsistent with Christian faith. Nevertheless, his background in spiritism, mediumism, hypnosis, the Rosicrucians, and other occultism indicates that he is not a Christian but an occultist.⁴⁷ In fact, Silva claims he has been psychic since childhood, and confesses he developed Silva Mind Control through the help of one of his spirit guides.⁴⁸ Thus, the spiritism of both Mr. Silva and Silva Mind Control show SMC cannot be a Christian organization (see Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

Silva Mind Control claims it is not an occult organization. But it admits it attempts to develop people psychically and enables them to contact inner advisors or "spirit guides." It claims it has no theology, but it has a distinctive worldview and theology that are clearly not Christian.

Silva believes that all men can solve their problems—and usher in a millennium—by using their psychic powers. He even stresses that people should not rely on something like the atoning death of Christ to forgive their sins because they must learn to forgive their own sins:

Just thinking about Jesus is not going to do it [save you], nor allowing Him to enter your heart, or to be cleansed by His blood in hopes you will be saved. Jesus never said, "Being cleansed with my blood will save you," and he never said, "If you let me enter into your heart, you will be saved." The ones who are saying this are the Sunday preachers. You wonder how they can promise that the blood of a person killed nineteen centuries ago could cleanse you. Or how you could be born again without having died first. Another thing the Sunday preachers have kept on saying for centuries is that Jesus is coming back again. I venture to say, "No."⁴⁹

Instead, Silva teaches that what Jesus Christ really emphasized was entering the kingdom of heaven (the alpha brain wave state) through Silva Mind Control.⁵⁰

Silva also rejects the concept of Christ's deity. For example, he argues that the issue of Christ's nature really isn't that important:

Whether He was part of the godhead, or a unique Son of God, or a very advanced avatar with the same divinity that we all possess, the important fact is that He was sent on a very important mission: to correct the error in human development that was preventing humans from using the right brain hemisphere. . . . Rabbi Jesus is a son of God. . . . We are also sons of the same God, not as evolved as Rabbi Jesus was, but still sons of the same God.⁵¹

But Silva also believes that one day he will even be greater than Jesus.⁵²

10. The fruit of est: What are The Forum, Lifespring, and Actualizations?

The Forum was developed by Werner Erhard and constitutes a slightly revised rendition of his previous knavery,

Erhard Seminars Training (est). Lifespring and Actualizations were both developed by graduates of est. Collectively, these powerful Mind Science/New Age seminars have graduated more than one million people. Among them are literally tens of thousands of professionals in the business, academic, and social communities. Thus, leaders in science, business, industry, academia, and government have all been profoundly influenced with the philosophy of these groups.

To varying degrees, these seminars constitute an attempt to produce a Western form of "enlightenment" which builds on a platform of Eastern mysticism and, to an extent, occult practice. They have erected an eclectic edifice derived from a large variety of sources, both religious and secular, tailored, in part, to reach the leaders of mainstream America. Their philosophy teaches that a radical operation on a person's worldview is necessary, transforming it from a Western to more of an Eastern perspective. The seminars are designed to help people realize that they are part of God and, to varying degrees, literal creators of their world and their experience. According to Forum publications, "The Forum is a *work place for transformation*, a clearing in which people make the distinctions that allow the power of an inquiry into being [ultimate reality] to be expressed really, viably, in everyday life."⁵³

Although these seminars are slickly packaged and can produce extremely powerful transformations by breaking down people psychologically and emotionally, they are potentially destructive psychologically.⁵⁴ Werner Erhard himself once admitted that est was something evil.⁵⁵ We have seen nothing in est or its offshoots that would cause us to question his judgment.

In our opinion, est/The Forum, Actualizations, and Lifespring—because of the powerful transformations they produce in people and because of the anti-Christian ideas that people adopt—bear significant responsibility for instilling Eastern occult philosophy into the upper echelon of American society. As social radical Jerry Rubin correctly observed, "Est is an important part of the Easternization of America."⁵⁶

Erhard himself (who describes his spiritual parents as Hinduism and Buddhism)⁵⁷ became occultly enlightened and transformed as a result of his extensive investigations into the occult. For example, he underwent the "Latihan" experience during his time in the religion of Subud—an experience that seems to parallel aspects of spirit possession.⁵⁸ Est—and now the Forum—is the fruit of his

“conversion” experience in the occult and his personal research into various Eastern/occult disciplines.⁵⁹

Erhard claims that est or the Forum does not interfere with anyone’s religious beliefs, but he also confesses, “In a seminary, I would have been burned as a witch,” and “Had I been in any religious order, or any church monastery, I definitely could not have done any of this. It would have been heresy.”⁶⁰

All these seminars are supposedly nonreligious, but since one of their purposes is to alter a person’s epistemology and instill a monistic or pantheistic belief in impersonal divinity, they qualify as religious. In all of them, biblical Christianity is taught as detrimental to growth and enlightenment. For example, Erhard once said, “In est training *you* are God. . . . Therefore you cannot look to any supreme being for special treatment, goodness, or award.”⁶¹

In essence, est/The Forum, Lifespring, and Actualizations are designed to subtly undermine the validity of the Christian worldview—or almost any worldview—one might have prior to the seminar. For example, Stuart Emery, founder of Actualizations and a “profound psychic,” teaches it is an illusion to think that God is going to save man, in part, because man is already God.⁶²

In conclusion, according to est/The Forum/Lifespring/Actualizations, people are perfect and divine just the way they are. They just don’t realize it yet.⁶³

Section Three

The Theology of the Mind Sciences

In this section we will examine the teachings of the Mind Sciences in more detail from the writings of popular Mind Science authors. In particular, we will show how Mind Science beliefs seek to deny Christian teachings and undermine belief in the God of the Bible.

11. What do the Mind Sciences teach about God?

Eric Butterworth is a Unity School of Christianity teacher and author of *Discover the Power Within You*. He claims his book is based on the actual beliefs of Jesus but

offers the following teachings on God: “Jesus has a unique concept of God. To Him, God was not an object of worship but a Presence dwelling in us, a force surrounding us, and a Principle by which we live.”⁶⁴

Emmet Fox authored some 50 books and pamphlets, including his well-known *The Sermon on the Mount*, plus *Find and Use Your Inner Power*, *Reincarnation: Described and Explained*, and *The Zodiac and the Bible*. In his *The Sermon on the Mount*, he claims that the biblical concept of God is analogous to an “absurd and very horrible fable”; that the biblical God is “a very jealous, revengeful, and cruel despot” and that “He seems to have no more in common with mankind than men have with the animals.”⁶⁵ Instead, he pantheistically describes God as all life: “God is Life. God is not just living, nor does God *give* life, but God *is* Life. . . . Is God a person? No, God is not a person in the usual sense of the word. . . . God is Principle.”⁶⁶

Joel Goldsmith comes from an extensive background in Christian Science and is the author of *Conscious Union with God* and *Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture*. He is also founder of a metaphysical sect known as The Infinite Way. He says of God, “The God that controls your destiny is your consciousness. . . . One of the greatest factors in the failure of men is the belief that God is something other than their own being. . . .”⁶⁷ And, “Consciousness is God, and God is consciousness. . . . When you find God, you will have discovered your own consciousness. . . .”⁶⁸ And, “God does not punish people. . . . You cannot have God *and* disease, too. There is only one Power, and that is God. Anything else is [false] belief or illusion.”⁶⁹

Anthony Norvell is a popular mental science teacher and author of such titles as *Think Yourself Rich: Norvell’s Secrets of Money Magnetism*, *The Million Dollar Secret Hidden in Your Mind*, *The Occult Sciences: How to Get What You Want Through Your Occult Powers*, and *Exorcism: Overcoming Black Magic with White Magic*. He refers to God as “a Universal Mind that works through all men, which you may tap when you want to draw on it for power, new ideas, guidance in your affairs, for new gifts and talents.”⁷⁰ He says that God “flows throughout all creation; it creates and sustains all living things. It is a Cosmic Intelligence which works under certain dynamic mental and spiritual laws.”⁷¹

Joseph Murphy has written more than 40 books, has a daily radio show, lectures internationally, and has a background in Religious Science. Some of his books include *How*

to *Pray with a Deck of Cards, How to Attract Money, Psychic Perception: The Magic of Extrasensory Power, Secrets of I Ching, and Magic of Faith*. He describes the biblical God as a "cruel, vindictive, and an inscrutable, tyrannical, cannibalistic molock in the skies."⁷² He teaches that the true God is "lodged in the unconscious depths of all men" and that "God is the only Presence and the only Power, and I am one with it... God is, and all there is, is God... I and my Father are one. I know that God is the very life of me."⁷³

Vernon Howard is another popular Mind Science teacher and the author of *Esoteric Mind Power, A Treasury of Positive Answers, The Mystic Masters Speak, and The Power of Psycho-Pictography: How to Change and Enrich Your Life with the Aid of Creative Visualization*. He says that God lives within everyone and that, "The following terms all mean one and the same thing: God, goodness, mental health, truth, decency, happiness, freedom, reality, peace, love, sensibleness."⁷⁴ In other words, to be happy is to be God.

Harold Sherman is a spiritist and founder of the Harold Sherman ESP Body/Mind/Spirit Healing Workshops. He is author of such books as *How to Make ESP Work for You, How to Use the Power of Prayer, How to Solve Mysteries of Your Mind and Soul, and The New TNT Miraculous Power Within You*. He says he long ago outgrew the childish concept of the biblical God and is convinced that "a part of God, the Great Intelligence, indwells each human soul—yours and mine."⁷⁵

U.S. Anderson is another popular author who has written such books as *Three Magic Words, The Magic in Your Mind, and Success—Cybernetics*. He says the following of God: "You will learn that there is only one creator... the Universal Subconscious Mind, or God." And, "There is only one basic consciousness in all creation; it takes up its residence in all things... It is intelligence, awareness, energy, power, creativeness, the stuff from which all things are made. It is the Alpha and Omega of existence, first cause; it is you."⁷⁶

Annalee Skarin has a Mormon background and is the author of *To God the Glory, Ye Are Gods, and Secrets of Eternity*. She defines God as a higher intelligence that "is all power, all love, all light... You already have access to all this unspeakable power... to transmute [your] spiritual desires and dreams into tangible, material manifestation."⁷⁷

Maxwell Maltz is the author of the bestselling *Psycho-Cybernetics: A New Technique for Using Your Subconscious*

Power. He says of God, "I believe that there is One Life, one ultimate source, but that this One Life has many channels of expression and manifests itself in many forms."⁷⁸

The above teachings show that despite claims to the contrary the Mind Science concept of God is neither Christian nor biblical. The Bible teaches that God is an eternal, infinite Person, a triune being who alone is God. "Before me no God was formed, nor will there be one after me," and "Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other..." (Isaiah 43:10; 44:8; cf., Acts 5:3,4; 1 Timothy 6:15,16; Titus 1:4; 2:13).

12. What do the Mind Sciences teach about Jesus?

The Mind Sciences teach that Jesus was the perfect example of an enlightened teacher of mental science. He was thus aware of His own divinity, and as a result of His mental union with "the Christ" (Cosmic Mind, Infinite Intelligence, etc.), He was able to perform miracles and show mankind the power that could be theirs. Thus, Jesus the man epitomized the "Christ life" or divine potential which resides in all men and which, in order to be manifested, needs only be tapped by mind power.

Jesus' true purpose was not so profane a concept as that of dying for the sins of the world, but rather to show men that whatever He did they, too, will do if they will only utilize the cosmic laws of the universe.

Joel Goldsmith says, "Remember that your Messiah is the Christ of your own being... We are learning that the Christ was not a man. The Christ is a sense of divine Love that flows between us... We know that the Christ is not an historical figure."⁷⁹ He also says, "You are the Christ... All that God is, I am..."⁸⁰

U.S. Anderson describes Jesus as follows: "Jesus of Nazareth was clairvoyant; Jesus performed mental telepathy; Jesus healed through mind power; Jesus performed physical manifestations (miracles) from thought. Jesus was a man and merely a man, but His intuitive perception of the laws of the universe was such that His wondrous works were regarded as miracles. Yet He invoked no new laws. He simply worked in accord with the highest laws."⁸¹

Catherine Ponder has a background in the Unity School of Christianity and is the author of *The Dynamic Laws of Prosperity* and the popular "Millionaire" series—*The Millionaires of Genesis, The Millionaire Moses, The*

Millionaire Joshua, The Millionaire from Nazareth, etc. After describing Jesus as "the Master of victorious living," she observes, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ was for the purpose of bringing to view again the divine nature of all mankind."⁸²

Eric Butterworth says the following of Jesus: "Jesus is the man who became divine through discovery of the dynamic that is innate within all men. . . . Jesus became so conscious of this Christ relationship that eventually He could not tell where one began and other left off. Thus, He became Jesus Christ, a legend, but more than this, a state of consciousness. . . . Jesus . . . found the way . . . to claim the divinity within us."⁸³

But the Bible denies Mind Science beliefs when it teaches that Jesus was *born* the Christ; therefore, He could never have *become* the Christ (Luke 2:11). Jesus Himself never once said He was only an example of enlightened consciousness to help men realize their own divinity. He emphasized He was the one and only Son of God (John 3:16,18) and that the real purpose He came was to die for the world's sins (Matthew 20:28). In fact, a normal reading of the New Testament will prove that both Jesus and the apostles denied every major teaching of Mind Science.

13. What do the Mind Sciences teach about man?

Virtually all Mind Science teachings stress that in his true nature, man is one essence with God. Thus, in a literal sense, individual men may accurately, like Jesus, make the claim, "I am God."

Emmet Fox once described the nature of man as follows: "God individualizes Himself as man, and so you are really an individualization of God," and "the Son of God is incarnated in about 2,000 million separate bodies on the earth. . . ."⁸⁴

Joel Goldsmith argues, "You are the Christ," and "God is the life, the mind, the substance, the Spirit, the Soul of your being. . . ."⁸⁵

U.S. Anderson claims, "Each man is not just the man that he is, but he is God as well."⁸⁶

Joseph Murphy says, "I am God, and there is no God besides me. . . . My Higher Self is God."⁸⁷

But the Bible teaches that it is folly for any man to consider himself God because man is only a finite being, a

creation of God (Genesis 1:26,27). Man is not now God nor can he ever be God. Indeed, the Bible teaches that to make such a claim is to be self-deceived, to oppose God, and to court His judgment (Isaiah 14:14,15; Ezekiel 28:1-10). Thus, "Do not put your trust in . . . mortal men, who cannot save" (Psalm 146:3), and "This is what the LORD says: 'Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD'" (Jeremiah 17:5).

14. What do the Mind Sciences teach about sin and salvation?

The Mind Sciences teach that "sin" is not a violation of God's law or character but merely a "flaw" in consciousness. For example, such a "flaw" might be the misperception that one is a limited creature living in a fallen world when, in fact, one is really a part of God living in a divine world. In its ultimate sense, sin is a misperception that the world is flawed with poverty, crime, evil, etc., when, in fact, these things do not ultimately exist. This explains why salvation is to experience a higher state of consciousness that allegedly permits "proper" perception of the world as it really is—a manifestation of God's own being. This explains why the biblical concepts of sin and salvation are rejected as figments of unenlightened consciousness which work to destroy people's awareness of their true godhood. Thus, according to Mind Science, it is Christian belief which is the true spiritual evil.

Joel Goldsmith logically teaches that the very concept of sin in a biblical sense is a serious spiritual error because "there is no such thing as sin. . . . Sin violates the truth of spiritual oneness."⁸⁸ For Mind Science, to accept that man is not God but separated from God by sin "would [itself] be a sin; it would be a sin against the Holy Ghost."⁸⁹

Emmet Fox claims, "As long as attempts are made to cure disease, prevent sins or reform sinners. . . evil therefore will not be destroyed. . . . The consciousness of the individual is the [true] Savior. . . ."⁹⁰ Any belief that accepts the reality of disease, sin, Christ's atonement, etc., is the ultimate sin and the ultimate evil because it prevents an understanding of the true spiritual perfection and oneness that already exists between men and God.

Joseph Murphy teaches that true salvation is internal discipline and spiritual understanding of the laws of mental

science. Once we realize that we are already God and perfect and lack nothing, "this is how [we] become spiritually reborn or experience what is called the second birth."⁹¹

Vernon Howard teaches that because sin is an illusion, "All guilt is false" and to be spiritually "lost" simply means to be separated from awareness of your true divine nature:⁹² "When you ask how you can find God you have already divided your mind, which prevents discovery. When your mind no longer thinks in the opposing terms of you and God, you will understand... there is no division between you and God..."⁹³ Obviously then, no one needs divine forgiveness for their sins: There is "no need to even think about forgiveness," and "those still in darkness, the majority of people, have no understanding of real forgiveness, so you can forget them. [Mind Science] Truth has provided total forgiveness."⁹⁴

Annalee Skarin teaches that sin is merely the breaking of cosmic law which occurs, for example, when one permits the concept of separation from God to be present in one's consciousness. Any individual who believes it is necessary to trust in Jesus Christ for salvation is deluded because "Christ never purifies any man. Each man must purify himself by following that Christ light of conscience [i.e., consciousness] within himself."⁹⁵

Eric Butterworth also teaches that "accepting Jesus" is not necessary, nor is believing in the historical person of Jesus as found in the Bible. Rather, we need to find our unity with God in our consciousness. Thus, "God doesn't really forgive sin... God cannot forgive sin" because sin ultimately is an illusion; a false perception in consciousness.⁹⁶

Section Four

The Mind Sciences and Christianity

15. How have the Mind Sciences influenced Christianity? Have they restored true Christianity?

The Mind Sciences have primarily influenced Christianity through what is called the "Positive Confession"

or "Faith Movement," which we have briefly discussed in *The Facts on the Faith Movement*. But the Mind Sciences have also influenced the church through their humanistic philosophy, liberal theology, occult philosophy, aggressive hedonism, and blatant worldliness.

Perhaps the most serious issue is how the Mind Sciences have confused the general public over the beliefs of true Christianity. Since most of the Mind Science groups, from Unity School of Christianity to Christian Science, claim to offer the true teachings of Jesus and the Bible, there are millions of people who have been persuaded that Mind Science beliefs are authentic Christianity.

Unfortunately, what the Mind Sciences have done is to appropriate Christianity to their own ends by falsely claiming that they offer the true teachings of Jesus. But this approach is incorrect because no historical, theological, cultural, scriptural, logical, or other evidence can be advanced to defend such a view. The only way the Mind Sciences can claim their teachings are biblical is to ignore the normal reading of the Bible for a spurious appeal to its alleged "metaphysical" interpretation. But as any perusal of Mind Science texts (e.g., Unity's *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*; Mary Baker Eddy's glossary in *Science and Health*) will prove, even the "divine minds" of individual Mind Science writers find it difficult to agree on proper metaphysical interpretation. In the end, their interpretation of the Bible is of little value because it is coerced and subjective.

The teachings of Jesus and the church have been established for almost 20 centuries. Whatever is biblical teaching is Christian teaching. For the Mind Sciences to come on the scene two thousand years later and claim they have discovered the true teachings of Jesus is misrepresentation at best and spiritual fraud at worst. Even the most vocal critics of Christianity will agree that what the Bible teaches is not what the Mind Sciences teach. The following comparisons will make it clear that the Mind Sciences' claims to be Christian are wrong.

God

Mind Science: Impersonal; Spirit/Mind/Cosmic Law, etc.; Unitarian.

Christianity: Personal (loving, merciful, etc.); triune (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

Jesus

Mind Science: A man who most fully realized and lived the "Christ"—the divine part of all men.

Christianity: The only incarnate God and second Person of the Trinity.

Man

Mind Science: One essence with God (i.e., in his true nature man is God).

Christianity: A finite creation of God made in God's image, but never one essence with God.

Salvation

Mind Science: Salvation is from wrong thinking and false perception. Salvation occurs by personal "enlightenment" through metaphysical instruction and occult practice. By good works.

Christianity: Salvation is from God's judgment. Salvation occurs by faith in the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ who died for our sin. By grace (Ephesians 2:8,9; Romans 3:28-4:6).

Death

Mind Sciences: Death involves reincarnation and cosmic evolution back into Godhood.

Christianity: Eternal heaven or hell.

Bible

Mind Sciences: The writings of fallible men offering varying degrees of spiritual enlightenment as long as they are interpreted metaphysically (i.e., non-literally and subjectively).

Christianity: God's personal revelation of Himself to mankind; interpreted normally (i.e., literally).

Ultimate Reality

Mind Sciences: Monistic or pantheistic—all is God/God is all.

Christianity: Religious dualism—God as the Creator of the universe, material and spiritual.

No one can logically claim that any Mind Science organization teaches what biblical Christianity teaches.

16. Is there a connection between the Positive Confession/Faith Movement and the Mind Sciences?

One unfortunate consequence of the Positive Confession/Faith Movement and much "Christian" Positive Thinking

is their similarity to related philosophies in numerous Mind Science cults, New Age sects, and human potential seminars. Those who are untaught can easily be led astray by these similarities. Consider Silva Mind Control. Note that the goal of SMC is basic human potentialism (similar to certain "Christian" Positive Confession teachings):

The results are well-being, success, and abundance, all that is freedom's birthright.⁹⁷

You will learn how to make health an automatic process rather than something we have to work for. And wealth. And success. And happiness, too. You were born to be a winner, to be healthy, wealthy, successful, and happy.⁹⁸

In SMC the means to the goal is by developing psychic powers and establishing contact with "inner guides" or "psychic advisors."

Now, consider the Faith Movement. Is it not just possible that those Christians who are instructed in their "divine right" to health, wealth, happiness, peace, success, etc., will work to get it any way they can? Groups like Silva Mind Control, Unity, Science of Mind, etc., 1) claim to be Christian, 2) employ occult concepts and contacts under psychological constructs, and 3) offer specific arguments which, at least for the untaught, seem to give the blessings of Jesus to the entire endeavor. So why should we believe that Christian "Faith" teachings would never lead the unsuspecting into more powerful forms of Mind Science?

The logical connections between the Mind Sciences and the Positive Confession/Faith Movement have not been lost even on Mind Science practitioners. For example, in "Should the Church Apologize to Unity?" Elissa McClain discusses the irony of much Christian Positive Confession. As a former member of the Unity School of Christianity, she confesses it would be difficult to distinguish Unity from some brands of Christianity:

As an adolescent who grew up in the Unity churches I was taught to avoid anything that smacked of fear and negativity. Prosperity, health, and happiness were all divine rights that merely needed to be affirmed repeatedly and visualized until the subconscious mind accepted them as reality.

It would seem that today's brand of "popular Christianity" is catching up to Unity's conscious level!

... As a student of Unity, I was taught to approach God boldly, thanking Him in advance for meeting all my desires, even if the actual results were slow in being manifested. We condescendingly tolerated anyone who actually thought they had to beg or plead God for anything at all. We merely had to deny the negative condition and receive what God had provided. Unity used these principles long before neo-Pentecostal "Faith" teachers claimed them as the latest revelation knowledge.⁹⁹

Today, as a Christian, McClain asks, "I wonder—should the Church apologize to Unity for identifying it as one of the largest and most successful cults of our century? It hardly seems fair to brand it a cult if our own churches are copying it."¹⁰⁰

And that is the problem. Millions of Christians are accepting the teachings of the Positive Confession/Faith Movement with little awareness of their origin or of the consequences not only in the church but in the larger society as well. For additional information we would recommend our two booklets *The Facts on the Faith Movement* and *The Facts on False Teaching in the Church*.

Section Five

The Mind Sciences, the Occult, and the Spirit World

17. Does the philosophy of the Mind Sciences constitute an occult belief?

If the Mind Sciences are influenced by or derived from occult sources and if their philosophy harmonizes with occult philosophy, then our only answer can be that the Mind Sciences constitute a form of occult belief.

In order to prove this, one only need examine the basic philosophy of occultism (e.g., monism, pantheism), its practices (e.g., visualization, meditation, psychic development, spiritism, etc.), and the results of occult practice (a dramatic transformation in consciousness that fosters an occult worldview).

Monism and/or pantheism is the underlying occult philosophy which also undergirds the Mind Science philosophy that man is God. Because the occult has historically taught the unity of man and God, this connection between the Mind Sciences and the occult is a logical one. The practices of visualization, meditation, etc., which are allegedly based on universal law, are the means to this "self-realization" and also the eventual development of psychic powers. Characteristically, it is these practices which help people to abandon "false" (e.g., biblical) teachings. These teachings supposedly have held them back from proceeding onward to experience "higher" states of consciousness—allegedly revealing to them that they are one essence with God. The occult nature of the Mind Sciences can also be seen in that they harmonize with the teachings of the spirit world.

All this means that in adopting Mind Science belief, people are ultimately accepting various teachings of the occult—yet frequently under the guise of "genuine" Christianity or mere positive thinking. Further, it means people are, in some ways, accepting the teachings of the spirit world thinking these teachings will help them in life. To the contrary, such people will be more vulnerable to other forms of the occult, more open to spiritism in its various forms and manifestations, and predisposed against Christian belief, adopting spiritually and psychologically harmful philosophies and practice.

For example, spiritism is a recurring theme in Mind Science. Indeed, the spirits both reveal and promote Mind Science philosophy via their communications, and they also offer specific practices to help incorporate the philosophy internally. The late medium Jane Roberts describes the philosophy of her spirit guide "Seth": "The conscious mind directs unconscious activity and has at its command all the powers of the inner self. These are activated according to our ideas about reality. 'We are gods couched in creaturehood,' Seth says, 'given the ability to form our experience as our thoughts and feelings become actualized.'"¹⁰¹

Now consider the following description of Mind Science philosophy as it relates to evil: "The basic error is the belief that evil is real. Ascribing reality to the unreal by giving it time and attention is man's basic problem. It is the reason for sickness, poverty and unhappiness. . . . We *think* poverty and we *become* poor. We think sick and *are* ill."¹⁰²

A profound problem at this point is that both Mind Science philosophy and practice work to mask spiritistic

phenomena as contacts with divine realities. For example, in Mind Science philosophy a monistic premise results in the conclusion that "all power is divine power." Thus, in essence, all spiritistic activity is, by definition, seen as a manifestation of the Divine Mind. As Joseph Murphy states, "There is but One Spiritual Power."¹⁰³

As a result, many Mind Science leaders and practitioners conclude that what are, in effect, personal spiritistic revelations are really manifestations of a person's individual divine consciousness. In essence, to "call upon" the divine mind or subconscious for assistance is, at least potentially, to rely or call upon the spirits. This, unfortunately, is the problem of monistic systems in general that assume only God (or Mind) exists and that all that is real is good and God.

In other words, if we predefine every spiritual experience as God (Mind) and good, then virtually every activity of spiritual warfare is not only camouflaged, it is also reinterpreted as divine activity. The end result is that men become the victims of spiritistic duplicity.

Finally, because the Mind Sciences universally reject the idea of a personal devil, this further ensures confusion as to the source of Mind Science power.

18. How has spiritism and the occult influenced individual Mind Science groups?

One can trace many of the beliefs of the modern Mind Sciences to various American spiritistic teachings of past and present. The revelations given by the spirits frequently coincide with the philosophy of the Mind Sciences.¹⁰⁴ Further, on an individual level, the originators of specific Mind Science groups (Silva Mind Control, Religious Science, Christian Science, etc.) were often in contact with the spirit world and even implied that, to varying degrees, they had been inspired by the spirit world in giving their teachings. In this question we will briefly document how specific groups within the Mind Sciences have been influenced by spiritism and the occult.

Why should anyone be concerned about whether or not the Mind Sciences teach the occult and spiritism? For at least three reasons: 1) God declares that the occult is an abomination to Him (Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Acts 19:18-20; cf., 1 Corinthians 10:20); 2) as we have documented in *The Coming Darkness: Confronting Occult Deception* (Harvest House, 1993), the spirits of the occult, New Age, Mind Sciences, etc., are really lying spirits which the Bible identifies as demons; and 3) as we have also documented in the

same text, occult and spiritistic practices have severe spiritual, psychological, and physical consequences.

Ernest Holmes and Religious Science. We noted earlier that for a period of time Ernest Holmes had been particularly interested in spiritism. Not surprisingly, the standard textbook of Religious Science by Holmes, *The Science of Mind*, claims, "Spirit communication must be possible."¹⁰⁵ Its glossary reveals familiarity with many mediumistic and occult topics: for example, apparition, channel, clairaudience, clairvoyance, cosmic consciousness, discarnate, familiar spirits, medium, mental medium, mental plane, psychometry, telekinetic energy, telepathy, theosophy, trance, etc. In terms of inspiration from the alleged dead, Holmes confessed, "I believe this is possible and that it often takes place."¹⁰⁶

We also observe that the Science of Mind organization has become increasingly enamored with the occult in the last two decades as indicated by its symposiums and the publications of Science of Mind writers. For example, the 1978 and 1979 Holmes Center Symposiums involved a discussion by Ivan Tors of his spirit guides, lectures by spiritists Olga Worrall and Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, psychic W. Brugh Joy, parapsychologist Thelma Moss, etc.

In both Holmes's lectures and writings, he was, at least at times, subject to what could appropriately be classified as spiritistic inspiration. Reginald Armor's biography of Holmes observed that in his lectures "he was aware often that his mind would open to the creative influx of this Divine Presence and at such times he was aware of Spirit speaking through him at levels far beyond his intellectual understanding at the moment. He believed in this inspirational type of speaking."¹⁰⁷ Further, Holmes "acknowledged that pure inspiration played a significant role in his literary efforts. . . ."¹⁰⁸ We think the fact that "Ernest was very interested in spiritualistic mediums and psychic phenomena" reveals that Holmes's inspiration in his writings and speaking was spiritistic rather than, as he claimed, divine.

Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science. Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) was, for a time, a spiritist. She attended seances, became possessed, and had spirits speak out of her. The fact that she was a medium is not surprising. Since childhood her life reflected involvement with the spirit world. From spirit voices in her youth to psychic abilities and psychic visits, involvement in Mesmerism,

mediumism, and psychic healing—and even practicing a form of what could be termed “witchcraft”—Mary Baker Eddy’s life was marked by occult involvement.¹⁰⁹

Christian Science adamantly denies Mary Baker Eddy was ever a medium, so it is necessary to document our claims. Writing in 1913, Boston University professor Henry Sheldon refers to her “susceptibility to mesmeric influence and ability to function as a spiritualistic medium.”¹¹⁰ In 1910, F.W. Peabody of the Boston Bar reported that before her supposed discovery of Christian Science, her profession in and around Boston was as “a Spiritualist medium, giving public seances for money.”¹¹¹

In 1909, an authority on spiritualism, Frank Podmore, author of *Mediums of the Nineteenth Century* and *From Mesmer to Christian Science*, observed that not only were her friends spiritualists, but that she herself professed to be a spiritualist and took part in seances as well. “She was occasionally entranced, and had received ‘spirit communications’ from her deceased brother Albert. Her first advertisement as a healer appeared in 1868, in the Spiritualist paper, *The Banner of Light*.”¹¹²

As late as 1878, ten years after she had finally left mediumism, Mary Baker Eddy continued to claim that her work with spiritistic phenomena and practices was “not the work of spirits and I am not a medium.”¹¹³ Nevertheless, it should be understood that, in a sense, she had simply *redefined* her previous allegiance to more easily incorporate the newly revealed religion of Christian Science which had become incompatible with certain orthodox teachings of spiritualism. For example, “Mrs. Eddy herself states that she has been able to perform the signs and wonders of spiritualism, though explaining them by another cause.”¹¹⁴ Thus, merely because the seance itself was absent is hardly proof that the subsequent “spiritual inspiration” practiced by Mrs. Eddy was not spiritistic.

Mary Baker Eddy engaged in mediumistic or spiritistic activity from approximately 1845 to at least 1867, almost one-quarter of a century.¹¹⁵ Indeed, if she “discovered” Christian Science in 1866, it is more logical to view Christian Science as an extension of her spiritism rather than its repudiation. The fact that Mrs. Eddy abandoned mediumistic practices and orthodox spiritualist philosophy for her “own” revelation of Christian Science does not require the conclusion that the spirits’ influence in her life ended. After having been a medium and/or spiritist for more than 20

years and given her immediate subsequent claim of supernatural inspiration for the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health*, this is evidence enough to suspect that the true source of her inspiration was spiritistic. Not surprisingly, since its inception, Christian Science has supported the goals of spiritism in many ways.

Jose Silva and Silva Mind Control. Documenting the occult nature of Silva Mind Control is unnecessary since SMC freely confesses, “The Silva method of mind control is the means to function psychically. . . .”¹¹⁶ SMC has attempted to introduce every one of its eight million graduates to “psychic guides” or “inner counselors.”

In a personal conversation with Mr. Silva, he told us that many years ago, while he was formulating Silva Mind Control and engaging in his own “spiritual” development, he noticed a curious phenomenon. Every time he went out of body during “astral projection” he encountered a little Chinese fellow to the back of his right shoulder. Eventually they became “friends,” and apparently this spirit guide became the inspiration or prototype for the inner counselors contacted through the SMC program. Concerning psychic guides, Silva confesses, “I have had them all my life,” and “They have been my research for forty-two years—all over the world. . . .” Further, the guides help SMC graduates in psychic healings and “they are here . . . to help you evolve, to become as good as they are, whoever they are.”¹¹⁷

Unfortunately, Silva Mind Control shares a good deal of responsibility for the current revival of spiritism and channeling in America.

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore and Unity of School of Christianity. Unity is also an occult religion. First, its metaphysical philosophy helps to predispose members toward an interest in the world of the psychic and the occult. For example, the stress upon the powers of the mind and its assumption that these powers are divine or latent within man naturally lends itself to the claims of the psychic world. Fillmore himself taught that when one comes into proper relationship with God, the natural result is the development of psychic abilities.¹¹⁸

Second, Unity churches frequently reserve a section in their library for books on general ESP, the occult, yoga, meditation, etc., and they also sponsor seminars on the occult. Third, many articles in the various Unity magazines deal with the subjects of the occult as well.

Fillmore himself confessed the following: “We should not think of the psychic realm as evil, or be afraid of it. . . .

Through our Christ dominion we develop spiritual powers to handle the psychic realm to great advantage...."¹¹⁹ Both Fillmore and his wife were apparently successful psychic healers and, like Ernest Holmes and Mary Baker Eddy, subject to supernatural inspiration which they merely claimed was divine. In fact, much of Fillmore's teaching and philosophy was inspired from the psychic realm.¹²⁰

During his life, Fillmore studied a variety of occult subjects including theosophy, Swedenborgianism, Rosicrucianism, and Hinduism. His earliest writings were under the pen name "Leo-Virgo," a reflection of his avid interest in astrology.¹²¹ The first issue of *Modern Thought* magazine (April 1899) had articles on Christian Science, spiritism, theosophy, the development of psychic powers, and other occult subjects.¹²²

Like Mary Baker Eddy and Ernest Holmes, Fillmore fell away from spiritism and later many practices of the occult in general. In essence, however, many of the ideas and the worldview of occultism continued to be taught under the guise of the "original" teachings of Christ.

Werner Erhard (est/The Forum), John P. Hanley (Lifespring), and Stuart Emery (Actualizations). The founders of each of these seminars have varying degrees of involvement in the occult. For example, Werner Erhard was involved in Scientology from which he seems to have derived a significant portion of est; he was also a graduate of Mind Dynamics, a self-hypnosis occult mind-control enterprise. Erhard, Stuart Emery, the founder of Actualizations, and John Hanley, the founder of Lifespring, were teachers in Mind Dynamics, and Erhard and Hanley were also graduates of Jose Silva's Silva Mind Control which stresses psychic development and contacting psychic guides. Further, Erhard spent a year with the occult Subud Movement, has been involved in spiritism, and has researched Edgar Cayce, Rosicrucianism, theosophy and other occult practices. Thus, W.W. Bartley's biography of Erhard indicates extensive occult involvement on Erhard's part prior to starting est.¹²³ Besides Scientology and Mind Dynamics, Erhard studied or became involved with Zen Buddhism (he has made trips to the East to study with Zen masters), hypnosis, and yoga (he was one of Swami Muktananda's original sponsors in the United States), plus novel psychologies such as Psycho-cybernetics, Gestalt, encounter-therapy, and various forms of transpersonal psychology.

What we can say in fairness is that the Mind Sciences in general are to varying degrees movements and philosophies that support the occult and spiritism. Their great

influence in American life in the past hundred years has played a major role in the modern revival of the occult.

Section Six

The Mind Sciences: A Critique

19. Does the mind really have psychic or divine powers?

The Mind Sciences believe that men have innate supernatural or divine abilities, and as proof they cite the fact that some people can develop psychic powers. But as we documented in *Cult Watch*, according to biblical teaching, parapsychological research, and the claims of many occultists themselves, man does not have such powers innately. For example, nowhere in the Bible is man presented as having supernatural powers that originate within his own nature. Real supernatural power comes either from God and the holy angels or Satan and his demons. If we carefully examine Scripture, we discover that every miracle ever done by believers was done entirely through the power of God or holy angels, and every miracle done by pagans was done through the power of Satan or his demons.¹²⁴

Further, the common idea that we use only 10 percent of our brain's potential, even if true, can hardly prove that if we could use the other 90 percent, we could actually perform supernatural miracles with our minds. The fact is that psychic powers are not latent human powers possessed by everyone. Most people who think so refer to the research of J.B. Rhine and modern parapsychology as having "proven" that psychic powers are natural abilities within all people. But shamans, satanists, witches, mediums, channelers, psychics, and spiritists freely concede that apart from their spirit helpers they are powerless to do the things that they do.

Michael Harner is a graduate professor, practicing shaman, and author of *The Way of the Shaman*. He observes that the fundamental source of power for all shamans is the spirit world: "Whatever it is called, it is the fundamental source of power for the shaman's functioning.... Without a guardian spirit, it is virtually impossible to be a shaman, for the shaman must have this strong, basic power source...."¹²⁵

In his *Adventures into the Psychic*, seasoned psychic researcher Jess Stearn makes the common observation, "Almost without exception, the great mediums . . . felt they were instruments of a higher power which flowed through them. They did not presume to have the power themselves."¹²⁶

In other words, people who have this power characteristically recognize that it is not a natural human ability. In *Freed from Witchcraft*, former Satanist and witch Doreen Irvine confesses, "I had known and felt that [occult] power often enough, but I believed it was not a natural, but rather a supernatural, power working through me. I was not born with it. The power was not my own but Satan's."¹²⁷

Further, if people are cleverly taught that their supernatural powers are "natural and innate," they will wrongly assume that their powers originate within them as some "natural" or "divine" evolutionary psychic ability. The fact that demons worked through them would not only be hidden from them, but there would also be a natural aversion to the very concept of demons because the idea of "natural" or "divine" powers is infinitely preferable to the idea of collusion with evil spirits.

But no matter how occultists may choose to interpret their powers, they cannot escape the fact that it is really spirits that work through them. If psychic powers were truly a human capacity, *anyone* could develop them. But again, the only people who develop such abilities are occultists who, through their occult practices, come in contact with the spirit world. As the vast majority of people have never developed these powers, it is not logical to think such powers constitute a "natural" human potential lying dormant within the race.

Consider the conclusions of Danny Korem, a world-class stage magician who has investigated or exposed a number of leading psychics. Responding to the question, "Do humans actually possess psychic powers?" he replied:

If you mean by psychic abilities things the mind can do in and of its own ability, I say it's not possible. That's what you find when you investigate case after case after case. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on research in this area and there has never been a verifiable demonstration of human psychic power.¹²⁸

In conclusion, we see no evidence for natural or latent psychic powers. These powers are "potential" only to those

who are tapping the powers given by spirits, whether or not such beings are perceived and whether or not they are conveniently redefined in terms of natural, neutral, or divine categories.

20. How do the Mind Sciences lead individuals to self-deception?

The Mind Sciences teach people to accept the false idea that their minds have divine power, making it easy for people to become self-deceived when confronted with the difficult areas of life—such as disease, death, personal assault, divorce, etc.

We will never forget an elderly Christian Science neighbor. All day long she cried out in terrible pain from the disease she refused to accept as real. Her cries were so loud they would often wake us up in the morning. This lady rejected all medical assistance, thinking it was a betrayal of her faith. Her response merely reaffirmed the "truth" of Christian Science: "I am in perfect health. Disease is an illusion of mortal mind. Pain has no reality."

We can only wonder how many thousands have suffered needlessly by refusing medical help, relying instead on the supposed powers of their mind for a "cure." We can only wonder how many have died early deaths. Indeed, who can deny that those in the Mind Sciences who refuse to accept evil, disease, and death will eventually have to face these realities?

Even Charles Fillmore himself was convinced that he would never die. He believed he could mentally begin a process of self-regeneration that would result in the creation of an immortal body in which he would live forever. At age 46 Fillmore recorded his thoughts: "About three years ago, the belief in old age began to take hold of me. I was nearing the half century mark. I began to get wrinkled and gray, my knees tottered. . . ."¹²⁹ Nevertheless, he refused to accept the "false" perceptions of his senses concerning the encroachments of age and began an avid program for the mental affirmation of his youth. But old age continued to make its advances.

In the very *year* of his death, Charles Fillmore wrote to all of his followers that he would never die: "In my article in the August, 1946, *Unity*, I stated that . . . I should never pass out of this body. . . . [And] I shall live forever in the flesh body. . . . I expect to . . . be known as the same person that I have been for ninety-two years, but my body will be changed in appearance from that of an old man to a young man with

a perfectly healthy body. . . . Some of my friends think that it is unwise for me to make this public statement of my conviction that I shall overcome death, that if I fail it will be detrimental to the Unity cause. I am not going to admit to any such possibility."¹³⁰

Despite his noble efforts, Charles Fillmore died a few months after writing those words. Fillmore declared he would live, but he was wrong.

Unfortunately, those who deny the reality of the fallen human condition often become victims of their own philosophy. While one denies any reality to a disease, that disease continues its progress unimpeded in the body. When one refuses to accept reality to evil, seeing only "the goodness of God" in all people, one becomes easy prey for people who would take advantage of them.

Consider the Religious Science practitioner who, while being robbed and threatened with death, said with a smile, "God is here." With a knife savagely at her throat, she reported, "Looking into his eyes, I saw him in his true identity—God's life expressing through him." After being beaten and then robbed, she realized her thoughts had "erected a protective shield about me" and that "any apparent evil loses its power to harm us."¹³¹

What about teenagers into crime, drugs, promiscuity, or alcoholism who are taught that they are only working out the evolution of their own soul, and that regardless of behavior, the teenager is really "God's life that is seeking expression"?¹³²

No one likes the bad things that happen in life or the fact that we are all fallen beings who get sick, have problems, and finally die. But denying the reality of these things is not the solution. Far from preventing problems, in many cases, Mind Science belief is only going to cause them or exacerbate them. Those who deny reality will become the victims of reality for the simple reason that they cannot identify the real problem.

21. What are the moral implications of the Mind Sciences?

The Mind Sciences claim that their teachings endorse morality, but it is certainly not a biblical or conventional morality. Is it logical to claim that a teaching which denies the reality of evil is moral (i.e., concerned with the principles of right and wrong conduct)? Can it logically be considered moral to teach that sin does not exist and therefore cannot be considered evil? If no sin or evil exists, then

no one ever commits sin or evil. How can anyone logically base a system of morality on such a philosophy? In Mind Science, it is only the *belief* in evil that is the true "evil," not the false perceptions of evil which ultimately have no reality.

The Mind Sciences even claim that Jesus and the Bible teach this philosophy. Yet more than 500 verses in the Bible refer to actual evil. Either Jesus, the Bible, and the testimony of history and common sense are false, or the Mind Sciences have a deficient worldview. After all, if sin has no reality, why did Jesus teach He went to the cross in order to die for sin?

Nevertheless, the Mind Sciences maintain evil is only an illusion. As Ernest Holmes argued, "I have always taught that there is no sin but ignorance, following the belief of Emerson. . . . My object is to avoid the sense of dualism—a universe of good and evil."¹³³

To deny evil its reality is bad enough, but to then call it "good" is morally reprehensible. Yet, this is the approach of the Mind Sciences. At least to some degree, evil is really part of God and good. As Ernest Holmes once stated, "We seek a greater good and we call the lesser good, evil."¹³⁴ The Nazis may have seemed evil but "we should recognize the divine in them, no matter what the apparent seems to declare. The man who . . . is seeing two powers, good and evil, has not discovered that the evil is simply the good misdirected."¹³⁵

Christian Science teaches that "the five physical senses are the avenues and instruments of human error."¹³⁶ It argues that "the evidence of the senses is not to be accepted" concerning illness, evil, etc.¹³⁷ Thus, "Sin, sickness, death . . . are without a real origin or existence. . . ." ¹³⁸ Finally, "We regard evil as a lie, an illusion, therefore as unreal as a mirage that misleads the traveler on his way home."¹³⁹

Charles Fillmore of Unity taught, "There is no presence or power of evil, in reality; there is only one Presence and one Power—the good omnipotent."¹⁴⁰ Sue Sikking, a modern Unity writer, argues, "Good is not one thing and bad another. There are simply different degrees of good; less good or more good."¹⁴¹

Unfortunately, this philosophy easily leads to an unthinking disregard for those who have suffered the painful consequences of disease, tragedy, or evil.

The problem with such denial is not merely the self-delusion involved or the inherent risks or callousness of such an approach. There is also the problem of becoming

insulated against the basic Christian message. If sin and evil have no reality, then man has no need of a savior. The logical conclusion is that Christ could not possibly have died for sin. Therefore, the atonement must be interpreted metaphysically, stripping it of its spiritual power.

Perhaps the words of Isaiah should be listened to afresh: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight . . . for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 5:20,21,24).

Conclusion and a Personal Word

If you have been involved with Mind Science teaching and now recognize that it does not represent the teachings of Jesus and the Bible, you may also wish to receive Christ as your personal Savior. We would encourage you to pray the following prayer:

Dear God: I confess before You that I am a sinner and that I cannot earn my own way to heaven. I thank You that You sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross for my sins. I now turn from my sin and receive Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior. I now believe that He rose from the dead on the third day. I ask Him to come into my life, and to help me to live for You. Amen.

Receiving Christ is a serious commitment. Please contact a local church where Jesus is honored or the Ankerberg ministry in care of this publisher for helpful information on living the Christian life.

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ISBN 1-56507-153-0