



The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through
God to the pulling down of strong holds. —II Corinthians 10:4

January 2025 Vol. 143 | No. 01

WELCOME

- 3 **Welcome - January 2025**
By Jenny Sinatra

LETTERS

- 3 **Readers respond**
*By Christine Weller, Linda Rivers, Cheryl Brown
Lohse, Nancy Bachmann, Nancy Moon, Shirley Taylor,
Belinda Joines*

FEATURE

- 4 **Overcome “love of ease,” be a better healer**
By Angela Sage Larsen

INTERVIEW

- 6 **Surrounding the world in love for Christian
Science**
*By Martha Moffett interviewed by the Journal's
Nancy Humphrey Case*

ARTICLE

- 10 **What's needed for healing**
By Deborah Huebsch
- 11 **The ends of intelligence**
By Daniel Lees
- 13 **Church's loving reach**
By Rosalinda W. Johnson
- 15 **The healing Christ—here for all time and
eternity**
By Emra Farkas
- 16 **A new view of temptation**
By Susanne Van Eyl
- 18 **Cleansing fog**
By Wendy Neubert

INTERLUDE

- 19 **Every Christian Science Reading Room**
By Wendy Giersdorf

TESTIMONIES OF HEALING

- 19 **Pain gone and free to run**
By Barrett Pierce
- 20 **A holy experience—and healing**
By Charles Lindahl
- 22 **Recurring back pain healed**
By Chris Wye
- 22 **Healed after fall from bike**
By John Dickson with contributions from Cheri Rigby
- 23 **A better resolution heals blemish**
By Tessa Parmenter

OF GOOD REPORT

- 24 **Sunday School teaching that endures**
By Martha Hallaren
- 25 **Time can't box us in**
By Ian Forber-Pratt
- 26 **Holding tight to inspiration**
By Robby Butler
- 28 **Sharing the Comforter**
By Gloria Harrison
- 28 **Before you ask**
By Whit Larsen

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 29 **Admission of new members**
By Martha R. Moffett
- 30 **A new member of the Christian Science
Board of Directors**
By The Christian Science Board of Directors
- 30 **New Editor at The Christian Science Monitor**
By The Christian Science Board of Directors

- 31 **Rotation on the Board of Trustees and in other positions at The Mother Church**
By The Christian Science Board of Directors

EDITORIAL

- 32 **No unknowns to God**
By Lisa Rennie Sytsma

Jenny Sinatra, Staff Editor, Issue Curator

Welcome - January 2025

By Jenny Sinatra

Dear Readers,

A hunger for newness. An almost rebellious inner yearning for something, anything, to be different. The beginning of a new year tends to amplify this relatable yearning. If we recognize this as a spiritual thirst, we're off to a good start.

I often find comfort in Christ Jesus' assurance that we're not going to find lasting peace—we're just not—in the shifting sands of mortal reliances. The master Christian told us that as we look higher, acknowledging the one God's power, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17).

Our lead article, “Overcome ‘love of ease,’ be a better healer” might sound puzzling at first. Because, what's wrong with being comfortable? But in the long run, fulfillment is truly about casting aside empty promises of materialism for the things of Spirit.

All along the way, as we are clambering up the sometimes-rocky paths of spiritual growth, we are being strengthened, relying more on our spiritual sense. Healing happens more smoothly, more frequently.

We trust you'll enjoy this month's collection of submissions, which give evidence of this. They bring out the truth of these encouraging words from the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy:

“Truth's immortal idea is sweeping down the centuries, gathering beneath its wings the sick and sinning. My weary hope tries to realize that happy day, when man shall recognize the Science of Christ and love his neighbor as himself,—when he shall realize God's omnipotence and the healing power of the divine Love in what it has done and is doing for mankind. The

LETTERS

Readers respond

By Christine Weller, Linda Rivers, Cheryl Brown Lohse, Nancy Bachmann, Nancy Moon, Shirley Taylor, Belinda Joines

Lyon Osborn, “What are we paying for?,” *Journal*, October 2024

I'm very grateful for this article. I had some questions myself. In particular relating to the necessity for continued funding when present needs are well met. The answers given appear to be clear-headed, honest, and grounded in divine Principle and love for the good that Mary Baker Eddy's discovery of Christian Science bestows upon all.

Christine Weller

Simcoe County, Ontario, Canada

Richard Winegar, “Standing with the truth,” *Journal*, October 2024

This testimony of healing demonstrates how quickly God answers prayer. God truly is “a very present help in trouble” (Psalms 46:1). I was impressed with the fact that the “elephant” didn't need to be identified in order to pray correctly. Also, the prayerful support of a Christian Science practitioner, along with the author's steadfast prayer and his family's support, was so inspiring.

Linda Rivers

Loganville, Georgia, US

Tony Lobl, “Rejoicing—before and beyond elections,” *Journal*, October 2024

This is a gem. It has calmed and purified my thoughts about government (and taught me the wonderful phrase “unconditional civility”). Thank you.

Cheryl Brown Lohse
Delray Beach, Florida, US

Virginia Gathings, “The divine influence,” *Journal*, September 2024

Thanks for this helpful article. It inspires conviction and courage in demonstrating Christian Science.

Nancy Bachmann
United States

“Pathways to the practice,” *Journal*, September 2024

Thank you for these firsthand accounts of the Christian Science practice. They are extremely helpful to those of us who want to be in the practice.

Nancy Moon
Colorado Springs, Colorado, US

Emra Farkas, “A healing rebuke,” *Journal*, September 2024

Like the author of this article, I am a lifelong Christian Scientist. This is one of the best, most thought-provoking articles I have ever read!

Shirley Taylor
Clayton, New York, US

Jeremy R. Moss, “All together,” *Journal*, August 2024

This poem about a spiritual sense of passing on was uplifting and reassuring. A favorite line was “no starting point, nor interlude/in boundless Life’s infinitude.” I find the Interlude in each *Journal* a welcome respite.

Belinda Joines

Hendersonville, North Carolina, US

FEATURE

Overcome “love of ease,” be a better healer

By Angela Sage Larsen

I couldn’t figure out why I felt as though I was stalling, as if a heavy, invisible blanket were keeping me earthbound and encumbered. Life felt dark and my thoughts seemed sluggish.

Then I came across this startling statement by Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer of the universal, divine law of Christian healing: “The mild forms of animal magnetism are disappearing, and its aggressive features are coming to the front. The looms of crime, hidden in the dark recesses of mortal thought, are every hour weaving webs more complicated and subtle. So secret are the present methods of animal magnetism that they ensnare the age into indolence, and produce the very apathy on the subject which the criminal desires” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 102).

I was familiar with the author’s definition of *animal magnetism*: “As named in Christian Science, animal magnetism or hypnotism is the specific term for error, or mortal mind. It is the false belief that mind is in matter, and is both evil and good; that evil is as real as good and more powerful” (*Science and Health*, p. 103). But when I looked up *indolence*, alarm bells went off. It means “inaction or want of exertion of body or mind, proceeding from love of ease or aversion to toil” (Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828).

I could see how a “love of ease” was showing up in my own experience, but to realize that it was making me and others apathetic—and by extension, permissive—toward evil itself, was a wake-up call.

One of the most imperative demands made on Christian Scientists is to watch—to be alert and on guard. The word *watch* means to remain awake. Christ Jesus specifically tells his followers: “What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch” (Mark 13:37). We watch for God’s goodness, His manifest power and presence, and to be sure we don’t fall into thinking and acting in a manner unlike the Christ nature which Jesus taught and demonstrated.

As I more actively watched my thinking, I began to see how, at the heart of the darkness, heaviness, and even confusion that plagued me, was this aggressive, subtle trap of indolence. Here are just three of the ways I realized I was entertaining “love of ease”:

1. The first can be summed up in “I don’t want to”—simply an unwillingness to work for God. Working for God sounds like, well, a lot of work. But it bears great rewards. Working for God means acknowledging and accepting the divine nature of His creation, with everything functioning in perfect harmony. It means being humbly grateful for blessings already received and ready for the unfolding of infinite good. Working for God includes daily prayer, fueling up spiritually by studying the Scriptures and Mrs. Eddy’s writings, and embracing and acting on good thoughts while rejecting selfish, evil thoughts.

Christ Jesus’ disciple Peter wrote: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Peter 1:2–8).

The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible defines the Greek word for *barren* as lazy. Whereas laziness is nonproductive, the qualities Peter lists reinforce each other to make us abundantly productive. Working for God is not so much a work-and-rewards system, as a means for expressing all the good we already have!

2. The second was in a desire for a more comfortable material experience, without a willingness to rule out sin in thought and action. Mrs. Eddy writes: “Healing physical sickness is the smallest part of Christian Science. It is only the bugle-call to thought and action, in the higher range of infinite goodness. The emphatic purpose of Christian Science is the healing of sin;...” (*Rudimental Divine Science*, p. 2).

Jesus healed by casting out the thinking—sometimes referred to in Bible translations as an evil spirit, spirits, or demons—that caused the outward discord. One time his disciples asked him why they had failed to heal a case. He replied, “Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:20, 21).

A spiritual translation of *fasting* that I’ve found helpful is: “refraining from admitting the claims of the senses” (Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 222). The material senses cannot be relied upon for a recognition of reality—what is universally true here, now, and everywhere. They unfailingly report that there is a power, an intelligence, a substance, a presence, a law outside of and opposed to God. Therefore, when we do mistakenly rely on the claims of the senses, we are invariably breaking the First Commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue: “You shall have no other gods before or besides Me” (Exodus 20:3, Amplified Bible, Classic Edition).

Are we truly willing to cast out sin—any tendency to believe the suggestion that there is another god, another power—from our hearts, thoughts, experiences? Are we seeking merely a more comfortable human existence, or do we truly desire to work for God? Of course, pain and disease are never

Father-Mother God's will for Her precious children and can never be the divine order of things. They result from belief—a belief we can cast out. Since the purpose of Christian Science is the healing of sin, and the effects or “signs following” of the healing of sin are physical healing, we cannot allow ourselves to be lazy about handling sin in ourselves.

3. The third way I was seeing indolence showing up was in the constant pull of distractions disguised as rest and entertainment. World events, coupled with challenges in our own lives, can be overwhelming, demanding that we pause. But laziness would mislead us on what is truly restful and satisfying. Perhaps laziness tempts us to escape through screen time, which can take the form of mere amusement or “doomscrolling” through mortal opinions and bad news. Instead of giving in to temptation, which will only drag us deeper into darkness and depression, we can turn to God for inspired answers.

As we turn wholeheartedly to God, we find that every prayer, every Christian Science treatment, bears witness to God's nature as loving, principled, harmonious, intelligent. Thought is lifted above indolence, and we find both that our sole purpose for existing is to witness and express God's nature, and that doing this is joyful, energizing, and fulfilling. The Bible tells us: “Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Isaiah 43:10).

That darkness, depression, and sluggishness I mentioned at the beginning of this article? It took months of dedicated daily effort, study, and prayer to face them. But that word *indolence* kept me motivated. I did not want to consent to evil. Day by day, moment by moment, I was waking up to God as my source, my true Love, my focus, my one and All.

I learned to defend myself against the pull of ease by turning to the “Daily Prayer” that Mrs. Eddy provides, which says in part: “‘Thy kingdom come;’ let the reign of divine Truth, Life, and Love be established in me, and rule out of me all sin” (*Manual of The Mother Church*, p. 41).

As I prayed, I would often substitute the word *indolence* for *sin*.

Beginning to reconnect with divine Love, I thought of God as Mother. She spoke to my thought with such tenderness, firmness, and mercy, that putting Her first became irresistible, desirable, delightful. I became eager to see what She had to share with me and more enthusiastic to hear the gospel (good news) of Love's presence than afraid of consenting to evil.

After working consistently to put God first moment by moment—in thought and deed—for several weeks, I felt reborn! And I continue to feel that invigorating sense of inspiration as I cherish working for God as the most important thing I can do.

To a new branch church in Massachusetts, Mrs. Eddy offered guidance much like Peter's: “Honor thy Father and Mother, God. Continue in His love. Bring forth fruit—‘signs following’—that your prayers be not hindered. Pray without ceasing. Watch diligently; never desert the post of spiritual observation and self-examination. Strive for self-abnegation, justice, meekness, mercy, purity, love. Let your light reflect Light. Have no ambition, affection, nor aim apart from holiness” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 154).

The work of overcoming a love of ease yields salvation, safety, health, and holiness—a deeper conviction and experiencing of God's grace.

INTERVIEW

Surrounding the world in love for Christian Science

By Martha Moffett interviewed by the Journal's Nancy Humphrey Case

What does it mean to be a member of The Mother Church? What keeps The Mother Church fulfilling its mission? And how should we measure its success?

These are some of the questions Martha Moffett, a Christian Science practitioner and teacher, has deeply pondered since becoming Clerk of The Mother Church in 2023. She shares fresh insights in this interview.

Nancy Humphrey Case: The *Manual of The Mother Church* by Mary Baker Eddy identifies specific tasks the Clerk is responsible for. But how do you see the role of the Clerk's office in a more general sense?

Martha Moffett: When I was first appointed Clerk, I looked in the *Manual* to see what the Clerk of The Mother Church does. One of the main functions is to admit new members (approved by the Board of Directors). So I began to think about what it means to be a member of The Mother Church.

The first requirement, other than not being a member of another church denomination, is to love Christian Science (see *Manual*, p. 114). That has meant a great deal to me. It's our love for Christian Science that unites members around the world. And in turn, we're a transparency for God's love to uplift and save and heal mankind.

That's beautiful. Was there anything else that came to light as you pondered what it means to be a member of The Mother Church?

Yes! In her address on laying the cornerstone of The Mother Church in 1894, Mrs. Eddy said, "When the hearts of Christian Scientists are woven together as are their names in the web of history, earth will float majestically heaven's heraldry, and echo the song of angels: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men'" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, p. 145). That was Mrs. Eddy's vision—that our hearts would be woven together, surrounding the world in love for Christian Science.

She also wrote, "Nothing aside from the spiritualization—yea, the highest Christianization—of thought and desire, can give the true perception of God and divine Science, that results in health, happiness, and holiness" (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 15). Being a member of The Mother Church involves a lifting up of our thoughts and desires, living unselfishly, and lifting

up and healing the world. This is what makes us "Christianly qualified."

Oh, right—that's also mentioned on the application for membership, isn't it? What else did you find in the *Manual*?

A By-Law I found in the section on "Discipline" stood out to me. It says, "A member of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., shall not be a member of any church whose Readers are not Christian Scientists and members of The Mother Church" (p. 45). So while The Mother Church doesn't try to control the policies of branch churches (in fact, a *Manual* provision prohibits The Mother Church's interference in branch church affairs), this provision ensures that a love of Christian Science teachings permeates the services in branch churches around the world. And Mrs. Eddy writes elsewhere that "the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends" on the Sunday Lesson-Sermon (*Manual*, p. 31). It's this love of the teachings of Christian Science that elevates church and keeps it fulfilling its mission.

How does being a member of The Mother Church support its healing mission?

You know, when Christ Jesus was born, the light of Christ was seen as a bright star, the Bethlehem star. Could it be said that the light of Christ shines most brightly today through The Mother Church? Mrs. Eddy writes, "The star of Bethlehem is the star of Boston..." (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 320). No institution on earth has a mission that exemplifies God's love for man more than The Mother Church.

And healings come through the various functions of The Mother Church—through our weekly Bible Lessons, practitioners, Christian Science nurses, lectures, and our periodicals, which show the healing efficacy of Christian Science today. So joining The Mother Church means you are joining with this extraordinary activity of God's healing love reaching out to the whole world. That's not a small vision!

I love that, Martha. Can you share an example of healing that you have witnessed in the work of the Clerk's office?

Last spring, the Christian Science Board of Directors visited branch churches in Asia, and when they got back they called a meeting about how to respond to a need to support branch churches in these fields. My department was asked to participate in a collaborative effort to find out from these fields how The Mother Church could best support them in practicing and sharing Christian Science. The result so far is that we have created brochures, pamphlets, and cards in Japanese, Indonesian, and two languages in the Philippines.

These resources have been well received—we're so grateful! We hope these fields have felt nurtured and loved. This focus on and love for them has already resulted in wonderful fruition.

For example, a church in the Philippines planned lectures at Benguet State University, and cards were prepared with Bible passages translated into the two main languages of the country. The response to the lectures was significant. About one hundred fifty students attended, and afterward many made such comments as, "Now I know who God is," "Now I know how to pray," and "Now I know my prayers can heal."

We look forward to partnering with other fields as well.

That's so wonderful! It shows how relevant Mrs. Eddy's statement about "unprejudiced minds" continues to be (see *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 570). And it all came from love—the love of The Mother Church for its members and branches, and those members in the Philippines reflecting God's love for the students in their community.

What are some other functions of the Clerk's office?

The Clerk's office helps to plan the Annual Meeting of The Mother Church. Lately, the Board of Directors has put more focus on welcoming and including young people. You know, Mrs. Eddy provided that twelve-year-olds would be able to join The Mother Church. So we made special efforts to invite young people to attend the last Annual Meeting. We included activities

designed specifically for them, and invited them to attend. The response was gratifying.

Also, the Clerk's office oversees the services and other activities in the Original Mother Church Edifice and its Extension. When the Extension was built, the question inevitably came up, What is to become of the Original Edifice? What should it be used for now that services are being held in the Extension? Mrs. Eddy drew up a legal document to protect it, stipulating that going forward the Original could be used only for "reading, instruction, worship and service, in accordance with the doctrines of genuine Christian Science" (December 19, 1906, indenture between Mary Baker Eddy and the Christian Science Board of Directors, p. 3).

She thought of it as a sacred space?

Yes. Mrs. Eddy loved that church, and wanted her followers to love it, too. We don't have holy geography or shrines in Christian Science. However, the building of the Original Mother Church was an extraordinary accomplishment. All the resistance of the carnal mind was met, beautifully. And that demonstration stands.

The Clerk's office ensures that these buildings, which belong to the members, are lovingly preserved and used appropriately according to our governing documents. They are not museums; they represent something of the love and gratitude of Christian Scientists for God and for Christian Science. These are built first in our hearts, and we are to "continue to build, rebuild, adorn, and fill these spiritual temples with grace, Truth, Life, and Love" (Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 195). That is essential for our church to keep fulfilling its mission today.

Did you ever notice how the architecture of The Mother Church is adorned with fruits? The windows and arches are dripping with fruit imagery carved in them. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20). And he promised that the gates of hell would not prevail against his church, based on Christ-healing. Our love for Christian Science is evidenced in our healing works.

How else do you see the work of the Clerk's office in its historical context?

The Clerk's office maintains the records of membership, and from time to time the question of the continuity of our movement comes up. Members want The Mother Church to be here for their children and grandchildren—really for all humanity and all time. And we get questions from the public during tours of the Church about the numbers of members. (These tours are quite popular and people are often moved to tears by the beauty of the buildings.)

In determining how we should respond to these questions, I have been praying and thinking about the provision in the *Manual* called "Numbering the People." It says: "Christian Scientists shall not report for publication the number of the members of The Mother Church, nor that of the branch churches. According to the Scripture they shall turn away from personality and numbering the people" (p. 48).

This is an example of how Christian Scientists take "the inspired Word of the Bible" to guide us in very practical and important ways (see *Science and Health*, p. 497). In the Bible, the children of Israel were instructed not to number the people. It was as if God were saying, "Let's get this straight from the very outset. You're not going to judge your success by the numbers."

Mrs. Eddy put that By-Law in the *Manual* at a time when Church membership was growing rapidly. And it doesn't just say not to number the members, but it instructs us to turn away from numbering the people. This is very much at odds with how the world measures success.

We do hold ourselves to a standard of demonstration—individually, in our own lives and in our prayers for the world, as well as collectively. If we do this, as we do this, the entire world will feel the effects. And we won't need to be concerned about the continuity of our movement.

Examples abound of how our prayers can have a powerful healing effect. Elizabeth Earl Jones's article "The 'great white throne'" tells about two practitioners praying to protect the President of the United States from an assassination threat (see *Christian Science Sentinel*, October 16, 1943). Shortly after, his secretary reported that the President had felt the "lifting of a crushing mental load which descended upon him when

he took the oath of office, and from which he had experienced no relief until now."

Another example is Mrs. Eddy's instruction to members of The Mother Church to pray for the resolution of the Russo-Japanese War and the tremendous results of those prayers, with a peace treaty being signed less than three months after specific prayers for peace had begun (see Robert Peel, *The Years of Authority*, p. 256).

Our success is measured by asking: Are we bringing healing into our own lives and into the world?

In Deuteronomy it says, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people" (7:7). To me that's reassuring. It isn't to say our churches shouldn't grow and thrive, but Jesus had twelve disciples, and they changed the world!

How can members help young people see that church is for them?

I think young people want what we all want—a meaningful career, fulfilling relationships, a sense of justice in society. Christian Science is a tremendous help in all these areas, bringing to bear the divine power of goodness on our lives in very practical ways. Uniting with others around the world in Mother Church membership enables us to bring this vision of goodness to bear on the whole world in ways that we could not do alone. There really could not be a more meaningful institution to fulfill the hopes and desires of young people than this Church.

Mrs. Eddy states: "Christian Science is not a dweller apart in royal solitude; it is not a law of matter, nor a transcendentalism that heals only the sick. This Science is a law of divine Mind, a persuasive animus, an unerring impetus, an ever-present help. Its presence is felt, for it acts and acts wisely, always unfolding the highway of hope, faith, understanding. It is the higher criticism, the higher hope; and its effect on man is mainly this—that the good which has come into his life, examination compels him to think genuine, whoever

did it. A Christian Scientist verifies his calling. *Choose ye!*" (*Miscellany*, p. 3).

ARTICLE

What's needed for healing

By Deborah Huebsch

This article is part of a series appearing occasionally in the Journal, the Christian Science Sentinel, and The Herald of Christian Science. Each article aims to correct some misconception about Christian Science that would keep us from having the results we so desire as spiritual healers.

Do you ever feel as though there is something more you need in order to have a healing? Well, you're not alone. Here's a poignant statement that Christian Science practitioners hear a lot: "I just need more faith and/or spiritual understanding in order to get healed."

Having faith and understanding *is* important. But according to the Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, who gave us the complete explanation of how to heal spiritually, there is a need for something more.

On page 1 of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, she explains, "The prayer that reforms the sinner and heals the sick is an absolute faith that all things are possible to God,—a spiritual understanding of Him, an unselfed love."

This explanation of healing is based on Jesus' teachings. He often told people he had healed that their faith had "made them whole." He also had an awesome understanding of God as the doer of the works. But arguably, the most powerful aspect of his healing ministry was that he was moved with, or felt, compassion before the person was healed. You'll find this mentioned numerous times in the Gospels, showing the importance of love in healing.

We all know what it's commonly thought to mean to experience love. It's a warm and fuzzy sense of well-being. Love tends to override negatives such as irritation, disappointment, frustration. But does this description of love adequately capture what happened when Jesus healed? Or what Eddy describes as "unselfed" love?

Love is God. Therefore, it includes all that God is. It fills all space. It is a power. It's universal, impartial. It liberates, inspires, heals. It is both a noun and a verb. You might say Love is the atmosphere, the reality in which we exist.

Love is also something that isn't just a thought. It's a feeling. It's a heart thing rather than a head thing. Maybe this is why both Jesus and Eddy considered it to be so important. So it's curious that when people think about what they might need for healing, this quality of "unselfed" love doesn't often come up.

The descriptive word, which characterizes the kind of love that heals, is hugely significant. The word used by Eddy is *unselfed*, not *unselfish*. The Oxford Dictionary defines *unselfish* as "willing to put the needs or wishes of others before one's own." Sounds good, is good. But evidently it's not always what heals.

The prefix "un-" can mean a variety of things. One is "not." For our purposes, unselfed may mean "not selfed." "Un-" also can mean to reverse. What could be the reverse of an incorrect sense of self? Being God's expression? And "un-" is sometimes used to mean released from. So *unselfed* could mean released from self.

When it comes to prayer, understanding the word *unselfed* can make a huge difference in our healing work. Basically, Eddy is telling us to leave any sense of self out of prayer. So it isn't that *our* efforts heal. Or that we have to feel responsible for healing any situation. What is required, however, is to get completely out of a sense of mortal selfhood. In other words, divest our thinking of any consciousness of personal effort.

What does that do? It puts us completely in the role of seeing God work and reflecting that work. We bear witness to what God knows about any situation.

Understanding that this is the purpose of our prayer, we aren't tempted to go down the road of trying to fix something. Rather, we see that God's allness has already excluded all evil, that His creation is already completely good.

As the Founder of Christian Science, Eddy put her discovery of the divine laws that govern the universe into practice. She was a remarkable healer. Explaining how to heal instantaneously, she said, according to a student's recollection: "I will tell you the way to do it. It is to love! Just live love—be it—love, love, love. Do not know anything but Love. Be all love. There is nothing else. That will do the work. It will heal everything; it will raise the dead. *Be nothing but love*" (*We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*, Expanded Edition, Vol. 1, pp. 296–297).

This action of unselfing our love removes any sense of separation. It isn't that we are experiencing God as if we were here and God were over there. We find ourselves "in the Spirit" as St. John says. We become conscious of all good, complete harmony, pristine clarity.

How do we know if a sense of self is standing in the way of healing? One example could be when we worry about whether our prayer is going to work. Or if we feel responsible for doing a good job.

What can we do about that? Get very still. Hush the chatter that would make us feel afraid that we might fail. And then listen to God.

When we take any sense of self out of our prayer, all that is left is divine Love and its expression. It is All. The only. The real. What happens as a result? We become aware that Love fills all space, including the very place where there seemed to be a problem. And this is often when we experience healing.

My sister was once confined to a psychiatric hospital, where she hadn't said a word since being admitted. I wanted to go see her, but I was told it was pointless since she was basically catatonic.

As I prayed about it, Jesus' words came to thought. He asked the question, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" (Matthew 11:7). Eddy wrote, "What went ye out

for to see?' A person, or a Principle?" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 117).

That was my answer. I realized I was not going to see a mentally disturbed sister. Because God is Love, there was nothing but Love to experience. It wasn't me trying to be helpful in going, but Love showing me what was true.

As the nurse took me to my sister's room, she apologized and said there'd been no change. The locked door had a window, and I could see my sister standing across the room by the other window, staring out. The nurse unlocked the door and let me in.

My sister turned, saw me, and exclaimed, "Debbin [that's what she called me], I'm so glad to see you!" We then had a perfectly normal conversation. She was released two days later, with "sudden unexplained remission of symptoms" written on her chart.

This didn't seem surprising to me. It was God being God, Love being Love, and I was privileged to see it. I wasn't trying to heal my sister; I just endeavored to see Love expressed. And of course it was, as it always is.

For me, this has been an example of how important this third ingredient, unselfed love, is to healing. Yes, of course, faith and spiritual understanding are necessary. But unselfed love lifts our efforts from limited, circumscribed attempts to see good reign into the consciousness of infinite, ever-present, divine Love. It's not declaring truth; it's witnessing Truth. It's not trying to love another, or even love God. It's being in Love, knowing only Love, because Love is truly All.

The ends of intelligence

By Daniel Lees

Humans have used their intelligence throughout history in ways both good and ill, pure and impure, and even in a mixture of these—a divided house.

This history has led to the common assumption that intelligence can be both good and evil. But is this a fair assumption? Or is intelligence purely good?

The Bible speaks of “the mind of the Lord” and “the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16). Based on the Bible and deriving its authority from it, Christian Science teaches that God, good, is Spirit, and Spirit is Mind. God’s thoughts comprise the spiritual universe, including spiritual man (our own true selfhood), whose consciousness is the reflection of God, divine Mind.

Actual intelligence is a quality of God. In fact, as Mary Baker Eddy defines Him in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, God is intelligence (see p. 587). And this divine intelligence operates consistently on our behalf, governing, directing, satisfying, harmonizing all being.

Any other claim to intelligence or intelligent action is false, a matter-based supposition of a mind or minds in addition to God. A theoretical opposing mentality, called in the Bible “the carnal mind” (Romans 8:7), is the author of so-called brain-based thought. In Christian Science this is also known as *mortal mind*, as it includes death or finity within itself. It runs on fear, the fear that we could be separated from God, good, Love, which Jesus taught and proved to be impossible.

Though ultimately unreal and thus lacking any actual creative power, mortal mind presents itself as capable of novelty. In contemporary news media, artificial intelligence (AI) has gained prominence in articles often expressing apprehension over what the writers see as its inherent threat. Such fear should be challenged by all thinkers, as the term itself is a blatant contradiction. Again, the Christian Science textbook states, “God is intelligence” (*Science and Health*, p. 2), and in the Bible God declares His entirety: “I am the Lord; and there is none else” (Isaiah 45:18).

So what is AI? It is the manipulation of data, or material information, through “learned” (encoded) computer software—a rehashing of old material. Reconfiguration is not invention. The only originator of anything is God, the divine creator, Mind, whose ideas alone comprise reality.

Artificial intelligence is not reality, but artifice. As such it has no control or power over man, God’s spiritual idea or manifestation. A painting of a river, for example, however realistically done, is not actually wet and can do no harm to anyone or anything.

Speaking of material gods, Jeremiah points out, “They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good” (10:5; the entire chapter rewards a second look).

Also of note is augmented reality, which combines “real world” experience with computer-generated 3D content. That is, it overlays one material concept with another material concept. But God is the only real creator and His ideas are spiritual realities. Who or what could add to reality, to what God has already done?

Because Spirit is good and is infinite, it should not surprise us to see that goodness evidenced in human inventions, including some applications of AI, which can have positive utility through algorithmically-enhanced processes—labor-saving efficiencies in manufacturing, for instance. Mrs. Eddy writes, “We welcome the increase of knowledge and the end of error, because even human invention must have its day, and we want that day to be succeeded by Christian Science, by divine reality” (*Science and Health*, p. 95).

Any good results produced by AI derive from the operation of divine Principle in human affairs. Any harmful effect is an illusion of error, or mortal mind. In the Bible God promises, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (Jeremiah 29:11).

What of threatened crimes against humanity plotted through AI? Mrs. Eddy writes, “Science only can explain the incredible good and evil elements now coming to the surface” (*Science and Health*, p. 83). When reading this, remember that the word *incredible* applies equally to both the good and evil elements. Let’s be sure to acknowledge the “good” as well as the well-publicized “evil elements” now coming to light.

Is not the pinnacle of incredible good Christian Science itself, explaining and demonstrating through healing the law of perfect God and perfect man—the infinite Principle of good eternally at one with its reflection, man? The omnipresence of God absolutely precludes the existence or development or operation of anything unlike or opposed to good. Because infinite Spirit, God, is intelligence, He cannot be mimicked or enlisted on behalf of evil.

The law of divine Love perpetually operates on our behalf, sustaining good, health, and progress while also enabling us to detect, expose, and destroy all falsehood—and this becomes apparent when acknowledged by thinkers. We can calmly and humbly trust God to supply mankind with vigilance and timely wisdom for rightful action. Government entities around the world are taking steps to ensure transparency in AI development and application. Any malicious uses of AI are without divine authority, and are therefore ripe for destruction, like the fruitless tree Jesus encountered (see Matthew 21:19).

Spirit is also Truth. In its infinitude Truth eternally supports and fulfills righteous desires and endeavors within the human family. Jesus assures us, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). Through divine grace, immortal Truth meets our need and perfectly unfolds right ideas, sometimes before and often even without our asking.

For many years I worked on writing an essay on literary analysis. Initially, promising pathways of analysis closed up. I would too often hit a brick wall and leave off the work. Unbidden, though, new directions I’d not considered would draw me back to the task, till finally it was done, and I submitted the article to a well-respected academic journal. It was reviewed by an expert in literary analysis who knew neither my identity nor affiliation, nor did I know theirs. It was quickly accepted, deemed “brilliant” by the reviewer.

While I was happy for the positive outcome, it was firmly borne in upon me that I had no more performed the analysis than had my pet Boston terrier. Through training and experience I certainly possessed the necessary compositional skills, but not the analytical

insight that came. I can ride a bicycle, but could never have invented the device. I hadn’t prayed specifically for divine help; nevertheless the help came.

From this experience I realized as never before the impersonal yet precise role of grace. Although the article’s subject matter involved literary aesthetics, the core focus was moral and looked to deific causes and effects. Its completion and success was a clear proof to me that God alone is the source of all actual creative intelligence.

We are all God’s children. Evil is never a feature of our being, neither presently nor in the future. We can yield to and trust God’s thoughts toward us, confident in knowing that as His image, we are forever safely guided and guarded. “Good thoughts,” Mrs. Eddy writes, “are an impervious armor; clad therewith you are completely shielded from the attacks of error of every sort” (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 210).

The ends of intelligence are manifested in blessings continuously bestowed on man, God’s image. Such bestowals include peace, wholeness, joy, security, justice, prosperity, success, and enlightenment. These constitute the intelligent inheritance of every one of us, the kingdom of heaven within that Jesus promised.

Church’s loving reach

By Rosalinda W. Johnson

How often have you attended a church service looking for an answer, a solution, or a healing and come away with just what you needed? I remember trying to find healing of a growth on my spine that for months had made sitting uncomfortable, causing me to lean to one side or the other of a seat. Because I had always found healing through Christian Science, I knew I would be healed of this problem, too.

Around this time a service in a branch Church of Christ, Scientist, so inspired me that soon afterward the healing thought came in a flash: "I can't be sick—I have God's work to do!" Immediately, I knew the growth was gone, simply not there anymore. With that realization, there was no more lump and no more pain. I've been able to sit normally and comfortably ever since.

The divine message that had brought the healing made me realize that the work I had before me was to understand the continuity of God's harmonious functioning, which I reflect. I also realized that I had been embraced through the healing support of our church. Church supports our work, and I have continued to love church work in all its aspects.

In the Bible, Christ Jesus said that Peter's recognition of the Christ, the spiritual idea of God, was to be the foundation upon which he would build his church (see Matthew 16:16–18). Just as God gives us the Christ, He gives us church—this important assembly of God's children to support and comfort.

Dedication to church requires the willingness to grow in our understanding of God and to love all who help to express the spiritual sense of *Church*, which is defined in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy as: "The structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from divine Principle.

"The Church is that institution, which affords proof of its utility and is found elevating the race, rousing the dormant understanding from material beliefs to the apprehension of spiritual ideas and the demonstration of divine Science, thereby casting out devils, or error, and healing the sick" (p. 583).

Our humble dedication to Church enables us to see more of its infinitude and blessings. With active church attendance over many years, I've witnessed countless daily blessings. Church has taught me that I can trust God as omnipotent intelligence and divine Love. And Christian Science has revealed my spiritual sense, "a conscious, constant capacity to understand God" (*Science and Health*, p. 209).

Spiritual sense is exactly what I felt when my car was forced off a remote road by another car with four men

who then began aggressively taunting me. Because of an innate understanding of God's ever-presence, I felt only the love of God for them and for myself. I knew that God was seeing them as His own spiritual sons, and that I was able to see them that way, too.

I felt led to tell them how grateful I was that God had sent them to me because I needed them to direct me to a business located somewhere in the area. Suddenly the men sat straight up in their car and told me to follow them. Their immediate change in behavior made me feel I could trust them. And they honorably led me for several miles straight to my destination.

To me, this was a clear example that we go to church not only for the blessings it brings us, but to learn how to share the blessings of Christian Science with others, in obedience to the biblical command: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18). Like ripples in a lake, the spiritual activity of Church reaches out to God's sons and daughters.

As each of us prays to see more spiritually, we realize that everyone possesses an innate recognition of God as the source of good. The loving call from our heavenly Father-Mother beckons to everyone, and each person is capable of feeling a special invitation to gratitude and worship. God's perpetual invitation reads, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah 55:1). It is the Christ, the true idea of God, that draws us to church, planting within our hearts the desire to understand God. As Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

We need to view our Church spiritually, too. In the healing "structure of Truth and Love," there is no absence nor empty space, because Love reflected in love is allness. Recognizing and expressing this all-inclusive love fills our churches. Operating within and expressing the "structure of Truth and Love," we greet everyone as the offspring, not of the flesh, but of Spirit; we welcome each person through the door, not of a material structure, but of spiritual understanding; we make room for every spiritual idea in our thought of Church. Only by entertaining right ideas about God and man can we demonstrate the irresistible attraction

to that special place of gratitude and worship that we know as church.

Mrs. Eddy writes in the *Manual of The Mother Church*: “The prayers in Christian Science churches shall be offered for the congregations collectively and exclusively” (p. 42). This can include not only those present in the building, but all who are trying to find their way to the Christly worship of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray to see each of God’s children as answering Love’s invitation. Our expression of this recognition blesses the spiritual progress of everyone.

The healing Christ—here for all time and eternity

By Emra Farkas

Overheard in a church lobby: “The churches *used to be so full!*” That same week two articles in prominent publications had noted the “continuing decline” of church attendance. It’s a topic that has generated a lot of opinion pieces and news articles, to say nothing of those lobby conversations.

Christian Scientists might feel justified in assigning a variety of causes to shrinking church congregations: times have changed; people in past decades had a stronger faith in God; there was less materialism and opposition to spiritual things; spiritual healing was easier because medical care was less advanced and pervasive. In general, the conditions and culture in which the earlier church members lived were more conducive to prayer.

Yet Christ Jesus and his followers had to contend not only with the materialism of Greek and Roman culture but with the religious codes, rituals, and faithlessness of their day. Despite the material resistance to Jesus’ spiritual teachings, they demonstrated that the Christ, Truth, is able to reach the receptive heart in every

age to heal all sorts of challenging conditions. Jesus declared that the Christ, the regenerating power behind his healing works, antedated Abraham, and is with us eternally, overcoming every seeming obstacle to an understanding of man’s spiritual, perfect nature as God’s child.

When a desperate father, describing his son’s long-standing, life-threatening illness and his own lack of faith, begged Jesus for help, it was given. After addressing the atmosphere of unbelief that he was contending with in the case—“O faithless generation”—Jesus immediately healed the boy (see Mark 9:17–27).

The God that Jesus worshiped and proclaimed was ever-present Love, filling all space. It was through divine Love that Jesus healed, demonstrating to all that nothing can ever separate us from this all-encompassing Love. And the Apostle Paul, in a letter to the Christians in Rome, wrote of his firm belief in this: “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38, 39).

What shines through the accounts of the early Christians is their faith and trust in God’s enduring love. It wasn’t that they didn’t encounter hostility or unfavorable conditions, but that when confronted by them they resorted to and rejoiced in God’s all-power, presence, and goodness. (As a friend liked to say, that’s why the book in the Bible where you read the accounts of the early decades of Christianity isn’t called, “The book of the terrible times and the horrible things we suffered”—it’s called *The Acts of the Apostles*, and it’s a book full of healing and grace and revelation.)

The same can be said for the early Christian Scientists. When you read their testimonies of healing in the Christian Science periodicals, dating back to the 1880s, you see that they, too, faced threatening situations of all kinds. And it was through Mary Baker Eddy’s discovery of Christian Science that they understood the power of God and the practicality of spiritual Truth and

Love. Their works proved that Christ, Truth, overcomes whatever would claim to resist divine Love's healing power.

When I first entered the healing practice of Christian Science, I had an experience that brought home the need to keep thought filled with the reality of God's goodness and love and the naturalness of our receptivity to Truth, as well as the need to consciously exclude from my thinking the suggestion that what I was doing was not practical and desirable.

A friend came to visit whose hand had recently been injured in an accident. Up until that point my practice had consisted of a small circle of fellow church members and relatives who'd called for Christian Science treatment from time to time. When my friend described what had happened to her, I wondered momentarily if I should offer my prayers and risk the possibility of derision for having religious convictions. My desire to be a faithful witness to God's love won out. And I found that this is true: "Whatever holds human thought in line with unselfed love, receives directly the divine power" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 192).

Any concern I had about my ability to help my friend no longer seemed relevant. I was conscious only of the ever-presence of God, and of the operation of God's law of good. This was clear evidence to me of the activity of the Christ, forever present in individual consciousness to meet the human need.

My friend accepted my offer to pray. The next few days were a time of joy and confidence in God's power to heal. When it then came time for my friend to leave, she showed me her hand, which had no evidence of any injury. Instead of being anxious about a permanent disability, she was rejoicing in the liberating Truth that had healed her.

While I cannot say that I never again was tempted by self-conscious doubt, I can say that the culture of materialism, the health laws the world accepts as wisdom, and the human conditions that tend to press on us, no longer seem like the solid obstacles to healing that they once did. I am more certain of the fact that God's love and supremacy are unchanging and eternal.

Nothing can separate us from God, as we are one with our Maker, reflecting all of the divine qualities, including health, intelligence, and love. That is all we need to know about our ability to heal today.

In her *Message to The Mother Church for 1902*, Mary Baker Eddy wrote: "Jesus commanded, 'Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead;' in other words, Let the world, popularity, pride, and ease concern you less, and *love thou*. When the full significance of this saying is understood, we shall have better practitioners, and Truth will arise in human thought with healing in its wings, regenerating mankind and fulfilling the apostle's saying: 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death'" (p. 9).

A new view of temptation

By *Susanne Van Eyl*

Many individuals in the Bible have shown generations of readers how to be faithful to God. No matter what happened in these biblical characters' lives or how much they seemed to be in danger, they did not falter in their loyalty and obedience to the one God. They refused to be tempted into wrong behavior or to abandon their convictions despite adverse circumstances or the threat of violence.

For example, Daniel was thrown into a den of lions as punishment for refusing to worship the king rather than God; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were sentenced to death by fire because they held on to their faith in God despite being ordered to bow down to a golden image; and Joseph never wavered in his trust in God no matter how many hardships he had to overcome. Jesus was tempted by the devil but categorically turned down each lure. And Paul and some of Jesus' disciples spent time in prison for their support of the new Christian faith.

Where others may have been tempted to figure out compromising, retaliatory, or extreme ways to deal with situations that threatened their freedom and even their lives, these individuals' trust in God remained firm. And they prevailed in those circumstances.

Even before Jesus taught his disciples what's now called the Lord's Prayer, men and women in the Old Testament of the Bible practiced a concept that is represented by this line of the prayer: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). Despite the threat of drastic consequences, they refused to deviate from the inspired demand to obey God.

The great examples set by these individuals gave me the impression as a child that the temptation mentioned in the Lord's Prayer referred to something dramatically sinful—such as disobeying God or committing a crime. And the spiritual interpretation of this line, "*And God leadeth us not into temptation, but delivereth us from sin, disease, and death,*" given by the Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, cemented this view (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 17).

Since my life wasn't anything nearly as dramatic as those of the ancients in the Bible, I felt I was reasonably free from temptation. When would temptation ever come my way? Well into adulthood I was sure that the answer was never. Then came the day when all that changed.

I had been feeling out of sorts for several days, burdened by circumstances that seemed beyond my control. Then, an acquaintance did something that seemed quite insensitive, and I was furious and offended. Though she knew what was going on in my life, she made demands that made me feel even more burdened. Only one day was affected, but whenever I thought about her actions before and after that day, my feelings of resentment grew.

About a week later, it became obvious to me that this state of mind wasn't helpful, so I began praying. I wanted to overcome the anger and bitterness. I prayed with the Lord's Prayer, going through it slowly line by line, pondering each idea. When I got to the line that addresses temptation, I suddenly heard a clear

voice in my thought: "I didn't tempt you to feel that way!" I stopped for a second, surprised. Was God telling me that all of this had actually been prompted by a temptation?

All of a sudden, feeling offended—and out of sorts—appeared to be a choice! I felt empowered to investigate the deeper issues that were plaguing me. My acquaintance had neither caused those issues nor acted out of ill will. As soon as I realized that I had a choice, I prayed to see the entire matter from a higher, spiritual perspective. This quickly put the anger behind me, and I saw the woman as the friendly person I had known her to be before the incident. Also, the burdened feeling soon disappeared, and life became more normal again.

I realized that God doesn't tempt us to feel like a victim or to get angry at others. Irritation, impatience, or self-righteousness are temptations to act contrary to our God-given nature. Knowing that we don't have to bow down to those temptations gives us power over them. This power or dominion, recognized, can be a quick and effective way to deal with discord.

When we're tempted to act in a way foreign to our true nature as God's child, even if the circumstances or mental arguments seem to justify our actions, we don't have to take the bait. We can recognize God's presence and power and stay obedient to His law of love. We can ask ourselves: Would God show us another response besides anger or being offended if we sought His view? And wouldn't we be sure that His way can bring the situation to a harmonious resolution? The answer to both questions is yes.

Granted, the situation with my friend may seem small in contrast to other types of temptation. But it showed me the need to be alert to every temptation, no matter how insignificant the issue may seem to be. We have all seen examples of when a small disagreement or misunderstanding turned into something bigger or even ended in tragedy. Mary Baker Eddy tells us in *Science and Health*: "You must control evil thoughts in the first instance, or they will control you in the second" (p. 234).

Understanding temptation in a broader sense has been tremendously helpful to me when my first instinct

wasn't to be gracious. The ability to step back from a quick flash of anger or resentment and see the person in front of me—and myself—as God's child has helped defuse some potential conflicts. Mrs. Eddy explains why this is: "Evil thoughts and aims reach no farther and do no more harm than one's belief permits" (*Science and Health*, p. 234).

Being tempted to disobey God, and acting on that temptation, wasn't in the genuine nature of the above-mentioned biblical heroes, and it isn't in ours, either. Like them, we are made in the image and likeness of God, Love. The image of Love can never be resentful because Love can never be anything but loving.

We read in First John: "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him" (3:2, New International Version). I find this verse immensely comforting because it tells us that no matter what, no one will ever be less than God's child.

My resentment of the woman's behavior back then might have destroyed our friendly relationship if I hadn't learned this lesson. I am very grateful for the incident between us because it made me a better person. Gaining a more rounded view of temptation changed my attitude about so many things, and I have gained a much better handle on small annoyances. Seeing them as temptations to engage in unconstructive behavior enables me to move to higher ground where I can ask God to show me how to resolve the issue, and then move on.

Cleansing fog

By Wendy Neubert

I enjoy communing with God during walks. I cherish this time to listen for God's thoughts and to think more

clearly about God, as well as to challenge any negative thoughts I might have.

As I often do, one morning on a walk I listened to the audio version of the week's Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*, which was on "Love." I remembered a Christian Science Daily Lift I had watched online that showed that you can purify muddy water by adding lots of clean, clear water until only the clear water remains. This relates to a line from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy that was in the Lesson, where ungodlike thoughts, or "error," could be thought of as similar to mud: "The way to extract error from mortal mind is to pour in truth through flood-tides of Love" (p. 201).

At that time, I had been mentally rehearsing a problem, leading to great frustration. Suddenly, I noticed a fog that had slowly moved up the hill and was now moving rapidly toward me. In that moment I likened the fog to "the depth, breadth, height, might, majesty, and glory of infinite Love" that our Leader says "fill all space" (*Science and Health*, p. 520).

That fog moved effortlessly past boulders and enormous trees, over the landscape, over the hills, and right over and around me. In that moment I felt an overwhelming impetus to drop my rehearsal of error and to let Love purify and lead me. To be cleansed!

Even though fog often represents the negative concept of an obscured view, in that moment it symbolized to me the strength and power of God effortlessly being everywhere. I could see that the "glory of infinite Love fill[ing] all space" is always *in action*. Observing the fog filling all the space around me inspired me to drop the frustrations and simply turn to God—"Purify me, Father-Mother. I am Yours. I can hear and know only *Your voice of goodness.*"

This all happened in seconds. But it was such a tangible illustration of God's pure love for His child ... and I was tremendously grateful. The heavy mental burden lifted

—and the day went forward filled with a joy-inspired sense of *good*.

INTERLUDE

Every Christian Science Reading Room

By Wendy Giersdorf

A fount,
a garden,
a temple,
a fortress:
The Christian Science Reading Room
is *here*
to help us all
find the Holy Comforter—
quenching,
feeding,
healing,
redeeming!
Its doors are open,
welcoming us again and *again*
to demonstrate
our
God-provided,
sacred,
irreversible
dominion.

Pain gone and free to run

By Barrett Pierce

I find running to be a tremendous opportunity to express my God-given freedom. Last year I was eagerly looking forward to running the Marine Corps Marathon with a friend and his dad. Though we had run it before, we excitedly prepared to experience this great race again, share in the camaraderie, and take in the sights of our nation's capital.

About two weeks before the race, I finished my last long training run and began tapering my workouts. It was at this time that I was suddenly faced with severe abdominal pain. I could barely move, let alone run, and I couldn't eat or stand up straight. I feared I might have appendicitis. Running a marathon now seemed impossible.

Colleagues urged me to get emergency medical care, but I knew I wanted to heal this problem through prayer. I promptly called a Christian Science practitioner, who agreed to give me metaphysical treatment. She assured me that this attack was a false belief, and she helped me daily to know its unreality and gain a sense of my true spiritual identity as God's flawless expression.

During the following days, I experienced three major breakthroughs in thought. The first occurred early on. One night I lay in bed listening to a recording of the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, available on christianscience.com. The replay was at the chapter titled "Fruitage," which contains numerous accounts of people who were healed just by reading the book—sometimes after decades or even a lifetime of affliction. In every case, what brought them healing was a new understanding of their uncontaminated spiritual relationship to God. Listening to these experiences was deeply humbling. I had not a single doubt that healing was possible for me, too.

The second breakthrough came during a conversation with the practitioner. Since my initial phone call, I had been vague with her about what I was dealing with. But *Science and Health* says, “To heal by argument, find the type of the ailment, get its name, and array your mental plea against the physical” (p. 412). I felt led to tell her about my fear that I might have appendicitis. She was unimpressed. She reminded me that since God did not create disease, this was no more real than any other illness. At the end of our call, she said, “Barrett, I know you love God very much, but do you really know how much God loves you?”

Those words broke through the mesmeric belief in sickness. What power could possibly withstand God’s love? I knew right then that God’s omnipotent love for me was present and had been there all along. The pain lessened noticeably, and I was able to walk and eat.

The final breakthrough came just days before the race. At this point my mobility remained limited and I doubted I would be able to run. As I was reading the final section of that week’s Christian Science Bible Lesson, this citation stood out to me: “Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 1:25). This was the assurance I needed that all was well and would be well, so I headed to Washington, DC.

When race day came, I was pain-free and standing in the starting pen with my friend, his dad, and twenty thousand other runners. I didn’t yet know if I’d be able to run more than a few yards, but I was trusting God and letting Him guide me. I felt that my divine Father-Mother was holding my hand, walking me to the starting line, and reassuring me, “You can do this.”

I took a quick jog down the road to loosen up and affirmed that my healing was complete. Those were the first steps I had run in almost two weeks, but I made the decision then that I did not care about the training I had missed or what my finish time would be. Just being able to run was a spiritual victory.

I completed the marathon without the slightest physical complaint. Beyond the finish line, I called the practitioner, my mom, and my fellow Christian

Scientists who had supported me along the way. Tears filled my eyes as I thanked them and thanked God for His love. I knew it was my divine right to be free of illness; and by doing the work—prayerfully claiming this right—I had indeed been blessed in my deed.

Since that day, I have held on to our God-given right to freedom, and I’ve continued to feel God’s care and guidance through three ultramarathons and well over one thousand miles, and I’ve remained in excellent health. There is no false belief, however severe, that cannot be cleared away by God’s perfect law of liberty.

Barrett Pierce
New Bern, North Carolina, US

A holy experience— and healing

By Charles Lindahl

For several years I had struggled with a persistent internal disorder that made walking painful. Although I had prayed with the expectation of healing and had treatment from a Christian Science practitioner on several occasions, there was no change. While the symptoms didn’t hinder my daily activities, one day I knew it was time to give the condition more focused prayer. So, I decided to spend a quiet week alone gaining a better understanding of spiritual reality and my identity as God’s reflection.

I began by reading *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by the Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy. Though it was a book I was quite familiar with, having studied it all my life, I decided to start at the beginning and not move on from a sentence or paragraph until I felt sure I understood its meaning.

After reading and praying for five days, I had covered only 125 pages. Although I felt somewhat uplifted, there was still no improvement in the physical condition.

The following week I attended an annual statewide meeting of representatives of the university system for which I worked and the state's community colleges. For over two years, our university system had been revising its general education requirements. Since this was important to the community colleges, we had consulted their leaders extensively and included them in our deliberations. As a result, they had endorsed the changes and we were in the process of preparing the final proposal for approval by our board of trustees. We expected that this subject would surface at the meeting but that it would not be a problem, since we already had the approval of the community college system.

The main architects and developers of the new policy were my two immediate superiors, but they were unable to attend the meeting. When the first question at the meeting unexpectedly challenged several aspects of the proposal, the person conducting the meeting asked me to respond. As I had played only a supporting role in the development of the new policy, I was not very familiar either with it or with the rationale for key decisions. So, as the microphone was brought to me and I slowly rose to face over three hundred attendees, I had no idea what I should say.

I started by acknowledging it was an important policy and explained the steps taken to involve community colleges in its development. As I finished one sentence, I had no idea what the next sentence would be, but the words came as needed. The next question was on the same subject, and again I had no outline or framework in mind for my remarks, but word by word, sentence by sentence, the ideas came.

By the third or fourth question on the same topic, it became evident that this was a coordinated, aggressive effort to defeat the proposal, which ended up being discussed the entire hour of the meeting. I was surprised at my composure and ability to respond to the questions effectively without resentment, defensiveness, or aggressiveness.

When the meeting ended, I returned to my hotel room, dropped to my knees, and gave thanks to God. I had stood on holy ground and witnessed God's power and presence. God is infinite Mind, and this Mind had fed

me with all I needed to know and say to respond to the attack on the policy. It was as if God had been dictating to me.

I was reminded of God's response to Moses' reaction when told he was to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt: "And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent ... I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth?... Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exodus 4:10-12).

I concluded that my deep study of *Science and Health* the previous week had lifted my consciousness and leavened my thinking to the point that I was receptive to the inspiration and support as it flowed naturally from the one infinite Mind.

At dinner that evening, a friend who worked in the community college system but had not attended the meeting asked, "What in the world did you say to them?" He then said that a group of their representatives unhappy with the proposal had carefully planned the challenge but after the meeting decided to abandon their opposition. The proposal was later approved by our trustees with no opposition.

Months later, I discovered the following statement by Mary Baker Eddy in her *Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*: "Man is God's image and likeness; whatever is possible to God, is possible to man *as God's reflection*. Through the transparency of Science we learn this, and receive it: learn that man can fulfil the Scriptures in every instance; that if he open his mouth it shall be filled—not by reason of the schools, or learning, but by the natural ability, that reflection already has bestowed on him, to give utterance to Truth" (p. 183). This helped me understand what had occurred. I had opened my mouth with no prior sense of what I should say, and it was indeed filled.

Shortly after the meeting, I realized the physical problem had dropped away. The symptoms were gone and I was able to walk again without any discomfort.

Many years later, I am still in awe of this experience, which has bolstered my conviction of God's all-power and ever-presence.

Charles Lindahl
Fullerton, California, US

Recurring back pain healed

By Chris Wye

One weekend a number of years ago, I was in New York City, where I was to address the annual meeting of the Christian Science students' association of which I was a member. (Our Christian Science teacher had passed on a few years before.) For me, this was a very special honor. The addresses at Christian Science associations are meant to uplift and refresh thought and strengthen the spiritual healing practice of those attending, who have each completed Primary class instruction with a Christian Science teacher.

I woke up in my hotel the morning of the address really pumped up and looking forward to the occasion. But as I swung my legs out of bed, a searing pain shot through my back and I collapsed on the floor. I had been having back pain like this sporadically for over a decade and had prayed on and off about it. Although I managed to get up and take a few steps, within a minute or two the spasms returned.

Instantly I saw this for what it was: material resistance to the spiritual truth the address would be affirming and exploring that day. This resistance was coming as the aggressive mental suggestion that God was not omnipresent and omnipotent—an error of belief that was trying to take away from a wonderful occasion.

Over and over again that morning, I held to “the scientific statement of being” given by Mary Baker

Eddy in the Christian Science textbook: “There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all. Spirit is immortal Truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal; matter is the unreal and temporal. Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material; he is spiritual” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 468).

I persisted in holding to these truths. Despite the continued pangs of discomfort, which made walking difficult, I got to the church where I was to speak and was taken to a small room, where I had an opportunity to continue praying for some time before giving the address. At one point, I reached out to God and said, “Father, You know my heart. I am here with a heart full of gratitude to express my love for You and Your children, and to offer ‘a cup of cold water in Christ’s name,’ that it might help anyone in need.”

When it was time for me to speak, I was able to stand up and walk to the podium and deliver the five-hour address in perfect comfort. I never experienced attacks of back pain again.

Chris Wye
Washington, DC, US

Healed after fall from bike

By John Dickson with contributions from Cheri Rigby

I was riding my bicycle, almost home. Just after making the turn onto my street, I started into my driveway, when my front tire went out from under me, the result of an icy patch that I hadn't seen. In the split second before smashing face-first into the cement, I heard a voice inside me say something like, “I'm here,” or “Don't worry.” I can't say for sure; however, it was a comforting thought.

My neighbor, a registered nurse, came running from her house—she told me later that she didn't see what happened, she heard it. After I told her I thought I was OK, she ran back home to get a towel. I got up and started taking the bike into the garage. My neighbor helped me get inside my house, and as I cleaned up, she called my wife. It was time for me to pick her up at work and my neighbor was concerned about me driving. She knew I was a Christian Scientist, and I again told her I was OK.

Driving to my wife's office, I saw myself in the rearview mirror. I looked as if I had just fought 15 rounds with a boxing champion; my face was such a mess. That is the first of many times when I told myself, "I am the flawless image and pure, radiant reflection of Soul." The bleeding had stopped quickly, and there was very little discomfort in spite of the material picture.

My wife's office is two miles from our home, and I did not have any issues driving. I just kept affirming my true spiritual identity as God's idea, not subject to accident. We ate dinner and then went to the Wednesday evening testimony meeting. As we entered the church we were greeted by an usher, and before she could say anything I joked, "You should see the driveway!"

That night in bed I prayed to rest harmoniously, and continued to pray when I would wake up during the night. I affirmed truths along the lines of what Mary Baker Eddy said in one of her writings: "God creates man perfect and eternal in His own image. Hence man is the image, idea, or likeness of perfection—an ideal which cannot fall from its inherent unity with divine Love, from its spotless purity and original perfection" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 262). My wife and I were grateful the next morning when we woke up, having had a good rest.

The next few days I continued to pray by denying the material claim and fears, and affirming the scientific spiritual truth of perfect God, perfect man. I also continued to ride my bike. A few days later I noticed my neighbor's car in her driveway, and I knocked on the door to return her towel (which I had washed). When

she came to the door she said, "John, that could have been so much worse! It had to be divine intervention."

The last scab on my face fell off exactly one week later. That was over two years ago.

I still think about that comforting voice I heard that day right before making impact on the cement. Looking back at this experience, I feel it was God's love and protection that enabled me to remain calm throughout this experience. I am very grateful for Mrs. Eddy's discovery of the universal spiritual laws Jesus practiced, available to everyone at all times.

John Dickson
Providence, Rhode Island, US

I am the neighbor mentioned above, and it is my deepest belief that God's love is available to all, in every circumstance. I have always had a deep respect for the world's religious traditions and knew that John was in good hands, cradled by his deep faith and abiding love. I was simply swept into the current to assist. The experience was a beautiful reminder of what God's love is capable of.

Cheri Rigby, RN
Providence, Rhode Island, US

A better resolution heals blemish

By Tessa Parmenter

One January, I decided to make a New Year's resolution to wash all the makeup off my face before going to bed each night. I was doing pretty well with that, so in March I was annoyed to find what I assumed was a sty on my lower eyelid.

Even though I kept it clean and avoided makeup, it wasn't going away. A few weeks later I was struck by the

thought that it wasn't a sty, but might be a blemish—something I would have to live with.

Even as I began to think this way, a part of me still wanted to *do* something about it. But what? In the past I had found good guidance for all sorts of issues by studying the weekly Bible Lessons from the *Christian Science Quarterly*, but I was feeling bad for not making enough time to study the Lesson that week. I realized that it would be better to make a resolution to study the whole Lesson every week rather than focus on something as trivial as makeup.

Not long after, I was listening to a recording of the Bible Lesson, when I heard this line from the Christian Science textbook: “God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 113). In my study of Christian Science I had heard that “matter is nothing,” but I had never given much thought to “nothing is matter.”

These three little words changed my view of the world. The permanence and “somethingness” of Spirit seemed more real to me than ever. It helped me see that the blemish was without real substance. The urge to rid myself of the growth surgically completely dissolved. I was so immersed in seeing the world from this spiritual perspective that I actually forgot all about my eye.

A few days later I realized that there was nothing to go around when I was applying makeup—the blemish was completely gone.

I was so amazed by this I couldn't help but share my experience with others during a testimony meeting at my church that Wednesday. Later on I was happy to hear that the quote that had meant so much to me was inspiring to our organist and that he was helped by my testimony.

I'm so grateful for the transforming ideas in the Christian Science Bible Lessons.

Tessa Parmenter
South Portland, Maine, US

Sunday School teaching that endures

By Martha Hallaren

A **vivid memory of my** time as a pupil in the Christian Science Sunday School is the love that my Sunday School teachers had for the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, and for the Bible Lessons from the *Christian Science Quarterly*, consisting of citations from those two books. These dedicated teachers introduced me to the teachings and healings of our Way-shower, Christ Jesus. I also learned about many other men and women in the Bible, and gained a familiarity with the books of the Bible. And I learned how *Science and Health* sheds light on the Bible and on Christ Jesus' words and works.

My clearest memory is of the teacher I had when I was in seventh grade. She was a single mom with two children. In spite of her busy schedule, each week she prepared a list of questions relating to that week's Bible Lesson and sent it to the students in her class. We each read the Bible Lesson during the week to prepare for the class discussion on Sunday. This Sunday School class sparked a realization that the weekly Bible Lessons would help meet our individual needs.

For example, our family kept a horse at a stable where my dad and I took riding lessons. When my dad rode him, he was well behaved, but when I began riding him, he often ran away (with me on him) and I sometimes fell off. My riding instructor shared helpful tips and said I needed to let him know who was in charge.

One of the Bible Lessons we talked about in Sunday School at that time included this passage from the book of Genesis: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the

earth” (1:26). I began to see that God had given dominion or authority to me as His image and likeness. In Sunday School we also prayed the Lord’s Prayer each week, which ends with this statement about God: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever” (Matthew 6:13).

Over a few weeks, I became more confident of God’s presence and government as I led the horse to the riding ring each day and rode him. A better understanding of my God-given dominion resulted in a better working relationship with my horse. He stopped running away with me, and I became more aware of God’s love and control when I was riding. This caused me to enjoy horseback riding even more and to see that our activities are a way we give glory to God. I rode the horse several times a week for the next two years, and it was a happy, progressive time.

There were other Christian Science healings during this time, including one after my horse unintentionally stepped on my foot and injured one of my toes. It was painful to take off my riding boot and painful to walk. My parents asked if I would like to call on a Christian Science practitioner to pray for me. It was my first time working with a practitioner, and I was very grateful for his prayers and the resulting quick healing. Today I can’t even tell which toe was injured.

When I turned twenty and graduated from Sunday School, the link between discussing the weekly Bible Lesson in Sunday School and the reading of the same Lesson in church bridged over my transition from Sunday School to church in a natural way. I had already been reading the Bible Lessons regularly, and they had become a loved source of spiritual education, inspiration, and guidance.

After college I moved away from home and joined the Christian Science branch church in my new town. The church members were friendly, and a member who had two college-age daughters very kindly invited me to join their family for lunch after church each Sunday.

Over the years I’ve taught in the Christian Science Sunday School at different times. In this joyous, active work, I pray to know that each child’s needs can be met and their questions answered through the study

of the Scriptures. Each week the Bible Lesson includes stories or passages of interest to students of all ages, including the very youngest. There is often a Bible story that brings out one of the “first lessons” designated by Mrs. Eddy in the *Manual of The Mother Church*—the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and her spiritual interpretation of it, and the Beatitudes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (see pp. 62–63).

I’m grateful for the faithful Sunday School teachers who guided my early study of the Bible and of the Bible Lessons, which introduced me to *Science and Health*. My years in Sunday School showed me how helpful it is to use the truths of Christian Science in my daily life. Because of this I began to go to our church’s Wednesday testimony meetings to hear how others were using Christian Science to meet their needs. Soon I took Primary class instruction from an authorized teacher of Christian Science. For these many blessings, and for the weekly Christian Science Bible Lessons, I am most grateful.

Time can’t box us in

By Ian Forber-Pratt

In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, it can be easy to lose sight of a spiritual perspective. But my recent journey to India for a work trip became a profound healing demonstration of the power of God, Spirit.

My wife and our two young children, ages two and seven, accompanied me. The adventure began with an intense 27-hour journey from our home in St. Louis to just outside of Delhi. The trip included a 10.5-hour time change and left us exhausted and disoriented. We arrived at our destination at midnight and went to bed. Our children woke at 4 a.m. and my wife and I got up to care for them. Feeling overwhelmed, my wife and I quickly lost our tempers and then tried to calm each other down. The prospect of a long day at the office loomed.

The breaking point arrived at 5 a.m., as a pounding headache and frustration enveloped me. But then I remembered the greatest and most powerful tool I have: prayer. (Long ago, my wife and I had agreed that relying on God was our foundation.) So I turned to the spiritual anchor that has guided me through countless challenges, the Christian Science Bible Lesson.

That week, the Lesson was entitled “Substance.” I turned on the audio version of the Lesson and it immediately calmed me. I allowed the words from the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy to permeate my consciousness, washing away the anger and frustration that had taken hold. The citations centered on the ideas of divine Soul and the power of our ability to know right from wrong. I sighed deeply as I welcomed the idea of my true, God-given, perfect spiritual identity.

The Lesson was followed by a recording of one of my favorite hymns, which begins:

From sense to Soul my pathway lies before me,
From mist and shadow into Truth’s clear day;
The dawn of all things real is breaking o’er me,
My heart is singing: I have found the way.
(Violet Hay, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 64, © CSBD)

These words offered a peace that transcended the exhaustion. I was given a powerful reminder that, despite the challenges we were facing, I was striving to glorify God, and my life had a purpose far beyond my immediate concerns.

I felt renewed with a sense of hope and a readiness to accept good. I’ve found that’s sometimes all we need to realize profound healing.

With this newfound perspective, I was able to join my family for breakfast and embark on my day, challenging the conventional limits of time and energy. Visiting our company’s program in an area south of Delhi, I encountered women whose resilience and work for equality brought tears to my eyes. Their strength was a testament to the infinite nature of good, God, and the spiritual identity of each of us. My headache, fatigue, anger, and doubt were all gone and I felt completely

refreshed, so much so that I ran a little over three miles after work!

In the evening everyone in the family gently fell asleep. I was in awe of the profound shift that had taken place.

Reflecting on this whirlwind experience, I am reminded of the limitless nature of our spiritual identity and the substance of good that defines us. The way to calm and clarity truly lies in listening to and heeding the ever-present guidance of divine Love. Through this journey, I was able to better understand that we are not bound by the limitations of time but instead can prove the boundless nature of Spirit.

Holding tight to inspiration

By Robby Butler

I took up an initiative a couple of years ago to be more alert to God’s messages. I started a daily practice of grabbing onto ideas or messages from God that I heard, writing little notes to myself about them, and sticking them in my pocket. These inspired ideas helped keep me consistently grounded.

Later I added to that practice, writing specific gratitude for moments during the day when I knew that I had experienced God’s goodness or had felt His presence. An example could be a well-timed phone call. You know, God’s time is always right. God doesn’t work with hours and minutes. God, as Principle, causes right activity to occur in its proper sequence. And so, when I have a well-timed phone call, I’m thankful to God, and I write my gratitude on my little piece of paper to hold that experience firm. In this way I remember the little evidences of God I see around me all day long.

On December 21 of that year, I was working on selling an apartment I owned, with the closing set for December 24—the day before Christmas. I had a morning filled with inspiration from God, then I proceeded to my very full day.

In the middle of the day, during my only break of the day, I glanced at my email and found a message from the lender saying that there was a major issue that could wreck the transaction. The issue was that the lender needed the city to provide a letter verifying the zoning. These zoning verifications are only written by a specific agency. And the lender had taken the initiative to call the agency but had heard nothing. By emailing me, they were essentially giving up—and telling me about it.

Any one of those elements would sound deflating, but in this context, the situation immediately seemed hopeless. The government isn't known for fast responses; I was unfamiliar with this agency; it was almost Christmas; and the whole transaction was at stake! But while reading the lender's email, I remembered the note I had stuck in my pocket that day. It was crystal clear: "without doubt, without fear," which comes from the words to Hymn 485 by Fenella Bennetts in the *Christian Science Hymnal: Hymns 430–603*.

I looked at that quote and asked myself, "What shall I do about this?" I saw that if there was fear and doubt (and there was), I could discard them and turn to my relationship to God, and trust that "without doubt, without fear." The limited possibilities I felt for success meant nothing to my relationship to God and His government, as His child. I might as well make God the priority and feel fearless and confident in what I knew of Him.

It wasn't a great sign that the lender had said that they called and got no response. But I felt confident that "without doubt" I could also call. So I did, and as I dialed the number, I hopped around on the city government webpage. Then I got an inspired idea—I realized I should consider trying a different number. The first line did not pick up, just as the lender had experienced. The second phone number listed on the website immediately went through. After listening to my explanation of the situation, the person who picked up said this was a big, multi-step request, which would include making a payment and getting a supervisor to review the form. And there was no guarantee for when the letter would be ready.

Over the previous several weeks I had been holding specifically to a line from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy where she writes, "... through Christ's precious love these efforts are crowned with success" (p. 22). I pondered that line while considering what to do.

I was grateful that this person had a pretty good attitude for someone who had just gotten a big request right before Christmas, and after we hung up I said, "Okay, Father, if this is the right way for me to spend my time, I'll do that, and trust the outcome to You." I still had thirty minutes left before my next meeting in which to follow the process, request this letter from the city, receive it, and deliver it to the hands of the lender.

That half an hour proceeded with so much harmony: phone calls going out, coming back, transactions being processed, the clerk confirming payment, etc. Email responses were immediate too, despite the automatic reply that I'd hear from them within ten business days. Right as the thirty-minute window closed and I had to join my next meeting, I received an email with the letter attached, which was sent not only to me but also to the lender, the buyer, and every party involved in the transaction. It had unfolded perfectly!

For other reasons the deal ended up coming together early in the new year. But experiencing such a harmonious outcome in this situation by leaning on God helped me stay inspired as we proceeded to a good conclusion for all.

God's voice of harmony can be heard at all times, and we're blessed when we listen to and obey it. I'm so grateful for those insights that come in prayer to guide us. Listening to and trusting God teaches me about our harmonious lifework in the kingdom of heaven.

Sharing the Comforter

By Gloria Harrison

I was in a hurry to put our new house in order and wanted to go shopping because my husband and I needed comforters for the twin beds in our guest room. As I rushed across my living room, this message came to me: “You’re not praying.” Since I was standing by the sofa, I sat right down and decided to listen for messages from God. While I prayed, this word kept coming to me: *justice*. I was surprised by that, but decided to go shopping with the idea of justice in mind.

When I arrived at a store, a young woman assisted me. I explained I needed two blue comforters, and she took me right over to one. She even opened it all the way up so that I could see the whole thing. It was perfect. The only problem was that there was only one left in the store. She offered to call the manufacturer the next day to see if there was another one.

Just as soon as she had said this, a woman hovering by us came over and said, “No, they don’t have that anymore. You don’t need to make that call.” I assumed this was the young woman’s supervisor.

I walked away but found myself staying at the store a while longer looking at some other items, even though I didn’t need anything else. I was wondering what was keeping me there, when someone behind me said, “There’s no *justice* here.” It was the young girl who had helped me. I prayed to know that justice is here because God is here, and I thought this was a message I could share with her. She said, “My supervisor will not let me do my work here. She interferes.” She added that she would call the manufacturer for me and keep me informed. I thanked her and left the store.

The next morning, I was at home reading the weekly Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* when the phone rang. It was the young employee. She had learned that the manufacturer *did* have another comforter and would send it to the store. I went back to reading, and the next line I read from the Bible was, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter” (John 14:16). I had to laugh!

This employee had been so helpful and persistent that I sincerely wanted to bring her a gift when I picked up my order at the store. It came to me to bring her the true “Comforter,” which I understand to be Christian Science. I had been helped so much by the textbook of Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, that I decided to wrap up a paperback copy of it and give it to her. The young woman happily accepted it.

Several weeks later I was driving by that store and thought I would see how the reading was going. It turned out the young woman hadn’t been able to read it yet because her husband couldn’t put the book down! Something was having an effect, though, because she said, “I have to tell you what happened. Management wants to transfer me to another location. I will be doing a job I was never given the opportunity to do here, that matches my college major.” She was so happy about the upcoming transfer—being able to do what she had been trained to do. I felt this was a beautiful form of justice.

Before you ask

By Whit Larsen

When my relatives and friends were expectant parents, I loved to watch how they prepared places for their precious new babies. With thoughtfulness and love, they picked out the perfect nursery furniture and decor, clothes, and toys. They planned and prepared with joy and expectation. When the little ones arrived, everything they needed was already waiting for them.

Seeing this sweet scenario play out for my little nieces and nephews and friends reminds me of an important spiritual fact: As parents go through all that preparation for their newborns, how much more does our divine Father-Mother God prepare a place for each of us, you and me, because we are His beloved, precious children. Divine Love has prepared a place for each one of us, with everything we will ever need.

In the spiritual account of creation in Genesis, chapter I, God prepares a place for man, both male and female, and supplies all their needs before they ever come on the scene on the sixth day. The days of creation aren't about human time but about divine order, illustrating that God's unfoldment of our right place and supply beforehand is actually continuously happening, and is a universal law.

Christ Jesus taught his followers of that universal law in the Sermon on the Mount when he said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matthew 6:8). Since our Father is Spirit, what is supplied isn't material things, but spiritual ideas, like real substance and health, harmony and joy, and these meet our daily needs. This Christly reassurance is a promise that we already have what we need, not because we've worked to earn it but because of God's nature as Love and as All, and our nature as His reflection.

What's left for us to do is to spiritually conform our thoughts and actions in such a way that we can see the Father-Mother Love bring us each into the place so graciously prepared for us, and to rely faithfully on God for all our needs, reflecting the same joy and expectation Love has for us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Admission of new members

By *Martha R. Moffett*

Dear Members,

We are delighted and grateful to be able to share with you the happy news of the recent admission of new members to The Mother Church from around the world. New members to our worldwide family come from Argentina, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Democratic Republic of the

Congo, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, United Kingdom, and United States of America. Their applications were sent in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Each new member joins in supporting the activities and resources with which The Mother Church embraces the world, and each member is, in turn, embraced in The Mother Church's special love of its members.

Some of these activities and resources include:

our Pastor, the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy;

the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, available in 16 languages;

authorized teachers of Christian Science offering Primary class instruction;

the Christian Science periodicals, including *The Christian Science Journal*, *Christian Science Sentinel*, *The Herald of Christian Science*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*, to which each member of The Mother Church who can afford it has the privilege of subscribing and to which we welcome your contributions of articles and healings; as the *Church Manual* provides, "It shall be the privilege and duty of every member, who can afford it, to subscribe for the periodicals which are the organs of this Church; and it shall be the duty of the Directors to see that these periodicals are ably edited and kept abreast of the times" (Mary Baker Eddy, p. 44);

other resources, such as Christian Science Reading Rooms, youth and church summits, Annual Meeting, and much more.

As always, our sincere gratitude goes out to all members and Christian Science teachers who support the admission of new members through their prayers and by approving and countersigning applications.

Applications for membership are welcome at any time. The next admission of new members will take place on May 30, 2025. Completed applications must be received

by the Office of the Clerk no later than the end of the business day (4:00 p.m. Boston time) on May 28, 2025.

With Christlike love,

Martha R. Moffett,
Clerk of The Mother Church

A new member of the Christian Science Board of Directors

By The Christian Science Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

Having served on the Christian Science Board of Directors since May of 2017, after a career in law and international business, Rich Evans, CSB, has decided, through much prayer, that it is time to rotate off the Board and return full time to the fruitful work of Christian Science practice and teaching. Rich will continue to teach and hold his association in Arizona. He and his wife, Blythe, will live at their residence in Osterville, Massachusetts. All those who have worked with Rich in these recent years can attest to the spiritual gifts he has brought to his work. We are grateful for his devotion to the Cause of Christian Science. His love for the whole human family shines throughout his work, and we know it will continue to shine brightly in the Field.

Rich shares: "I'm deeply blessed by and grateful for the gifts of serving as Manager of the Committees on Publication and on the Christian Science Board of Directors here in Boston. What a privilege it is to witness divine Love continue to reveal the global application and progress of the Science Mary Baker Eddy discovered, founded, and continues to lead through her writings. I am also grateful to have experienced the love for God, Christian Science, and

Church expressed by those who work for this Cause here and throughout the world. God, indeed, is good."

Stepping onto the Board as of January 1, 2025, is Elizabeth (Beth) Schaefer, CSB. Beth grew up and resides in San Antonio, Texas. She graduated from Principia College with a double major in sociology and Spanish. After college, she worked with troubled youth as director of an emergency shelter for teens in crisis. She also set up and managed several group homes for teens. Later, Beth worked as an environmental educator and naturalist. She went on to work for the United States Forest Service as a wilderness ranger, which included patrolling the backcountry and firefighting stints throughout the western US.

Beth began receiving calls from her Sunday School students and their parents for prayerful help and ultimately became a full-time *Journal*-listed Christian Science practitioner in 1999. She became a Christian Science teacher in 2003. Beth has served as a Christian Science lecturer and Second Reader of The Mother Church and written articles for the Christian Science periodicals, including *The Christian Science Monitor*. Beth and her husband, Lamar Smith, have two grown children and two grandchildren, who fill their lives with joy and delight.

We send our deepest thanks to Rich and look forward to welcoming Beth back to Boston!

The Christian Science Board of Directors

New Editor at The Christian Science Monitor

By The Christian Science Board of Directors

The Editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*, Mark Sappenfield, will be stepping back from his role as Editor, having decided to extend his stay in Berlin, Germany, where he and his family have been living

since August 2023. He will continue to work for the *Monitor* in a senior role.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Christa Case Bryant as the next Editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*. Christa brings twenty years of experience as an international bureau chief, political reporter, and editor to her new post and, most important, a deep understanding of the *Monitor*'s mission. Christa will take the reins from Mark in the early part of this year.

We are very grateful for Mark's editorial direction of the *Monitor* over the past eight years and his continuing commitment to the *Monitor*'s work. Mark has reported from the Pentagon to Afghanistan, covering seven Olympic Games and multiple NASA missions. As Editor, he has helped to develop and produce the *Monitor*'s "values projects," including the Respect Project, Finding Resilience, and Rebuilding Trust. He has worked assiduously in pursuit of a deeper journalism that has been the *Monitor*'s hallmark, and to support and develop staff at all stages of their careers.

Christa's love of the *Monitor* and its high standards for journalism is grounded in a broad portfolio of assignments from helping to guide the CSMonitor.com website during the *Monitor*'s transition to a web-first publication to Jerusalem bureau chief to senior Congressional correspondent. While covering Congress, Christa won two major awards for political journalism: the National Press Foundation's Dirksen Award for Distinguished Reporting of Congress in 2022 and the 2023 Sigma Delta Chi Award for Washington Correspondence. She is also an alumna of the Nieman journalism fellowship at Harvard University. Christa will be the 17th Editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*.

We are extremely grateful to Mark and Christa for their dedication to Christian Science and for their many years of service to the *Monitor*. We thank Mark for his work as Editor, and we will welcome Christa in the coming months as the new Editor.

The Christian Science Board of Directors

Rotation on the Board of Trustees and in other positions at The Mother Church

By *The Christian Science Board of Directors*

Dear Friends,

We are writing today to announce a change on the Board of Trustees of The Christian Science Publishing Society as well as some new assignments being taken on by current employees of The Mother Church.

Effective December 31, 2024, T. Michael Fish, CSB, completed his term of dedicated service, and he will now resume his full-time focus on practicing and teaching Christian Science in Virginia.

In Michael's five years as a Trustee, he has been a devoted champion for Mary Baker Eddy's periodicals and all of the hardworking staff who publish them. With a special focus on *The Christian Science Monitor*, he has worked tirelessly and generously to support and encourage writers, editors, and other staff members—including the interns, who hold a special place in his heart. He has set a stellar example of putting first things first, as seen in the sign on his desk that says simply, "God First." We can't thank Michael enough for his loving presence, quiet humility, and devotion to "promoting and extending the religion of Christian Science" (*Deed of Trust Organizing The Christian Science Publishing Society*).

Both the Trustees and the Directors have decided that at this time there is a need of and value to having a Director serving within the Publishing Society. Therefore, Scott Preller, CSB, has stepped away from his role as President of the Board of Education to join in the work of the Trustees, while continuing to serve on the Christian Science Board of Directors.

We are also very happy to let you know that Tom McElroy, CSB, has agreed to serve as the new President

of the Board of Education. Many of you know Tom from his years as a lecturer and as Manager of the Board of Lectureship (BoL). Tom has been an authorized teacher of Christian Science since 2018. Melanie Wahlberg, CS, who has served on the BoL for nine years and has recently been serving as Assistant Manager of the BoL, is taking over for Tom in the role of Manager. All of these changes take effect January 1, 2025.

Please join us in thanking Michael for his dedication and service and welcoming Scott, Tom, and Melanie to their new roles.

Board of Trustees of The Christian Science Publishing Society

The Christian Science Board of Directors

EDITORIAL

No unknowns to God

By Lisa Rennie Sytsma

At the beginning of the year the future can look bright, but it can also feel scary. There are so many unknowns.

The ancient Greeks had a way of dealing with that—they hoped to keep bad things from happening by placating every single one of the many gods they believed ruled human life. Each god got his or her own temple—and in case they accidentally missed one, they built an extra temple to “the unknown god.” When the Apostle Paul saw this temple, he decided to help them out. He announced: “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:23).

The God Paul described to the people of Athens was neither one of many nor unknowable. Paul explained what the Bible teaches: There is only one God, and He is the only cause and creator. Paul assured the Athenians that they had no need to fear the unknown because God cares for all of us, His precious children. “For in him we

live, and move, and have our being; ... For we are also his offspring,” Paul said (Acts 17:28).

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy defines *unknown* in part as “that which spiritual sense alone comprehends, and which is unknown to the material senses” (p. 596). Material sense does not know God or His creation. But the good news is that we each have an innate spiritual sense. This spiritual sense, *Science and Health* explains, “is a conscious, constant capacity to understand God” (p. 209).

Each one of us, as God’s beloved child, is able to know and understand God, because He built us that way. We learn from the Bible that we are His image and likeness, His spiritual reflection. The Bible also tells us that God, Spirit, is “of purer eyes than to behold evil” (Habakkuk 1:13). As God’s reflection, we know what God knows, so in reality we also can know only good.

Few feel that they know only good, however. Everywhere we look we see reports of lack, loss, war, conflict, disease, sin. It can seem as though evil is better known than good. But as we learn to silence the material senses and their report of discord, we can hear Christ—the spiritual idea of Truth that is voicing God’s eternal good to us every moment. Christ fills our consciousness with the assurance that God truly is the only creator and that, therefore, only that which He created is real.

The material senses, unable to comprehend what God knows, cannot give us any useful information. The sin, sickness, conflict, lack, that they report cannot be God-created. Therefore, they can exist only as a suggestion that there is something outside of God’s control, something He did not create. This suggestion is purely mesmeric, a lie presenting itself hypnotically as fact. We handle any form of mesmerism or hypnotism by replacing it with what’s true. Because God is Truth, no matter what situation we’re facing, we can turn to God and His intelligent control of creation for help and answers.

Experience tells us that until we reach the point where we are constantly conscious only of the presence of God and His perfect, spiritual creation and nothing else, we will continue to be confronted with suggestions of evil. But Jesus, our Way-shower, demonstrated that those

suggestions cannot stop our progress or inhibit in any way our ability to do good, be good, or feel good. And he showed that we always have God-given dominion over those suggestions.

The way to prepare to overcome challenges quickly and confidently isn't to worry what might be "out there" waiting to get us. That frame of mind denies God's ever-present power and dominion. But as we silence material sense and strive to draw closer to God, Spirit, moment by moment, conforming our thoughts and actions to His spiritual law of good alone, we increasingly see that we don't need to fear the unknown because we see His control and His goodness made manifest in our lives.

I was once faced with a decision I felt incapable of making. There were too many unknowns. I turned to God in prayer, hoping to get a sense of what decision would bring about the best future. But then I realized that, really, there was only one possible future—a future filled with God, Love, and His goodness and my ability and opportunity to demonstrate this. My motive was to do and to serve His will. I felt confident that even if, humanly, it seemed I had made the wrong decision, I couldn't be lost spiritually or disadvantage another of God's children. And the experience itself would be a blessing to me and, I was sure, to others as well. I was grateful, but not surprised, when that did turn out to be the result of the decision I made.

As the definition of *unknown* in *Science and Health* continues, "Paganism and agnosticism may define Deity as 'the great unknowable;' but Christian Science brings God much nearer to man, and makes Him better known as the All-in-all, forever near" (p. 596). The ancient Greeks feared and worshiped the unknown. We are free to love, worship, and, importantly, know the All-in-all. God, Love, holds us forever within His embrace. A future embraced by Love is a future we can all welcome!

Lisa Rennie Sytsma
Associate Editor

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL

PUBLISHED BY THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY

EDITOR

ETHEL A. BAKER

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

TONY LOBL, LARISSA SNOREK, LISA RENNIE SYTSMA

MANAGING EDITOR

SUSAN STARK

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

GRAHAM THATCHER, KARINA BUMATAY

CONTENT & YOUTH

JENNY SAWYER

COPY EDITOR

AARON BINGHAM

STAFF EDITORS

NANCY HUMPHREY CASE, SUSAN KERR, NANCY MULLEN, TESSA PARMENTER, CHERYL RANSON, ROYA SABRI, HEIDI KLEINSMITH SALTER, JULIA SCHUCK, JENNY SINATRA, SUZANNE SMEDLEY, LIZ BUTTERFIELD WALLINGFORD

AUDIO PRODUCTION

AMANDA KAMAU, CARLOS A. MACHADO

PRINT & WEB PRODUCTION

SAL GILIBERTO, GILLIAN A. LITCHFIELD, MATTHEW MCLEOD-WARRICK

DESIGN

EMILY SWANSON

CONTACT US

- ON THE WEB: JSH-ONLINE.COM
- MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSIONS & WRITING GUIDE REQUESTS: JSHWRITE@CSPS.COM
- SINGLE COPIES: THE *JOURNAL* IS SOLD AT CHRISTIAN SCIENCE READING ROOMS WORLDWIDE. TO FIND A READING ROOM VISIT [HTTP://JOURNAL.CHRISTIANSOURCE.COM/DIRECTORY](http://JOURNAL.CHRISTIANSOURCE.COM/DIRECTORY) OR USE THE DIRECTORY IN THE BACK OF THE *JOURNAL*. YOU CAN ALSO CHECK YOUR LOCAL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY UNDER "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE."
- SUBSCRIPTIONS AND RENEWALS: TO SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW A *JSH-ONLINE* SUBSCRIPTION VISIT JSH-ONLINE.COM. FOR PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS GO TO CSSUBSCRIBERS.COM OR CALL THE CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT AT 888-424-2535 WEEKDAYS BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND 5 P.M. EASTERN TIME.

MAGAZINE PROMOTIONAL AND REPRINT INFORMATION:

ANY FULL PAGES OR DOUBLE-PAGE SPREADS IN THIS ISSUE MAY BE REPRODUCED UP TO 100 COPIES OR ENLARGED ON PAPER (E.G., FOR WINDOW DISPLAYS, EVENT BOOTHS, ETC.) TO PROMOTE THE SALE OF THIS MAGAZINE. FULL-PAGE IMAGES MAY BE USED ONLY WITH THE ACCOMPANYING PAGE OF WRITTEN CONTENT AS IT APPEARS IN THE MAGAZINE. ALL CREDITS MUST BE PRESERVED. FOR ALL OTHER USES, INCLUDING INTERNET, OR COPIES IN EXCESS OF 100, E-MAIL: COPYRIGHT@CSPS.COM. FAX: 617-450-2031. OR, WRITE TO: PERMISSIONS, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY, 210 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, P02-15, BOSTON, MA US 02115.

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL (ISSN 0009-5613). PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY, 210 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, P02-25, BOSTON, MA 02115 US, AN ACTIVITY OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, IN BOSTON, MA [PRINTED IN US]. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. THE DESIGN OF THE CROSS AND CROWN SEAL IS A TRADEMARK OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND IS USED BY PERMISSION. THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL IS A TRADEMARK OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY. BOTH ARE REGISTERED IN THE US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES. CANADIAN GST REGISTRATION NUMBER – 126916436. CPM NUMBER – 40030806. © 2024 THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL, CUSTOMER SERVICE, PO BOX 6082, HARLAN, IA 51593-1582 US, OR MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT ONLINE AT WWW.CSSUBSCRIBERS.COM.