



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

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Welcome - February 2025

By Lisa Rennie Sytsma

Dear Friend,

February isn't the only time of year we think about love, though Valentine's Day tends to bring the subject into sharp focus. But wherever the day is celebrated, how often is the focus of that celebration the actual source of real love, which is God, Love? Yet the First Epistle of John tells us that *God is Love*, and reminds us that "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (4:16). In reality we do dwell in God, Love, embraced in His love, "cared for, watched over, beloved and protected," as Hymn 278 (P.M.) in the *Christian Science Hymnal* points out. Deep within our hearts, we can often feel that love, at least for a moment, if we look for it.

But to develop the spiritual sense that knows and feels that love and its power all of the time takes commitment, perseverance, and a willingness to change the way we think to a more Godlike basis. A personal, limited sense of love—or a lack of love—seems so prevalent that we need help both in knowing what God's love truly is and in understanding exactly how to change our thinking to increasingly reflect that love. In the pages of this issue, authors and testifiers share how the Bible—especially Jesus' teachings—seen in the light of Christian Science, helped them and can help us too. Join us in exploring these ideas more deeply!

Lisa Rennie Sytsma, Associate Editor

LETTERS

Readers respond

By Margaret Lewis, Avi Sabavala, Heather Bauer, Arthur Colyar, Linda Vara

Don Feldheim, "Steps we can take for church prosperity," *Journal*, November 2024

I so appreciated the steps the author outlines as Jesus' example for us to follow to assure church prosperity. The idea of getting out of our comfort zone—i.e., not being confined to our own village; sharing the good news about God's kingdom; healing wherever people gather; teaching in synagogues (Sunday School in our churches)—reminded me that we are continuing to advance church and that we all have a duty to follow Jesus' example.

Margaret Lewis

Madison, Wisconsin, US

Gretchen Newby, "Traveling with the 'Daily Prayer,'" *Journal*, November 2024

The articles in this issue were a reminder that my gratitude for the timely and insightful articles in the publications is overdue. The above article really resonated with me. In my many travels I have been led to pack prayer, including Mrs. Eddy's "Daily Prayer" (*Church Manual*, p. 41), which has led to a harmonious and enjoyable journey no matter where I am or whether I'm solo or with people. I loved the thought of "right-seeing" so beautifully brought out. Thank you to Gretchen and to all of you who work to bring out these inspiring publications.

Avi Sabavala

Baroda, India

Karen Daugherty, "Maximizing the potential of our Bible Lessons," *Journal*, November 2024

What a wonderful, wonderful article. So very helpful! I am using the beautiful "Joshua at Jericho" idea of having six days of daily study to see the nothingness of matter,

and then the wonderful healing service of Church as the seventh day of rest, in understanding that God is All-in-all and the only good. I will remember this always.

Heather Bauer
Suwanee, Georgia, US

Ethel A. Baker, “Grateful to know God,”
Journal, November 2024

I am so grateful we have the Thanksgiving service each year, as well as the Thanksgiving Bible Lesson. This is a perfect time to express our gratitude to God for all our blessings.

Arthur Colyar
Las Vegas, Nevada, US

Karen Neff, “A divine afflatus brings a new view of church,”
Journal, October 2024

This is such a powerful view of Church, a view for everyone to embrace. So clear, so inspiring. I love the enlarged sense of Church, so inclusive and universal. Thank you!

Linda Vara
Las Vegas, Nevada, US

FEATURE

The double beatitude

By Carol Coykendall Caspary Raner

My mouth was dry. A shiver ran up my backbone. I was frightened. Seated at a meeting in a local restaurant with fellow retired teachers, I waited for my turn as we went around introducing ourselves and saying what we’re doing now that we’re retired. Then I announced, for the first time to any group, that I am a Christian Science practitioner. I was surprised at how afraid I was to speak up. It took much courage to rally myself to say

this out loud in front of so many people—but how great it felt afterward.

What motivated me to speak up? I had been considering what I call the “double beatitude” from Christ Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:10–12).

Jesus repeats the blessing to remind us that part of being a true follower of Christ is not only being a peacemaker and pure in heart, but also claiming our Christianity —“owning it” in front of others—and this was my first time to do so.

Following the luncheon, I went to my branch Church of Christ, Scientist. As a member of the church’s grounds committee, I put on my garden gloves and began pulling weeds. There were lots! After several hours, I went home.

In the middle of the night, I woke up with severe pain in my shoulder and upper arm, the same arm I had used to pull the weeds. I was tired and wanted to go back to sleep and deal with the sore shoulder in the morning.

But then I stopped myself. I thought about how that very day I had said, in front of all those retired teachers, that I am a Christian Science practitioner. If someone called me in the middle of the night with a painful shoulder, wouldn’t I pray for them? Of course I would!

How? I knew the truths Christ Jesus gave to all in the Sermon on the Mount were present with me, right then and there. Mary Baker Eddy writes in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: “Christ is the true idea voicing good, the divine message from God to men speaking to the human consciousness” (p. 332). There was no struggle to hear the divine message. And there wasn’t any authority, truth, or reality in a depiction of me as a suffering mortal. The truth that God, divine Love, loves me and I love God was ever present, naturally casting

out whatever was wrong in my thinking and replacing it with Love's comforting message.

Wasn't this pain a form of persecution to a Christian who was proclaiming she was a follower of Christ Jesus for righteousness' sake? The persecution didn't come from a person, but from a view of myself as material rather than spiritual. The beatitude states, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." I knew right then that I could expect relief because I was already in the kingdom of heaven, where no pain can be.

As I sat up and prayed, I knew I was not going to go any further until this intruder, this belief of pain, was dismissed from my thinking. I began to reason this way: The activity I had been performing that afternoon, removing weeds from our church's garden, required strength, endurance, and tenacity. I was working in the church garden out of my love for the church. These qualities of strength, endurance, tenacity, and love are all qualities of God, Spirit. And I could not experience harm for expressing Spirit's good qualities.

My night-light reminded me that Jesus' promise was present—that the kingdom of heaven truly was at hand! No matter how small the light, darkness disappears before it. And the darkness of error in thought, manifesting itself as pain in a shoulder, disappears before the light of God, divine Truth.

Science and Health says: "Whatever it is your duty to do, you can do without harm to yourself" (p. 385). And: "Mortal mind is the worst foe of the body, while divine Mind is its best friend" (p. 176).

The foe, mortal mind, or a physical view of myself and the world, was lying to me, claiming that even though it was good and right to share with others that I am a Christian Science practitioner, and even though it was good and right that I put loving effort into our church's garden with God-bestowed spiritual qualities, I could still be wronged and afflicted with physical suffering.

Sitting in those early morning hours, I was awake to this lie. I was so grateful to be a student of Christian Science, to wake up to the fact that all I needed to do was adhere to my best friend, divine Mind, and obey and agree with its simple truths. That gratitude lifted

my thought. Humility enveloped me as I knew that God was governing me and this situation completely.

The pain was suddenly no longer there. I was indeed blessed by the healing message of the Christ, Truth. Instead of allowing myself to be reviled, persecuted, and taken in by the false belief that I was a mortal with an injured arm, I was free! I went back to sleep, and when I awoke in the morning I was still free of pain, and I have remained so.

As the last verse of the double beatitude says: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." I continue to rejoice as a faithful follower of Christ.

INTERVIEW

The Mary Baker Eddy Library: A Q&A with our readers

Since its opening in 2002 in Boston's bustling Back Bay neighborhood, The Mary Baker Eddy Library has been hosting visitors from around the world. After a tour of the Library, one woman commented, "I honestly had never heard of Mary Baker Eddy and came away from the Library blown away. I'm not a very religious person but I do respect and appreciate all that she did."

An American religious leader widely known to have discovered Christian Science, Mrs. Eddy (1821–1910) taught that the healing ministry of Christ Jesus was based on a divine Principle that is practical today. She was a lifelong Bible student, author of Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures (which this year marks its 150th in print), and Founder of The Church of Christ, Scientist, with branches around the world. Among the publications she established are The Christian Science Journal, Christian Science Sentinel, and The Herald of Christian Science, as

well as The Christian Science Monitor, a respected global news source.

While many of our readers know who Mrs. Eddy was, few know much about the Library that is her namesake. This month we invited readers to send in their questions about the Library, which its staff graciously offered to answer in writing.

Are all parts of the Library open to the general public?

The Library welcomes everyone—from Church employees to students of Christian Science in the Field to members of the public—to visit the Research Room or ask historical questions by email, phone, or letter. Due to privacy considerations, some materials are only available to employees with a work-related need to see them. However, the vast majority of the collections is available to all, and the entire staff strives to promote a greater understanding of Christian Science history by providing access to as much of the collections as possible.

Who uses the resources in the Library?

People and organizations from many different backgrounds. Academic and other researchers whose work touches on the collections contact the staff in order to learn more about a wide range of topics relating to Eddy and Christian Science. Fellowships are available to researchers—both Christian Scientists and those unaffiliated with the church—who wish to pursue more in-depth exploration, and many of them publish their research.

What connection does the Library have with The Mother Church (The First Church of Christ, Scientist) in Boston?

The Mary Baker Eddy Library is a department of The Mother Church. Its archive documents the history of the movement from the discovery of Christian Science up to the present day. The Library records the individual and collective stories of Christian Scientists across the decades, from its namesake to present-day adherents. It charts their persistence, courage,

resourcefulness, and commitment to relieve suffering and bless humanity.

How does the Library integrate with the activities of The Mother Church?

As a department, the Library supports historical content development, facilitates the review of certain public products and publications, and answers historical questions from other departments. Meanwhile, its archivists and records managers are responsible for collecting and caring for documents relating to Christian Science history, including the business records of the church. It has both a public-facing and a church organization-serving mission.

The Library staff is made up of five small teams with specific assignments:

- Communications:** Engagement with all audiences, including outreach, newsletters, website content, social media, copyright and other legal matters, events, and general information.

- The Mary Baker Eddy Papers:** Online access to Eddy's previously unpublished works, including sermons, manuscripts, and her outgoing and incoming correspondence (see mbepapers.org).

- Programs:** Mission-related events, workshops, discussions, and other activities for adult and youth audiences.

- Research and Reference Services:** Activities related to researching the collections, including facilitating on-site access in the Research Room, answering questions related to the collections, and coordinating the fellowship program.

- Records Management and Special Collections:** Management and care of the collections, including The Mary Baker Eddy Collection and the organizational archives and business records of The First Church of Christ, Scientist.

How does the Library support the healing mission of Christian Science?

The Library strives to be a trusted and authoritative resource for accurate information about Eddy and the history of the church. For example, we answer many questions about the authenticity of documents attributed to her, in line with several provisions in the *Church Manual*, the governing document of The Mother Church (see Mary Baker Eddy, Art. VIII, Sect. 10, “No Adulterating Christian Science,” p. 43; Art. VIII, Sect. 11, “No Incorrect Literature,” pp. 43–44; Art. XXII, Sect. 6, “Reading and Attesting Letters,” p. 66).

The Library supports *Manual*-based activities of The Christian Science Publishing Society, the Christian Science Board of Lectureship, and the Christian Science Committee on Publication, by fact-checking articles, book and lecture manuscripts, and announcements. Its research, exhibits, and programs provide extensive evidence of “the facts pertaining to the life of the Pastor Emeritus” (*Manual*, Art. XXXI, Sect. 2, “Duty of Lecturers,” p. 93) and contribute to correcting “in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church...” (*Manual*, Art. XXXIII, Sect. 2, “Duties,” p. 97).

The Library is mindful that it comes under the same mandate as all Church members and activities: “God requires wisdom, economy, and brotherly love to characterize all the proceedings of the members of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist” (*Manual*, Art. XXIV, Sect. 5, “God’s Requirement,” p. 77).

In addition, people can become acquainted with Eddy’s life, work, and ideas, and the history of the Christian Science movement, through the Library’s posting of online articles and podcasts, and its in-person activities for youth and adults.

Encouraging an honest understanding of Eddy’s life purpose, Library resources help members fulfill their duty to God, their Leader, and mankind (see *Manual*, Art. VIII, Sect. 6, “Alertness to Duty,” p. 42). In one sense, the Library is a living biography of Eddy and the continuing relevance of her ideas.

How many research requests does the Library get from journalists or scholars in the course of a year? On what subjects do you get the most questions?

The Library receives more than 1,500 requests each year. Twenty or thirty of these come from professional journalists and scholars. The rest come from the general public and Christian Scientists, with several hundred from other Church departments. Common queries include: requests to authenticate or verify quotations and experiences attributed to Eddy or the church; questions about her life and the history of Christian Science; questions about her writings and her use of language and punctuation; and requests for historical and biographical information on church members.

How is the Library viewed by the academic world in Boston and beyond?

The Library is developing a solid reputation in Boston’s academic circles. One feature of this is the willingness of local academics—many who are leaders in their fields—to participate in Library programming. Among them are faculty from Harvard Divinity School, Boston University School of Theology, Boston University’s history department, Tufts University’s history and religion departments, and Boston College’s history department, among others.

The Library’s fellowship program has attracted local academics from many Boston-area institutions to conduct research in its collections, for book and article projects and other initiatives.

The Library’s reach has extended across several continents, as well as to colleges, universities, and other institutions throughout the United States. Programming has engaged with noteworthy scholars and academics in Great Britain, Germany, the Russian Federation, Australia, and several African countries, including Kenya.

How does the Library decide how much access to give outside authors and researchers?

Visitors can obtain access to all open materials. These have been reviewed by Library staff and other departments, based on best practices for libraries and

archives. The condition of the material must be sound, so that handling will not cause it any additional harm. Delicate items may be available digitally, through the computers in the Research Room. Staff members also consider privacy concerns. For example, most available material is over fifty years old and does not make reference to living individuals.

What sort of information is available on the Library's website? Do you have organized content on particular topics that can be viewed in one place? Is anything translated into other languages?

Mbelibrary.org, the English-language website, contains research and educational content that is available to all. There is also robust Library content available on websites in French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, with selected new articles and other resources added frequently.

The website has various sections, including one on Eddy that contains biographical information about her, descriptions of her writings, and summaries of biographies about her. Of particular note is the 80-page annotated chronology of Eddy's life, which can be accessed in the "Deep read" section.

Also of note is the "Exhibits" section, which features recent Library offerings, including both on-site exhibits and the newest online presentations. This year you can view "Celebrating 100 years of Christian Scientists in military chaplaincy," which gathers together documents, photographs, and objects demonstrating the impact that Christian Science military chaplains have had in serving the United States armed forces and their church over more than a century.

The website also features the monthly podcast Seekers and Scholars. Inspired by Eddy's love of the seeker and her admiration for the discipline and integrity of thought that inform the best in scholarship, the podcast explores how her ideas, life, and legacy have influenced the world in myriad fields and pursuits. Episodes often look at how the Library collections are contributing to new and trailblazing scholarship on Eddy and the history of Christian Science. With one hundred episodes as of March 2025—and many more

planned—there is no shortage of topics for continued exploration relevant to Eddy's impact in fields such as religion, health care, culture, the arts, business, politics, and journalism.

I have seen a letter purported to be written by Mrs. Eddy and want to know whether it is genuine. How do I find out?

First, check out "Authentications" on the website, which can be found under the "Research" tab—or search the site for one of the phrases from the letter, using the keyword search function. Your question may have already been asked and turned into an "Ask a researcher" article. If you don't find it there, you can either fill out the form in the "Questions" section or email the staff at research@mbelibrary.org.

Are there nuggets regarding the practice of Christian Science that Library researchers come upon and could be shared more widely?

In publishing items from The Mary Baker Eddy Collection at mbepapers.org, staff members often come across interesting gems of insight from her correspondence. The Papers website is available for anyone to explore these on their own, and the team highlights some of them in a quarterly email newsletter, in monthly "From the Papers" articles, and in social media posts on Facebook and Instagram. Some of these will also appear in the pages of the *Journal* from time to time.

How can early reminiscences of those who knew and worked with Mrs. Eddy be more widely shared with the Field?

Edited and excerpted reminiscences are widely available through publications of The Christian Science Publishing Society, such as the two-book series *We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*. In addition, the Library holds a rich collection of reminiscences that are available for patrons to read on-site in Boston. Some of these are also available electronically for a small fee. There is a finding aid for these reminiscences in the "Finding aids" section on the Library's website. Researchers often cite these documents in website articles.

Mrs. Eddy had to deal with many critics in her time. Some of them practiced methods of what they claimed to be “mind healing,” and many plagiarized *Science and Health*. Does the Library still come across these?

In publishing documents from the Mary Baker Eddy Papers, the Library has noted that a good amount of Eddy’s correspondence involved her efforts to ensure that those interested in Christian Science were able to access its genuine teachings. She was continually receiving questions and concerns from her students, and finding ways to respond. Some of the solutions the Papers team has noted include the founding of the *Journal* and the establishment of the Massachusetts Metaphysical College.

Website articles and brief reviews of biographies on Eddy examine a variety of approaches to her life and work. Some of these approaches are largely accurate; others are inaccurate portrayals.

Today, there are a number of websites offering documents and interpretations related to Eddy’s life and teachings, as well as to writings attributed to prominent Christian Scientists. Feel free to contact the Library for background and authentication information on these materials.

What is the difference between the Library’s archival collection and that of Longyear Museum in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts?

Eddy and the history of Christian Science are at the heart of both collections. Longyear is an independent historical museum, primarily focusing on the 19th and early 20th centuries, whereas the Library documents the history of the Christian Science movement up to the present day. Some overlap does exist in the materials the two organizations hold. But their collections are complementary; each holds correspondence, reminiscences, and other items that the other does not.

One specific difference is that Longyear’s collection includes eight historic houses where Eddy lived at different times, as well as related art and artifacts. On

the other hand, the Library holds the bulk of Eddy’s papers and correspondence.

What are some key takeaways you would like the public to have from a visit to the Library?

We’d like visitors—in person or online—to come away with the sense that our collections have addressed their questions or concerns and satisfied their curiosity—and perhaps encouraged them to look more deeply into Christian Science. Mary Baker Eddy and the history of the Christian Science movement are topics that touch many areas of experience: Christianity and the sciences; spiritual healing and medicine; women in religious leadership; grassroots and lay-led renewal movements in Christianity; innovations in journalism; practical theology, and more. It’s vitalizing to learn that what really matters are ideas that can be put into practice to bless people.

ARTICLES

Beginning with God

By Andrea Jenks McCormick

“Popular theology makes God tributary to man, coming at human call; whereas the reverse is true in Science. Men must approach God reverently, doing their own work in obedience to divine law, if they would fulfil the intended harmony of being.”

Those words from *Unity of Good* (p. 13) by the Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, caused me to ask myself if I too was calling on God to know about my problems and help me fix them. Christian Science teaches that we must first approach God reverently. This points our thought in the right direction, to an understanding of the true nature of God and man, which is what enabled Christ Jesus to heal. We must reach out to God with the desire to understand and honor Him, not to get Him to be aware of false mortal beliefs of life in matter.

We tend to assume that if God doesn't know about our problems, He can't solve them. But consider the principle of mathematics. It doesn't know anything of the problems we solve with math. The principle or law, when correctly understood and applied, brings about the intended results. Mathematics does not work more effectively if it first knows the nature of the mistakes being made. It is never influenced by outside forces, opinions, or circumstances. Principle is eternal, immutable, and unerring.

Just so, we learn in Christian Science that God, as divine Principle, can be aware of only His perfection. He is "the great I am; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all substance; intelligence" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 587). So the only creation that exists is God's creation, whose highest ideas are His sons and daughters, made in His image and likeness, as stated in the first chapter of Genesis.

God is All-in-all, and God is Spirit. Since He is wholly good, and all that He creates reflects His goodness, one must conclude that God did not create evil and knows nothing of it. And since He is Spirit, all that He creates is spiritual. He did not create matter. This means evil and matter must be errors—false beliefs in something besides God, good.

So what is the work we are to do in obedience to God's law, to which Mrs. Eddy refers? Is it not that we are to rise up and out of the belief of life in matter, of so-called human existence, to the consciousness of God, the one Mind, rather than asking Him to come down to the level of a false, mortal consciousness?

The statement quoted earlier says we are to "approach God reverently." To me, this means we must recognize God as Spirit, the only Mind, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, as well as the eternal fact that we are His perfect ideas. If God, Spirit, knows nothing of evil or of a material creation, then neither can we.

We look to the Master, Christ Jesus, as our healing Exemplar. After three years of demonstrating his oneness with God and healing every manner of sickness and sin, he didn't say, "The show's over!" and leave us

to marvel at his works that would be no more. Quite the opposite. He promised us that we could and would do the same works: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12).

To demonstrate Jesus' promise of our healing ability, we must first be willing, as he was, to claim our oneness with God and exchange the material sense of things for the spiritual. Jesus said, "The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:29, 30). That is our part in our covenant with God. God's part is already fulfilled. He has made us in His image and likeness and has given man dominion over all things. For that dominion to be realized, we have to fulfill our part of the covenant by obeying His laws.

Christian Science teaches that man must be reconciled to God, not God to man. *Unity of Good* explains: "Christ cannot come to mortal and material sense, which sees not God. This false sense of substance must yield to His eternal presence, and so dissolve. Rising above the false, to the true evidence of Life, is the resurrection that takes hold of eternal Truth" (Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 60–61).

We spend much time focusing on challenges with our bodies, our relationships, our supply, etc. We analyze, agonize over, and keep track of how long they've been around. We tell others about them and let others tell us what they think about them, and then we try to apply Christian Science to heal them. That is trying to reconcile God to a material sense of man, asking God to come into the dream of life in matter and fix the dream. A dream doesn't need fixing—it's not real. Rather, we want to let the voice of God, Truth, awaken us to the fact that we are already well and have all we need, because God made everything, and He made it wholly good, like Himself.

To lift our head above the mist of material sense, to awaken from the dream, is to see the solution—the truth of being—rather than the problem. Many times I unsuccessfully asked God to come into my dream of life in matter and solve my problems, until I learned that I must lift my consciousness out of the belief in a matter-

based existence, and up to the spiritual reality that God, Spirit, is All-in-all.

Years ago, I had to demonstrate this important concept of reconciling my thoughts to God when my husband didn't show up the night before we were to move back to the United States from Hong Kong. He was devastated that a job he loved had ended, and from his point of view, nothing could compare to what he had just lost. We had no jobs and no home. So, to use an Australian term, it seemed he had gone "walkabout." Feeling overwhelmed, he went out for a walk and said he'd be home by 10:00 p.m. But at 3:00 a.m. he had not returned, and we were supposed to catch a plane in a matter of hours.

I wanted God to fix my husband, who seemed to be abandoning me, and to fix me and all the anxieties and fears I felt. That didn't work! So instead of starting my prayer from the standpoint of a missing husband and a frightened wife, I decided to start with God and His perfection. I remember gaining an immediate sense of peace with the realization that one of those scenarios was false, material evidence, and the other was the eternal truth of being—God's omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence.

I reasoned that if God is all-knowing, then my husband couldn't be hiding or escaping from God's perfect knowledge of him. If God is ever present, then my husband could feel God's presence, comfort, and love right where he was. And if God is all-power, then no fear, anxiety, or uncertainty could overwhelm either of us.

In half an hour he arrived home with a smile on his face. He had indeed heard God and was now assured that not only would he be fine, but he had been given explicit instructions on something very special that he was to do. He looked like a new man. And he obeyed God's guidance, which led us both to whole new careers, working together for the next 15 years.

I had learned that "Christ cannot come to mortal and material sense, which sees not God." Rather, it was my duty to rise up and out of the belief of any life in matter, separate from God. When I did, I was able to prove that

the truth of perfect God and perfect man is a present and eternal reality.

The Bible Lesson and healing

By *Mary Bothwell*

A few years ago, in a conversation with other Christian Scientists, it seemed appropriate to mention that Mary Baker Eddy, the Founder of Christian Science, wrote that "the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends" on the Bible Lessons found in the *Christian Science Quarterly* (*Church Manual*, p. 31). The conversation paused momentarily. One woman expressed surprise and then said, "Since I want Christian Science to continue, I guess I'd better be more dedicated to studying the Bible Lesson." This had been my response when I discovered that passage years earlier. It caused me to reinvigorate my daily study of the Bible Lesson. The importance of the Bible Lessons to Christian Science is far broader than a daily activity for my own spiritual education. It's broader than preparation for participating in Sunday services as a Sunday School teacher, Reader, musician, or congregant.

The Christian Science Bible Lesson is made up of passages from the Bible and correlated passages from the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mrs. Eddy. It includes accounts from the lives of the patriarchs and prophets in the Old Testament and examples of Christ Jesus' teaching and healing in the New Testament. The passages from the textbook include some aspect of the theology of Christian Science and show how the spiritual laws underlying the Bible teachings can be applied in healing, as Christ Jesus taught.

Something that prospers is something that is strong and thrives. So, in the previously quoted By-Law in the *Church Manual*, Mrs. Eddy is telling us that the Christian Science Bible Lessons undergird the strength

and growth of Christian Science. Healing is an essential aspect of Christian Science. For me, this means that I need to strive to apply the truths in the Bible Lesson to my daily needs for healing.

The Bible Lessons are full of wonderfully inspiring passages from the Bible and *Science and Health*, many of which are familiar to and have been loved by countless individuals throughout their lives. But just reading and appreciating these passages or reading the Bible Lesson as a duty to be fulfilled is not furthering the prosperity of Christian Science. As I study the Bible Lesson each day, I find myself asking, “What is the spiritual message in this citation? How can I apply this message to my own situation and to the situations of those I’m praying to help?”

I’ve found that this approach supports my prayers for my community and the world, as well. One thing I’ve noticed about the Bible Lessons is that each one usually provides a spiritual perspective that addresses current local, national, or international issues—even though the Lessons are made up months in advance. Sometimes this perspective is illustrated by a Bible story in which the difficulty facing the historical men and women parallels modern issues. At other times, citations from the Bible and *Science and Health* provide the spiritual counter fact to the ugliness that seems so rampant in the news. I know that if I’m stuck about how to pray about a need or situation in the news, I can find an answer in the Bible Lesson.

Often, I study the Bible Lesson by applying many of its statements to my situation that day and using the truths it contains as the basis of my treatment for myself. Each day, as I study the Lesson, I recognize that the helpful inspiration contained in it comes directly from God. I find it helpful to study it early in the day so that I’m prepared to meet any situation that arises, and so I will have a handy reference from either the Bible or *Science and Health* to give to those who call me for help as a Christian Science practitioner.

Studying the Bible Lesson also prepares me for actively contributing to the healing thrust of the church service on Sunday. I find myself more receptive to the Lesson-Sermon as it’s read, expecting it to heal all those

present as needed. I attend the service as an already-inspired participant actively contributing to the healing atmosphere of the service.

If I have trouble understanding a particular passage from the Bible, I listen for what God has to reveal to me about its meaning. Sometimes this leads me to consult the Bible commentaries and dictionaries available in Christian Science Reading Rooms in hardcopy as well as online. These resources describe the context of biblical events and the meanings of the original Hebrew or Greek words. I keep the dictionary app open on my cellphone so that I can look up the less familiar words. I also take notes on the Lesson and read passages in context, especially in the Bible, to understand the setting of a particular passage. These activities are helpful, but I keep at the forefront of my thought that the important message of the Bible Lesson is spiritual and comes through divine inspiration. This is what makes the Lesson a vehicle for healing.

Another helpful aspect of the Bible Lesson is that its 26 subjects, designated by Mrs. Eddy to be repeated twice a year, nearly parallel the order and topics of the questions and answers in the chapter “Recapitulation” in *Science and Health*, which is the material that is covered during Primary class instruction in Christian Science (see Isabel Ferguson and Heather Frederick, *A World More Bright: The Life of Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 152). For those who have taken class instruction, this means that some aspect of each topic in class instruction is reviewed every six months in the Bible Lesson. For those who have yet to take class instruction, studying and putting into practice the spiritual understanding revealed in the Bible Lesson is wonderful preparation for class. I often find that the Bible Lesson amplifies my understanding of the various questions and answers in “Recapitulation.”

Christian Science is a continuing revelation to each student of this Science. The Bible Lesson is part of our self-instruction in Christian Science, and it helps us to be receptive to this revelation. Consisting entirely of passages from the original authority, God’s Word from the Bible together with passages from *Science and Health* that corroborate and explain the Bible citations, it is free from human interpretation. Digging into these primary

sources for inspiration and healing messages, instead of relying on others' inspiration recorded in articles and talks (as helpful as these may be), makes the revelation one's own.

When one seeks the Lesson's spiritual message, it's impossible for it to ever become old and boring—even when we study it every day and then hear it read in church on Sunday as the sermon preached by our pastor, the Bible and *Science and Health*. In fact, studying it every day and then hearing it on Sunday is one of the ways it unfolds fresh views and ideas to us. I find myself eagerly anticipating the spiritual insights to be gained from this daily study, and many times I have found this fresh spiritual understanding brings healing.

A number of years ago, I had an experience that reminded me of the holiness and healing light of our Bible Lesson and its unique place as the sermon in our Sunday services. I had become ill at the end of a strenuous vacation in Zambia. I rallied enough to make the 44-hour trip home, but I was very concerned about being able to serve as First Reader on the first Sunday after my return.

During the trip, I had diligently studied the Bible Lesson to prepare to conduct the service. I could have requested a substitute, but as I prayed it felt right to continue to plan to be there. On Sunday, although I had made progress in healing, I wasn't fully well. I was able to stand at my post, and as I read aloud, I mentally affirmed that the truths voiced in each passage were applicable not only to me, but also to the entire congregation. And I recognized and silently affirmed that these truths weren't going to be stopped by the rather squeaky sound of my voice. The truths in the Bible Lesson were available to and understood by everyone in the congregation, no matter how my voice sounded.

In the middle of reading the Lesson-Sermon, I felt as if the congregation, Second Reader, and I were in a holy place. I don't know that I'd ever felt that way before. Others felt it, too. After the service, one person pointedly asked me what I had done to bring such an atmosphere to our service. Humanly, I hadn't done anything. Spiritually, I was a witness to the truth in the

Bible Lesson. Within a couple of days, I was completely well.

In her *Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, Mrs. Eddy writes: "The systematized centres of Christian Science are life-giving fountains of truth. Our churches, *The Christian Science Journal*, and the *Christian Science Quarterly*, are prolific sources of spiritual power whose intellectual, moral, and spiritual animus is felt throughout the land" (p. 113).

Committed, fresh, eager study of the weekly Bible Lessons found in the *Christian Science Quarterly* will uplift us and humanity as we demonstrate their lessons in our daily lives.

"The finite must yield to the infinite"

By Ron Lawrence

Growing up in Christian Science taught me to pray with and study the spiritual truths found in the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. But, as many have experienced, I had to make Christian Science my own and discover for myself the fundamental divine Truth and the demonstrability of its teachings.

During my final semester of college, I badly injured my right hand on a piece of glass. I had the wounds cleaned and stitched up, but this left me with my writing hand bandaged and immobilized, and the courses that I was taking were heavily dependent on writing. It was difficult taking notes with my left hand, and I worried that I might fall behind and fail the classes. My self-will was on overdrive: I was determined to pass. I had to pass no matter what.

The first exam in one of the courses went badly. I knew I had to bring my grade up to graduate. I went to the accounting course professor and asked him if there was

anything I could do for extra credit. He told me that I could develop a new accounting standard that had to be for a future industry requirement and coordinate with the entire body of existing standards. He held out little hope that this could be achieved.

I went home feeling discouraged and found myself on my knees praying this pitiful but sincere prayer: “Dear God, I give up. I have no idea what to do. I need Your help.” At that point, I was quiet and yielding to God, divine Mind, and silencing self-will.

In the spiritual awakening that followed, I understood more deeply, and experienced, that we can hear God speaking to us when we silence mortal thought and listen willingly and patiently. The first words I heard (mentally) were, “Well, it’s about time!” I waited, and the most wonderful sense of light and Love emerged gently in my consciousness, and then it shone with an almost overwhelming brightness and intensity. After a few moments came the instruction: “Wait and see what God will do.” I contemplated God as the All-in-all, divine Love. As Mrs. Eddy says: “The finite must yield to the infinite. Advancing to a higher plane of action, thought rises from the material sense to the spiritual, from the scholastic to the inspirational, and from the mortal to the immortal” (*Science and Health*, p. 256).

I was led to tell my housemate of my predicament, and he handed me a book about financial transactions that needed to be better considered as the national economy evolved. I immediately recognized I was holding a book that related to exactly what my professor had suggested.

Thinking prayerfully about this, I gained a sense of confidence that I hadn’t experienced before, one not of relying on my own knowledge and ability, but of listening for God’s instructions. I read the book straight through. I could grasp the critical points in the book that would need to be developed in a strict rule-making logic and format. Mrs. Eddy’s statement, “Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need” (*Science and Health*, p. 494), was a more precious and presently unfolding idea to me than ever before.

As I began to write, the words came, and it was as if I had been witnessing a beautiful flower blossom.

This sounds silly in a literal sense—there wasn’t much beauty in the terse prose of an official accounting standard, but in the way it was constructed and hung together, it expressed a complete idea, with everything that needed to be considered.

My attitude had shifted. Instead of seeing things in an accretive way—this task leads to this task, which leads to this task—I saw that we can grasp the wholeness of God and His expression as the basis of thought and action. While rejoicing in God’s goodness and completeness, we can do what is required of us. As I wrote, everything fell into place.

When the paper was complete, I couldn’t help but think, “Humanly, I could not have written this, but as the expression of immortal, omniscient Mind, I could.” It all worked out successfully and I received the needed extra credit.

And what about the immobilized writing hand? It is a proven truth that when we have our whole thought on God and Christ, the true idea of God, the human necessities, including healing, are taken care of. I was writing as usual, and the hand was back to normal quickly. The rest of my coursework was equally harmonious and inspiring. I gained more insightful and practical knowledge in the following weeks than in the previous semesters. I felt a mastery of the subject that hadn’t been there before. And I was able to graduate as scheduled and start a promising job.

But this was actually only the beginning of the story. I felt the need to have a deeper understanding of what I had experienced. I also felt a deep desire to better understand Christian Science as the “final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing” (*Science and Health*, p. 107), and our Leader as “a scribe under orders” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 311). Thinking prayerfully about this, I was led to study the Bible more deeply, searching out the biblical basis for Christian Science.

I had always had a love for the Bible, but at this point it seemed like a jumble of ideas and stories. I didn’t yet see how it is the Word of God. And so, I felt that the first requirement in finding satisfactory answers was

to have a better, more comprehensive understanding of the Bible.

After graduation, I joined the local Christian Science branch church. The church's Reading Room had an excellent collection of Bible reference books, including lexicons, commentaries, and cross-reference Bibles. I studied in a consistent and determined way, using the Bible resources for historic and cultural context as well as to better understand Hebrew and Greek words. The cross-reference Bibles allowed me to see the interrelation of different books of the Bible, and to see words, symbols, concepts, stories, allusions, etc., as golden threads. This strengthened my understanding of Scripture.

I found that the Bible is complete—and that the prophetic thought and vision of the Bible are the golden threads illuminating the coincidence of the human and divine, weaving a tapestry of man's relationship to God. I saw that the Christ, Truth, presents man's eternal divine oneness with the creator, individually and collectively. In my search I discovered an overall story of redemption and salvation and the Bible was definitely illumined and palpably real.

With a better grasp of the Bible, I felt prepared to explore the writings of Mrs. Eddy more deeply. I studied *Science and Health* more thoroughly than ever before. In my earnest studying, I found myself, in a way, arguing with Mrs. Eddy on certain points as if she were in the room. It was definitely a one-sided argument. I was led to go back to the Scriptures and look for concepts similar to what seemed confusing in *Science and Health*, and I found connections between the books that revealed the "undivided garment" of Truth (*Science and Health*, p. 142). The meaning of passages that had given me pause became clear.

I started to see what Mrs. Eddy meant when she referred to the Scriptures' "marked consonance" with *Science and Health* (*Miscellaneous Writings*, pp. 363–364). I also began to see more clearly that the pastor of Christian Science, the Holy Bible and *Science and Health*, are inseparably linked. And I found that the same golden threads of prophetic thought and vision that run seamlessly through the Bible were carried through in *Science and*

Health. This enabled me to discern more what I had set out to, Christian Science as the "final revelation" and Mrs. Eddy as "a scribe under orders"; I was finding her in her writings as she advises us to.

The spiritual concepts in the pages of the textbooks of Christian Science became more understandable, and I saw more fully how they were accessible and practical to humanity, to those yearning to know and demonstrate their living link to God. Together these books presented the Comforter, Christian Science, as promised by Christ Jesus: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

With this sense of the Comforter, the explanations in *Science and Health* also shone light on the Bible, and lifted it away from being a material record to a book of the Spirit, a book showing the influence of Spirit over centuries. This quote sums up what I learned from my study: "The Scriptures require more than a simple admission and feeble acceptance of the truths they present; they require a living faith, that so incorporates their lessons into our lives that these truths become the motive-power of every act" (*Miscellaneous Writings*, pp. 196–197).

Embracing this "living faith" in my daily life and yielding to God, divine Mind, I found a firm foundation for my daily practice of Christian Science. Not to say that all at once life's challenges were conquered. But step by step, I have witnessed more and more of God's goodness manifested in my life and in the lives of others.

I love this statement from our Leader, which I continue to take to heart: "A little more grace, a motive made pure, a few truths tenderly told, a heart softened, a character subdued, a life consecrated, would restore the right action of the mental mechanism, and make manifest the movement of body and soul in accord with God" (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 354).

God's care in times of grief

By Yvonne Renoult

A close friend recently asked me a heartfelt question about how Christian Scientists deal with grief after a loved one passes on. I replied and our conversation moved on to other things, but his question lingered with me. One answer that has helped me is a deep realization that our loved ones continue on in God's love. In the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy explains that "God and the real man are inseparable as divine Principle and idea" (p. 476).

The temptation to fall into darkness and sadness is strong after a passing. There might even be a sense that the depth of our love for the departed is only demonstrated by sufficient suffering. Since the loss of a loved one can feel like a dramatic event, these responses are not unreasonable. The healing of grief is individual—different for each one. While I would never discount anyone's personal process of grieving, there is an argument that can be made for not accepting a long, drawn-out grieving process—no matter how deep our devotion and love.

A friend once shared her wonder of a fellow church member who had just lost her husband and exhibited no signs of grief. This opened my thought to the idea that one can consider bypassing a process of grief before finally settling into a feeling of peace again. But long or short, the healing of grief can be a holy experience. It can be one of those trials that are "proofs of God's care" (*Science and Health*, p. 66) and ultimately bring us a fuller sense of eternal life when looked at deeply, with new eyes.

Two important components to the healing of grief are that God as Love is caring for our loved one, and also caring for us. So our connection to feeling loved has not really been severed.

An experience I had of my precious dog passing might seem insignificant in comparison to the loss of a loved

one, but I mention it here because it expanded my understanding for when bigger challenges came. I had such a sweet sense of spiritual continuance with my dog when she passed, that it set me up to gain added insights when the more momentous passing of my mother occurred. Modest as it may seem, the experience with my much-loved dog gave me a glimpse of something new and higher about eternal life.

On the day of my mother's passing, the healing of grief was surprisingly instantaneous. But although I felt shielded from grief, the experience was not a light event. Instead, it brought a profound awareness of my mother's tangible spiritual essence. I attribute this state of uplifted consciousness in part to the loving prayers given me by a Christian Science practitioner weeks prior to my mother's passing. Many strong inspirations filled me about my mother's inseparability from Love.

Another helpful element that can bring solace is gratitude. In the most tender way, deep gratitude for a loved one who has passed is a power that can help displace sorrow. This is where *Science and Health's* counsel can be helpful: "... it is wise earnestly to consider whether it is the human mind or the divine Mind which is influencing one" (pp. 82–83). Gratitude to God, our loved one's source, makes us receptive to divine blessings from that same source.

In both healings, I experienced a warm glow of gratitude replacing grief. In place of a person communicating with us, God's love touches our thought with the eternal essence of this individual as a permanent gift from God.

Our willingness to see something new and higher breaks the patterns of grief. Eddy alludes to this phenomenon when she explains that, "Jesus demonstrated the inability of corporeality, as well as the infinite ability of Spirit, thus helping erring human sense to flee from its own convictions and seek safety in divine Science" (*Science and Health*, p. 494). As we give up the belief of life in matter, we'll see new expressions of life everywhere, because we are opening ourselves to them.

I had a more difficult time with the passing of another loved one, because we had many unresolved issues—

grievances that I had harbored. In an effort to find peace, I remembered Mary in the Bible, who was unable to see Jesus at the tomb because she didn't expect to find him alive. When Jesus addressed her by name—or, metaphorically, her true nature—she then recognized the resurrected Jesus. This shows that in expressing one's true nature, one can experience more peace. This is what happened for me.

I needed to get quiet and listen for the voice of God, Truth, which tells us something different from the loudness of grief. At my moment of sorrow, a startling angel thought came: "There is something else going on here. Pay attention so that I may show you." I saw that only the good qualities of my loved one—the spiritual—were real, and the rest, which were not of God, were unreal.

During deep prayer one morning, it came to me to understand this loved one's entirely spiritual identity, separate from any challenging character traits. Who was this pure child of God that divine Love created and cherished? I reminded myself of all the qualities, such as joy, playfulness, intelligence, and compassion, that were felt in our relationship before any negative character traits clouded our connection. Divine Love was reaching me in a way that I could comprehend. I became willing to resist typically outlined steps of grief and look for something higher and different.

This lifted the deep-seated grief, and lightness replaced the darkened sense that had weighed heavily on me. In the most surprising way, divine Love provided me the peace that I so longed to feel. Unexpectedly, my loved one's unique character traits were cleverly and affectionately alluded to in the eulogy given for her by a close relative at her memorial service. This gave me a new affection for her quirky ways, and my heart felt healed.

We don't necessarily stop to reflect on a loved one's spiritual qualities until faced with their passing. But we don't have to wait for someone to pass to experience this heightened awareness. God is always communicating to us what they truly are if we are watching and interpreting through our highest spiritual sense.

Although I have felt the gentle and unique essence of my mother when passing her favorite flowering bush, there is no material medium or personal spirit of good, but rather the ever-present good that is God, the All-in-all, expressed in infinite, individual ways. We need not limit in any direction the expression called mother, father, or friend. I have recognized "mothering" bestowed on me from other sources in ways that softly reminded me of my mother's love. As we turn away from the limitations of corporeality, we flee from our own mesmerized convictions learned from world beliefs about grief.

After prayerfully considering the subject of grief, I have realized that the bottom line is that God is Love. So there must continue to be something very wonderful, lovely, and loving to be understood and experienced about each loved one who passes from our lives.

We need not lock our loved ones in a remote status far from us. Next time I am faced with grief, I hope to more quickly seek a deeper understanding of eternal life and let the many illusions of the belief of death fade away in its light.

You are greatly beloved

By Mari G. De Milone

Originally published in Spanish

In the Bible, it is reported that Daniel, a descendant of the royal family of David, was one of the young men that King Nebuchadnezzar took captive to Babylon. Daniel is included in those known as the "major prophets," and is beloved by Bible readers of all eras. And not only by them, but three times he received an angel message that assured him that God loved him, too. On one of those occasions, he heard these words: "You are greatly beloved" (Daniel 9:23, New King James Version). Some of those messages came to him in moments when Daniel may have considered himself unworthy of God's love.

Daniel's experience makes me think that we all want to be loved with a love that is reliable and constant—an unwavering love. The good news is that, like Daniel, we are already loved with infinite love—a love that emanates from Love, God. This love is permanent and cannot be restricted by time or space.

I was able to realize this one day when my husband and I were traveling through the countryside. Suddenly, the beauty of the landscape dazzled me. I am used to the gentle elevations of the city where I live. So the streams flowing from the top of the road were quite a spectacle. I saw flocks of white sheep grazing over emerald valleys in the autumn sun and small houses, like children's toys, in the distance. It was truly a panorama of light and color, and for a moment, my eyes filled with tears. I thanked God for what I was able to see of nature's beauty. It was like catching a hint of His greatness and of His love for His own, a hint of something spiritual and eternal. We continued the trip, and throughout the journey I kept thinking of what I had seen.

Christian Science reveals that nature's magnificence gives a glimpse of true creation. In one of her works, Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, calls it a "promise" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, p. 87). A promise of something spiritual and higher—that already exists, here and now. And in her great work, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, she explains, "The light of spiritual understanding gives gleams of the infinite only, even as nebulae indicate the immensity of space" (p. 509).

This glorious gleam "of the infinite" that I had grasped during our trip was a glimpse of the divine universe. This realization washed over me, and I saw that I reflect the magnificence of God's spiritual creation. Yes! And God's entire creation is free from imperfection, so spiritual man must be perfect. "God expresses in man the infinite idea forever developing itself, broadening and rising higher and higher from a boundless basis" (*Science and Health*, p. 258).

Therefore, the qualities I sensed in that landscape are reflected by each of us as the highest expression of God. I felt truly loved on that drive, and I have continued to feel this inexhaustible love around me.

Sometimes it may take us a while to realize that our true individuality is beloved, or we may be required to put more effort into replacing old, limited concepts about God and ourselves with a spiritual perspective. However, this change of thought always brings us closer to the concept of who we really are, because it strengthens and develops our spiritual understanding. Knowing our true, valued individuality can replace any sense of feeling unloved, unworthy, or even expendable.

Many of us have experienced that feeling at some point. A few years ago, a woman called a Christian Science practitioner and said she was feeling a lot of pain throughout her body. It was almost impossible for her to get up in the morning. She could not move her arms or walk freely, so she had to sit most of the day, unable to help her husband with the simplest household chores. She felt totally useless. When she spoke to the practitioner a couple of times, during the last call he felt impelled to tell her what he had learned about God—in other words, about our true nature, which is spiritual and very beloved. She seemed to accept this new concept about herself, and after about a week, she called him again. But this time, he heard a very joyful tone in her voice, a tone he had not heard before.

Then she told him that after their last conversation, the pain had worsened. But this time she was prepared to resist it. She began to affirm everything she had come to understand about her true being as the only reality that existed. And there, in that moment, she realized that throughout her life she had despised herself. She thought that she was far less intelligent than others, and on several occasions had even called herself stupid and ugly. In other words, she had not known herself and, therefore, she had not really loved herself.

When the pain stopped, and it stopped almost immediately, she looked at her image in the mirror and found something she had never seen before—she saw herself as beautiful. She understood that she was lovingly embraced by God and that He had created her in His image, as the first chapter of the Bible states. This new concept about who she was, her real identity—complete, satisfied, glowing—dispelled the shadows

of what she had previously believed herself to be. When she felt the Love that is God holding her tenderly, it caused the old concepts that she had held for so long to disappear. She knows with certainty now that the wonderful feeling of being loved by God will remain forever.

We all want to be loved in a constant and genuine way, especially in the midst of challenging conditions. No matter what situation we are in—whether alone or with others—or how we feel about ourselves, God truly knows us and loves us this moment. Regardless of what the material senses say about what we are and how we are, God sees His creation as He created it: in His likeness. And when we affirm these truths with confidence, they become ours, allowing us to feel the love of Love. A powerful Love from which we can never separate ourselves.

All of us—each one of us as God’s child—can say with authority: Yes, I am a dearly beloved idea of God.

INTERLUDE

Love’s gift

By Kit Cornell Kurtz

Revelation can come,
glimpses of clear vision—
St. John’s holy city,
the crystal river,
the tree of life—
brought into intimate moments
as we listen to God.

But if it seems
the “still, small voice”
of Love and Truth
is preceded by
earthquake,
wind,
fire,

it is only to show
that God’s not in them.
The drama is not the show
—God’s show—
or even the first act.

Revelation sits
quietly with us
in morning prayers,
in holy moments
that God sets apart
with joy,
with beauty,
with peace—
holy moments
where God’s child
is seen
as clearly
as God is seen.

Revelation
—an open view of reality—
comes slipping into thought,
continually.

It is Love’s gift
placed gently
in the hand
of one who
is looking at
God.

TESTIMONIES OF HEALING

No more poison oak rash

By Carol Maddock

One weekend when I was a teenager, some friends and I hiked in the canyon below their house. Within a couple of days, I was covered from head to toe with a poison oak rash. Because I had experienced previous healings through prayer, I told my parents I wanted to rely on

Christian Science for this healing as well. In addition to sharing helpful ideas with me from the Bible, they encouraged me to call a Christian Science practitioner to pray for me, which I did. The practitioner prayed for me over the next few days, and I held on to the truths she shared about me as a child of God.

In the weeks prior, I had just begun reading the textbook of Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, cover to cover, so I continued reading it while I stayed home from school. I didn't understand all that I read, but I could feel my thoughts being uplifted. I was reminded that Christ Jesus healed those who were sick through spiritual means alone, and *Science and Health* was showing me how I, too, could have a spiritual healing.

I was learning that God is All, and that He made everything good and indestructible. This truth is the basis for experiencing harmony in our lives. Evil of any kind is destroyed by understanding that it is not real, but rather a false belief—a suggestion in thought that can be rejected as no part of God's creation.

I thought about a healing statement I'd found in *Science and Health*: "The relations of God and man, divine Principle and idea, are indestructible in Science; and Science knows no lapse from nor return to harmony, but holds the divine order or spiritual law, in which God and all that He creates are perfect and eternal, to have remained unchanged in its eternal history" (pp. 470–471). That meant to me that there had never been a moment when I didn't express God.

I'd learned in Christian Science Sunday School that God made all His children in His image and likeness, as the first chapter of the Bible tells us. Christ Jesus taught that God is Spirit, so I reasoned that since I am made in the image and likeness of God, I am spiritual, not material. Nothing bad could be part of my being as God's spiritual idea; I couldn't lapse into a state that wasn't good. It was a simple concept, but I grasped the meaning and took it to heart. By the time I finished reading *Science and Health* that week, I had been healed of all the effects of the poison oak.

More recently, my husband and I were taking our dog for a walk at a local park where there was new-growth

poison oak along the trails. Our dog went right through a large patch of it, and I found myself entertaining concerns such as, "Oh no, you're going to have to wash the dog with gloves," and, "You're going to have to take care that you don't spread the oil from the plant onto your skin."

However, thinking back on my healing as a teenager made me realize I had nothing to fear. I immediately turned away from the mental picture of a poison oak rash and realized that the fearful suggestions coming to thought were general beliefs about this plant that I did not have to accept as true about any part of God's good creation.

By the time we made it home, I'd completely forgotten about the dog going through the poison oak. A number of days went by before I thought of it again, and I realized that my husband, our dog, and I had all been protected from a reaction to poison oak.

I am so grateful for Christian Science and its Discoverer, Mary Baker Eddy, for teaching us how to follow Christ Jesus' healing example.

Carol Maddock
Salinas, California, US

Healing of Animal bite

By Gina McMurchy-Barber

In an earlier chapter of my life I was fortunate enough to find myself in a research and rehabilitation camp for orangutans in Borneo, Indonesia. Sometimes wild orangutan infants were captured and kept as pets. Inevitably they grew too large and were kept in cages too small. The fortunate ones were discovered and sent off to camps such as the one that I was at, and over time they were reintroduced to the wild.

There were probably about two dozen ex-captive orangutans living around the camp. Of them, two

were adolescents. From a distance they looked almost identical. However, Rombe was friendly and the other one, Rico, was dangerous. In fact, he had been terrorizing people in the camp, especially women.

One afternoon I was by myself when a lone orangutan met me on the trail. I recognized the face—or so I thought—so I wasn't afraid. (For anyone who isn't familiar with these wonderful orange apes, a full-grown orangutan has five to seven times the strength of a human.) As the animal quickly approached, I suddenly realized it was Rico. Within seconds he was mauling me. I yelled for help. Very soon some of the staff arrived and frightened Rico away. But by this time my legs were bruised and scratched and there was a nasty bite wound that was bleeding.

After being helped to my cabin, I did what I have always done in times of crisis: I reached for my pocket-sized copy of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. With shaking hands I opened it randomly. My eyes fell on this passage: "Have no fear that matter can ache, swell, and be inflamed as the result of a law of any kind, when it is self-evident that matter can have no pain nor inflammation. Your body would suffer no more from tension or wounds than the trunk of a tree which you gash or the electric wire which you stretch, were it not for mortal mind" (p. 393).

It was exactly what I needed. Immediately I was able to calm down and began contemplating how this truth related to my situation. Shortly, there was a knock at my door. It was one of the indigenous Dayak trackers who worked for the camp. He practiced a type of traditional medicine that included appealing to gods that he was accustomed to praying to.

I thanked him for his offer but told him I had my own method of spiritual treatment and that I would be fine. He expressed concern that there would be an infection due to the bite wound and the humid jungle climate. I had already cleaned the wound as best as I could and again assured him that I would be all right.

In addition to the fear of infection, there were two other matters I needed to address in my prayers. One was the feeling that I was cut off from help should my condition worsen. The closest town was a six-hour boat ride away,

only there was no boat available. Neither was there a telephone—only a poorly operating two-way radio. And the other issue was the feeling that Rico was an evil animal.

I'm grateful that neither of these concerns lasted long. I grew up attending a Christian Science Sunday School and had learned that God is everywhere, so a sense of my safety was soon restored. Also, I'd had a lifelong love for all animals. It was natural for me to want to see Rico as God's perfect creation, and therefore harmless and useful. While I was cautious of him, I also had a sense of love and compassion; he'd spent years in a cage after his mother was killed.

I did have to deal with the evidence of an infection; for quite some time the flesh surrounding the wound was not normal. Eventually I was able to call a Christian Science practitioner, who lived a thousand kilometers away, to ask for treatment. Over the next few weeks he prayed for me, though it appeared that the wound was not healing. One day when I was talking on the phone with him, I asked, "What else is there for me to know or pray? I feel like we've done it all."

The practitioner said, "So why not just accept that you've been healed?"

"Oh," I thought. "Well, all right then, I will!" And I did. I stopped checking the wound and turned my attention and prayer to other things. I can't say exactly when, but at some point the wound closed up and the texture of the flesh returned to normal.

An added bonus to this healing was hearing that a while after I left camp, Rico was removed to a location far into the jungle where he could happily live in the wild far from humans.

In the subsequent forty years I've experienced countless healings through prayer, including of marital difficulties, smoking, unemployment, bursitis, and a crushed disc in the spine. I am so grateful for Christian Science and the practitioners who have supported, guided, and loved me.

I feel I've glimpsed something of the truth of this statement: "God is the Life, or intelligence, which forms

and preserves the individuality and identity of animals as well as of men” (*Science and Health*, p. 550).

Gina McMurchy-Barber

Surrey, British Columbia, Canada

Child’s head injury quickly healed

By *Graham Thatcher*

“**Lo, I see four** men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (Daniel 3:25). Hundreds of years before Christ Jesus was born, these words were spoken by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, after he ordered three young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to be bound and thrown into a fiery furnace because of their unwavering fidelity to God’s supremacy on earth. The protection from harm these young men experienced may be understood through St. John’s description of the “new Jerusalem” (see Revelation 21:2–4), where God’s order and law of safety appear to us. I am grateful to share that my son was healed based on the lessons from these accounts.

Last summer, just before we were to leave for a family camping trip, my wife texted me that while they were grocery shopping our young son had fallen and severely hit his head. She had called a Christian Science practitioner for treatment and asked me for immediate support and help. She also comforted him while bandaging his head and then driving home.

I immediately started praying for our son. I recalled the previous night’s Wednesday testimony meeting at my local branch Church of Christ, Scientist, which included citations from the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, on the topic of “New Jerusalem.” I reasoned that if God is all-powerful and only good, and His kingdom has come on earth, as Jesus said, then

there can be no chaotic force, randomness, or chance that could cause my son to have an accident. If there was no accident, there could be no injury. I clung to the truth that my son is always living and moving in a place so protected that it’s impossible he could be subject to accident or physical harm.

When my wife and son arrived home, I was initially alarmed to see blood on the headrest of his car seat. However, I mentally denied this image as not coming from God and impossible in the kingdom of heaven. I mentally argued that based on the premise that my son’s life is an expression of divine Life, the harmony of heaven, the evidence on the car seat was inaccurate, unfounded, and baseless.

As I took our son inside and changed his clothes, I checked his head to see if he needed any bandages or care from a Christian Science nurse. There was no sign of injury on his head—no cut, lump, bump, or bruise.

However, he was still upset, recounting his fall, so I could tell that the impression of the event was replaying in his thought. I talked to him about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and the Son of God, which we had discussed multiple times. He had learned the Bible story in Sunday School a few months earlier. He recounted to us that the Son of God was with them and had saved them from the fire. I told him that the Son of God, the Christ, was with him now and could relieve him of any pain, just as it had protected the three young Hebrews from the fire. With that he stopped focusing on the fall, dropped the subject, and played happily with his younger sister.

Meanwhile, my wife prayed to reject the mortal image of the fall and mentally establish the divine image that we knew constituted reality. After our son showed no signs of pain or injury, we decided to continue with our camping plans, while also continuing to be in communication with a Christian Science practitioner. Her treatment established that our son’s healing was permanent and that his existence in God’s kingdom meant that he was not subject to erroneous claims that he could experience a lapse from God’s protecting presence or that his healing could regress or he could relapse into suffering.

Our son never exhibited any discomfort during the trip. The camping experience turned out to be a highlight of our summer, and our son never again mentioned the shopping incident. There have been no aftereffects of his fall.

Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, explains *New Jerusalem* as “the spiritual facts and harmony of the universe; the kingdom of heaven, or reign of harmony” (*Science and Health*, p. 592). This is not a mere theological hypothesis that Christian Scientists hope to find validated in an afterworld. The omnipresent salvation of Christ from imminent suffering, referenced throughout the Old and New Testaments, is never interrupted and continues even today. Mrs. Eddy’s discovery of Christian Science in the 19th century, and the healing effects from our practice of Christian Science, demonstrate that salvation to be eternal, scientific, and logical truth.

Our son’s healing taught me in new ways that we are not subject to seeming random forces of nature nor unintelligible acts of a wrathful God. Rather, we can experience protection from and the healing of physical and mental harm through the practice of this Science of Christ.

Graham Thatcher
Woodinville, Washington, US

Painful leg condition healed

By Sylvia Messner

One of the greatest gifts I have gained in all my years studying and practicing Christian Science is the journey I had that was occasioned by a very painful condition in one of my legs. Far outweighing the intense fear of the image it presented, and of what the medical diagnosis might be, was my desire to trust completely in Christian Science for my healing—in all I had learned from it and

knew it to be. I wanted to have full faith in it as an ever-present, provable Science based on man as the perfect, spiritual expression of God—of Life, Truth, and Love.

As a child, I hadn’t been taught that each of us is, in reality, an expression of God. That is something I later learned through the study of Science. But I did have a clear sense that my existence and being were more than a temporary mortal experience. Christian Science teaches that God is Principle and Life, and that every one of His ideas forever expresses this harmonious, principled Life. The fact that these are provable truths is why I ultimately chose to rely on Christian Science for healing.

What impressed me when I called a Christian Science practitioner for help was how little time we spent discussing the physical condition or the symptoms. We didn’t look to matter, or the body, but to God, divine Truth. In our prayers we primarily worked with one basic statement from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: “Principle and its idea is one, and this one is God, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Being, and His reflection is man and the universe” (pp. 465–466).

With the practitioner’s first treatment, the intense pain immediately ceased, but I did use crutches on and off to get around in the weeks that followed. Daily, moment by moment, I kept my thought on the oneness of Principle and idea, with my movement governed by, and reflecting, Principle’s harmonious activity and therefore not subject to any imperfect or inharmonious material claims. Also, words and phrases from many of the hymns in the *Christian Science Hymnal* would spontaneously come to mind, giving me comfort and inspiration.

The practitioner and I continued praying during the next few weeks as I kept to myself, discussing the leg condition with no one. By the end of a month the leg was normal, and I was back walking my dog, without crutches, on our daily walks of about two miles.

Speaking of her journey in discovering Christian Science, Mrs. Eddy remarked: “For three years after my discovery, I sought the solution of this problem of Mind-healing, searched the Scriptures and read little

else, kept aloof from society, and devoted time and energies to discovering a positive rule. The search was sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope, not selfish nor depressing” (*Science and Health*, p. 109).

For me, having been given the rule in Christian Science that Principle and idea is one, I also found my journey “sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope, not selfish nor depressing.”

I am grateful to say that as the physical problem fades from memory, what remains is a greater understanding of God and the untouchable perfection and principled activity of His ideas.

Sylvia Messner

Laguna Hills, California, US

Healing of shoulder pain

By *Martha Hallaren*

One morning in late June 2020, I woke up with a painful shoulder. I remembered that a doctor who had conducted a required company physical exam when I was in my mid-twenties had said, “You must be living in constant pain due to the bone structure of this shoulder.” I had assured the doctor that I was in no pain. I hadn’t experienced any pain in the shoulder over the years until that morning and had been able to participate freely in normal activities and to wear clothes as sold with no need for altering the shoulders.

After I remembered the doctor’s comment, a stronger message came to me: “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father” (Matthew 11:27). I looked up these words of Christ Jesus in the Bible and reasoned that just as God perfectly and completely knew His Son, Christ Jesus, God knows me (and each of us) as His spiritual, good, perfect, painless image and likeness (see Genesis 1:27, 31).

At first I wondered if I would need to get a sling for my arm because of the painful shoulder, but as I prayed with the truths in the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lesson that week, I no longer felt a need to investigate a sling. The Lesson contains passages from the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. The eternal truths of the Bible were very vivid, and I found ways to walk, sit, and sleep that were comfortable.

It was clear to me that I wasn’t attempting to use Christian Science to change bone structure; I was striving to see myself more clearly as God’s spiritual likeness. In fact, *Science and Health* includes this passage: “Man is not matter; he is not made up of brain, blood, bones, and other material elements. The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God. Matter is not that likeness. The likeness of Spirit cannot be so unlike Spirit. Man is spiritual and perfect; and because he is spiritual and perfect, he must be so understood in Christian Science” (p. 475).

I felt supported by God in this right desire to see how God had made me. I was and am so grateful to Christ Jesus, the great demonstrator of Christianity, and to Mrs. Eddy for her decisive healings and for giving the world the complete explanation of Christian Science in *Science and Health*, which illuminates Jesus’ teachings.

A message that had been shared at the Annual Meeting of The Mother Church a few weeks earlier, in June 2020, showed me how important it was to the world for each of us to tangibly see and experience the supremacy of God, good. Anne-Françoise Bouffé, the incoming President of The Mother Church, had said that we must work faithfully to fulfill our duty to God, our Leader, and mankind “until all error is finally brought into subjection to Truth”—words from page 240 of *Science and Health* (see Annual Meeting report, *Journal*, September 2020). (Those duties are included in the By-Law titled “Alertness to Duty” on page 42 of the *Church Manual* by Mary Baker Eddy.) I took this to mean that we are to faithfully pray step by step until at some point there is no more pain or disease or fear; work faithfully in Science until there is no more racism, no more brutality, no more exploitation of children and women, no more sin.

In a paragraph in *Science and Health* with the marginal heading “Subordination of evil,” Mrs. Eddy writes: “We must learn that evil is the awful deception and unreality of existence. Evil is not supreme; good is not helpless; nor are the so-called laws of matter primary, and the law of Spirit secondary” (p. 207). This passage encouraged me to pray and study until there was no more shoulder pain—to turn to the truths of Christian Science to understand more about God’s love and government and to experience my God-given freedom and strength. I knew that dwelling on Godlike thoughts would have a good effect on my life and body. I affirmed that my thinking is pure, clear, receptive to Christian Science.

During this time of prayer and study, I was able to continue with almost all normal activities, and within a week or so I was even swimming again as usual without any pain. This healing has been permanent.

Thank you, Father-Mother God! Each healing in Christian Science establishes more firmly in collective world thought that God, good, is supreme on earth as in heaven. The final word is always with God.

Martha Hallaren

Rancho Santa Fe, California, US

Soaring aspirations

By Linda S. Black

My friend and I were having lunch outside on a beautiful day, when he commented on all the birds he was seeing above. He insisted there were hundreds of them soaring way above us, but I only saw the clear blue sky.

Finally, some of the birds’ wings caught the sunlight at just the right angle, and there they were—hundreds of them gracefully flying together. From then on, I knew how to look for these amazing birds and watch them fly high above in ethereal flocks. I reveled in seeing

something new of God’s creation, like the psalmist who wrote, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psalms 119:18).

In her writings Mary Baker Eddy gives us a spiritual interpretation of birds when she writes, “The fowls, which fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, correspond to aspirations soaring beyond and above corporeality to the understanding of the incorporeal and divine Principle, Love” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, pp. 511–512).

One morning I saw the significance of this spiritual interpretation. I had awakened feeling ill. In a few hours I needed to fulfill a post at church, and I affirmed that my church duty was supported by God and sustained by spiritual aspiration. I needed to let my thought soar beyond and above what the physical senses reported.

As I focused on the higher ideas of God, I trusted these truths to lift my thought above the downward pull of material beliefs of sickness. *Science and Health* says, “By lifting thought above error, or disease, and contending persistently for truth, you destroy error” (p. 400). Soon I regained my freedom from illness. With gratitude and joy, I was at my church post that morning.

Now, when the high-flying birds are present, I look up and enjoy watching them gracefully soaring, and I’m reminded to look beyond the limits of material sense to discern the realities of God’s kingdom.

BRANCHING OUT

When a church helped “just by being there”

By Debi Randt

Editors’ note: *The following was written as an open letter of gratitude to members of a branch Church of Christ, Scientist.*

Dear church members,

This is a long overdue letter of gratitude for your presence in and prayers for your community. I was a direct recipient of these healing prayers and I thought you should know.

Our son moved to your city during the pandemic. Last year we drove out to bring him a carload of his belongings. It was a 15-hour drive from where we live. As we were approaching our hotel, we saw your sweet church. It was so exciting to see a Church of Christ, Scientist, so visible in the heart of the city.

When our son took us on a walking tour of the city the next day, he happily pointed out your branch church. Later that afternoon, we drove around to the loading dock of his apartment building to unload all that we had brought with us. When I got out of the car, one of my feet caught on an irregularity in the pavement so that when I tried to walk forward, I fell hard, breaking my glasses.

My husband was on the other side of the car, unaware of my fall, and my son was on the loading dock waiting for us. Neither could hear me when I called out for help, but a kind gentleman, who was unloading a truck nearby, helped me up. After brushing myself off, I made my way around the car and told my husband and son what had happened. I only had minor scratches on my hands, but my foot was uncomfortable where it had stuck in the pavement.

When the car was unloaded, we went into my son's apartment to await his girlfriend. During this time, my foot was becoming increasingly more painful, so I prayed quietly. After my son's girlfriend arrived, we walked to a restaurant several blocks away, and I was able to have my husband discreetly support me.

As we enjoyed our meal, I could feel my foot swelling up. When it was time to walk back to our hotel, I had to lean heavily and noticeably on my husband. My son's girlfriend was concerned. She asked me if I would like to take an over-the-counter painkiller. Although I was touched by her thoughtfulness, I wanted to rely on Christian Science for healing, so I politely declined her offer.

We made plans to meet up early the next morning for a quick breakfast, then my husband and I went back to our hotel. Although I had been turning to God for healing ideas throughout the evening, I was now able to really listen for God's guidance and pray uninterruptedly.

There were three things that I thought about as I prayed before I went to sleep. First were ideas from Hymn 53 (John R. Macduff, *Christian Science Hymnal*, adapt. © CSBD), especially the first two verses:

Everlasting arms of Love
Are beneath, around, above;
God it is who bears us on,
His the arm we lean upon.

He our ever-present guide
Faithful is, whate'er betide;
Gladly then we journey on,
With His arm to lean upon.

The second thing I thought about was the title of a *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lesson that I had studied recently: "Adam and Fallen Man." I acknowledged that I came from God, Spirit, and was therefore wholly spiritual, made in His image and likeness, good, pure, and perfect. I knew that I had never fallen and could never fall out of His presence, as I was inseparable from God as His reflection; in truth, there was never a moment when I could be separated from or fall out of the permanent peace, harmony, health, and comfort in which my Father-Mother God holds me.

Thirdly, I thought about your dear branch church just around the corner from me at the hotel. I started to think about all the work that was being done to prepare for the following morning's service: The Readers had rehearsed, and hymns, citations for the Scriptural Selection, and a benediction had been carefully and lovingly chosen. I thought about how the superintendent and teachers in the Christian Science Sunday School, along with the nursery attendants, were preparing to welcome and nurture any children who came to learn about how much God loves and cherishes them. Ushers were ready to warmly greet and welcome

members as well as visitors and newcomers from the community.

Earlier, I had noticed how tidy the church building and grounds were, so I knew that loving attention was paid to maintaining them. I thought about the moment during services when members pray silently for their congregations and how those prayers couldn't help but bless the community as well. As a guest in the community, I knew I could feel the prayers of that church and its members right then and there.

You can't imagine the warm feeling of love, comfort, and support that these healing thoughts brought to me in my hotel room that night. I thought of the Board members that wisely guided the business decisions of the church. I was grateful for each aspect of church work and all of the local members who so lovingly, graciously, and selflessly did this work to keep this church as a beacon in that city for neighbors, friends, family, and visitors. Even though my trip schedule meant I would leave before the Sunday service, thinking along these lines made me feel surrounded by God's unbounded, healing love and the gracious support of people I had not even met.

With these ideas, I went to sleep and rested comfortably all night. By the following morning, I was walking on my own. When we met up with our son and his girlfriend, I was walking with a barely perceptible limp. I continued to improve during our trip, and I was fully healed soon after I arrived home. Thankfully, my glasses were also easily replaced.

It is important that you know the role that your branch church played in this healing. This experience gave me a renewed appreciation for the role that Christian Science churches play in our communities just by being there. The work that you do for church is seen, felt, and appreciated even if not always voiced. I am so grateful for the healing prayers of your members.

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, the Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, writes, "Christian Science despoils the kingdom of evil, and pre-eminently promotes affection and virtue in families and therefore in the community" (pp. 102–103). I was definitely blessed by this tangible healing

affection while visiting your community. I look forward to meeting you the next time we are in your city.

I love Christian Science Reading Rooms!

By Patti Ogden

One of my greatest joys is to go to a Christian Science Reading Room. This began when I was a little girl. We lived near St. Louis, and it was always a special treat to go to one there after visiting the big department stores downtown and eating at a favorite restaurant. I frequently asked to go to the Christian Science Reading Room because it was so inviting, with big chairs, Bibles, and books on Christian Science.

During one of our shopping trips I started to get a stomachache, so I asked my mom if we could go to the Reading Room first. When we got there, I sat down and prayed. My prayers always include gratitude, so as I prayed, I thanked God for the Reading Room. I also thanked God for the Christian Science Sunday School I attended. I thought about what I learned on Sundays at church and reasoned that if God is good and made everything good, then a perfect child of God (like me and everyone) couldn't have a stomachache. With these prayers, I was healed and ready to eat.

Many years later, my mom asked me to take her friends to a shopping area in Los Angeles. On the drive there, though, I wasn't feeling great and didn't think I could go much farther. I remembered there was a Christian Science Reading Room in another shopping mall nearby. So I drove to the Reading Room and stayed there while my mother's friends explored the shopping mall.

On a table, next to the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, was the *Manual of The Mother Church*, also by Mrs. Eddy. I opened it and read three By-Laws: "A Rule for Motives and Acts,"

“Daily Prayer,” and “Alertness to Duty” (see pp. 40–42). I hadn’t even finished studying “A Rule for Motives and Acts” before I was completely healed. I had the best time in that Reading Room. And I continue to use this phrase from “A Rule for Motives and Acts” on a daily basis: “In Science, divine Love alone governs man; ...”

I’ve since had many other opportunities to visit Christian Science Reading Rooms. I feel very close to God when I’m in one. When my husband was going to law school, I fondly remember regularly studying at a Reading Room after dropping him off, before I would go to work. It felt to me like entering a closet of prayer, the way Jesus said to in the book of Matthew: “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (6:6).

I’ve now had the privilege of being a Reading Room librarian and an attendant at other Reading Rooms. They will always be one of my favorite places. A Reading Room is a warm, welcoming haven—a well-stocked resource, answering someone’s need.

The artistry of Soul

By Alexander Cavalli

Traveling in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California, I looked down onto Mono Lake. It was an astonishingly beautiful sight. Tufa columns—statuesque exposed mineral deposits that were formed underwater when the lake level was higher—rose from the water, no two alike. As I walked around looking at the array of tufa, I could not help but ask, “God, how do You do this?”

I knew that the picture seen by the physical senses is a limited representation of “the ideas of Soul” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 269). Nonetheless, as I looked around me at the lake

and the mountains nearby, I could not help but ask the question again and again.

In the years since, I have asked it regarding many other things, such as an arrangement of flowers. And I have begun to call expressions of beauty, form, intricacy, color, geometry, harmony, etc., the artistry of Soul (one of the synonyms of God).

Mrs. Eddy called flowers “hieroglyphs of Deity” (*Science and Health*, p. 240). Just a single flower represents an extremely complex and intricate work of art, and no two are alike. All point to Soul, or Mind. And if we look out into the vastness and great beauty of the universe shown through images from space-based telescopes, we must admit that Soul is a consummate artist from the infinitesimal to the infinite.

With a palette of qualities and substance that far exceed what we can imagine humanly, the spiritual universe, including man, is a profoundly complex, detailed, active, beautiful, infinite, eternally unfolding work of art. Again, Mrs. Eddy writes, “Immortal men and women are models of spiritual sense, drawn by perfect Mind and reflecting those higher conceptions of loveliness which transcend all material sense” (*Science and Health*, p. 247).

When we need healing, we can always remember that man is a perfect work of Soul’s artistry, a perfect self-portrait of divine Mind. And this realization translates to a proper adjustment of the false picture—i.e., healing.

The artistry of Soul shines through everywhere and is present in the consciousness of every child of God. All we have to do is take time to look, and recognize it.

The Normal class of 2024

By the BOARD OF EDUCATION

Every three years since 1907, the Board of Education, an auxiliary to the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, has held a Normal class to prepare and authorize new teachers of Christian Science, as provided for by Mary Baker Eddy in the *Manual of The Mother Church*. With rejoicing, we announce the completion of the 2024 Normal class, which included several historic firsts.

Over the years, the Normal class has always been held in the Boston area, whether at The Mother Church or, for the past several classes, at a nearby conference center. However, in recent years it has seemed to be increasingly difficult for qualified applicants from outside the United States to obtain visas to come to Boston. While on the surface the reasons appeared to be geopolitical, the Board of Directors felt the real challenge that needed to be overcome was resistance to “promoting and extending the religion of Christian Science as taught by me,” as Mrs. Eddy called for in multiple documents (see, for example, Deed of Trust Organizing The Christian Science Publishing Society, p. 3). The Directors knew that having teachers available in areas of the world where Christian Science is being practiced is a needful and right idea, and they began to explore the possibility of holding Normal class in a location other than Boston. After much prayer, the Directors decided to move forward with this idea.

The timing of what happened next was striking. The very next day the Directors, who also serve as Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker Eddy, were considering a provision in a clause in her will for providing financial support for teaching where needed. They came upon this wording from Mrs. Eddy’s will: “I desire that the instruction for which provision is hereby made shall be at the said College, but my said trustees are hereby authorized to provide said instruction *elsewhere*, if, in the unanimous judgment of all said trustees for the time

being, such course shall seem best” (italics added for emphasis).

The 2024 Normal class was completed early last December in Cape Town, South Africa. It included new teachers from Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, the United States, and for the first time ever, Republic of Congo and Uganda. We are deeply grateful that God opened the way for this class to take place.

Moji George, CSB, of Lagos, Nigeria, taught the class. Moji learned of Christian Science during college, and although her career led her into various fields, including banking, information technology, and education, her first love was the healing practice of Christian Science, which became her full-time vocation in 2007. She began her own work as a teacher of Christian Science in 2015. She has served as First Reader of The Mother Church and Associate Editor of *Journal, Sentinel, Herald*, and she currently serves as a member of the Christian Science Board of Directors. She is faithfully supported by her husband, Hector, and her son, Akin.

On the following pages is a list of authorized teachers of Christian Science who currently teach Primary classes of instruction in Christian Science healing. Members of the most recent class have an asterisk () by their name.*

List of Christian Science teachers

Ahanonu,
Chiemezi Elvis *
Owerri, Nigeria

Ajayi,
Grace Ngoindai *
Akure, Nigeria

Arneth, Heike

Munich, Germany

Aubin, Edwina

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Baker, Ethel Ames

Buffalo, New York, US

Beattie, Mary

Canberra, Aust. Capital Territory, Australia

Beddoes-Mills, Beverley

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Benjamin, Louis E.

Durban area, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Berckmann, Warren T.

Sonoma County, California, US

Bikaï, James Pascal

Yaoundé, Cameroon

Bothwell, Mary

Pasadena area, California, US

Bouffé,

Anne-Françoise

Paris, France

Breuer, Susan

San Francisco Bay Area, California, US

Brown, Katie Sue

Fort Wayne, Indiana, US

Bulloch,

Georgia Powers

Austin area, Texas, US

Clague, Cynthia Lee

Eugene, Oregon, US

Clements,

Janet Heineman

Chicago area, Illinois, US

Coddington, Connie

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, US

Cole, Judy

Michigan, US

Collins,

Susan Steinemann

New York, New York, US

Colombini, Alessandra P.

São Paulo, Brazil

Concar, Pamela Joy

Orange County, California, US

Daglian, Melanie L. *

New York, New York, US

Dailey, Diane P.

Los Angeles, California, US

DeBolt, Pamela

Santa Rosa, California, US

Dickinson-Scott, Jane=

Scarborough, North Yorkshire, England

Douglass,

Colleen Feldmann

Eugene, Oregon, US

Driessen,

Christine Jenks

New York, New York, US

Dutenhoffer, Annette

Longmont, Colorado, US

Eichenberger, Jürg

Basel, Switzerland

Estes, Dorothy

Sacramento, California, US

Evans, Richard Hunt

Scottsdale, Arizona, US

Falso, Stormy Becker

Atlanta, Georgia, US

Farkas, Caryl Emra

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Mary Baker Eddy and Webster's 1828 dictionary

By Trustees of The Christian Science Publishing Society

In 2007, The Christian Science Publishing Society began selling Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, also known as Webster's 1828 dictionary. The goal at the time was to provide students of Christian Science and visitors to Christian Science Reading Rooms with additional study resources.

Interestingly, there's no record of Mary Baker Eddy using Webster's 1828 dictionary. For that reason, and because this and other historical dictionaries are available free online, we are discontinuing this product.

Mrs. Eddy did not narrowly confine her research to one reference book, and no single dictionary is key to understanding her writings or enabling a fuller and more effective practice of Christian Science. Useful information, including a list of dictionaries known to be owned by Mrs. Eddy, can be found in the article "What dictionaries did Mary Baker Eddy own?" on the Mary Baker Eddy Library website (mbelibrary.org/dictionaries). Scans of many of these titles are available on websites like archive.org, hathitrust.org, and google.com/books.

Adam H. Dickey, one of Mrs. Eddy's secretaries, saw firsthand her tendency to use several dictionaries: "She was unusually careful in her choice of words and would many times hold a letter for hours, refusing to allow it to go out until she had found the exact word to express her meaning. Sometimes two or three different dictionaries would be consulted, and then after the letter had been changed several times, she would recall it and make still another change" (*We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*, Expanded Edition, Vol. 2, p. 427).

The decision to discontinue Webster's 1828 dictionary is part of the continual effort of The Christian Science Publishing Society to review and give fresh

consideration to the reference materials we provide for sale in Reading Rooms.

2025 per capita tax message

By Lindsey J. Taylor

Dear Members of The Mother Church,

When I entered the Original Mother Church auditorium in June last year, I was struck by the simplicity of the inscription high on the wall above the Readers' platform: "God is Love," from First John.

On the platform itself is a complementary exclamation from Psalms: "Who is so great a God as our God" (77:13).

These few words from the Bible, so profoundly at the heart of Christian Science, express to me Mary Baker Eddy's deepest conviction about the nature of God and His love for every one of His children and, in turn, our love for Him.

Love reflected in love for humanity was remarkably evident in Mrs. Eddy's putting on record the Science of the Christ through her writings and her establishing The Church of Christ, Scientist. When the corner-stone for the Original Mother Church building was laid in 1894, she said: "Today I pray that divine Love, the life-giving Principle of Christianity, shall speedily wake the long night of materialism, and the universal dawn shall break upon the spire of this temple" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, p. 144).

So much more than a building, The Mother Church stands as a manifestation of divine Love meeting the human need for the spiritual understanding of Truth that frees from materialism and brings healing whenever and wherever it is needed. To me, it represents infinite Love embracing every member with

the truth that man is God's own spiritual expression reflecting the eternal perfection of God.

For as long as I can remember I have treasured Mother Church membership as an anchor in my life. A traditional ship's anchor has two prongs to secure it to the seabed to prevent the ship from drifting. I sometimes think of these prongs as the *Church Manual* and our ever-available pastor: the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.

Our Leader said of this pastor that its "pure Word contains only the living, health-giving Truth" (see Robert Peel, *The Years of Authority*, p. 72). In a world in which so much seems uncertain, I am grateful for the total assurance it gives us that God is Love and that "to infinite, ever-present Love, all is Love, and there is no error, no sin, sickness, nor death" (*Science and Health*, p. 567). What a blessing it is to know this and to let this inform our prayers for each other and for the world. I am also grateful to know that the spiritual truths presented in our pastor undergird each of the By-Laws in the *Church Manual*, which support us in practicing Christian Science effectively.

Our pastor, the *Church Manual*, and the activities the *Manual* establishes are truly divine Love's provisions. All that we give to support the Cause of Christian Science joyfully expresses our gratitude for every provision of Love encompassed by our Mother Church.

With love and appreciation for you all,

Lindsey J. Taylor

President of The Mother Church

Spiritual education and progress

By *Monica Passaglia*

Christ Jesus' teachings were intended to reveal spiritual reality to his followers, which leads to living in the kingdom of heaven on earth—the kingdom of spiritual harmony. How can we progress to gain a present perspective of this reality? We each have a spiritual sense that reveals what is real and good and brings healing and progress, so our first step should be to look for ways to educate that spiritual sense—to develop a true, spiritual view of God and the universe.

Christ Jesus gave us a critical starting point for advancing spiritually when he said, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein” (Mark 10:15).

Qualities often seen in children—such as humility, receptivity, and purity—open us to the spiritual sense of what is real. And those qualities are inherent in our true nature as children of our Father-Mother God, forever expressed by each one of us.

A childlike thought helps us to be receptive to putting off the falsehoods about God and man we've learned through education that's not based on understanding and demonstrating Spirit, God. Education gained through a mortal mentality trains us to believe in a limited, and ultimately false model of what is real. Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, illustrates the unreliability of this model, a material sense of things, when she writes about the history of Kaspar Hauser, a German boy who lived in the 19th century, “Incarcerated in a dungeon, where neither sight nor sound could reach him, at the age of seventeen Kaspar was still a mental infant, crying and chattering with no more intelligence than a babe...” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 194).

Mrs. Eddy goes on to say: “His case proves material sense to be but a belief formed by education alone. The light which affords us joy gave him a belief of intense pain.... After the babbling boy had been taught to speak a few words, he asked to be taken back to his dungeon, and said that he should never be happy elsewhere. Outside of dismal darkness and cold silence he found no peace.... All that he ate, except his black crust, produced violent retchings. All that gives pleasure to our educated senses gave him pain through those very senses, trained in an opposite direction.”

Material sense feels and perceives only what it is educated to believe. This false sense includes both good and evil, joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains, in which happiness and health seem fragile, sooner or later turning into suffering.

Spiritual education, on the other hand, develops our spiritual sense. Using this innate capacity of our real, God-created being, we can refuse to be impressed and misled by the material sense of things. When we turn to God to discover what is really happening, spiritual sense frees us from suffering by revealing the harmonious reality of God and man. Turning to God in prayer and study, we can feel the influence of Christ—God's divine idea that voices good alone, that restores the spiritual sense each one of us has as God's reflection. This brings healing to human situations.

Mrs. Eddy established a system of spiritual education based on the teachings of Christ Jesus. This educational approach helps us to follow Jesus' life example in practical ways, to experience the kingdom of God now, and to be Christian healers. By bringing out our spiritual sense, this inspired system of learning strengthens our ability to heal through prayer.

This education includes study of the weekly Bible Lessons published in the *Christian Science Quarterly*, which uncover the healing, transforming sense of the Bible's message; Sunday church services and Sunday School, which are based on those Bible Lessons; Wednesday testimony meetings, which give proof of the truths of Christian Science; Reading Rooms, where anyone can gain a spiritual perspective of reality; Primary class instruction with an authorized teacher of

Christian Science, which gives students deeper insights into healing themselves and others; and weekly and monthly magazines like this one.

Speaking about teaching others to heal, Mrs. Eddy comments, "You must first mentally educate and develop the spiritual sense or perceptive faculty by which one learns the metaphysical treatment of disease; you must teach them how to learn, together with what they learn" (*Christian Healing*, p. 14).

In this learning adventure, step by step we can discover new views about the beauty and infinity of God, the universe, and ourselves. These new views bring renewal to our experience.

When we learn to give up material ways of thinking and become willing to use spiritual sense to understand God; when we see in others only what is good and pure; when we forgive with humility; when we give up personal opinions; and when we love others so deeply that we devote our lives to healing and supporting our communities, then we show that we have accepted Jesus' instruction to become as a little child. When we take advantage of the many avenues Mrs. Eddy provided to educate ourselves spiritually, we discover how God loves and preserves us with laws of harmony and perfection. We discover more about our unlimited spiritual identity, which includes health, purity, and constantly unfolding good. We live an expansive life, in which we are blessed by blessing others.

Monica Passaglia
Guest Editorial Writer

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