

THE CULTIC CURES OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE ULTIMATELY DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD BY PROMOTING AN EVIL SYSTEM

Christian Science is a Church headquartered in Boston is famous or infamous for not calling in the doctor. The Church insists that there is no evil for a good God would not allow it to exist and that it is an illusion.

Arnold Lunn wrote, "The alleged miracles of Lourdes have a special claim to scientific consideration for two reasons. First, because the cures are examined by a specially constituted committee of doctors. Christian Scientists are notoriously unfriendly to medical scrutiny, but doctors, irrespective of religion or nationality, are invited to serve on the medical Bureau des Constatations which was established in 1882 to test the alleged miraculous cures at Lourdes. In peace-time a yearly average of about 500 doctors visit Lourdes and as many as sixty doctors have been present at the examination of an alleged miracle. The record office of the Bureau keeps the case-sheet of those whose cures it has studied, and the certificates brought by the patients from their own doctors are deposited with the reports of the examining doctors at Lourdes. The permanence of the cure is only conceded if the subsequent history of the cure has been recorded for a period of years.

In the second place the evidence for supernormal cures at Lourdes is of quite a different character to the evidence for alleged "Faith cures", such as those claimed by the Christian Scientists. The British Medical Association appointed in 1909 a committee of doctors and clergymen to examine the claims of Christian Science, and this committee reported in 1914 that there was no evidence for the cure of organic diseases. The Christian Scientists who replied that an unbiased tribute to the effectiveness of cures wrought without medical assistance could hardly be expected from a committee of doctors, should refer to the findings of the committee of doctors at Lourdes, and to the classic work "Preuves Medicales du Miracle" by Dr. Le Bec, the senior surgeon of a Paris hospital who was president for many years of the Bureau des Constatations."

He quotes Nobel Prizer winner and scientist Alexis Carrel as saying of the Lourdes healings, "The only condition indispensable to the occurrence of the phenomenon is prayer. But there is no need for the patient himself to pray, or even to have any religious faith. It is sufficient that someone around him be in a state of prayer. Such facts are of profound significance. They show the reality of certain relations, of still unknown nature, between psychological and organic processes. They prove the objective importance of the spiritual activities, which hygienists, physicians, educators, and sociologists have almost always neglected to study. They open to man a new world".

Christian Science says you need to pray yourself to get healed!

The lesson is that the cures of Lourdes are good if not miraculous and Christian Science cannot match that.

APPENDIX FROM 2019 ARTICLE

"Newspapers and prosecutors noticed the casualties, especially children dying of unreported cases of diphtheria and appendicitis. In the early years of the church, this touched off battles with the American Medical Association, which tried to have Christian Science healers, or "practitioners", arrested for practising medicine without a licence. Since practitioners did nothing but pray, however, their activities were protected by the US constitution. Reacting with righteous zeal, Church leaders doubled down for decades, furtively slipping protections into the law and encouraging insurance companies to cover Christian Science "treatment". Since it cost very little, the companies cynically complied.

As a result, by the 1970s – a high-water mark for the church's political power, with many Scientists serving in Richard Nixon's White House and federal agencies – the church was well on its way to accumulating an incredible array of legal rights and privileges across the US, including broad-based religious exemptions from childhood immunisations in 47 states, as well as exemptions from routine screening tests and procedures given to newborns in hospitals. The exemptions had consequences: modern-day outbreaks of diphtheria, polio and measles in Christian Science schools and communities. A 1972 polio outbreak in Connecticut left multiple children partially paralysed; a 1985 measles outbreak (one of several) at Principia College in Illinois killed three.

In many US states, Scientists were exempt from charges of child abuse, neglect and endangerment, as well as from failure to report such crimes. Practitioners with no medical training (they become "listed" after two weeks of religious indoctrination) were recognised as health providers, and in some states were required to report contagious illnesses or cases of child abuse or neglect, even as their religion demanded that they deny the evidence of the physical senses. Practitioners, of course, have no way of recognising the symptoms of an illness, even if they believe it existed, which they don't.

A whole system of Christian Science "nursing" sprang up in unlicensed Christian Science sanatoriums and nursing homes

catering to patients with open wounds and bodies eaten away by tumours. There, no medical treatment was allowed to interfere with prayer. Assigned only the most basic duties – feeding and cleaning patients – Christian Science “nurses” are not registered, and have no medical training either. Instead, they engage in bizarre practices such as leaving food on the mouths of patients who cannot eat. They provide no assistance for those who are having trouble breathing, administer no painkillers, react to no emergencies. “Do not resuscitate” is their default. But some of these facilities, and the incompetent care they provide, are covered by Medicare, the US’s national healthcare insurance programme.

For some of its disciples, however, Christian Science remains a menace, causing unnecessary agony and early death. Death is never easy, either for the dying or for those left behind. **It’s now commonplace for ethicists to lament the ways hospitals encumber or complicate dying, by encouraging hope where there is none, or by refusing to clarify the point at which further intervention may be needlessly expensive or excruciating.** But there is something worse than death in a hospital. There’s dying unnecessarily of conditions or diseases for which real treatment or pain management is readily available. There’s dying without help, without pain relief, without care.

APPENDIX - BOOK, GOD'S PERFECT CHILD, REGARDING HOW CHRISTIAN SCIENCE RECENTLY CHANGED PRACTICE AND SAID IT WOULD "TREAT" PEOPLE BELIEVING IN MEDICAL CARE

It was the Christian Science church that put religious exemptions to child abuse on the books, opening a Pandora’s box and releasing all manner of religious extremists and militant anti-vaccination fanatics. It was church officials who engineered the 1970s US federal regulation that led to virtually every state enacting laws allowing parents to neglect children and get away with it.

Rita and Doug Swan, founders of the non-profit organisation Children’s Healthcare Is a Legal Duty, have tirelessly lobbied against these laws, and some states have done away with them in whole or in part. The Oregon legislature became so ashamed of allowing Followers of Christ, a Pentecostal faith-healing group, to fill a cemetery with newborns and stillborn children that it repealed its religious exemption laws in 2011. But some Followers simply picked up and moved to Idaho, which has become the go-to state if you are prepared to let your kids die. There, their children have died of everything from pneumonia, seizures and sepsis to a ruptured esophagus, mostly due to medical neglect – and the name of every one of them should be nailed to the door of the Mother Church.

... Christian Scientists interpret physical recovery – however imaginary, imperfect or incomplete – as a spiritual triumph. Two other healings during the mid-80s involved a self-diagnosed heart attack and a case of rheumatic fever, a condition rare in this country due to antibiotics. The rheumatic fever was prolonged. For nearly a year, while serving as First Reader in his church, he experienced severe joint pain and near-immobility. When he recovered, he was proud of being able to climb a nearby mountain, Mount Si.

“Jonestown in slow motion” is how one writer described Christian Science – a reference to the apocalyptic cult where more than 900 people died in a mass suicide in 1978. Aided and abetted by his religion, my father killed himself in the slowest and most excruciating way possible.

That is where Christian Science leaves us. It could disappear today or tomorrow or years from now, but its own beliefs, and the religious exemptions it has seeded in laws all across the US, will leave a disaster in their wake, resulting in lives ruined, in unnecessary suffering and death, and in legislation that allows every crackpot cult and anti-vaccination zealot to sacrifice their children. Christian Scientists can renounce Eddy all they want, but it will not undo the evil they have done. That is their legacy.

This is an edited extract from the new 20th anniversary edition of God’s Perfect Child: Living and Dying in the Christian Science Church by Caroline Fraser, published by Metropolitan Books

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