

What Does Religious Science Teach About Jesus?

by John Ankerberg, John Weldon

According to Religious Science¹, Jesus Christ was a highly evolved individual who used Science of Mind principles to an expert degree. Science of Mind, like many Eastern religions, does not deny the deity of Jesus per se, only his unique deity. That is, Jesus is as much a part of God as everyone else. Thus, Jesus only realized “the Christ” (deity) as all people can:

Christ is God in the soul of man. To practice the Presence of God, is to awaken within us the Christ Consciousness.... The birth of Christ is not an historical event, but is an eternal incarnation. Christ is born to each age and reborn in every individual soul.²

Jesus is the name of a man. Christ means the Universal Principle of Divine Sonship.... Jesus became increasingly the Christ as his mentality increasingly perceived the relationship of the man Jesus to the Christ principle which is inherent in all people.³

[“Jesus” is merely] the name of a man. Distinguished from the Christ. The man Jesus became the embodiment of the Christ.⁴

Biblically, however, Jesus was uniquely *born* the Christ (Luke 2:11); he did not *become* the Christ later (see 1 John 2:22).

Religious Science philosophy explains why it believes that Jesus is fundamentally no different from anyone else. His consciousness is more evolved, but He had the same nature as anyone. In *Words That Heal Today* (ignoring Scriptures such as Matthew 2:2,11 and John 20:28), Ernest Holmes declared: “Jesus never expected us to worship him either as a person or a [unique] God.”⁵ Elsewhere, “Jesus never thought of himself as different from others.”⁶ “To think of Jesus as being different from other men is to misunderstand his mission and purpose in life. He was a wayshower and proved his way to be a correct one!”⁷ Jesus merely utilized a higher, or transcendent, vision, and it was this alone that enabled Him to perform miracles. He understood the laws of the universe better than others, but they were still His equal. Everyone has the potential to do the same miracles that Jesus did, because what He did, anyone can do. Why no one ever has, Religious Science cannot say.

Here we discover one of the Achilles’ heels of Religious Science, and of New Thought religion generally. If Christ was *not* unique in nature, why has no one ever been like Him? Who else performed His miracles, lived His powerful life, taught His authoritative teachings and rose from the dead? No one. As we pointed out in *Ready with an Answer* (1997), His entire being, everything having to do with Him and everything He did, was unique. Both friends and enemies recognized this. For example, sin of one type or another can be found in every person, including Ernest Holmes, but not in Jesus. Nevertheless, “Anyone who wishes can be just like Jesus.” Sinless. But in 2,000 years no one ever has. Does not this affirm a uniqueness of nature and not simply an expression of higher knowledge?⁸

Holmes’ book, *The Philosophy of Jesus*, presents a good overview of Science of Mind teach-

ing about Jesus Christ and what Religious Science thinks He taught. Holmes expressed complete confidence that he knew the real meaning of Jesus' words. He believed that Jesus was fully aware that He was teaching Science of Mind principles. Thus, according to Holmes, Jesus "discovered" His divinity, in part, through the truth that "God is incarnated in everything," that each person is "a unique incarnation of God."⁹ Further, Jesus did not come to save our souls,¹⁰ and Jesus "did not say there is a heaven which God has provided for us in life after this life; he said that heaven is present with us."¹¹

Religious Science practitioners do not seem to understand the implications of making Jesus Christ a Science of Mind practitioner. In rejecting the historical standards of interpretation that powerfully document what exactly Jesus taught, they simultaneously reject the standards that document what Ernest Holmes taught. In other words, if we were to say that Ernest Holmes did not teach Religious Science, his followers would obviously reject the assertion, surprised that we could say such a thing. "Why, all this is historical fact." Of course it is. We cannot logically deny what Holmes taught because it is public record. Well, who Jesus is and what He taught about who He is are also public record. For instance, that He was "the only Son of God" was both His claim and that of His followers (Matt. 16:16; Jn. 3:16, 18; Rom. 1:4; 1 Jn. 4:9). Are we to believe Holmes when he declares, "Jesus understood his own nature"?¹² If so, then Religious Science practitioners must rethink their view of Jesus. Indeed, Jesus proved His nature by His resurrection from the dead, something Ernest Holmes neglected. Why, then, should Religious Science practitioners prefer Holmes' interpretations of Jesus over those of Jesus about Himself?

The only way Religious Science can get around this problem and "accept" Jesus while denying everything He plainly stood for is to employ a double standard. That is, Religious Science interprets Jesus' words metaphysically, but they interpret Holmes' words normally. Indeed, a metaphysical interpretation of the writings of Ernest Holmes and Religious Science principles would distort them just as effectively as their interpretations distort Jesus' teachings.

Notes:

¹ United Church of Religious Science (Science of Mind).

² Ernest Holmes, *Keys to Wisdom* (Los Angeles: Science of Mind Publications, 1977), pp. 38-39.

³ Ernest Holmes and Alberta Smith, *Questions and Answers on The Science of Mind* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1953), p. 10.

⁴ Ernest Holmes, *The Science of Mind* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1939), p. 603.

⁵ Ernest Holmes, *Words That Heal Today* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 10th Printing, 1979), p. 90.

⁶ *The Science of Mind*, p. 361.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

⁸ *Science of Mind*, January, 1979, p. 16.

⁹ Ernest Holmes (Compiled and edited by Willis Kinniar), *The Philosophy of Jesus... For the World Today* (Los Angeles: Science of Mind Publications, n.d.), pp. 48-49.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹² *The Science of Mind*, p. 361.