



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 - December 2024

By Tony Lobl

Dear Friend,

Christmas moments. There was the moment Mary realized the unique way she would bear her first child. The moment Joseph was awakened to the need to take the child over the border into Egypt, out of harm's way. And the moment the Christ child was born to bring peace and goodwill to all.

Beyond being moments in time, these were moments of clarity—spiritual intuition and inspiration reaching hearts ready to receive them. These moments resulted in a momentous outcome for humanity—a Savior, *everyone's Savior*, had arrived to declare and demonstrate that the kingdom of heaven, the reign of God's flawless harmony, was right here on earth.

We don't need another visible Savior. Jesus proved the ever-presence of our invisible, eternal Savior, Christ, the truth of God, seen in the breadth and depth of what Christ is and does. More recently the Science of Christ, the promised Comforter, has shown us how to realize Christ-healing today as it was yesterday and will be forever.

What we do need is our own sacred moments of clarity—of material belief yielding to spiritual reality, ingrained error being uprooted by divine Truth, want or indulgence giving way to innocent abundance. In this *Journal* you'll find many such moments interwoven into the tapestry of ideas shared, affording proof that there is *never a moment* when man—our true identity—does not express God's perfection (see Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 470).

We wish you a Christmas filled with priceless moments of yielding to the living Christ.

Tony Lobl, Associate Editor

LETTERS

Readers respond

By Paula Bartlett, Yvette Gardner, Dana Nilsson, Barbara Nichols, Christopher Bowers

Ron Mangelsdorf, "The feeling is the healing," *Journal*, October 2024

What a wonder-filled experience showing how we can all look expectantly for signs of God's power and perfection. A bright light in the sky is not just reserved for the biblical nativity story. This so encourages us to expect to see signs of God in our own experience.

Christopher Bowers

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Susan Booth Mack Snipes, "God's creation is up and running," *Journal*, September 2024

What a wonderful article. I seemed to be struggling with despair over some things going on around me, which I knew God had to clear up for me. This article was a huge help and I'm most grateful to have it come to me to read.

Barbara Nichols

Camden, Maine, US

Tom McElroy, "How to promote Christian Science: Use your 'talent,'" *Journal*, August 2024

This article was awakening for me. I'd also assumed the value of the talents was a small amount. When it was described as about twenty years' income, I found that fascinating. I shared this with my husband, and he asked, "Does that change the meaning of the parable to you?" I thought for a moment and answered, "Yes!" I realized that if someone gave me twenty years of income, I might be the one to bury it. It was a wake-up call that our talents need to be invested and multiplied because of the great value to others, and we would not want to withhold that blessing. What God has given us is just too valuable to keep to ourselves. Knowing and appreciating this great value helps support me in the

sharing of talents, or letting my light shine. Thank you for the simple but powerful insight.

Dana Nilsson

Durango, Colorado, US

Abigail Mathieson Warrick, “Why is Christ the Way?” *Journal*, August 2024

What an amazing article. It is the exact instruction and guidance I need today. I’m deeply grateful for it.

Yvette Gardner

Lennox Head, New South Wales, Australia

Appreciation of the *Journal*

I genuinely appreciate the *Journal*. I read the whole *Journal*, and *Christian Science Sentinel*, every time. As I read the June issue, I wrote “Wow!” on several articles, and other notations on others that I found to be particularly inspiring, etc. Of course, I love all the *Journals* and *Sentinels* and find much inspiration and spiritual understanding in all of them. They are priceless to my husband’s and my demonstration of Christian Science.

Paula Bartlett

Sanger, Texas, US

Turning to head out, I heard the rich, distinct tones of a trumpet playing the first line of the Christmas carol “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.” I listened, and in moments the majestic sound of a brass octet resonated throughout the mall, one beautiful carol after another.

People from all walks of life stopped what they were doing and gathered around to listen. Families of shoppers, store owners, vendors with handcarts, and children of all ages sitting cross-legged on the floor, were all focused on the ensemble and the beauty of the music.

When the playing stopped, everyone dispersed except for a young child who remained still, focused on the wonder of the music, filled with the spirit of the season. Her joyful expression and demeanor woke me out of the disappointment I had been feeling. Had I been so wrapped up in my own thoughts that I had forgotten to see and cherish what I most loved about Christmas—that the universal Christ speaks in the darkest of places to every listening heart?

The innocence of that child was my Christmas gift. It shook me from a mental gloom and a focus on self. Later that day I sat under a spreading tropical tree and read several passages about Christmas and the eternal Christ from the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science. Thinking back to that little child in the mall and the wonder in her eyes, I was reminded of the pure thought of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus.

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to Jesus—the highest expression of the Christ-idea in human form—Mary received the news with meekness, wonder, and expectancy. “Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God,” the angel said. “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:30–33).

Although the virgin birth was something material sense could never understand, and the carnal mind or

FEATURE

Christmas and a childlike heart

By Dilshad Khambatta Eames

One Christmas season several years ago, I found myself feeling disappointed that I was missing the quiet and holy calm of Christmas—the pure sense of it I so loved. Anticipating being surrounded by a commercial atmosphere and feeling sorry for myself, I decided to take a walk and soon found myself in a crowded shopping mall.

worldly thinking would resist, even hate, Mary humbly received and welcomed it. With childlike willingness and wonder, she opened her heart to receive God's love and acknowledge His supremacy. She called herself "the handmaid of the Lord," and her conversation with Gabriel ended with her yielding to God's purpose in these loving words: "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). And after Jesus' birth, when God had announced the good news to the shepherds and they came to see the babe, Mary understood that she was witnessing something much larger than herself. She "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

Because of her purity and spiritual sense, Mary glimpsed a sacred and profound truth about Life as Spirit, God. Mrs. Eddy explains it this way: "The illumination of Mary's spiritual sense put to silence material law and its order of generation, and brought forth her child by the revelation of Truth, demonstrating God as the Father of men. The Holy Ghost, or divine Spirit, overshadowed the pure sense of the Virgin-mother with the full recognition that being is Spirit" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 29).

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). Mary's purity and spiritual sense enabled her to discern the Christ. And our God-given spiritual sense enables each one of us to be receptive to the eternal Christ speaking to the human consciousness, telling us that our purity is absolute. This purity comes from the spiritual fact that we are each the reflection of God, the one divine Mind, Love. As we recognize and cherish this fact, the Christ asserts itself in consciousness and embraces us in its fullness—the unity of good. Its unseen presence is here, now, constantly knocking on the door of thought and appearing with power and grace, telling us what's spiritually true and real in the universe of divine Love.

At this very moment the Christ is breaking through fear and hatred to make tangible the Holy Spirit, or Comforter, with us. The word *comfort* is derived from a Late Latin word meaning "to strengthen, restore strength to, invigorate, cure" (merriam-webster.com). This Comforter, promised by Jesus, strengthens us by

revealing and reassuring us of our immortality and God's eternal relation to us, His beloved children. This is "Immanuel, or 'God with us'" (*Science and Health*, p. xi), today and forever.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul speaks of "the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Corinthians 11:3). This simplicity is the unadulterated, pure manifestation of God, free from deceit and duplicity. The simplicity that is in Christ delivers us from the entanglement of worldly woes and temptations, freeing us to realize our true identity—the pure expression of Soul.

A testimony reprinted in Mrs. Eddy's *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896* says, "Truth is, and ever has been, simple; and because of its utter simplicity, we in our pride and selfishness have been looking right over it." This testifier experienced that Christ, Truth, comes to us in the "simplicity of demonstration" (p. 469). It is witnessed in our daily living when we're open to God's grace.

The darkness and hatred of the Herod-thought has attempted to mock, dethrone, and destroy God's Christ, both before and after the birth of Jesus. It still tries to today. But "the simplicity that is in Christ" obliterates the Herod-thought, or carnal mind. It keeps our "eye" single—focused on God (see Matthew 6:22).

The child-heart sees good as natural, and expects it! Far from being naive, that heart is authentic, trusting, and original—rooted in God. Mrs. Eddy writes: "Children are more tractable than adults, and learn more readily to love the simple verities that will make them happy and good.

"Jesus loved little children because of their freedom from wrong and their receptiveness of right" (*Science and Health*, p. 236).

That's exactly why children are receptive to the true meaning of Christmas—the eternal unfolding of God's wonderful Christ, or Truth, bringing "peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). As we nurture childlike qualities in ourselves, we become more receptive, too.

Several years ago, I was suddenly overcome with dizziness, nausea, and pain, and couldn't function. I

was a Reader at my branch Church of Christ, Scientist, and had to prepare to conduct the Wednesday evening testimony meeting, so I reached out to God, yearning to feel my oneness with Him. I longed for His justice, kindness, and peace, and for the security and healing that come from realizing His Father-Motherhood.

What came to thought was to gratefully and cheerfully defend the work I was doing by acknowledging the divine authority for the office of Reader and loving our church congregation more than ever. Then, like a child, I simply trusted the Christ to lead me. I let go of a false, personal sense of responsibility; it simply washed itself away. I felt my rightful innocence and worth. With renewed courage I was impelled to prepare for the service, and very quickly I regained strength and complete normalcy.

The undying Christ transcends time, space, borders, cultures, and all man-made divisions. It is forever here to heal and to save us from sinful, material beliefs that the world may impose on us. If you are yearning for healing in your life, listen for the angel that says, "Fear not." Listen for the Gabriel that ministers individually to you, the "servant of the Lord." He's telling you what he told Mary: "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

Perhaps the pure thought of that little child in the mall heard and felt the same wonderful message. The universal Christ message speaks to the child-heart in each one of us through "the simplicity that is in Christ." It humbles, softens, and heals. It opens our eyes to the all-inclusive love of God, bringing peace, joy, and healing to *all*.

Sharing Christian Science means sharing what you love

By Schuyler Sackett, Erika Parrish-Wilcox, Bill Carawan, Masiah Wess, interviewed by the Journal's Tony Lobl

Do you find it daunting to share Christian Science with others? On a recent Sentinel Watch podcast, the hosts who welcome visitors to the Christian Science Plaza in Boston discuss talking about Christian Science with newcomers, and how it's really just about sharing what they love. The following is an edited and abbreviated transcript of their conversation. To listen to the full podcast, go to cssentinel.com/sharing-cs-sharing-love.

Tony Lobl: I have four people here from the Church's Plaza Activities team who look after and welcome visitors to the *How Do You See the World?* experience and those taking tours at The Mother Church. I understand that the Christian Science Plaza is now one of the top destinations in Boston. So, Erika Parrish-Wilcox, Bill Carawan, Schuyler Sackett, and Masiah Wess, in your role as hosts you are meeting many members of the public to whom Christian Science may be a totally new concept.

Schuyler Sackett: Absolutely. Each day we're encountering people who are unfamiliar with Christian Science and having wonderful interactions with them.

Bill Carawan: We find that when they take the tours, they can't get enough. They just want to know everything, particularly about the healings. They love the healings.

Masiah Wess: One day a woman who had just visited the Mapparium asked me, "Can you explain what Christian Science is?" So I told her about Mrs. Eddy and her discovery of Christian Science in 1866 after prayer healed her of a life-threatening injury. I also spoke a bit about the importance of understanding what God is and

the relationship we each have to God as His spiritual expression.

Erika Parish Wilcox: I love having the opportunity to be with these people. They are so genuinely interested in finding out what Christian Science is. I had a couple from Spain the other day, and the woman said to me, “Mary Baker Eddy really could heal? I want to know more about that!” And after they watched the video about Mrs. Eddy, she wanted to know about her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. They even took the time to go upstairs to The Mary Baker Eddy Library.

I try to relate to visitors in such a way that they will understand what I’m talking about. Working as a host is a great opportunity to share what I love and what has blessed me.

Have you ever heard back from any of the people you’ve interacted with and learned that they’ve pursued the study of Christian Science? I’ve often shared Christian Science with people I’ve met on my travels, and every once in a while someone gets back in touch and it’s clear their life has gone in a different direction because they’ve learned about the Science of Christ.

Bill: All of us have that experience every now and then.

Erika: We get a lot of students from the colleges in this area, and they often come back and bring their friends or their parents. We tell people about the Christian Science Reading Room. There’s a Reading Room around the corner from the exhibits, and the staff there shares fruitage with us, telling us that people came over and bought *Science and Health* or asked questions.

We also make a point of sharing the *Journal* with visitors and showing them the Directory in the back where the Christian Science branch churches and Reading Rooms are listed, so they can find one in their area.

I had an experience once where I had been working with someone for a couple of years, and eventually we had a conversation about Christian Science. And the next day they came back and said, “I walk past a Christian Science church every day on my way to work, and I’d never seen it before.” I think

the work you’re doing is going to open people’s eyes to see that they actually do have a local Reading Room or branch church around the corner from them that they might not have noticed.

Schuyler: Something I always keep in thought is that every encounter with a visitor is a divine appointment. You’re speaking with this person for a reason, though you may not know at the time how things are going to connect.

Recently I audited a Church tour, following along to be an extra set of hands to help out because it was a large group that included a number of families with children. I was sitting toward the back of the group, and one young girl seemed very restless and was making loud, disruptive noise. I realized I needed to do something. So I prayed, and it came to me that there was nobody on the tour but God’s children, and nothing was happening but the activity of Love. That was all it took, because the girl settled down and was totally quiet, and the tour proceeded.

Later on, some of the hosts who’d been conducting the tour mentioned that a woman had approached them afterward and explained that her daughter was autistic. The mother was very interested in the Sunday School. She took a copy of *Science and Health*, and wanted all the information she could get about the Reading Room and the periodicals. That family had just come by happenstance. They’d been looking for something else in the area and saw that the Church was offering a tour, so that’s why they were there.

Erika: Some visitors tell us about challenges in their lives, or maybe a loved one is in the hospital and they want to know how to pray. One woman had been in a hurricane that was very destructive, and she just felt drawn to our church. When she came in, she said she felt so embraced by love and so comforted. She sat quietly for a while and then started talking with us about how much it meant to her to find a sense of peace after what she had been through. She also wanted to know about Christian Science and took a lot of literature at the end of the tour.

This kind of thing happens over and over. There are many people searching and hungering to feel God’s love

for them and to get a spiritual perspective—to see what God sees and find comfort and peace.

Sometimes people love Christian Science but don't feel comfortable talking about it with others. What tips would you give them? A man named Alfred Farlow represented the Church in the time when Mary Baker Eddy was here. Mrs. Eddy loved his approach because he didn't throw a lot of Christian Science jargon at people. He was always trying to speak in a way that made sense to them, not in a way that said, "You've got to listen to what I want to tell you in the way I want to tell it." What have you learned through your interactions about ways to engage with people that help them see the beauty of what you have to share?

Bill: I get so full of love for these people that I feel ready to burst! When you love people, you're genuinely interested in everything to do with them—where they're from, what they do for a living. And you're going to listen for divine Love's guidance so you can tell them what they need to hear. We all experience this.

Erika: We're not trying to convert anybody. We're just sharing what we love, the truth that blesses and heals, and they can feel that. They'll say, "I understand why, if you experienced a healing like that, you would want to be a Christian Scientist."

Masiah: What's really precious, too, is understanding that the person approaching you is the right person for you to have a conversation with. They're being led to you, and they'll be receptive to what you have to share. If you can share one of your own healings or someone else's—something that has impacted you and that you appreciate—it goes a long way toward finding something this person can relate to.

That's lovely. I always go back to a statement Mary Baker Eddy makes in *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*: "When the heart speaks, however simple the words, its language is always acceptable to those who have hearts" (p. 262).

Masiah: That reminds me that in our work it feels as if there's no language barrier. Someone who comes up to

me might know Mandarin and a little bit of English, yet we're able to have a conversation and they walk away inspired.

Erika: I love using the translations of *Science and Health* in those situations, because on one side is English and on the other side is the other language. The couple from Madrid that I mentioned earlier didn't speak English very well, but I took a Spanish *Science and Health* and showed them the chapter "Christian Science Practice" in their language. And they couldn't wait to get the book and read it so they could find out about the practice of Christian Science.

There are 17 translations of *Science and Health* now, plus Braille and a couple of non-finalized translations.

Bill: Something else that means a lot to every one of us is this statement in *Science and Health*: "Millions of unprejudiced minds—simple seekers for Truth, weary wanderers, athirst in the desert—are waiting and watching for rest and drink. Give them a cup of cold water in Christ's name, and never fear the consequences" (p. 570).

Erika: Absolutely. It may seem difficult at times. Maybe you're feeling that someone isn't quite receptive. But when they feel the genuine love you're expressing, it often just melts that resistance away. And then they have a wonderful sharing with you.

So, Schuyler, of the tens of thousands of visitors every year, many of them come in not understanding or knowing about Christian Science. Is that the vast majority?

Schuyler: Yes.

But mostly it sounds like you have very constructive and positive interactions.

Schuyler: Oh, yes. Each interaction is twice blessed—it blesses the giver and the receiver. And that "cup of cold water" is something we think about every day. What is there to stop you from sharing a cup of cold water? Go ahead and do it!

Christian Science is a very different approach to health than medical practice, but you often have people from the medical professions, nurses and doctors, coming in. Are there any interactions with them?

Bill: Yes, all the time. To me, that's a special opportunity to let them know how much we appreciate their love for their fellow beings and desire to help them, even though we go in a different direction through spiritual healing.

Schuyler: Recently, there were two medical nurses visiting Boston. They were fascinated by everything they heard on the Church tour, which includes a description of how Mary Baker Eddy discovered Christian Science and founded the Church. They said that through their experience as nurses, they had already realized that the patient's state of mind is an important factor in healing. These nurses were both Christians, though from a different denomination, and they were very open to everything they were learning here.

What Christian Science offers is not just an understanding of how to keep a positive outlook. It's actually a spiritual perception, which is such a different way of looking at life.

Bill: A lot of times I tell people that Christian Science doesn't just cure problems, it prevents them. And then I always get a big laugh when I say, "I've been disgustingly healthy all my life, and I give Christian Science full credit for that."

I used to do media work for the Church, and I was working with an independent consultant who is not a Christian Scientist. I invited him to a meeting with a bunch of Christian Scientists who were doing local media work. There were about thirty of us in the room, and some of these people were pretty senior. We were trying to convince him that the fact we'd had all these healings was impressive. And he was saying, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." And then halfway through the meeting, he realized that no one in that room had taken drugs or had surgery for decades, and yet they were healthy, they were vibrant, they were engaged. And that absolutely

blew his mind. And he said, "That's what you should be sharing!" I think his point was that Christian Science is working. Christian Science is not a health-care product; it's a way of understanding ourselves in relation to God that keeps us healthy and promotes our spiritual growth, and it's within the reach of anyone.

Erika: A doctor from Russia wanted to find out about healing through prayer, and I shared a Russian *Science and Health* with him. He was especially interested in the chapter "Science, Theology, Medicine." At the end of the tour he opened the book and started reading. He was with a group of other Russians and was reading it as he was walking out the door. It was like he had found the most precious thing he could ever find. You could tell that.

I love that chapter, "Science, Theology, Medicine." We get people asking, "Why is it a science?" They really want to know. We also get theologians who are interested in hearing about healing and about how Jesus healed. So it's a good chapter to share.

So, Masiah, you're a lot younger than most of us here around the table. How long did it take you to feel comfortable sharing in the way you are now?

Masiah: Well, at first I wasn't comfortable. But my coworkers were extremely supportive and inspiring. Learning from them is what helped me gain the confidence to have more conversations about Christian Science with our visitors. Reading articles in the *Christian Science Sentinel* helped too. Anything that builds upon your knowledge and experience of Christian Science is beneficial. After I had Christian Science class instruction, I felt more comfortable talking to other people about Christian Science. Sometimes I hear people on the street say, "Oh, this is the Scientology Plaza." And I say, "Actually, this is the Christian Science Plaza, and there are some really neat exhibits that you can see." Before, I was hesitant to speak up about Christian Science to strangers, but now it feels natural talking about it.

That's beautiful. Any last experiences anyone would like to share?

Erika: One young woman wanted to know how to heal so she could do something good in the world. Not only was she interested in finding out about the textbook, but she also wanted to know what Christian Science class instruction is. She had learned that you can take a class from a Christian Science teacher and learn how to heal, and that we have Christian Science practitioners available to anyone who wants prayerful treatment. I showed her where the teachers and practitioners are listed in the *Journal*. The world is hungering to know about this Science. We can see that when they come in the door.

Schuyler: Yes, exactly. I'm thinking of another tour that I was auditing a while ago. I was sitting at the back, and an Indian man, I believe a Hindu, quietly came up to me and asked me in a whisper, "What does that mean?" He nodded toward Jesus' statement on the wall of The Mother Church, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). I thought, "That's a big question." But I took a gulp and started talking about how Christian Scientists understand the concept of truth, and what freedom could mean.

The man's daughter was on the tour, which was finishing, and we ended up going outside. It was a beautiful evening, and we were standing beside the reflecting pool on the Plaza and must have talked for half an hour about the synonyms for God and about how the truth of understanding our nature as reflecting divine Spirit can change our lives and make us free. He wanted to go to the Reading Room, get *Science and Health*, and explore everything that was available there. And it all just came from him looking at that statement and wanting to know what it meant.

Beautiful, thank you. And thank you all for sharing.

Christmas and courage

By Curtis Wahlberg

To address humanity's great needs will clearly take something stronger and deeper than anything the human mind can come up with. From violence to disease to climate change, humanity isn't sufficiently solving the essential problem of being human, apparently subject to material limits and unending conflict. But here's where Christmas answers the need. It points us to God, Spirit—not just as a beautiful thought but as an ever-present power that brings to light the true idea of Life so that we can face what's wrong in the world and heal it.

More than presents and a decorated tree, Christmas is a celebration of how Christ Jesus entered the world through the loving power of God. Beyond that, it's a celebration of what this power did in Jesus' life and what it does in ours. This power we call Christ, and it's forever revealing a more spiritual idea of being—the essence of which is God's qualities, such as intelligence, grace, and purpose.

Christ, the spiritual idea of Life, is always at work in human consciousness, and it carries us forward toward more spiritually based, secure lives marked by divine harmony and courageous love. Courageous because right in the face of the limiting, matter-based view of everything, we feel inspired to hold to a conviction of and devotion to Spirit, God, including the hope of seeing God's goodness at work impelling changes that are so urgently needed in the world.

The Christmas story is filled with testaments to the spiritual courage that we need. Mary had the quiet strength that kept her devoted to serving God, devoted to a more spiritual sense of life than the world offered. She was willing to believe and prepare for something revolutionary—conceiving and bearing the Bethlehem babe as a virgin—which went totally against human reasoning and material "laws." Joseph found the willingness to support this right idea, and later to heed

an angel's warning to flee from Herod to protect the baby.

All of this enabled the advent of Jesus of Nazareth, which blessed and changed the world. Today we need to build on those changes by also having the courage to go against worldly thinking and serve God, by recognizing divine Spirit as the origin and Life of all. This results in lives more filled with God's good qualities and the healing that these qualities bring about in our bodies and our entire experience.

This willingness to push against the flow of general thought has saved me on more than a couple of occasions. A few years ago it proved to be key in healing chest pains that I had experienced for some time. As I had for many years, I looked to see prayer take care of this problem.

I always pray from the basis of God, infinite Love, as the essence of our lives. This basis for thinking and praying can be comforting and healing. But I find it needs to keep expanding—to be fully thought through in order to keep healing us, empowering us.

As I did consider this spiritual basis more thoroughly and deeply, I saw clearly that, because God is both Life and Love, our lives should be a selfless expression of Love. Looked at this way, we're not thinking in terms of simply wanting a comfortable, pleasant experience for ourselves, but rather of having a life-purpose of helping to show forth the spiritual nature of Life, and thereby contributing to bigger, broader progress for everyone. In doing this we're embracing and living the very essence of Christmas.

As I prayed, I sensed that my heart is entirely intended to beat for humanity's spiritual progress. My metaphorical "motor" is not intended to pursue and enable only what is good for me. That's a mortal model that loses the strength of the Love that undergirds the universe. Our "motor" is of God. So it's intended to keep us moving in accord with Him. I sensed that if I wanted my heart to beat strongly, I needed to see more of our innate, spiritual strength that enables us to do more today for God, good, than we did yesterday. Really, I

was getting a bigger sense of Love, the divine Spirit of our lives.

This all changed my consciousness, improving my health and strength. I stopped having those chest pains. And since then, I've even more prioritized striving for understanding God and expressing His love. By this I mean not seeking the easy and enjoyable, but facing tough situations with the intent of seeing them redeemed, healed, so as to magnify God. This is the deep Christmas courage that the world needs, and that individually and collectively will save us from our troubles.

If we want more strength and health for ourselves and humanity, we need to keep finding more of our innate courage that means not simply wanting good for ourselves but wanting a sea change for the world. It's a courage that keeps our focus on the light we're bringing to the room we're in, as witnesses to the spiritual idea that's always in consciousness. It's a trust that everything gets taken care of in our efforts to really love, to truly bear witness to Christ, the spiritual idea of God. It's the courage to see that this idea, rather than the state of the world or any physical conditions we face, defines us individually and collectively. As a result, we help change the world, heal the world.

The consciousness of Love, moving us to express Love, is our true, Christly consciousness. So we need to be caught up in evidencing more of God in our lives, pushing past oppressive thoughts suggesting that only matter determines everything—suggesting that we are left merely to jockey for a pleasant corner to hang out in.

God's qualities, including the courage evident in the nativity story, are what move us forward. And as this deeper, Christly courage is more broadly understood and lived, it brings us to the spiritual consciousness that has solutions to everything and will help secure humanity's health, face down wars, and lift us free of the trauma of climate change.

This is deeply biblical stuff. It's the ascendancy of supreme good over all evil. It's the beautiful spiritual truth revealed in Christ Jesus' nativity gaining strength in our thought and winning out over the ugly lie about

man as dependent on matter. Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34). Isn’t this sword the spiritual understanding that cuts us free from material thinking, an understanding that very much requires the courage to stand for Truth that the Christmas message gives us?

Mary Baker Eddy writes, “After the stars sang together and all was primeval harmony, the material lie made war upon the spiritual idea; but this only impelled the idea to rise to the zenith of demonstration, destroying sin, sickness, and death, and to be caught up unto God, —to be found in its divine Principle” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 565).

We see the spiritual idea more fully represented, rising in demonstration, by means of Christ Jesus’ life. It’s this higher idea of Life that we celebrate at Christmas. And every day we can each see it more fully represented in our own and others’ lives.

Scientifically pruning our thought —today!

By Lynn G. Jackson

While growing up, I often had the opportunity to watch a relative draw and paint beautiful characters and scenes. He had a talent and an eye for line, space, color, and light. And to please me, he would draw a Disney cartoon character at my request.

I loved watching him draw a line, erase a little and adjust it, put in a tree, then take it out, over and over. Effectively, he was “pruning” his artwork, adjusting it to his mental eye, until his piece was finished.

Often these experiences with that relative come to mind, because now I understand that his pruning or adjusting of the artwork, until the model in his thought

came forth, points to lessons about healing in Christian Science.

The healing experience in Christian Science often entails thinking anew about a particular circumstance, event, or belief. It requires letting go of or erasing from thought incorrect beliefs about God and man, His sons and daughters. And it requires replacing such incorrect beliefs with the right, spiritual idea of man and God. This is accomplished through gaining a better understanding of God and our relation to Him. Toward that end, the Bible counsels, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8).

Drawing closer to God, leaving off false concepts of ourselves as mortals for the spiritual facts of our true selves, is scientific pruning. Spiritual facts, such as that God is good and gives only good, are based in Scripture and were taught by Christ Jesus. Accepted and understood as being true and right, they naturally replace the false and wrong, dissolving whatever errors are parading in our consciousness. Hatred is replaced with love, sin with purity, egotism with humility.

This scientific “pruning” erases the false belief from consciousness, and the right idea is revealed. Only purity and goodness are present in the perfect man. When we express this purity and goodness in consciousness, we see it simultaneously expressed in the body.

As the image of God, man is God’s idea. God knows man as His creation. God understands man as being His very likeness. He outlines man in His beauty and perfection.

Everyone on earth, though, has something in thought that needs correcting or pruning. Sometimes it may feel as though whatever is incorrect in belief, or whatever sin we’re facing, needs substantial correction and we’ve been living with it awhile. The spiritual pruning involved in leaving behind false traits and putting on God-given qualities, with the purpose of becoming more Godlike, develops our spiritual sense and deepens our understanding. This fulfillment of constant spiritual growth need not wait for a better time, a better place, or a better situation. Our continued

spiritual growth, uncovering our Godlikeness, can go on right now, under any circumstance.

Through dedicated, scientific prayer, we develop what we could call our “spiritual muscles.” Then errors within thought are dissolved, and we experience healing. It’s not a matter of trying to think better from a material perspective or to superficially replace hatred with love, but it’s a matter of entertaining scientific, right thoughts that are based on spiritual truth, based on man as God’s image, and God as man’s Mind. Then, with uplifted thought, we know what is real and true, and the false is naturally pruned away.

Within each one of us, as God’s child, is the presence of Christ, the healing power of God. It is this Christ’s revealing within us what is real, that naturally and divinely prunes away all that is false—all fear, sin, and disease. As we yield to this Christly action, allowing thought to be altered for the better, our true nature is revealed. Our true identity is expressed.

The pruning experience spiritually forges us. The divine requirement to wipe sin out of thought and so out of practice, necessitates that we come to see the unreality of evil and sin. It demands, in other words, that we spiritually understand God as All, and evil and sin as nothing. Whatever we’re facing, the spiritual goal is to gain a better understanding of our relation to divine Mind, God, as His image. The result is disbelief in evil and sin, which has the effect of casting them out of consciousness as unreal. Then the so-called problem, which before may have felt everlasting, is destroyed.

Mary Baker Eddy writes, “Disbelief in error destroys error, and leads to the discernment of Truth” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 346). Our disbelief in error is not an ignorance of error, but a spiritual discernment of the reality or power of Truth. It is a disbelief in any power opposed to God. It is a turning away from the din of materialism to the sweet chorus of spiritual being, man at-one with God.

Years ago, I experienced occasional bouts with what I believed to be eczema. Each time I would pray, and quickly or slowly the skin would clear up and all would be well. Then, at some point it would come back with a vengeance and be evident to others. During this time

I prayed to see impatience replaced by patience, fear replaced by trust, agitation by calmness, and most important to this situation, the belief of mortal heredity replaced by an understanding that inheritance comes only from God, good.

Studying a Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* that refuted the theological belief in everlasting punishment encouraged me, as it also dispelled the belief in unhealable mortal heredity that seemed to have been placed on me, and I was now realizing that that belief didn’t have to go on indefinitely and could be healed. Knowing that these false beliefs needed to be pruned through scientific prayer if the eczema was going to be healed once and for all, I turned to God to gain a clearer understanding of my relation to Him as His child. Spiritual, right thinking opens the door of thought to the action of Truth, which dissolves erroneous beliefs. It naturally advances us in our understanding. And it results in permanent healing.

While a challenge we are experiencing may seem long and arduous to us, it’s certainly not everlasting. How long will this spiritual pruning go on? Mrs. Eddy answers in one of the tenets of Christian Science: “But the belief in sin is punished so long as the belief lasts” (*Science and Health*, p. 497).

How would this apply in my circumstance, since the belief I was dealing with claimed to be primarily hereditary rather than the result of a substantial moral sin I had committed? To me, the passage applies not just to moral fault, but to any false belief we are holding. Once any false belief is gone, what is left to produce negative effects? Once it’s over—it’s over! Spiritual pruning of thought is an enriching spiritual activity that blesses us, because it lifts all that is erroneous away from our understanding of our real and true selfhood.

This healing took some time. It wasn’t easy. With every flare-up or moment of intense discomfort, I sought to prune my thought of all that was false. Over a couple of years, I gradually began to recognize several false traits in thought as subtle, unwarranted suggestions, and whenever they appeared I would pray right then and there to express my natural, God-given patience,

trust, calmness, all rooted in my true, pure heritage. I knew that thought is manifested in experience, and that it was important to let my thought be governed by divine Love, God. Holding to this line of prayer, I was completely healed of this belief and have had no recurrence of it for many decades.

To reiterate, this is a key point in our active spiritual pruning: To be free of suffering from an erroneous belief, we must allow the belief to be destroyed by truth. It's important to understand that the suffering is not from an all-loving God, but from a mistaken belief we are holding in thought about God or His expression. Once this mistaken belief is scientifically and prayerfully corrected by truth, it is destroyed, and healing occurs.

Mrs. Eddy has this to say about refuting all that is erroneous: "The refutation becomes arduous, not because the testimony of sin or disease is true, but solely on account of the tenacity of belief in its truth, due to the force of education and the overwhelming weight of opinions on the wrong side,—all teaching that the body suffers, as if matter could have sensation" (*Science and Health*, p. 396). Advancing out of the erroneous belief that life is in matter and matter is real, we find a newborn understanding giving us tangible, healing results.

Just as my relative pruned his artwork, we, too, can learn to scientifically and prayerfully prune our thinking of all erroneous concepts, such as hatred, fear, and anxiety. In doing so, we are formed anew by the Christ at work in us, turning us from earthly beliefs and limitations and their debased elements to Spirit and its holy qualities of thought and action. Rejoicing that there is no incurable state of consciousness, we each can spiritually prune our thought today and find healing through scientific, right prayer that understands God as All.

Pathways to the practice

The Journal is pleased to offer readers the second in an occasional column from the Office of Christian Science Practitioner Activities at The Mother Church in Boston. "Pathways to the practice" is autobiographical. While the contributors, presented here as two anonymous authors, are now experienced Christian Science practitioners, they were not yet listed in the directories of the *Journal* or *The Christian Science Herald* when they humbly accepted their first requests for Christian Science treatment—and got right to work! Below, in their own words, these 21st-century healers trace the heart's and mind's response to Christ Jesus' unambiguous call: "Heal the sick." It is our hope that readers will be encouraged, step by step, to renew their own commitment to scientific Christian healing in the 21st century, and to share this priceless gift of God's grace with all humanity.

Author 1: I was raised in a faith tradition where God was to be loved, worshiped, thanked, feared, and obeyed. My early religious influences were lovely, devout, sincere people. But any talk of God's love seldom went beyond Jesus' death on the cross. I was taught that God's love could be stripped away from us at any moment for the slightest transgression and that God loves only some people. Accordingly, I felt alienated from God, and for a time I doubted His wisdom in creating a sinful, unlovable universe, and I even doubted His presence.

When I began to study Christian Science and learned that God is Love itself, and that the true, spiritual man is the offspring of God, I wanted to know more. As I've come to know God as the intelligent, loving Principle of all that really is, I've seen and felt that love that I was so longing to feel, and I've felt closer to God.

The Bible tells us: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). And *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy says: "Love for God and man is the true incentive in both healing and teaching" (p. 454). That word *incentive* stuck out to me in a new way recently. When we think of an incentive, it is a motivating factor, a reward. As we "draw nigh to God" in helping and healing mankind, we become

more receptive to and more aware of His love, and in turn, we love Him and mankind more. It forms a cycle. Or, as Mrs. Eddy discovered and shared with us as the spiritual sense of a line in the Lord's Prayer: "And Love is reflected in love" (*Science and Health*, p. 17).

I once heard a Christian Science lecturer say something to the effect that love is like five loaves and two fishes—it might seem like too little until you start giving it away. And so, as I began to feel and tangibly experience God's love, the desire to share it grew. First, I served my branch Church of Christ, Scientist, by trimming bushes and cutting grass. Then I became a church member. Then I served as a Reader, and later I served on the board, and I continued to serve in many other ways. Each of these expressions of love resulted in understanding God more and in experiencing more love. So now I share this love with others in the full-time practice of Christian Science healing.

Before taking this step, there were many challenges to overcome—seeming lack of time, money, and understanding, as well as feelings of unworthiness. New challenges seemed to emerge every day. But I handled each one by recognizing it as a false belief that had no basis, no reality in God, divine Love, who supplies us with abundant love as we share it with others. One by one, each challenge fell to the wayside.

As each imposition appeared and disappeared, I thought of the words of a practitioner who spoke at the Annual Meeting of the members of The Mother Church one year and asked, "What are you waiting for?"

Since entering the full-time practice of Christian Science, I've experienced fuller and faster spiritual growth than I've ever known. New opportunities to love and to serve appear all the time, and as God, Principle, guides, I follow.

Challenges become less impressive as Love lifts our thoughts to the mountaintop, where we see them disappear. And as our "love for God and man" grows, we progress. As *Science and Health* says, "... progress is the law of God, whose law demands of us only what we can certainly fulfil" (p. 233).

So, to anyone wanting to feel closer to God and man, more loved and more loving, I say: What are you waiting for?

Author 2: Early in my public practice, I received a voicemail from a patient who felt like she intellectually understood the concept of God, but she wanted some pointers on how to feel God's presence deeply. I started to prepare my response while reading the Bible Lesson for that week from the *Christian Science Quarterly*. I was thinking about all the different ways I could talk to the caller about prayer.

I soon realized that I should "practice what I preach." Rather than preparing tips to give this person about how to feel God's presence, I could just do those things myself. The first thing I did was set a timer for ten minutes, clear my thought of doubts and fears, and pray. I got so many great thoughts about turning to the Bible—lifting thought and then opening to see what God has to tell us. At first, I thought this is what I should tell the caller.

I called the patient back, but she didn't pick up. So once again I realized I needed to practice what I preach. I lifted my thought to God, and I opened the Bible to the book of Isaiah and read: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (35:4, 5). The whole chapter is wonderful, but these verses were especially meaningful to me. It's a great statement of the simplicity of treatment. It stopped my fear.

I called the patient again. She said that while she had been waiting for me to call back, she had the inspiration to "let God," and felt immediately relaxed and uplifted by God's presence. She said she had felt the impact of my prayer. We rejoiced together. I didn't need to say anything I had prepared—I just needed to realize I was being called to listen to God myself.

This wonderful lesson was reinforced by another experience a few weeks later. On a call, a patient told me she didn't like reading the Bible or the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health*. She said she only

liked reading the Christian Science periodicals. I didn't say anything, but I knew that the patient would be led to appreciate these books.

At that time, I had been reading *Science and Health* with fresh eyes, as if I were a new student of Christian Science—really grappling with it. I knew for myself how special and important that book is, and felt it natural for others to see that, too.

The patient called again the next day. This time, she was head-over-heels in love with *Science and Health!* She highlighted some specific phrases that she found inspiring, and I mentioned that those passages came straight from the Bible. She explained that her parents had used the Bible in a negative way during her upbringing, but rereading those passages in the context of *Science and Health* made her see them in a new light.

Experiences such as these helped me to see more clearly that divine Love, our Father-Mother, is naturally speaking to both practitioner and patient. The textbook counsels us to "... pour in truth through flood-tides of Love" (p. 201). Divine Love guides the practitioner's prayerful treatment. And this guidance perfectly includes when to speak with the patient and what to say. The practitioner humbly listens to God and knows the truth of the message they're receiving so deeply and unselfishly that the patient naturally feels blessed and benefited.

As a practitioner, I love considering what Mary Baker Eddy once said to one of her students: "Get your heart right with the heart of God. That is what heals the sick. Get right yourself. Now, you get a practice and know that it is not you that heals, but that it is getting right yourself" (*We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*, Expanded Edition, Vol. I, p. 356). And I always cherish these words from our textbook: "If Spirit or the power of divine Love bear witness to the truth, this is the ultimatum, the scientific way, and the healing is instantaneous" (p. 411).

The welcoming light of church

By Joan Sherman Hunt

One wintry Sunday night, as I walked to a church service, the dark city streets were being blanketed by white, heavy snow. As I turned the final corner on my walk, I suddenly saw the welcoming lights of our church.

The church looked magnificent, ablaze with light through the snow and darkness. I thought, "What is this lovely lighted structure saying to me and to all those in my city tonight? Why, it's saying, 'Welcome! Come and see! Come and see this light of Christ voicing good—the divine message from God to man that has echoed through the ages.'"

This light of Christ, appearing as a bright star, impelled the wise men to come and see the baby Jesus. The same light inspired Philip, who told his friend Nathanael to "come and see" the prophesied Christ (see John 1:45, 46). And it was shown to John the Baptist's disciples who came and saw Christ Jesus cure the blind and sick (see Luke 7:19–23). The call to come, see, and be healed is the glorious, gracious calling of the Christ.

Today, this Christly method of healing through God is the message that Churches of Christ, Scientist, call us to come and see. It was the message calling out to me on that dark snowy night. And the brightness of not only the church but the Christ that it represents, spoke to my heart. Through that Christ light, I immediately felt enveloped in divine Love and filled with joy.

You see, I had been walking very slowly, not only because of the mounds of snow but because I was feeling ill and discouraged, even beginning to worry about the wisdom of stepping out on that cold night. But the heavy sense of discouragement left me and I was no longer conscious of the chilly night; I felt the warmth of God's goodness, the healing power of Christ.

As I approached the threshold of the church, I was reminded that so many wonderful workers had walked these steps over the years and had felt the same uplift, the same holy presence of Christ, Truth, that I was

feeling at that moment, warming away the winter chill. My discouragement was gone and so was my worry and illness.

What had healed me that night? Not the bricks and mortar of a lovely edifice. It was the shining light of Christ that this church embodied. Certainly, I had felt “the loveliness of Love” being proved by the congregation at that moment (Violet Hay, *Christian Science Hymnal*, Hymn 64), and I was filled with gratitude for our church family. It was the spiritual idea of Church that had healed me.

Mary Baker Eddy, the Founder of Christian Science, defines *Church* as follows: “The structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from divine Principle.

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

Church is not a building, but evidence of “Truth and Love,” synonyms for God. Church is right here, not over there. Church is something we can accept as true. We come and see the presence of church as a healing force in our community and in our world, cherishing “the beauty of holiness and the wealth of love” available to and felt by each and every honest heart (Mary Baker Eddy, *Message to The Mother Church for 1902*, p. 17).

Spiritually understood, there is only one Church: “The structure of Truth and Love.” Everything that constitutes this Church is wholly spiritual, never in need of improving. It is indestructible and incorruptible, proceeding from divine Principle. It’s forever perfect and complete. And as an infinite idea, it is forever unfolding in divine Mind. It rests secure in God’s allness, governed by His wisdom, upheld by His might. It communicates the spiritual understanding of Truth. It is inspired and sustained by divine Love.

Everything that the divine idea of Church is ever going to be, already is. One of the ways we grow in our

spiritual understanding of Church and demonstrate it is through the activities of our church organization. Every welcome from an usher, every decision at a board meeting, every Bible story shared in Sunday School, every head bowed in prayer during a service, every church activity, celebrates the spiritual idea of Church.

Getting ourselves to church to participate might sometimes seem like a challenge, but the sincere desire and devotion to “come and see” the healing Christ certainly lights both our way and the way for fellow seekers on perfection’s pathway.

In the book *Paths of Pioneer Christian Scientists*, speaking of the early days of the Christian Science movement before churches of its own were formed, Christopher L. Tyner states, “In the early years, many patients walked daily from practitioners’ offices completely healed and then went on their merry way, never to be heard from again.” He further relates that a student of Mary Baker Eddy, Annie Knott, compared these patients to “polished beads” that simply “rolled away.” It was church, she explained, that strung these beads together (see p. 20).

Just as the early members of The Church of Christ, Scientist, were church builders, those who come and see the Christ light of Church can be church builders today. We know that young Mary Baker was a faithful churchgoer who later spread the healing mission of Christ Jesus, and we can, too.

Have you ever thought about Jesus going to church? I recently came across a sweet description of young Jesus from *The Interpreter’s Bible*, where Walter Russell Bowie writes that some say “they do not need to go to church because God can be worshiped anywhere. Why cannot he be found equally well out under the open sky, on the hills, in the fields? ... Jesus did find him in the beauty of the Galilean lilies or under the silences of the stars; but he knew God there because he knew him also in the place where since he was a little boy he had gone to think of him, in the house of worship consecrated to his presence.”

The passage also includes this thought: “For a soul in isolation the fire may die, as the fire dies out in a coal set off by itself; but as coals, each one of which was

only partially glowing, when brought together turn into flame, so do the souls of men when they are brought together in corporate worship attain the glowing heat which one by one they might have lost" (Vol. 8, pp. 89–90).

We come to church because here we glow and grow together. Here we all come and see a brother- and sisterhood of polished beads strung together and loving all that Christian Science has brought into our lives. Church attendance here is never a burdensome duty or a mere habit, but rather a spiritual delight. We are united in our glorifying of God. Together we are a nursery school of character, gently and patiently urging each other onward.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught, "Ye are the salt of the earth: ... Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:13, 14).

Mary Baker Eddy referred to this message and encouraged, "Let us watch, work, and pray that this salt lose not its saltness, and that this light be not hid, but radiate and glow into noontide glory" (*Science and Health*, p. 367).

Let's let this spiritual delight of Church radiate and glow in our hearts, in our churches, calling out with the joyous message: "Come and see—all ye seekers of the light."

Embracing true sacrament

By Susan Booth Mack Snipes

One of my first powerful healings as a young adult came about when I learned how important it is to embrace a true sense of sacrament. Back then I had never particularly liked the Bible Lesson subject of "Sacrament" in the *Christian Science Quarterly*. It always seemed heavy and heartbreaking to me because it usually included the crucifixion of Christ Jesus, and I

felt it implied martyrdom, sacrifice, and loss. But my view changed.

As a young wife and mother with two small children, I began to experience a menstrual period that went on month after month without normal breaks in between. I wasn't in pain, but was afraid because I knew this wasn't right. I'd had Christian Science Primary class instruction a couple of years earlier, and was endeavoring to give myself Christian Science treatment as I had learned to do it in that class. This involved affirming the allness and omnipotence of God, Spirit, and denying that Spirit's opposite, matter, had any power to cause diseased action. I prayed to know that blood is not the vital source of life because Life is God. But the bleeding continued.

Then one Saturday, I asked my husband to watch the children so I could have some time to pray more deeply for myself. I also called my Christian Science teacher to pray for me. When I explained this situation to her, she asked me a startling question: "What is it that you think you are being 'crucified' over?" She didn't try to answer this question for me or dive into any psychological probing about what was going on in my life, but agreed to pray for me and turned me to reading the Bible Lesson for that week on "Sacrament" to spiritualize my concept of sacrifice.

I had been feeling overwhelmed by many things about marriage, home, and motherhood. It seemed that my responsibilities were never-ending and that I owed all of my time and efforts to others, with no time for myself. I guess I felt I was the one being sacrificed. My teacher's question helped bring to light the more fundamental false claim, the mental disguise, of martyred motherhood, and it moved me away from praying in relation to the physical symptoms. It directed me to listen for God to show me that this more basic lie was not a cause at all, because God alone is the cause and creator, the Father-Mother of Her spiritual universe and every child in it. It wasn't up to me to hold it all together.

As I slowly studied, pondered, and prayed with the Bible Lesson on "Sacrament," I got to a passage in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy

that I had read many times before, but it suddenly sprang to life for me: “In ancient Rome a soldier was required to swear allegiance to his general. The Latin word for this oath was *sacramentum*, and our English word *sacrament* is derived from it” (p. 32). Wow! It struck me that the problem wasn’t all the demands others were making on me, it was: Where was my allegiance? I felt immediate relief as I caught a glimpse of the fact that there is actually only ever one demand on man—for full allegiance to an all-powerful God, Love—and that this alone allows us to serve others in the right way without feeling burdened and martyred. Divine Love never demands anything of us without at once supplying our ability to fulfill that demand.

The bleeding stopped while I was reading the Lesson that morning, and soon after I was joyously making lunch for my hungry crew.

In the years since that healing I have loved the Lesson on “Sacrament” when it comes up, twice a year, and have embraced the idea of sacrifice because I know that what is really being required is letting go of a personal sense of self in favor of embracing our true spiritual individuality in God, which includes freedom instead of martyrdom. We read again in the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health*: “The purification of sense and self is a proof of progress. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God’” (p. 324).

But even though I’ve learned to love the *sacramentum* opportunity to renew my oath of total allegiance to God, that doesn’t mean I don’t still have to work at this “unselfing.” The perpetual drumbeat through the five physical senses that says we are indeed material, with a personal life, a personal body, personal family members, personal problems, and personal responsibilities, hammers away at all of us. The source of this thinking is what Christ Jesus called “the strong man,” the carnal mind which has to be bound before we can be released from feeling martyred and feel the peace of recognizing the divine Mind, God, as the one and only cause. Jesus said bluntly, “No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house” (Mark 3:27).

Mrs. Eddy gives powerful instruction on this need, in relation to feeling a false sense of concern and responsibility for others, in an article called “An Allegory” from her *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896* (pp. 323–327). The way I have thought about the allegory is that “a Stranger,” representing the highest altitude of thought or Christ, Truth, enters human experience much like the sun shines on everyone and everything. Christ enters every phase of the mortal sense of life, and exposes all of its intoxicating sinful allurements, and all of the mesmeric forms of disease and distress that would keep us fascinated by, and tied to, a false, personal sense of life.

Those who are tired of these limiting pleasures and pains begin to awaken and slowly follow the leading of the Christ up to higher standpoints of thought, but often they are still trying to carry the baggage of things they think will bring them satisfaction. This not only hampers their progress but causes more suffering and confusion about why the journey seems so hard.

Some people in the allegory set their burdens down readily and so move quickly toward the summit of spiritual consciousness, but then are tempted by the egotism of being a personal “fixer,” which is different from cherishing a sincere desire to do what’s best for others. This particular passage reads, “Then he who has no baggage goes back and kindly binds up their wounds, wipes away the blood stains, and would help them on; but suddenly the Stranger shouts, ‘Let them alone; they must learn from the things they suffer. Make thine own way; and if thou strayest, listen for the mountain-horn, and it will call thee back to the path that goeth upward’” (pp. 327–328).

Each of us can and must do our own spiritual climbing because no one else can unself for us or make that singular oath of allegiance to God for us. And I am also finding it helps to stop wringing our hands over how hard the ascent is and honestly face the temptations that are still alluring, distressing, and thereby compelling us to cling to the baggage of self.

As the allegory indicates, the subtlest temptation may be that of taking on others as a burden of our own in an effort to help them carry the burdens of their mortal

story instead of helping them see their immortality and drop the story completely. Interestingly, it seems that when we are up against the wall of inability to do anything of our own selves, we tend to set concerns down more completely. A recent experience brought home this lesson to me.

A severe winter storm brought 18 inches of snow to my new community. I had just completed a move to a small condominium with the “earthly all” of my personal belongings stored in the basement. As I watched the snowplow pile more and more snow right behind my basement door, I became concerned about flooding. All efforts to get the condo board to intervene were in vain. Then over the next two days there were warmer temperatures and a huge deluge of rain. In the middle of the night water started pouring down the wall of the stairwell.

I had stayed awake to monitor the situation, so I quickly began moving the stored items up as high as possible. I had towels and a shop vac (a kind of vacuum cleaner that can collect water and wet debris) to try to keep the water at bay. I was also trying to pray, but frankly I was feeling pretty overwhelmed. Finally, about three in the morning it was clear I could not hold back the water, and I needed to trust God’s care completely.

I went back upstairs and turned to the Bible Lesson for inspiration. It wasn’t a matter of giving up and letting the water take over; it was a prayerful surrender to giving all sense of my “earthly all” to God. I wasn’t so much praying to get God’s help in relation to this situation, but praying to feel that God was, is, and ever will be my only “situation.”

I prayed until I felt a release from worry and a calm sense of Life as God, and then went to sleep for a couple of hours. When I checked on the basement in the morning, the towel I had rolled up to soak up water was barely damp. The water flow on the wall was tapering off and soon stopped. Within hours a fan had dried the area with no water coming near the stored items.

It’s so powerful to recognize that the one and only cause, Father-Mother God, governs Her infinite universe. Giving up trying to be the cause of anything does not mean sacrificing anything truly good, but means

finding liberation from every burden. A loved hymn sums up what I keep learning to do:

O God, I cast my care on Thee;
I triumph and adore;
Henceforth my great concern shall be
To love and praise Thee more.
(John Ryland, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 224, adapt. © CSBD)

God is All-in-all and all good, and as we embrace a true sense of sacrament we cannot help but see the limitations of human existence recede before the one infinite God.

“God, what do You know about me?”

By Sabrina Stillwell

A mom of a young teen called me in my capacity as a Christian Science practitioner because her son wasn’t feeling well. They wanted me to pray with them and give him a Christian Science treatment. I talked to her a bit, and then to him.

Immediately after getting off the phone, I remembered a line from the first *Star Wars* movie, “These aren’t the droids you’re looking for.” I burst into laughter. Without delving too much into the film, the line has to do with a demand that the good guys identify themselves to the bad guys. But one of the movie’s heroes steps in and helps them bypass that demand. The group moves forward unharmed.

Back to my phone call. The mom and son called back a few minutes later and the son was totally fine. What happened there? What healed him?

When healing happens in Christian Science, we’re getting a glimpse of our Father-Mother God’s already present reality. Mary Baker Eddy writes in the

Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, “Become conscious for a single moment that Life and intelligence are purely spiritual,—neither in nor of matter,—and the body will then utter no complaints” (p. 14).

What did that line from the movie have to do with this? Since it referred to identification, it made me look to this teenager’s true identity—how God sees him. What came to me was that if we look at ourselves as mortal, material, we’re not identifying ourselves correctly. We’re seeing ourselves subject to a vulnerable, physical existence, with the body seeming to be the master instead of the servant. Through the material senses this young man looked like a victim of illness, but that was not him. He could only truly be identified by God—as spiritual, perfect, whole. Thought shifted to God’s view of him—the only view—and he was healed.

In Christian Science we’re counseled to daily, moment by moment, go to God in prayer. Why? *Science and Health* explains, “Prayer cannot change the Science of being, but it tends to bring us into harmony with it” (p. 2). It brings us “into harmony” with the spiritual laws of the universe, with what is already true.

Christian Science is not alternative health care. It’s not about turning bad matter into good matter. It’s not magic or mysterious, nor is it an academic exercise. In this divine Science we’re taught how to pray, to give Christian Science treatment.

In treatment there’s no formula—no incantations, no saying the right words in the right order. And it’s neither human will manifesting its desire, nor hypnotism—the belief that one mortal mind can exercise power over another mortal mind. It is the recognition of, and yielding to, God’s spiritual reality, which is here right now. It’s knowing that God’s will is done, and God’s will is always good.

There are many ways of praying and giving treatment. I’ve found some prayers are simply “Help me, God.” A simple prayer for a child could be “God is Love, God loves me, and there is nothing else.”

Christian Science treatment helps us look for and see reality—God and His flawless nature. I was once asked

to define “treatment” and what came to me was, “It’s not the healing agent, it is a vehicle to get us to the consciousness of Love.” This consciousness of Love is the recognition that God and we are one, and because we coexist, all is well.

My patient’s healing was instantaneous, but there are times that are more challenging. When we are struggling with fear or discouragement, we need to go deeper into the truth of God as we endeavor to understand that Spirit really is all. It is then that we need to deny what *seems* to be, and persist in focusing on what *is*—the fact of God’s great goodness.

We’re given tools to help us in this endeavor. In her textbook of spiritual healing, Mrs. Eddy writes of reasoning and argument. These tools, or auxiliaries, can help us realize the consciousness of Love. Human reasoning wants to start with the problem, while spiritual reasoning starts with the cause, not the effect (the problem).

In the Science of Christianity, we learn that God is the only cause. And so in treatment we naturally start with God, because as *Science and Health* says, “Spiritual causation is the one question to be considered, for more than all others spiritual causation relates to human progress” (p. 170).

There is counsel about healing by argument in several places in the textbook. For instance, “Remember that the letter and mental argument are only human auxiliaries to aid in bringing thought into accord with the spirit of Truth and Love, which heals the sick and the sinner” (*Science and Health*, pp. 454–455).

Think about that “letter” for a moment. If our prayer and treatment is merely an academic exercise, we can get distracted from the truth when we think we can recall and repeat the letter perfectly—check that “to do” off our list. But what’s missing is the spirit of Love. Honestly, I’ve had times when even though I know God is Love, I can’t seem to feel His love. What has helped me then, is acknowledging that even though I don’t feel it, this love is still the only thing that is real, and I can’t get tricked into being unaware of omnipresent Love. Then I once again feel God’s loving presence with me.

So these arguments are tools to lift our consciousness into the realm of God, and this is where we find healing. Mrs. Eddy writes, “Prayer cannot change the unalterable Truth, nor can prayer alone give us an understanding of Truth; but prayer, coupled with a fervent habitual desire to know and do the will of God, will bring us into all Truth” (*Science and Health*, p. 11).

In treatment, what are we striving to see? The “unalterable Truth”—reality from God’s point of view. How does God see reality, see us individually and collectively, see the world? There’s a beautiful quote attributed to Albert Einstein that echoes this question: “I want to know God’s thoughts; the rest are details.” In Christian Science we might say, “I want to know God’s thoughts; the rest is nothing.” The thoughts of God are the only truth.

I remember one day writing out a treatment for myself. All of a sudden it came to me to stop and just have a heart-to-heart with God, asking questions and listening humbly for the answers. I asked, “God, tell me about You—who and what are You?” As I listened, answers came. Then I asked, “God, what do You know about me—who and what am I, in relationship to You?” Again I listened. And then I had a further question: “God, what about all the evil, or what seems to be in opposition to You?” And a feeling of such profound love came over me. All the answers came gently, but so powerfully that I had tears of gratitude and joy.

What does all this studying and praying do for us? Our desire to know God, to know reality, to associate with these wonderful ideas, helps us more deeply understand that we already live in the consciousness of Love. At the same time, it transforms our character, strengthens our trust in God, and makes us love our neighbor more, because we’re not only seeing ourselves better, but seeing everyone else more clearly, more spiritually.

Our goal is not just to have a healthy body or a good human experience; it is to know and experience reality—the goodness of who and what God is, and how God identifies us and all of creation. When we see everyone as the beloved of Love, we find that “one moment of divine consciousness, or the spiritual understanding

of Life and Love, is a foretaste of eternity” (*Science and Health*, p. 598). And this brings healing.

The throne of God

By Barbara Horton

Nothing is more comforting, in the face of the daily fears that bombard us, than the assurance that God alone governs and is reigning. The Bible and the teachings of Christian Science affirm that God is supreme, that there is but one all-good God, and that God governs the entire universe. As unrealistic or delusive as this may sound to some, countless examples of healing in the Bible and in Christian Science publications illustrate how the supremacy of God’s power is made evident when it’s acknowledged and turned to.

God’s power is described in the Bible in many different ways. One compelling way, in numerous passages, is through the use of a throne as a symbol for God’s supremacy—a symbol well understood in biblical times.

Isaiah and Psalms speak boldly, with authority and conviction, of God’s supremacy. The psalmist declared, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (Psalms 45:6). And God spoke to Isaiah saying, “The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool” (Isaiah 66:1). This establishes that God, omnipotent Mind, has divine, heavenly power over all creation.

According to merriam-webster.com, the word *throne* means “royal power and dignity: sovereignty.” It also says that the word *sovereignty* can mean “supreme power,” “freedom from external control,” or “controlling influence.” God’s royal power is the supreme power in our lives. There are no external forces or influences that can alter this absolute fact.

The book of Revelation states, “Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne” (4:2). There is one

on the throne as the Ruler of creation, just one. God does not share this throne or authority with another, nor are there coexisting thrones. This does not mean God is a material super-dictator or emperor. Rather, He is divine Life, Truth, and Love, very tangibly present and almighty.

Christ Jesus proved this throughout his healing ministry. He revealed and gave evidence of God's sovereignty to mankind, to help us understand that God is all-powerful and supreme, and that His goodness reigns in our everyday lives, now and forever. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matthew 9:35).

The Master's teaching repeatedly referred to the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God being at hand, and within us. He ended the prayer he gave to his disciples, the Lord's Prayer, with this emphatic statement: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever" (Matthew 6:13). Jesus consistently turned to God and acknowledged His divine authority over His entire creation, and his life and healing ministry demonstrated God's supremacy as he overcame and triumphed over matter-based laws and beliefs.

God's supremacy and governance was true across centuries of Bible history and remains true throughout time. It is established right now, today. Nothing has changed it, nor can anything change it in the future. There are no contrary or matter-based claims or circumstances that can alter it.

By cherishing and pondering what Jesus and many others in the Scriptures evidenced of God's power, Mary Baker Eddy discovered and proved that there was a divine Science behind the many demonstrations of God's authority in the Bible. She knew that God's spiritual creation includes the true identity of each of us. And the more that each of us recognizes and understands this, the more we see evidence of God's guidance and qualities expressed in our direct experience and beyond.

In turning to the Bible as, in her words, her "only authority" to guide her "in the strait and narrow way of Truth" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, pp. 103–104), Mrs. Eddy relied solely on God to lead her. Convinced of infinite Mind's absolute supremacy, she remained unimpressed with any material pictures or evidence and worked steadfastly to demonstrate God's control over all. She knew that her demonstrations were not the result of her human personality, skill, or control, but that they were due to her understanding of God's supremacy. She taught us that we can rely on God's complete control in every aspect of our lives, healing and seeing harmony restored regardless of what the circumstances may appear to be. In her *Message to The Mother Church for 1900*, she states, "... our hope anchors in God who reigns, and justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne forever" (p. 10).

We need to actively be conscious of God's ever-presence, all-goodness, and power in order to consistently refuse the temptation to believe that the material pictures around us are true. And we can guard against negative thoughts that tempt us to believe that there is a power instead of, in addition to, or greater than God's governance. We never need to accept that anything in our experience is out of God's reach, out of His realm. No matter what the situation is, turning humbly in prayer to God as supreme over all will bring calm and order to that which seems awry or out of control. God gives only good, and holding to spiritual facts about His all-powerful reign helps us see and experience His abundant goodness.

A number of years ago I faced a situation which seemed hopeless, with no evident means of help. My husband and I had just returned to the United States after living in Germany, where I had taught special education with the Department of Defense schools for four years. I had accepted a new teaching job (with a provisional license) and had applied for my full state teaching license and also for graduate school.

However, since I had been living abroad, I did not meet the recent residence requirement for the applications, even though I had been working for the US government. The situation was very frustrating, and it seemed

incredibly unjust and unprincipled. And no matter what angle I approached it from, it appeared to be a dead end. At this point I realized I needed to trust God completely.

Our decision to return to the US and our steps in finding our new home and jobs had all been based on prayer. We were convinced we were in our right place, and everything else had fallen into place beautifully. I acknowledged that God had been in complete control over our move, and that this had not changed. His supremacy had no limits. We continued to pray and to know that there were no impossible situations and that God was in fact on the throne, always and under all circumstances. The Bible passage “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalms 46:10) was a daily reminder to remain still, calm, and trusting.

Within two weeks, my husband discovered that the state legislature had just changed a related law, nullifying the restriction that had obstructed my path and that of other newcomers to the state. I was able to successfully apply for my teaching license and was accepted into grad school before the next semester—perfect timing for both. In addition, there was a new grant that was made available in my field of study, which dramatically decreased the cost of my graduate studies.

My coworkers at my new teaching job were amazed at this remarkable and quick turn of events. Since we had not taken any human footsteps to resolve the situation, to me this was a clear demonstration of the workings of God on His throne and His control of every aspect of our lives.

We never need to surrender to any unjust situation or material so-called law, nor do we need to believe that we are carrying the burden of fixing any discordant or unjust situation. As we deepen our understanding of God’s oneness and omnipotence, we become increasingly certain of His complete control. No matter what the situation is, we can trustingly turn to God and acknowledge His divine authority over His entire creation. Yielding to this divine authority restores harmony and demonstrates God’s complete

control—showing that He is in fact the only one governing on the throne.

INTERLUDE

The daystar of Christian Science

By Katie Beth

The Wisemen were led to behold and to follow this daystar of divine Science, lighting the way to eternal harmony.

—Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. vii

Imagine the sky
a relentless, hovering gray—
cloud-like in foggy stagnation.

Then, a loosening
in the seam of night.
The light of Christ

gleams through a star,
illuming the way of Truth.
Darkness dissolves

in the coral glow of sunrise.
The daystar is clear, anchored
forever at eternal noon.

Knee healed after auto accident

By William K. Johnson

Several years ago, I was hit by a car while crossing a busy street in a large city. My knee was severely damaged and I was in a great deal of pain. A crowd gathered, and many comments were made about injury and shock.

Once I was able to focus, I realized that probably an ambulance had been sent for to take me to a hospital. I decided that where I really wanted to be was at home, where I could focus on the truths of Christian Science, which I knew from experience would heal me. Home was twenty miles away, and the easiest way to get there was to get on a commuter train four blocks away.

I hailed a cab, which took me to the train station. Still in great pain, I hobbled to the train, then called a Christian Science practitioner. I told him what had happened and asked him to pray for me. After sharing a few thoughts, he immediately started to give me Christian Science treatment. I also called my son and asked him to pick me up at the station near my home. On the way home from the station, I went to a drugstore and rented a crutch.

I stayed home from work for a few days and talked to the practitioner at least once a day. As I pondered the words of truth that the practitioner shared about man's unbroken relationship to God, my thought was calmed and I began to feel some relief from the pain.

On the second or third day, as I was ending my conversation with the practitioner, he shared what I knew to be the spiritual perspective of what had occurred: "You know, this never happened." Agreeing, but not thinking much about it, I said something like, "Yeah, yeah—thanks!" and we both hung up.

I don't know if it was later that day or the next, but the truth of that statement—"This never happened"—dawned upon me. Evil can only claim to exist, to

have a history, in a material world. A material world includes accidents, chance, long-standing problems, and diseases. But the infinite and omnipotent Father-Mother God is the only cause and creator. The universe He created is spiritual, and that spiritual universe is the only universe there is or can be.

In the spiritual realm of omnipotent good, evil has no history and will never have one. There is no chance—only constantly unfolding good. In God's perfect universe, this accident never happened. And I knew that right now, man, God's spiritual likeness, is free of any belief that an accident did happen.

After I realized the truth of the practitioner's statement, the healing progressed rapidly. I went back to work, walking both to and from my commuter train. I used a cane for a week or two but was able to walk with much less discomfort and with continually improving mobility.

Another thing I learned from this experience was that human observations and judgments about a person's situation cannot impede one's progress and can have no effect on one's God-given health. Everyone in my office knew I had been hit, because some had seen it happen, and my walking and limping was scrutinized on an almost moment-by-moment basis. But this did not hinder my healing. Finally, as I was no longer limping, the interest in what had happened to me ceased.

About a week or ten days after the incident, I was the best man in a wedding. This entailed standing for the better part of an hour, which I was able to do, although with some discomfort. Shortly after that the healing was complete. Since that time I have skied several times and participated in other athletic activities with no pain or problem.

"How are we healed?" one might ask. We are healed by the divine embracing the human. The Christian Science textbook assures us, "Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 494).

William K. Johnson

Quickly freed from pain and immobility

By Kristin Jamerson

Last year I faced an incapacitating pain in my leg and hip. It came out of nowhere and inhibited walking, sitting, getting in and out of a car, and even sleeping. Because of the intensity of the pain, I was at first quite fearful and despairing. It came at a time when I was very busy serving others in various capacities.

I called a Christian Science practitioner for treatment and was immediately assured that our Father-Mother God's presence was right there for me and that I could only hear His voice, drawing me closer to Him and away from the claim of a painful condition. As Christ Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them" (John 10:27).

I also found an interview online called "Mental surgery: The healing power of divine Mind" (Nathan Talbot, cssentinel.com, September 23, 2014). Listening to it, I felt the presence of God, divine Mind, and an adjustment in my consciousness. The speaker mentioned this Bible promise from God: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jeremiah 31:33). If God is putting His law in my inward parts, I thought, then that means He is putting His law of harmony, balance, alignment, freedom, mobility, fearlessness, health, substance, agelessness, normalcy, and dominion in my inward parts.

Recognizing this as the law of my being provided the foundation for my healing. I lost a sense of hopelessness and fear that very morning and began to focus on drawing closer to God.

I prayed to purify my purpose and motives for my activities. I challenged human ego and dismissed

nascent speculation on what had caused the pain, as well as the fear that this was something I would have to live with. Empowered by the Bible verse, "In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me" (Psalms 56:4), I rose above concern over a malfunctioning body to my innate confidence in the power of God.

I was able to attend to the demands asked of me over the next two days, periodically pausing to breathe in inspiration and reject the notion that this problem had a course to run. I also embraced this statement by Mary Baker Eddy: "Truth is an alterative in the entire system, and can make it 'every whit whole'" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 371).

Family members sent me messages of support as well, including spiritual insights that further lifted my thought.

I was grateful for small steps taken, for my husband's gentle care, and for being able to fulfill my obligations. By the end of the fourth day I had no more pain and had full use of my leg and hip. At one point I had worried that I would never hike or bike again. But I am happy to say I resumed all of my activities. The next week was Thanksgiving, and I was overwhelmed with gratitude for God's love, and for Christ, His divine message, ever present in consciousness.

I have always loved this passage in *Science and Health*: "Christian Science acts as an alterative, neutralizing error with Truth. It changes the secretions, expels humors, dissolves tumors, relaxes rigid muscles, restores carious bones to soundness. The effect of this Science is to stir the human mind to a change of base, on which it may yield to the harmony of the divine Mind" (p. 162). I certainly experienced this "change of base" and Mind's harmony.

I am humbled by the peace that God's presence provides. I am grateful for spiritual guideposts in the Bible, and for the clear understanding of divine law explained in Mrs. Eddy's writings. I am also very thankful for the effective prayer of the practitioner, as well as the compassion and support expressed by my family.

Kristin Jamerson

Mercer Island, Washington, US

Prayer restores normal blood pressure

By Anne Melville

A while back I had to obtain a health certificate confirming that I was fit to retain my driver's license—a legal requirement in New Zealand when you reach a certain age. I knew that God's creation, including each of us, is "very good" as the Bible says (Genesis 1:31). I prayerfully affirmed that my health was perfect and that this could be borne out during the examination.

When I arrived at the medical center, the managing nurse told me that because I had no medical history, they would have to make a series of health checks. I assured them that I understood their responsibility to carry out the tests as the law required. I explained that I was a student of Christian Science and relied on scientific prayer for healing. The nurses were very respectful of my choice.

I was aware that prayer is often considered to be a hope that God will intervene on our behalf. So I silently prayed to uphold the facts about prayer that this divine Science teaches. Prayer is understanding that God is the only creator, always lovingly caring for His creation. It's really about seeing what God is seeing and rejoicing in that, being deeply grateful for God's loving care for each of us.

I had my blood pressure checked and was told it was 11 points higher than normal. I was praying with the Lord's Prayer while I had these tests, including a second blood pressure test, after which I was told it was still elevated by 10 points. The nurse said she would test it yet again in a few minutes.

As she left the room, I prayed calmly to see the spiritual reality of this situation. The thought came, "What is the fear underlying heightened blood pressure?" I knew the health risk it was believed to pose, but I denied that God's child could ever be at risk.

Then came the next thought: "Handle the claim of heredity." I prayed to see that as God's image and likeness, I was spiritual and perfect, never subject to a material body and inherited diseases. In fact, the body responds to thought, as evidenced by how the face flushes if we feel embarrassed.

Then I recalled a sentence from the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), along with its spiritual interpretation from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "Enable us to know,—as in heaven, so on earth,—God is omnipotent, supreme" (p. 17).

Oh, I thought, not "as per heredity, so on earth," but "as in heaven, so on earth." I was so grateful for this uplifting thought and was still dwelling on it when the nurse came back. She took my blood pressure again, and this time it had dropped 10 points to exactly the level she had told me was normal. "That was quick," she said. I just loved that it read exactly what was considered normal—not one point more, not one point less. My health certificate was granted.

I rejoiced in that beautiful proof of the efficacy of Christian Science. Prayer is indeed practical, aligning our thought and experience with the truth of God's loving care for us all.

Anne Melville

Kaikohe, Northland, New Zealand

Two significant healings

By Lynn Mack

In 1934 my parents were introduced to Christian Science due to an unusual medical condition confronting my older sister. At the age of three years old she lost her sight and several physicians said they could not help her.

One day when she was playing, she slipped and fell, cutting her forehead. My mother picked her up and ran to the apartment next door for help. The woman who lived there was a Christian Scientist. She very lovingly helped take care of the wound and comforted my mother, easing her fears and asking if she would be interested in having Christian Science treatment for her daughter. Relieved by the thought that my sister could have some help, she agreed to call a Christian Science practitioner, not realizing this meant relying on metaphysical healing. The very next morning, my parents woke up hearing my sister calling to them. She could see!

This was the beginning of a lifelong relationship my family had and continues to have with Christian Science.

One of the many healings that I've had through Christian Science happened in the 1970s. One day when I got home, my roommate told me we needed to remove the washing machine from the basement, as a new one was being delivered the next day. We needed a furniture dolly and an extra pair of hands to handle this task and our neighbor offered both; however, the dolly he offered wasn't designed for furniture. We had a plan of action and all went smoothly until the washer came free, knocking me backward and causing me to fall down the steps with the washer following.

To this day, I recall immediately knowing that I couldn't fall out of God's care. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy writes: "Accidents are unknown to God, or immortal Mind, and we must leave the mortal basis of belief and unite with the one Mind, in order to change the notion of chance to the proper sense of God's unerring direction and thus bring out harmony" (p. 424).

I prayed with that statement all the way down the staircase! And I got out from beneath the washer to assure my terrified friends that all was well. When I started to walk, though, I felt some pain in my right foot. Removing my work boots, I could see what looked like a broken foot.

I called my Christian Science teacher for help, and she assured me that I could not fall out of God's care in any way. The pain left quickly; however, the injury remained visible. I'd left teaching to become an electrical contractor, work I enjoyed for 35 years. Since I was the owner/operator of this electrical business, it was necessary for me to work the next day. That particular job involved electrical work for a surgeon at his home. When I arrived wearing a cut-up tennis shoe and using a cane, he was kind enough to offer to set the bone for me.

I felt confident in thanking the surgeon for his concern and telling him that I would be handling it through prayer in Christian Science. He and his wife, a nurse, left for work looking confused and skeptical.

Lunchtime came and it was a beautiful day to eat outdoors. Before I ate, I called my teacher again. She asked me which of Mrs. Eddy's hymns applied to this situation and told me to let my thoughts rest with the chosen hymn. I immediately thought of the poem titled "Satisfied." It starts out, "It matters not what be thy lot, / So Love doth guide" (*Poems*, p. 79). Thinking about this, I got up and walked toward the house. My fellow worker called to me, "You forgot your cane!" I looked at my foot and it was normal. How wonderful!

The next day the surgeon saw me without my cane and remarked that he was not surprised. I continue to be grateful.

Lynn Mack

Rocky River, Ohio, US

I couldn't be "hard-hearted"

By Shirley Cornelius

About two years ago I noticed that my heart was beating abnormally, and I was constantly aware of it. I called a Christian Science practitioner to pray for me, and in our prayers we affirmed what the Bible says—that man is made in the image and likeness of God. We were recognizing that man is spiritual and governed by God, the only power, who is ever present.

I looked up references to *heart* in the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, to get a better understanding of its spiritual meaning. The practitioner reminded me that we weren't trying to heal a body part, but seeking to gain a better understanding of my true being. I learned that the true heart is not material, but spiritual, and that we each, in truth, reflect the great heart of Love, God. If the heart is of God, it is gentle, loving, understanding, receptive, and perfect.

Then I remembered that a client whom I did bookkeeping for was sending money overseas to someone I felt was dishonest. Every time I had tried to discourage her from doing this, she had been very resistant. One day she even said that I was hard-hearted. This upset me, because my motive to protect my client had come from compassion.

All I wanted was for her not to be taken advantage of. That she thought I was uncaring kept disturbing me. After talking this over with the practitioner, I was much improved physically. I was also healed of the reaction to being called hard-hearted.

However, one night I didn't sleep much because I was experiencing those heart symptoms again. In the morning I became fearful and decided to go to a medical clinic, which is not what I would normally do. I'd relied on Christian Science for many years, and it had met all my needs. As I sat in the parking lot outside the clinic, I texted the practitioner to let her know what I was going to do. Although the practitioner wasn't praying for me at this point, she texted me back, saying, "You are perfect, and everyone can only see that perfection."

At the clinic they ran several tests. At the end, they said, "Everything is perfect." A few days later when I noticed the problem again and contacted the practitioner, she confidently reminded me that God would adjust whatever needed adjusting. I really felt the power of those words and thought of them every time fear began to come in. By the next day, the symptoms disappeared and all was well.

I've continued to experience complete freedom from that problem and am so grateful to have learned more about my true, spiritual nature through this experience.

Shirley Cornelius

Santa Barbara, California, US

One healing led to another

By Jan True

Several years ago I was suffering from a loss of hearing in both of my ears. It began in one ear and then the other ear over a period of a couple of months. It hampered communication at home, at church, and in my other activities.

I prayed with Mary Baker Eddy's metaphysical definition of *ears* in the Glossary of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: "Not organs of the so-called corporeal senses, but spiritual understanding.

"Jesus said, referring to spiritual perception, 'Having ears, hear ye not?' (Mark viii. 18.)" (p. 585).

And I declared daily (and continue to) in Christian Science treatment for myself, that I understand this divine Science, and that I can heal, and be healed, with it. But I was thinking that perhaps I needed to be a better listener, mostly in listening to God.

Some family and friends who were aware of the problem suggested that I try a material method, which I did. Although I had experienced effective Christian

Science healing through prayer before, during this time I went down a path of thinking that material means could help. At one point, the problem only got worse, and the material method didn't work at all. Then I was told that one of the ears had an infection and was prescribed an antibiotic, which I declined. I had no discomfort.

Meanwhile, I traveled to a Bible study for a long weekend. A friend there reminded me, "We see with God's eyes and we hear with God's ears." I liked that idea, but felt I wasn't really comprehending what the words meant. Yet that weekend, my pure desire to hear the ideas shared enabled me to hear just about everything, especially what was read from the Scriptures. It was rather awesome. But after I returned home, the problem was back in full force, and I continued with the material method I'd been using for a few more days.

Then I finally woke up in thought, and went to visit with a Christian Science practitioner. She lovingly reminded me that whatever the seeming material source of the problem was, we don't hear with our physical ears. At that moment those words were a revelation! It doesn't matter what we call a problem. As a spiritual idea, I don't include any material elements. This reminded me of a time when my Christian Science teacher asked me to just know that "... all is Spirit and spiritual" (*Science and Health*, p. 331). Because we're created by divine Spirit, God, every aspect and function of our being is actually spiritual, reflecting the qualities and completeness of God.

The practitioner I had reached out to for prayer reminded me that every challenge is impersonal, that everyone is working out something. So-called mortal mind, a supposed mind separate from God, suggests that Christian Science doesn't heal, but the suggestion is false. The practitioner agreed to give me a Christian Science treatment, and I felt very comforted by the visit.

I woke in the middle of that night, still unable to hear, and I was tempted to believe that the prayer of the practitioner wasn't doing any good. Instead, I declared, "Yes it is!" I immediately got out of bed, threw out the "remedial" product, and went back to bed and to sleep.

This was going to be a spiritual healing, not mixed with any material means. I still couldn't hear, but I had an expectation of healing.

An email from the practitioner directed me to Hymn 475 in the *Christian Science Hymnal*, "Forget not who you are, O child of God" (Mildred Spring Case, alt. © CSBD). I've loved that hymn ever since!

A few evenings later I was serving as First Reader in my Christian Science branch church. When I told a fellow member that I didn't hear any of the testimonies, she reminded me of the words in *Science and Health*, "If the medium of hearing is wholly spiritual, it is normal and indestructible" (p. 214). I'm not sure I'd ever really seen that sentence before! That night I spent time praying with that "new" passage—knowing that I truly am wholly spiritual, with no elements of matter at all. I also prayed with, "A spiritual idea has not a single element of error, and this truth removes properly whatever is offensive" (*Science and Health*, p. 463).

The next evening my husband and I planned to attend a friend's piano recital a couple of hours away. My love for this friend and the desire to hear her beautiful music and to visit with her afterward, felt like pure motives. When listening to a podcast at my desk that afternoon, suddenly I could hear perfectly out of one ear. My husband and I had a delightful conversation on the drive and over dinner in a noisy restaurant, and then I thoroughly enjoyed the recital. What a joy to be able to tell my friend how much I enjoyed her music!

Soon after, the hearing was restored in my other ear; I didn't even notice when. There was no discharge. The hearing just returned—"normal and indestructible." And the infection had left at some point, too. I was tremendously grateful.

A few months later, shortly before I was to take a trip, one foot twisted strangely, and I wasn't able to walk on it without considerable pain. There was a lot to do—laundry, packing, running errands. I considered borrowing a walker. But what came to me during an uncomfortable night was, "So if we don't see with our eyes, and we don't hear with our ears, then we don't walk with our feet!" "I walk with Love along the

way” (Minny M. H. Ayers, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 139, adapt. © CSBD).

The trip was actually for the purpose of learning more about, and getting involved with, a church-related philanthropic organization. Again my motive was love. So I could trust God’s love to take me there and back. It was through the impulsion of God, Love, and my God-given expression of His love, that I was taking this trip.

The next day I walked freely with no discomfort. And the following day I had no problems walking through two airports. I even walked several miles in the snow on that short trip. And there were no more adverse effects.

I continue to love to learn more about this Christ Science, the actual law of God, as I listen for what God is telling me about my true selfhood as His perfect, spiritual idea.

Jan True

Laguna hills, california, US

OF GOOD REPORT

Feeling rich when we didn’t have much

By *Herta Tompkins*

My husband was serving in the military when I found Christian Science. We were stationed in Hawaii and had constant visits from friends and family from the mainland. Although we were blessed to have such wonderful connections, our budget was very tight. Our guests had no idea what a strain it was for us to entertain them. At one point, I was looking forward to a two-week period when no visits were scheduled so we could recover a bit.

Before we had a day to ourselves, we received a call from a woman we didn’t know. She had a gift for me from one of my aunts, who worked with her at the airport

kitchen. So, my husband and I drove to her hotel on Waikiki Beach, only to find that she had sprained her ankle getting out of the taxi that day and would be confined to a chair in her room for the next two weeks of her vacation. The woman was very nice and reminded my husband of his mother. He felt such a connection that he invited her to come home with us for those two weeks so I could take care of her.

I resented the fact that my husband had made the offer without consulting me. I managed our finances, so he had no idea how little money we had for our own needs, let alone for company. Nevertheless, we helped her into our car. As we started our journey home, I was consumed with worry about how we could provide for her at such an inopportune time for us. I was wallowing in self-pity and anger.

But somewhere along the drive, I felt my heart change. I had been learning about Christian Science by reading its textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. In the little I’d read by that time, I’d learned the power of acknowledging the good that is always ours from our Father-Mother God, who is good. As I remembered this, the feeling of being imposed upon lifted and I began to think about how this woman must have felt after planning a vacation in paradise but now not being able to enjoy it.

When we returned home, we made our friend comfortable, had dinner, and helped her upstairs to a guest room. Then, I joyously went back to my study of *Science and Health* to see how I could further apply this Science to this situation. I read the answer beginning on page 475 that Mrs. Eddy gives to the question, “What is man?” Everywhere the word *man* appeared in the answer, I thought of our visitor. I especially liked the sentence, “Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals” (pp. 476–477). I realized that that was how I needed to see this new friend.

After spending hours studying the book, I was certain that the next two weeks would be the best ever for everyone involved. All concern about limited funds and our meals disappeared completely.

In the morning, our visitor came down the stairs, radiant and grateful to be able to walk freely again. She couldn't believe how good she felt. She kept calling it a miracle. We enjoyed her company very much while I played tour guide for the next two weeks. Our kids adored her, and she them. It felt as if she had always been a friend of the family.

At the airport while waiting for her departure, she told me how grateful she was for all the love she had felt while staying with us. And most of all, how grateful she was for feeling part of a family again. Then she told me that she never cooked except while at her job. That's why, at every meal, she went out of her way to thank me for the home cooking. It had reminded her of her childhood and her own mother's cooking.

In gratitude, she put some money in my lap that she had set aside for her vacation. I refused to take it, having lost all sense of financial limitation while in the wonderful company of this new friend. Those two weeks had taught me so much about love that money was no longer a concern. I felt rich without it. But she insisted.

What meant more to me than the money was that I'd been able to prove what I'd been learning about divine Love, God, in Christian Science even though I was so new in my study of it. My biggest concern had been our ability to provide nutritious meals suitable for company on such a tight budget. But that concern completely vanished as I felt God's love and saw Love supply all we needed, and so much more.

Since that time, I have had many more experiences evidencing God's dear love and provision. I will always be grateful for all that Christian Science has shown me.

Safe on the road

By William Roger Strelow

My career in the environmental protection field involved considerable driving. I drove not only in the United States but also in the many nations to which I traveled. Having studied Christian Science all my life, I always prayed to know that God, divine Truth, was my defense. My study of Truth was a guide and protection, not only for me but also for other travelers.

What I consider to have been one of the most pertinent protective thoughts for me over the years is the following citation from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "The history of Christianity furnishes sublime proofs of the supporting influence and protecting power bestowed on man by his heavenly Father, omnipotent Mind, who gives man faith and understanding whereby to defend himself, not only from temptation, but from bodily suffering" (p. 387). And the Bible has very useful reassurances, such as: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Joshua 1:9). Such strong statements stayed prominent in my thinking from the time I first learned to drive.

One morning, while my wife and I were in Germany, I faced one of my toughest driving challenges. We were in a remote, snowy area, when the car slipped on a sharp curve and the two front wheels went dangling over a steep gully beside the road. I had seen no other vehicles for a long time before this incident. Immediately, I prayed to accept the truth that God protects all His children regardless of the situation and however daunting the circumstances seem. I refused to let fear or doubt disturb my thinking. My wife was praying as well.

Within moments after we began to pray for the divine guidance we needed, which we knew would come, a vehicle pulled up behind us. It was a pickup truck that "just happened" to have equipment in the back which was precisely what was needed in order to pull our car easily to safety. The kind gentleman driving the truck

got my deepest gratitude and thanks. He told me he had not been planning to take this lonely route but had felt some unexplained impulsion to do so. I knew this seeming “luck” was actually God’s love and protection in action.

I continued my worldwide travels with a firm happiness and gratitude, knowing that God’s protective presence was with me wherever I went. I had several other inspiring experiences in succeeding years. In one case, I was driving home from a skiing trip in the US and found myself alone on a two-lane highway. The narrow road was largely covered with snow. As I recalled God’s solid protection and declared spiritual truths aloud to myself, a large truck seemed to come out of nowhere. He quickly passed me but then slowed down substantially so that I was able to drive in the path that his tires were creating. I trailed him for perhaps half an hour. Then he turned off onto a crossroad, at the exact point that the road was free of snow. The rest of my trip back to my motel was uneventful.

My firm adherence to and acceptance of the truth about man’s protection from driving dangers has kept my family and me safe several times since then as well. Over the years, our family has often thought of and rejoiced in the wonderful poem “Feed My Sheep” by Mary Baker Eddy, which assures us that God, our Shepherd, will show everyone “... how to go/O’er the hillside steep,” and how to “... follow and rejoice/All the rugged way” (*Poems*, p. 14). When we lift our thoughts in prayer as taught in Christian Science, we find that we are protected as we travel along the “rugged way,” and are enabled to understand and prove God’s goodness in daily life.

Wildlife can be protected and healed

By Debby Miller

Working on our family farm with my husband has shown me the truth of this Bible verse: “Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind” (Job 12:7–10).

On our farm, I have often seen animals healed through Christian Science. I have also witnessed the saving of wild animals.

One day last fall, after spending most of my morning studying the Bible and pondering God’s preservation of all creation, I headed to our Christian Science Reading Room for my weekly shift. As I rounded the large lake on the edge of our city, I could see a white-tailed deer floundering in the icy water. He had fallen through thin ice and a crowd was beginning to gather at the nearby park area. A fire truck had already arrived by the time I pulled into the park and began to pray. I suppose others were praying, too. This buck looked exhausted as two yellow-clad firemen began walking out to it.

An idea from my morning Bible study quickly came to thought: “The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore” (Psalms 121:7, 8).

Just then the buck stopped floundering and started swimming into an open area of the lake. He took a mighty leap onto the ice—and up the bank he ran, where a policeman had stopped traffic for him to cross the road! The deer, the firemen, and all the townspeople were safe. We all cheered and clapped.

God’s intelligent guidance of His creatures was evident that day, and I rejoiced to have witnessed His protecting power.

ANNOUNCEMENT

from the Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker Eddy

By *The Board of Trustees*

“New possibilities.” This is one of the natural effects of true philanthropy (see Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, pp. 287–288). As Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker Eddy (TUW), we’ve been considering the impact of her ongoing generosity to help promote and extend Christian Science. Today, as we look at the contemporary landscape of humanity and see both the enormous challenges facing our world as well as the spiritual resources unlocked by Christian Science, we recognize that branch churches are best positioned to share “new possibilities” of thought and action in their communities.

We’re inviting you and your branch membership to consider how the *Manual*-based activity of Reading Rooms offers a unique place of engagement with the healing ideas of this Science. We’d love to hear from you.

There are grant funds available from the trust established under Clause 8 of Mary Baker Eddy’s will. These funds are devoted to the primary purpose of more effectually promoting and extending the religion of Christian Science as taught by Mary Baker Eddy. Reading Rooms, along with being places to study, pray, and better understand this Science, offer an embracing way for churches to promote and extend the healing message of Christian Science in their communities. Therefore, we invite branches to give special consideration to the new possibilities and opportunities that their Reading Rooms provide.

In addition to projects related to Reading Room promotion, the TUW grant program will continue to offer support for a variety of projects to aid branch efforts in holding welcoming, healing church services, testimony meetings, Sunday Schools, and lectures. Projects might include building repairs or refurbishment, technology upgrades, web presence, lectures, emergency relief, rightsizing projects, and other activities that meet the criteria of promoting and extending the religion of Christian Science as taught by Mary Baker Eddy.

We invite branches to inquire about guidelines and eligibility for a Clause 8 grant by email (tuwgrants@csps.com) or telephone (+1-617-450-2000).

The Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker Eddy

EDITORIAL

The practical relevance of Christ Jesus’ example

By *Moji George*

Long before Jesus was born, several Old Testament prophets foretold his birth. But the prophet Isaiah also spoke about his divine purpose as the Savior of mankind. God gives all His children a purpose. He said to Jeremiah, “Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (1:5). God knows us intimately and has a specific purpose for each one of us.

Christian Science teaches that there’s something to learn from every aspect of Jesus’ life and example. These lessons have relevance and practical application for us today.

The virgin birth: Referring to this in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, author Mary Baker Eddy states:

“The time cometh when the spiritual origin of man, the divine Science which ushered Jesus into human presence, will be understood and demonstrated” (p. 325). The virgin birth is unique to Jesus, but it demonstrated that God’s children are born, not of the flesh, but of Spirit. Christian Science teaches that we are each and all God’s children. Therefore, we are neither material nor a mixture of the material and spiritual, but wholly spiritual. Gaining a better understanding of our relationship to our perfect, divine Parent has a practical effect. It heals.

Jesus’ boyhood: At twelve years, the young Jesus is recorded as saying he was about his Father’s business. The Bible also says that as he grew to manhood, he increased in wisdom and the knowledge of God. Therefore, parents, teachers, guardians, can learn from Jesus’ example and encourage children to cherish their individuality as they go about their heavenly Father’s business, expressing self-government. We’re all God’s children regardless of age. Our true employment is to glorify God in any task. And we can constantly expect to grow in spiritual understanding through diligent study of God’s Word.

Jesus’ temptations: Before Jesus embarked on his healing ministry, he faced temptations. The Bible says he was tempted in every way, yet he overcame each temptation. We too have the Christly authority that Jesus embodied. We’re able to resist and overcome tempting thoughts whether they present themselves as sinful suggestions, a diseased body or mind, or fear. We’re inherently Godlike. This gives us dominion, but we must exercise our divine authority. It requires spiritual discipline—praying and watching thought to ensure it aligns with what’s spiritually true, or Christly.

Jesus’ ministry: Jesus taught, preached, and healed. He assured all his disciples, including those who follow him today, that we’re all capable of doing the healing works he did. Christian Scientists expect healing because healing is the evidence of Immanuel—God’s influence in human consciousness (see *Science and Health*, p. xi). This divine influence is the Christ, Truth, present today, as it was not only in Jesus’ day but prior to his incarnation. Jesus instructs us to heal the sick. Echoing this instruction, we read in *Science and Health*:

“Implicit faith in the Teacher and all the emotional love we can bestow on him, will never alone make us imitators of him. We must go and do likewise...” (p. 25). How? The Christian Science textbook contains the rules of Christ-healing that anyone today may study, understand, and begin to prove in living, and in healing, even if at first in very modest ways.

Jesus’ crucifixion: Jesus’ crucifixion—his sacrifice on the cross—proved practically that he’s indeed the Way-shower, showing us the way of salvation. Submitting to the crucifixion was the only way the sinless Jesus could give indisputable proof of the eternity of Life. This proof is critical to us because it points to our ability to demonstrate what Christian Science teaches—that God is our Life. Therefore, no child of God is lost or ceases to exist. In truth, we always reflect divine Life because we live in God, not in a material body. Our true life is uninterrupted and immortal. This understanding brings comfort to the sorrowing.

Jesus’ resurrection: Jesus rose from the dead three days after his body had been buried, thus proving once and for all that the incorporeal Christ—the divine nature of Jesus—is deathless. Our nature, too, is Christly. Realizing, at least to some extent, that this is our glorious inheritance, resurrects a deadened sense of good in our experience and heals grief, and we begin to exercise our dominion over the challenges we face.

Ascension: Forty days after his resurrection, Jesus ascended. *Science and Health* describes his ascension this way: “In his final demonstration, called the ascension, which closed the earthly record of Jesus, he rose above the physical knowledge of his disciples, and the material senses saw him no more” (p. 46). This may indicate that we can expect human thought to continually tend Spiritward till we arrive at the full understanding of our spiritual perfection. What a wonderful hope.

No one can replace or substitute for Christ Jesus as the Way-shower of humanity. His place as the Savior of the world is unique. Mrs. Eddy, who discovered Christian Science and is therefore the pioneer or Leader of this Science, echoes the Apostle Paul’s statement in First Corinthians II:1 when she enjoins Christian Scientists

to follow her only in so far as her teaching and works do not deviate from the teaching and example of Jesus. Christian Science doesn't diminish in any way the place of the master Christian who presented Christ, and who is the one example for all to follow.

As this year draws to a close, let's spend some time appreciating the tremendous import of Jesus' example and what it means for us and all humanity, whether we're looking forward to the holidays, anxious about a physical challenge, struggling with a sense of loss, or meditating on the deeper meaning of Christmas. There's much to learn from the various aspects of Christ Jesus' life that will bring peace, comfort, and healing.

Moji George

Member of the Christian Science Board of Directors

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