

Religions of 2025 America

Chester ARP Fall 2025

Christian Science

- Are the Christian Science adherents Christians? Are they scientists? Are they both Christians and scientists?
 - They are none of the above.
 - Then, what are they?
 - I'm glad you asked.

Christian Science

- What is the Christian Science “religion?”
 - It is a belief system that emphasizes spiritual reality, mental healing, and the example of Jesus as one who reached ultimate spiritual understanding and self-actualization.

Christian Science

- History/Origin
 - As a movement, Christian Science was founded by Mary Ann Glover Patterson Eddy in 1866.
 - The first “congregation” was chartered in Boston in 1879.

Christian Science

- **History/Origin**

- Mary Ann Baker Glover Patterson Eddy was born in Bow, NH in 1821 to parents Mark and Abigail Baker.
- She was raised in a Congregationalist Church that upheld a strict doctrine of predestination, which unsettled young Mary.

Christian Science

- History/Origin

- “The doctrine of unconditional election or predestination, greatly troubled me: for I was unwilling to be saved, if my brothers and sisters were to be unnumbered among those who were doomed to perpetual banishment from God” — *Retrospection and Introspection*.

Christian Science

- History/Origin
 - Mary struggled with her emotional and physical health throughout her life. This is especially true during her young adult years.
 - Phrenology — reading the bumps on a person's head.
 - Mesmerism — hynoptic trances
 - Spiritualism — hyperactive spirits and séances

Christian Science

- History/Origin
 - Mary married her first husband, George Glover, in 1843.
 - He died 7 months later in Wilmington from yellow fever.
 - Young Mary was pregnant and far from home.

Christian Science

- **History/Origin**

- Mary went into a deep depression and struggled even more with her emotional and mental health after George's death.
- After trying various “spiritual” experiences and the occasional dose of morphine, she married Dr. Daniel Patterson in 1853.

Christian Science

- **History/Origin**

- Mary separated from Patterson in 1866 and divorced him in 1873, citing abandonment.
- She married Asa G. Eddy, her third husband, in 1877. He died on June 3, 1882.
 - Eddy died under the care of CJ Eastman, who had no medical training.

Christian Science

- History/Origin

- Mary Ann Eddy died in 1910.
- Mary founded Christian Science in 1866 during her recovery from a fall on a slippery sidewalk. She was given three days to live, cried for her Bible, read Matthew 9:2, and “rose completely healed.”

Christian Science

- History/Origin

- This was after she committed herself to the care of PP Quimby, a spiritual healer in Maine, in 1862. She was under his care for “spinal inflammation” and was “healed.”
- Mary Eddy “wrote” *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

Christian Science

- Revelation
 - The Bible is explained through *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.
 - Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures is Mary Ann Eddy's interpretation of the Bible's spiritual meaning and the meaning of the “science” of divine healing.

Christian Science

- God
 - God is infinite Spirit, Mind, and Love
 - Christian Scientists believe that God is not a person but divine Mind — infinite, all-powerful, all-good, and everywhere present.
 - Everything real expresses God's nature of Life, Truth, and Love.

Christian Science

- Reality
 - The spiritual universe is the only true reality.
 - They hold that the spiritual world is real and that the material world is an illusion — a mistaken view of reality caused by limited, human thinking.
 - Sickness, sin, and death are seen as false beliefs, not divine facts.

Christian Science

- **Man**

- Each person is God's perfect spiritual idea.
- Human beings are viewed as spiritual reflections of God, not physical organisms.
- Therefore, one's identity is pure, whole, and free from disease or sin.

Christian Science

- Healing
 - Healing comes through prayer and understanding.
 - Christian Scientists practice spiritual healing through prayer, not medicine.
 - By understanding that God's creation is perfect and harmonious, believers expect sickness or trouble to disappear as false belief gives way to spiritual truth.
 - This practice is guided by a practitioner.

Christian Science

- Jesus
 - Jesus's works are examples to follow.
 - Jesus is viewed as the ultimate example of spiritual understanding, not God himself.
 - His healings are proof of the divine law that everyone can apply through spiritual understanding.

Christian Science

- Sin and Evil
 - Sin and evil are overcome through right thinking.
 - Sin, disease, and death are considered mental errors — false beliefs about separation from God.
 - Correcting thought through prayer and divine understanding restores harmony and moral strength.

Christian Science

- Worship and Community
 - Christian Scientists worship in churches that hold two weekly services:
 - Sunday Service — readings from the Bible and *Science and Health*
 - Wednesday Testimony — Members share healings and spiritual insights.

Christian Science

- **Summary Statement**
 - Christian Science teaches that reality is entirely spiritual, that God's goodness governs all, and that healing and harmony come through understanding this truth rather than relying on material medicine.
 - Many choose not to use material medicine. They choose to follow a mental prayer process instead.