

BODY by Bicknell Young

So-called material things are never entities, never existing things. They are figures or symbols, standing for true value or for divine ideas, just as the figure or symbol “2” stands for an unchanging value in mathematics, or a note or symbol “do” stands for an eternal note in music.

As students of Christian Science, we understand that these figures or symbols that seem to constitute man or body are not the way false sense or educated belief is interpreting them. Everything that constitutes man or body is as it is in Truth . . . expressions or forms of the divine. In music or mathematics, we use the symbols or figures, but all the time we are considering the eternal verities or divine ideas just at hand.

There is a woeful lack of understanding among Christian Scientists in regard to their present body. This lack of understanding of our body keeps us from showing forth better bodies. If we wish to heal quickly and permanently as Jesus did, we must understand our present body as body is. And it is essential that we practice this understanding in order to give the world the true sense of the body Jesus had.

All down the ages, our present body has appeared to us to be matter, and improve our body we have endeavored to improve matter substance with matter. This is clearly illustrated in the woman of today. Woman, being the more spiritual sense of the so-called mortal, is endeavoring to improve her present body and make it more supple, youthful and beautiful. In doing this, even though not understanding the principle involved, she is showing her innate spirituality or improved belief. Materiality has laughed at these endeavors, but woman has persisted, and is winning in her desire for a perfect expression of her thought.

In the practice of Christian Science we spend much time in gaining a true sense of body. With the revelation of Christian Science we begin to consider the body from a metaphysical standpoint or from a state of mind somewhat illumined with the facts of divine Science. From the standpoint of metaphysics, we do not deny our body because it seems material to us, but we do deny our human, material sense of body. We keep our body and we understand and affirm that our body is an eternal verity, intact here and now as it is in Truth - - the one eternal body, the forever embodiment of divine ideas. The false appearance of false material sense that we call body is not body at all, but is a misconception of the one eternal body at hand. How many of us are willing to be “absent” from the limited material sense that we call body, and to be “present” with the true sense of body that is spiritual, painless, harmonious, Mind-governed and Mind-sustained.

Christian Science came to this age to restore to us our rightful heritage – a divine sense of body. Christian Science does not take away our body,

but it gives to us a divine sense of body. It restores to us our heritage of divine embodiment, the same sense of body Jesus had.

It is right to expect that those of us who earnestly study and strive to apply the teachings of Christian Science should show forth the effects of this effort in better bodies -- bodies exempt, in a measure, from age and decay. Why are we so slow in showing forth better bodies? It is because we deal with the misconception of our present body -- we deal with the figures or symbols as though they are body and fail to consider the true character of body, the embodiment of divine ideas. We fail to demonstrate a more perfect sense of body because we do not understand body, as body really is.

To the senses of the disciples Jesus' body was material; but Jesus had the true understanding of his body. He said, "Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." (Luke 24:39). Jesus understood that he lived in Mind, or Soul, and this understanding gave him flesh and bones that were not material, but divine ideas. This understanding of body, as the embodiment of divine ideas, enabled Jesus to demonstrate over sin, sickness and death.

Let us consider for awhile some of the misconceptions about our present body, which keeps us from showing forth better bodies, and keeps us sponsors of this twentieth century, from giving to the world the true sense of body that Jesus had.

There is an almost universal misconception that the body governs Mind. This misconception says that if there is an inharmonious experience such as pain, weariness, sickness, disease or accident that all these seeming experiences originate in the body. The very reverse of this is true. Yet it is the last lie that "must by its own consent yield to Truth." (S&H 152:1).

Our textbook informs us "the material body manifests only what mortal mind believes, whether it be a broken bone, disease, or sin." (S&H 402:18). Again it says, "Man thinks . . . when he is sick, disease controls his body to whatever manifestations we see. But the fact remains, in metaphysics, that the mind of the individual only can produce a result upon his body." (Christian Healing 6:18-22). And, since there is but one Mind, our Mind, then this Mind governs our body wholly and spiritually.

Another misconception about our present body is that all functions such as hearing, seeing, breathing, digesting, circulation, and elimination are carried on and are dependent on the formations or organs that constitute the human body. Now, the fact is, these so-called organs are here as eternal infinite ideas of Mind or Soul. They are not organs, but infinite ideas, and what appears to be the functioning of these organs: the knowing, seeing, breathing, digesting, circulation, and elimination are not operations of the so-called organs, but are the conscious operations of Mind or Life itself.

Let us turn from the misconception about body -- turn from the figures or symbols to a true estimate of our present body, and our present functioning. We all believe these truths about our body and its so-called organs and functions, but to many of us, they are as yet remote and something to be consciously attained at some future time. But the fact of our spiritual body is here eternally and should be demonstrated in our present day living as the only body here.

Another misconception that we are to dispel from our consciousness through metaphysical work is that our present body evolves and manifests disease. Our so-called material body – the figure or symbol – is a state of belief only. Body, the embodiment of ideas, does not form disease. Body does not form or manifest anything in or of itself. Body is forever immediate with Mind, and represents all that Mind is being, consciously, actively, and eternally.

For our body to experience disease, disease would have to be a sense experience in Mind or Consciousness. But Mind or Consciousness is infinite Truth, and this fact excludes any false limited belief in a diseased body. Matter and disease are never conditions; they are states of belief only. Matter and disease are as much a state of belief about our real and only body as $2 + 2 = 5$ is a state of belief about the fact that $2 + 2 = 4$.

We should understand that materiality does not lie in the things that we call material. There are no material things. What we call material things are in reality thought which Divine Science translates as ideas of Soul. Everything that exists is pure thought -- the thought of God or Mind.

The materiality that we think we see is entirely in us; is entirely in the observer. Our false sense of education dulls our vision as to what is actually present. The temptation to believe that things are what they appear to be, suggests itself to the mentality of each one of us. Jesus is recorded as saying, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." (Matt. 26:41).

There is no need to watch and pray to be protected from temptation to believe that what arises in consciousness is material. The temptation always present for us is to accept what we think we see, in the way educated belief defines it, instead of dealing with it as it is in Truth.

We should never argue with a patient about his so-called material body, as though it were something real and filling space; but we should argue against his belief or illusion about body. His body is as it is in fact and universal. It fills all space, and is not at all the way it appears to be. The false appearance that seems present is the counterfeit of the one and only infinite universal body always at hand. Body is eternally as it should be, but many of us in our practice attempt to heal what is belief only.

When once we know our present body as body really is, we shall not want to heal it. We shall not be tempted to believe our present and only body is the way finite sense interprets it. We shall not be tempted to deny the omnipresence of Mind's body – the embodiment of divine ideas simply because our false educated belief calls that which is at hand material and diseased.

We never try to rid ourselves of the disease that seems to be present in our so-called material body. Instead we rid ourselves of the false beliefs and aggressive suggestions that our present body is material and diseased. There is no connection between the so-called material body and God, so that God could heal it. To God, the so-called material body – the figure or symbol – does not exist at all. God reveals Himself as one infinite universal divine body – the embodiment of Himself and this body is whole and perfect. Body is the immediacy of Mind is wholly spiritual.

There is no disease to consume, or to infect, or to subsist on man or body - the embodiment of divine Mind. Man or body - the embodiment of divine ideas is never acted upon by fear, anxiety or discouragement, through thought transference, or through any other misconception of mortal mind. As the reflection of eternal Life, or infinite Omni-action, man or body is eternally acting and functioning in accord with God, Life.

Our textbook says, "Eradicate the image of disease from the perturbed thought before it has taken tangible shape in conscious thought, *alias* the body." (S&H 400:12). And our textbook also tells us that it was Blondin's belief that he could walk the rope over "Niagara's abyss of waters" that "gave his thought forces, called muscles, their flexibility and power". (S&H 199:25).

Therefore, when we as metaphysicians say the word "body" we do not think of body as material, but as conscious thought or thought-forces. And when we wish to improve our body, we improve our thought.

Another misconception is that our so-called material body is real and tangible. From a false material standpoint, our body does seem tangible and substantial to us, but through our treatments, we all prove that our so-called material body is illusion only, and as matter is intangible. From the standpoint of spiritual sense, our material body, being belief only, is absolutely intangible.

Whether our body is tangible or intangible to us depends upon our viewpoint – depends upon whether our mind is illumined or un-illumined with Truth. When we estimate our present body as being the eternal body of Mind or Soul, no matter how it appears, then our present body is divine to us. Our body remains always the same; it is our sense of body that changes.

Another misconception that many of us carry along is that our body dies. Now, Mind or Soul and its embodiment or body can no more be separated from each other than the sun and its light can be separated. Body is phenomena. Body or phenomena is Noumenon of Life reflected in spiritual existence. Since

noumenon of Life cannot die there is no phenomena called death. Noumenon and phenomena is one inseparable being. No matter what the false senses tell us, our present body can no more die than our present Mind or Soul can die.

The misconception of mortal mind tells us that our body dies, but if we accept this lie about our body, we are not Christian Scientists. By reversing this misconception called death, we arrive at the fact of Being, and learn that our body, being inseparable from Mind or Life, lives eternally.

In the "Acts of John" translated from the Greek, John asks Jesus, "Master, is there any material body?" Jesus answered, "The saints believed that their bodies were fashioned of clay, and by reason of such believing have been betrayed to death." Are we not, in belief, being betrayed to death when we believe that our body is matter and can be separated from Mind or Life?

Death could not occur, even to our material senses, were it not for the false educated sense or belief that Mind or Life and its spiritual embodiment or body can be separated. Mind or body is one inseparable entity existing eternally.

There is another prevalent misconception entertained by many Christian Scientists that says mortal mind can affect the body. It claims one human mind can influence another and in this way affect the body. But our textbook tells us "we rarely remember that we govern our own bodies. (S&H 402:21). And in Miscellaneous Writings (83:12) "No person can accept another's belief except it be with the consent of his own belief."

Therefore, when we accept in our thought, the misconception that another's thought can affect our body through thought transference, it is mortal mind's false belief that we are entertaining. The lie of mortal mind is seeing and feeling its own images of thought, but believes these images are formed in and of another's thought.

The function is to see like a mirror. Our body enables our mind to see its own images of thought and in this way correct them. So-called mortal mind, that we sometimes entertain as our thought, would be removed as easily and as quickly from our body as we remove the image from the mirror, were it not that this mortal mind that we entertain is a state of self-deception and believes that the trouble is in its body, and its body must be healed.

The mental malpractice of mortal mind and its aggressive suggestions would entangle (our) body and deface the tablet of (our) being. (S&H 226:26), and then mesmerize itself into believing that the material body is doing all this in and of itself.

Many persons are trying to take the trouble out of the body by treating the body through medicine or through metaphysical practice instead of uncovering in the mind the false images of thought and casting them out of the mind. When the false thought is removed, our body is found to be our divine body already whole and perfect.

Let us bear in mind two points. First, everything has its source in Mind, and is the immediacy of Mind. We receive nothing from the body consciously or unconsciously. The function our body is Life – the function of the mirror, i.e. to give back to our mind its own images. Second, we see and feel the qualities and contents of our own Mind, and we are to see these qualities and contents, not according to false educated belief, but as they are in fact of Truth.

Jesus brought forth his body from the tomb and later appeared to his disciples through closed doors. Jesus could do this because he had translated his material concept of body back to universal Mind. Jesus' body was where his thought wished it to be. And so we translate our concept of body back into infinite universal Mind; our body, being immediate – with Mind, will be at our service, just as much as the multiplication table is at our service.

Jesus understood his body as the language of Mind – as His conscious communion with Mind. And today, our embodiment of ideas, our conscious communion with Mind, is perpetually giving to us the “beauty of holiness, the perfection of being, imperishable glory.” (S&H 253:2-3). This language of Mind is the body that Jesus had – the one body, the body that is our body, eternally.

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

(Misc. Wr. 51:22-28).

My true self is spiritual, the emanation of Life.

The end.