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THE PEOPLE'S IDEA OF
GOD: ITS EFFECT ON
HEALTH AND
CHRISTIANITY

Mary Eddy
**The People's Idea of God: Its
Effect On Health And Christianity**

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**Text: *One Lord, one faith,
one baptism.*— Ephesians iv. 5**

Every step of progress is a step more spiritual. The great element of reform is not born of human wisdom; it draws not its life from human organizations; rather is it the crumbling away of material elements from reason, the translation of law back to its original language, – Mind, and the final unity between man and God. The footsteps of thought, as they pass from the sensual side of existence to the reality and Soul of all things, are slow, portending a long night to the traveller; but the guardians of the gloom are the angels of His presence, that impart grandeur to the intellectual wrestling and collisions with old-time faiths, as we drift into more spiritual latitudes. The beatings of our heart can be heard; but the ceaseless throbbings and throes of thought are unheard, as it changes from material to spiritual standpoints. Even the pangs of death disappear, accordingly as

the understanding that we are spiritual beings here reappears, and we learn our capabilities for good, which insures man's continuance and is the true glory of immortality.

The improved theory and practice of religion and of medicine are mainly due to the people's improved views of the Supreme Being. As the finite sense of Deity, based on material conceptions of spiritual being, yields its grosser elements, we shall learn what God is, and what God does. The Hebrew term that gives another letter to the word *God* and makes it *good*, unites Science and Christianity, whereby we learn that God, good, is universal, and the divine Principle, – Life, Truth, Love; and this Principle is learned through goodness, and of Mind instead of matter, of Soul instead of the senses, and by revelation supporting reason. It is the false conceptions of Spirit, based on the evidences gained from the material senses, that make a Christian only in theory, shockingly material in practice, and form its Deity out of the worst human qualities, else of wood or stone.

Such a theory has overturned empires in demoniacal contests over religion. Proportionately as the people's belief of God, in every age, has been dematerialized and unfinited has their Deity become good; no longer a personal tyrant or a molten image, but the divine Life, Truth, and Love, – Life without beginning or ending, Truth without a lapse or error, and Love universal, infinite, eternal. This more perfect idea, held constantly before the people's mind, must have a benign and elevating influence

upon the character of nations as well as individuals, and will lift man ultimately to the understanding that our ideals form our characters, that as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." The crudest ideals of speculative theology have made monsters of men; and the ideals of *materia medica* have made helpless invalids and cripples. The eternal roasting amidst noxious vapors; the election of the minority to be saved and the majority to be eternally punished; the wrath of God, to be appeased by the sacrifice and torture of His favorite Son, – are some of the false beliefs that have produced sin, sickness, and death; and then would affirm that these are natural, and that Christianity and Christ-healing are preternatural; yea, that make a mysterious God and a natural devil.

Let us rejoice that the bow of omnipotence already spans the moral heavens with light, and that the more spiritual idea of good and Truth meets the old material thought like a promise upon the cloud, while it inscribes on the thoughts of men at this period a more metaphysical religion founded upon Christian Science. A personal God is based on finite premises, where thought begins wrongly to apprehend the infinite, even the quality or the quantity of eternal good. This limited sense of God as good limits human thought and action in their goodness, and assigns them mortal fetters in the outset. It has implanted in our religions certain unspiritual shifts, such as dependence on personal pardon for salvation, rather than obedience to our Father's demands, whereby we grow out of sin in the way that our Lord has

appointed; namely, by working out our own salvation. It has given to all systems of *materia medica* nothing but materialism, – more faith in hygiene and drugs than in God. Idolatry sprang from the belief that God is a form, more than an infinite and divine Mind; sin, sickness, and death originated in the belief that Spirit materialized into a body, infinity became finity, or man, and the eternal entered the temporal. Mythology, or the myth of ologies, said that Life, which is infinite and eternal, could enter finite man through his nostrils, and matter become intelligent of good and evil, because a serpent said it. When first good, God, was named a person, and evil another person, the error that a personal God and a personal devil entered into partnership and would form a third person, called material man, obtained expression. But these unspiritual and mysterious ideas of God and man are far from correct.

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