

The Cults: Christian Science and Oneness Pentecostalism
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The Cults Christian Science

History:

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910)
Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures – 1875
Church of Christ, Scientist – 1879

Christian Science Doctrine:

Purpose of the church – to “reinstat primitive Christianity and its lost healing element” – *Church Manual*

Matter is evil (Greek dualism; Gnosticism)
Material world is illusory
Mind is the only reality
Sickness caused by Animal Magnetism
Sickness is nonexistent (use of medicine allowed)
Death itself is illusory

Christian response to dualism

Flesh is not evil, rather “it is sin living in me” Rom. 7:17
Gen 1:31 says: “God saw all He had made, and it was very good.”
Adam and Eve passed sin on to us

God

1. God is All-in-all
2. God is good. Good is mind.
3. God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.
4. Life, God, omnipotent good, deny death, evil, sin, disease – Disease, sin, evil, death, deny good, omnipotent God, Life.
Science and Health, p. 113

Jesus Christ

Historical figure
Mission was to teach us that all sickness is illusory
Not God incarnate
Virgin born
The “man” Jesus presented Christ, the “divine idea”

Holy Spirit

“Divine Science” itself
He revealed “the divine Principle, Love, and leading into all truth.”
Science and Health, p. 332

Humanity

“Man is not matter; he is not made up of brain, blood, bones, and other material elements. The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God. Matter is not that likeness. ... man is idea, the image of love; he is not physique. He is the compound idea of God, including all right ideas.”
Science and Health, p. 475

Sin – Does not exist. Punishment for sin lasts as long as one believes in it

Hell – State of mind or conscience stricken by guilt

Salvation – When liberated from believing in matter and in sinfulness, one has obtained salvation

Church – Wherever truth and love dwell

Sacraments

Since matter does not exist, there can be no visible means of grace

Twice a year, but no bread and wine or water

End Times

Since the universe is comprised of God only, history has no purpose

Afterlife is a probation period where we grow in the love of God, depending on where we were in this life

The Cults

Oneness Pentecostalism

History:

1906 Azusa Street Revival
1913 Camp Meeting
1914 Ewart preaches
1916 Separates from AG to form GAAA
1918 GAAA and PAW merge
1945 UPCI
1971 AWCF

Oneness Pentecostal Doctrine:

The “Name” of God is central to the Doctrine

Baptism -- Acts 2:38 – “Repent and be baptized ... in the name of Jesus Christ ...”
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19) are merely singular names for Jesus

Denial of the Trinity

“Pentecostal Unitarianism”
Deut.6:4 – “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.”
Not the same as Unitarian-Universalists
Col. 2:9 – “In Christ the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”

Name of God changes from OT to NT

OT – YHWH (Yahweh), Jehovah, LORD
NT – Jesus, Yeshua (“Jehovah saves”)
Jewish concept of name and nature hand in hand – “ ... saves His people” (Matt 1:21)
All sacred acts must be done in the name of God as He presently manifests Himself – Jesus only
Oneness Modalism – all three manifestations are present at one and the same time

Oneness is like Nestorianism

The man Jesus and the Son of God are two natures – human and divine – are like two boards glued together
Condemned by Council of Ephesus in 431 on the grounds that human and divine nature cannot communicate in a meaningful fashion (e.g., How can human blood save us?)
Council at Chalcedon in 451 -- “We confess one and the same Jesus Christ, the Son and Lord only-begotten in two natures without mixture, without change, without division, and without separation.”

Sonship of Jesus is temporary

God will one day abandon the name “Jesus”
Will assume a new name that will convey new characteristics and attributes
All in contrast to the Trinity as held by the major creeds

Salvation

1. Repentance and faith
2. Baptism in the name of Jesus
3. Infilling of Holy Spirit (speaking in tongues)

End Times

Premillennial (Dispensational for many)