



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Sentinel

What I say unto you I say unto all, watch. — Jesus

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Seeing the eternally original you

Lisa Rennie Sytsma

And the clock turns over at midnight: another year.

While this new year is often celebrated, sometimes it surfaces thoughts of past mistakes, regrets, things said that should not have been, or things not said that should have been. Even in the rare cases where there are no regrets, the advancing years tend to bring with them the sense that we're aging and experiencing the decline that the world tells us is inevitable. The human concept of existence tells us that the clock can't be turned back, however much we might like to return to someone we feel we used to be.

But God's creation exists on a much grander scale than hands advancing on a clock. In fact, His creation is spiritual, infinite, timeless, existing in what some religious thinkers have called "the eternal now." Within that eternal now, each of us exists and has always existed in our true, spiritual identity, wholly and forever good because, as the Bible tells us, we are created in the image and likeness of God, Spirit, who is eternal good.

We never need to "return" to our spiritual, original selfhood. In the eternal now, we've never left it. And we can't change it—it is as changeless and eternal as our Father-Mother, God, who created it. We can never lose our innate freshness and originality. Both are qualities of God and, therefore, qualities of each one of us by reflection.

But can anyone say that they always see their true perfection and completeness in their present experience? Most of us, looking at ourselves through a material—and therefore mistaken—lens, definitely see room for improvement. This desire seems to intensify at the beginning of every year. Indeed, publishers tend to release self-help books at this time, seeking to meet the demand for mental, physical, and financial self-improvement, while gyms and diet plans advertise "New Year, New You" promotions. Yet the best thing to bring about whatever changes we seem to need is the

spiritual improvement that enables us to see our true, timeless selfhood—to see ourselves as God made and maintains us.

Christian Science does not define progress in terms of a material body or bank account that we can be proud of, but as a growing demonstration of spiritual power. The Discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, put it this way: "Every day makes its demands upon us for higher proofs rather than professions of Christian power. These proofs consist solely in the destruction of sin, sickness, and death by the power of Spirit, as Jesus destroyed them. This is an element of progress, and progress is the law of God, whose law demands of us only what we can certainly fulfil" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 233).

Mrs. Eddy's assurance that we can fulfill God's law of progress is comforting. But we may not always immediately see how to fulfill it. The Apostle Paul describes this problem when he writes, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Happily, Paul doesn't just leave us with the problem. He provides an answer for how we can indeed progress despite whatever seems to be within us that is hampering that progress, concluding, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:21–25).

And we thank Paul for pointing us to Jesus! Jesus was the man who gave us Christianity, and gave it to us by being a perfect example of Christ, the true idea of God. Mrs. Eddy defines *Christ* as "the divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error" (*Science and Health*, p. 583). *Incarnate* means "embodied in flesh" (dictionary.com), and the flesh, our seeming material body, is the only place we can see imperfections, lack, sin, and sickness—the defects and problems we so very much wish to be rid of. The history of mankind teaches us that, while material remedies and solutions can sometimes

temporarily get us to an incarnate sense of “better,” “pretty good,” or even “darn near perfect,” they can never maintain us there for long. And they’ve never come close to showing anyone the truth of his or her glorious and unlimited spiritual being.

But willingness to change our thoughts and actions to bring them into accord with the law of God, as voiced by the healing Christ, will open our eyes to a new view of our true selfhood. Many find comfort in the Bible’s story of Jacob, who cheated his brother, fled for his life, and spent the next two decades being cheated by his uncle. If anyone needed a fresh start, untainted by the past, it was Jacob.

Jacob eventually saw the wrong he had done and faced his brother to ask for his forgiveness—which was freely given. Jacob’s “self-improvement” came through prayer, turning to God in meekness. Through wrestling with the angel message from God, divine Love, sent to save him, he became a new man—or rather, we could say, he became reacquainted with and began to express his original, pure, good selfhood. And we can all do this as we listen for Love’s voice.

In this new year, rejoice that you can find and rejoice in the true view of the original, eternal you!

Lisa Rennie Sytsma, Associate Editor

the calendar, striving to fulfill the commitments the company had made to our clients.

Although it was helpful to work in an organized way, sometimes it felt as if we were slaves of time. You probably know the feeling. For example, it can seem natural to be stressed or tired during the month of December after working so hard to meet year-end deadlines. We may feel discouraged because we didn’t quite accomplish the goals we set for the year. Perhaps we are putting pressure on ourselves by coming up with countless resolutions for the new year.

I’ve found it helpful at those times to remember that a calendar is just a system for organizing and coordinating activities. It’s a human construct, not a law of God, so it has no real power to become a source of frustration or make us draw limiting conclusions about life and ourselves.

The Bible has much to say about God’s perspective on the concept of time. I love this statement: “Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (II Peter 3:8). And consider this verse about the fullness of God’s day, which is not measured by a human calendar: “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalms 118:24).

In the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy sheds further light on the subject, presenting the spiritual definition of the word *day*: “The irradiance of Life; light, the spiritual idea of Truth and Love. . . .

“The objects of time and sense disappear in the illumination of spiritual understanding, and Mind measures time according to the good that is unfolded. This unfolding is God’s day, and ‘there shall be no night there’” (p. 584).

Christian Science reveals that God, Spirit, is eternal, the divine Mind that forever intelligently governs its entire creation. In the infinitude of God’s goodness, where we all really live, there is no time, no limitation, no human system of measurement, just Mind’s measurement of “the good that is unfolded.” There is no evil or darkness

How are we measuring time?

In the infinitude of God’s goodness, where we all really live, there is no time, no limitation, no human system of measurement.

Monica B. Esefer Passaglia

For many years, I worked as a software developer in the field of organizational development. I usually worked with large teams, and we would start with a project plan that included a detailed list of tasks, deadlines, and estimated completion time. We lived by

in the allness of God's universe, where the irradiance—the God-sourced light—of good fills all space.

Because God is omnipresent, whenever and wherever we pray, we can feel our natural connection to the divine—we can live in God's day and rejoice in witnessing the good that God is constantly unfolding. In God's day, we experience the irradiance of the real, or divine, Life, which is totally harmonious. As God is our source and we're God's effect, we reflect qualities of divine Life, such as strength, energy, newness, health, and joy.

We have the opportunity to change, step by step, the way we measure our activities, tasks, and achievement of goals—from the time they take to the good accomplished—leaving aside willpower, anxiety, stress, and frustration. This means that we won't be less efficient but more so. In humility, we will discover that when our thought turns Godward, the influence of Christ—"the true idea voicing good" (*Science and Health*, p. 332)—brings to light our abilities and capacities as God's effect. It inspires our priorities and activities; unfolds intelligence, creativity, and productivity; and also measures this unfoldment of good in Life's eternal day.

In my case, with the new understanding gained through learning how to pray and study in Christian Science, I stopped feeling enslaved by endless to-do lists. I stopped blaming myself for failures, and instead turned to God, the Mind that knows everything, and asked for His guidance. This helped me see how to prioritize tasks and allowed me to acknowledge that, as God's expression, I have the capacity to accomplish anything I need to do. As I let Mind, divine intelligence, set and prioritize my goals, each day unfolded with confidence in God's government of every task and situation.

Today, though my field of labor has changed, in the hustle and bustle of busy days, I still do my best to take moments to pause and appreciate God's measurement of time—"the good that is unfolded." God, invariable Love, produces and measures only good because there is no place for evil in His day. This spiritual perception has helped me many times to perform tasks or activities that at first seemed difficult or even impossible for me.

Measuring time only as God does and rejoicing in good increases our expectation of good as natural and real. Then we experience the brightness of Life, expressed in innocence, harmony, health, and spiritual progress.

Kingdom of heaven

Throughout Scripture, God's dwelling or presence is described as a heavenly realm. A Hebrew poet sings, for instance, "The kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations" (Psalms 22:28). While earthly monarchs were respected and obeyed in Israel, God was seen as sovereign over all. Many expected His kingdom to arrive on the human scene as a revival of Jewish political power.

In the teachings of Christ Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is redefined spiritually. God's dwelling had commonly been viewed as distant; Jesus declared that the kingdom of God is "at hand" and "within you" (Mark 1:15; Luke 17:21). Christian healer Mary Baker Eddy answers the rhetorical question "What is the kingdom of heaven?" this way: "The abode of Spirit, the realm of the real. No matter is there, no night is there—nothing that maketh or worketh a lie. Is this kingdom afar off? No: it is ever-present here" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, p. 174).

Jesus' followers regularly preached about the kingdom after the Master's resurrection and ascension. The Apostle Paul wrote, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" and "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (Romans 14:17; I Corinthians 4:20). John of Patmos recorded his vision: "I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ" (Revelation 12:10).

For more on this topic, see “A kingdom ‘in the midst’” by Elaine Follis.

The light that’s already there

I’ve seen firsthand the difference it makes when I stop focusing on shortcomings and recognize a person’s spiritual identity.

Pete Paciorek

There seems to be a prevalent notion that individuals are empty vessels awaiting external fulfillment or validation. This perspective often leads to a focus on filling perceived voids through human effort.

In my study of Christian Science, I spend a lot of time reading the Bible and seeking to follow Jesus’ example. And I have realized that the most empowering approach to life involves recognizing that everyone is already complete and that we’re tasked with uncovering the God-given goodness within ourselves and others.

The Bible offers numerous passages that affirm the inherent goodness and completeness of individuals as children of God. For instance, in Genesis 1:31, we read, “God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” This foundational truth tells us that as God’s creation, we are not flawed or broken. We don’t need to be fixed, and don’t need to gain something from outside of us that we don’t already have; our spiritual wholeness as the creation of God, Spirit, can be recognized and revealed within.

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy brings clarity to this idea: “Man is not matter; he is not made up of brain, blood, bones, and other material elements. The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God” (p. 475). For me, this shift in perspective has been more than theoretical. It’s been life-changing—and even career-shaping.

When I was a professional baseball player, I was surrounded by a culture that constantly evaluated worth by external metrics such as batting averages, stolen bases, and flashy contracts. But even in that competitive environment, I could see clearly that the best coaches and teammates were those who could see beyond performance and connect with their own inherent spiritual qualities, as well as recognizing and appreciating the talents of both teammates and opponents. These athletes didn’t have to “grind away” to get better and reach a place of greatness.

Later, as I moved into coaching and leadership roles, I leaned into the spiritual concept that greatness and excellence aren’t things we give to people—they are already within each individual. The role of a mentor and leader is to help uncover and draw out spiritual, God-given qualities.

Jesus consistently demonstrated that he did not see people as broken or lacking but as already whole. One powerful example in the Gospel of John (see 5:2–9) tells of a man who had been ill for thirty-eight years and was lying by a pool that was believed to have healing powers. “When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked.”

Jesus didn’t see a hopeless man broken by decades of infirmity. He saw a child of God—whole, capable, and blessed. That spiritual perspective—clear, unwavering, and unhampered by human theory, logic, or diagnosis—confirmed the man’s God-reflecting identity and restored his health.

In our own lives, this example challenges us to stop seeing others (and ourselves) as “in process” or lacking. It calls us to behold instead what God knows to be true about us. *Science and Health* reminds us, “Man is the expression of God’s being” (p. 470). To me, this means that the source of my value is not what I produce, but the spiritual fact that I reflect God.

As a coach of youth sports, I've seen the difference it makes when I stop focusing on shortcomings or inconsistencies and instead recognize a child or teen's spiritual identity as resilient, capable, and purpose-driven. This doesn't translate into ignoring areas of needed improvement, but rather into helping young athletes break free from self-imposed limitations. I've brought this same spiritual lens into my work with coaching staffs, administrators, and leadership teams. The temptation in sports programs is to look for what's wrong and then try to fix people—for instance, a coach who needs more discipline, an athlete who needs better focus, or a team that lacks motivation. But what if we were to simply recognize (and sometimes persistence is needed!) the light within them—the spiritual, God-reflecting qualities that are already there?

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reminds us: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14–16). Our job is not to install the light in others, but to help clear away what's hiding it.

Whether we are working to support our own children, young students, athletes, or colleagues, we can ask ourselves, "Am I approaching this person as a problem to solve or as a light that just needs uncovering?"

There are moments, even with years of experience, when I doubt my own capabilities or question whether I'm having a meaningful impact. In those moments, I remember that I'm not an empty vessel either. I'm not defined by past successes or present challenges. You and I are both the image and likeness of God—complete, equipped, and capable.

This understanding has helped me step into new leadership opportunities that I would have passed on in the past, held back by a mistaken sense of being limited. In sports, education, leadership, and life, there is transformative power in recognizing that we, and those around us, are not lacking but whole—are not

vessels to be filled, but expressions of God to be revealed.

The more we follow Jesus' example in seeing others—neighbors, families, children, colleagues, etc.—in this way, the more fear, resentment, doubt, and ego we remove, until the reflection of God's goodness and perfection is all that is visible.

I no longer saw myself as a prisoner

Name Withheld

Growing up, I regularly attended Christian Science Sunday School while my parents attended the Sunday service, and later I took class instruction in Christian Science. At some point, however, while still a young adult, I began to view Christian Science as an oppressive religion, something that took away all the fun of life. I chased what I thought of as happiness through promiscuity, alcohol, and, eventually, drugs.

I had enlisted in the military, and there, as well as in later jobs such as nightclub security, I learned to enjoy violence, viewing it as a way of life. This continued for many years, resulting in a downward spiral into depression and homelessness as I struggled to find meaning and satisfaction in temporary, material things.

Some years ago, I was incarcerated. For several years, I allowed things to continue as they had, despite the consequences, until one day I decided to read the Bible. Tired of getting into fights and living in a state of frustration and disappointment, and with plenty of time on my hands, I read the Bible cover to cover—and my thinking began to change.

When I told my mom what I was doing, she sent me contact information for the committee on Christian Science Institutional Activities in my area. They put

me in contact with a Christian Science prison chaplain with whom I could correspond. I was sent a copy of the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, and the *Christian Science Hymnal*, and was given a subscription to the *Sentinel*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and the Full-Text Edition of the *Christian Science Quarterly*, which contains weekly Bible Lessons.

As I began to study Christian Science again, it had a profound effect on me almost immediately. I decided to stop fighting and struggling against the prison authorities. All hopelessness and depression vanished. Although still physically incarcerated, I no longer saw myself as a prisoner or as addicted to sin. Mrs. Eddy wrote in *Science and Health*, “It is our ignorance of God, the divine Principle, which produces apparent discord, and the right understanding of Him restores harmony” (p. 390) and “God made man free” (p. 227). I found both to be true.

A few months ago, as I was sitting in the dayroom chatting with fellow inmates, I watched a situation unfold that would typically have precipitated a riot in the dayroom involving everyone there (about sixty of us). My first thoughts were nervous excitement and the old reaction to violence: “This will be fun!” Immediately, though, I rebuked those thoughts and moved a little way apart from the others so I could be alone. I began quietly singing to myself the hymn “Mother’s Evening Prayer,” with words from a poem by Mrs. Eddy (*Poems*, p. 4).

I worried about what might happen as the other inmates discussed what had occurred and whether there should be a violent response. I kept thinking about the hymn’s lines, “Wait, and love more for every hate, and fear/No ill,—since God is good, and loss is gain.” My thinking began to shift from “I need protection from this fight” to “Divine Love is absolute.” I looked at everyone individually and tried to see each as a child of God, worthy of God’s infinite love.

I continued to softly sing to myself the same hymn. It begins,

O gentle presence, peace and joy and power;

O Life divine, that owns each waiting hour,
Thou Love that guards the nestling’s faltering flight!
Keep Thou my child on upward wing tonight.

These words brought me peace, and as I looked around, I saw that the inmates had all decided that what had happened was not something to fight over.

Eventually, we were sent back to our cells for the night. When I got to mine, I found a new issue of the *Sentinel* waiting for me. As I read through it, I found an article about dealing with violent situations. The author states, “I’ve found that silently acknowledging the God-given individuality of everyone and our inseparability from God—the one true source or Parent, divine Love—uplifts the mental atmosphere” (see Elizabeth S. Massey, “The ‘kingdom of heaven’ on the subway,” February 3, 2025). This idea struck me as so simple, yet so powerful. Any remaining concern left me, and I was able to sleep peacefully.

We read in *Science and Health*: “The sharp experiences of belief in the supposititious life of matter, as well as our disappointments and ceaseless woes, turn us like tired children to the arms of divine Love. Then we begin to learn Life in divine Science. Without this process of weaning, ‘Canst thou by searching find out God?’” (p. 322).

The “disappointments and ceaseless woes” of life have indeed turned me like a tired child to the arms of God, divine Love, and doing so has filled my life with blessings.

This hour

Diane Warneck

A clean slate! A fresh page!
This present hour
Glow with promise

For “growth in grace”¹
For joyous willingness
To “learn all things rightly”²
No memories to haunt
No mistakes to regret
Father, I am right here
Ready for Your guidance
Grateful for Your care
And trusting to You entirely

Each hour of my every day

¹ Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 4.

² Ibid., pp. 95–96.

key events from the Old and New Testaments with detailed maps, colorful illustrations, and photographs. It retells Bible stories alongside descriptions of ancient life, highlighting locations such as the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. The book includes timelines and accessible, historically informed explanations. Price: \$20.00.

This new atlas joins several new Bibles and Bible study tools that have become available from The Christian Science Publishing Society within the past year. These are now available in Reading Rooms to support a deeper exploration of the Bible. Other new titles include *The New Interpreter’s Bible One-Volume Commentary*, published by Abingdon Press (priced at \$89.00), and two leather Clarion Reference Bibles published by Cambridge University Press (King James Version, priced at \$130.00, and New International Version, priced at \$140.00). We’ve also begun selling an economical NIV Bible published by American Bible Society (priced at \$13.00). Note that these new Bibles from other publishers do not have markers or bindings matching *Science and Health*.

More information about these titles can be found at your local Reading Room or on the Online Shop at shop.christianscience.com.

Weekly updates: December 29, 2025

New “In-Context” feature in the Digital Edition of the *Christian Science Quarterly*

Subscribers to the online version of the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons can now study in context without leaving the Digital Edition. They can view Lesson citations and their larger context from the pastor side by side, or switch back and forth with a single tap. This feature keeps the Full-Text and In-Context views at hand, supporting deeper study and understanding.

New Bible Resources in Reading Rooms

Now available for sale in Christian Science Reading Rooms is *The Bible Atlas: A Pictorial Guide to the Holy Lands*, published by DK. This atlas for young people explores

In Case You Missed It

New Bible Collections on JSH-Online.com

“Exploring the Bible” collections are curated to encourage deep engagement with the Scriptures. Each digital collection—highlighting a specific person, place, theme, or event—is composed of specially chosen articles that focus on the spiritual inspiration Mary Baker Eddy urges on Bible students. Find them at jsh.christianscience.com/collections.

How Christian Science helps me with friendships

Callie Wilkinson

One day, while I was out for a walk, I was thinking about past friendships I felt I'd messed up or friends I don't talk to anymore. I felt a strong urge to text them. Because it seems like there are a lot of highs and lows in high school, I wanted to tell these friends how things had been going for me and ask how they were doing.

I've struggled with friendships and connecting with peers my age my entire life, so I've sometimes felt isolated and alone. But in this case, I felt inspired to reach out to my friends.

Some never replied to my texts, but others wrote back and said they were so grateful to me for checking in. They told me they missed being with me, and I said I missed being with them, too.

When I woke up the next morning, I saw that I'd even gotten texts from a few friends I hadn't texted, and they also told me they missed me. This might seem like a coincidence, or friends just being nice, but to me it was something much deeper. I felt a strong sense of God's overflowing love, and it reminded me of a hymn I like from the *Christian Science Hymnal* that talks about how Jesus taught us about this love from God. The first verse says,

I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love,
I love to tell the story
Because I know 'tis true,
It satisfies my longing
As nothing else can do.

(Katherine Hankey, No. 414)

I grew up attending Christian Science Sunday School, where I learned about the healing truths of Christian Science and how I can apply them to my everyday life. So to me, "the story . . . of Jesus and his love" is

really about God's never-ending love for us, which Jesus exemplified and his healings taught us about.

Knowing that God loves me infinitely is really comforting. I've learned that God is my Father-Mother and is always present. I don't need love from people to satisfy me or make me happy; God's love is satisfying enough. But I was also grateful to know that the love I felt from my friends when I reached out to them was really God's love being expressed. It's all a reminder of infinite divine Love, which is always with each one of us.

Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, wrote in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, "To those leaning on the sustaining infinite, to-day is big with blessings" (p. vii). So when we lean on God for what we need, we find that it takes form in our lives in good and satisfying ways.

What I love about Christian Science is that there's always more to understand. I'm a student, and learning new things about God and my spiritual identity deepens my spiritual understanding. I love that this applies even to practical things in my life, like friendships.

This experience has taught me that God is a constant best friend who never leaves us. When we know this, we feel more settled and loved, and that strengthens our other relationships, too.

Prayer prepares the way for a harmonious birth

Diane Allison

The same day we got the wonderful news that we were expecting our second child, my husband was fired from his job. Although our joy about the child never waned, our finances began to look bleaker by the day. His job interviews were not going well. I was very unhappy in my own job, but was now afraid to quit.

One night, I woke up bleeding heavily. "Am I having a miscarriage?" I wondered. "Oh, please, no!" At the same time, vivid in my thought was this phrase from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "Our wine the inspiration of Love . . ." (p. 35). This is a reference to Jesus' last meal with his disciples on the night before his crucifixion, when he told them that the wine in his cup symbolized his blood (see Matthew 26:28). This made me wonder: If blood could symbolize the inspiration of divine Love, how could it ever be depleted? Or be a sign of harm? I realized that the inspiration of Love is always here, always replenishing.

I called a dear friend, a Christian Science practitioner, and asked her to pray for me. She did and, like the woman in the Bible who touched Christ Jesus' garment, I felt the bleeding stanch immediately (see Mark 5:25–34), and I felt the peace and wholeness of the Christ.

I called the practitioner back to thank her, and we agreed to continue praying together every day right up to the birth. Each time we talked, my understanding of our divine Father's never-failing care grew. Each dark fear was faced. I learned that fear is actually faith in evil—and I wanted to have faith only in good!

The Bible says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:18). I reasoned that since God is both infinite and Love itself, Love fills all time and space, so what is there to fear? I came to realize that every aspect of our lives, including our future, is already gleaming with love. My faith could rest right there. Each fear was replaced with joyous expectancy of good.

With fear gone, I knew it was OK to quit my job. We discovered that all over the region, there were art fairs where I could employ my talents in drawing children's portraits. That summer, we drove from one to another, and at each one, our preschool daughter had a delightful time with her daddy while I worked at what I loved. Not only were we rich in joy, but at the end of the summer, we had more in the bank than before my husband lost his job.

On the morning of our son's birth, I felt one quite frightening pain. After calling the practitioner, I felt reassured that the only thing actually going on was "the unlabored motion" of divine Love. These words

are from a statement in *Science and Health*: "Christian Science silences human will, quiets fear with Truth and Love, and illustrates the unlabored motion of the divine energy in healing the sick" (p. 445).

Truth and Love quieted my fear with the Christianly scientific understanding that this birth was not a physical event, but was instead God's unfoldment of a new spiritual idea coming to light with unlabored energy. Though I felt lots of movement, there was no more pain. Our beautiful son made his debut twenty minutes later. And just a few weeks after that, my husband found employment in a field that used all his talents, and this met our needs for years to come.

The terrible fear I felt for our future in those first few days after my husband lost his job has never returned. It has been replaced with a constant expectancy of good. I've learned from this experience that when we realize that God's goodness already fills the future, we can, no matter what challenges we face, truly expect only good.

Diane Allison
Brooklyn, New York, US

Horse safe after fall down canyon slope

Jessica Mandt with contributions from Laura Spieker

In 2022, my husband and I and a friend who is also a Christian Scientist went on a pack trip in the wilderness with our five horses. The second day, we started down some narrow canyon switchbacks on foot. My husband was leading the way when we came upon large trees that had fallen across a washed-out section of the trail. We got all the horses through this obstacle and continued until we came across a more challenging obstruction. I felt it was unsafe to attempt to cross it, so we turned around.

Back at the first obstacle, I was in front with my mare, Oriana. As she navigated the downed trees, one of the stirrups on her saddle caught a branch, knocking her off balance, and she fell. She lay on the extremely steep slope, unable to get up because her feet were above her. I held hard to her lead rope, trying to keep her from rolling over.

My friend immediately started declaring truths that we had learned in Christian Science. Her voice was strong and insistent, reminding me that God's law of good is the only law and that His law was in full operation right there and then. She declared that Oriana was safe because she was governed by God's law of harmony, and He was caring for her.

As I adjusted my position, Oriana rolled over and jerked the rope out of my hands. She stood up but then tumbled over the cliff edge and down the steep canyon slope. We heard long moments of crashing and then silence. Fear for my horse flooded my thought, but I clung to the truths that my friend had just declared and tried to listen only to God, good.

My friend reminded me that God, divine Love, was in control of the situation. I knew that, no matter how things appeared, God is infinite, and nothing that He has created—including my beloved horse—can leave His care. We also contacted a Christian Science practitioner to pray for us.

I couldn't see a human solution, as it didn't seem possible that Oriana could have survived such a fall. But I realized that I needed to focus on the fact that all things are possible with God. God had a solution, even if I couldn't think of one.

I thought about the Bible story of Jacob "wrestling with error—struggling with a mortal sense of life, substance, and intelligence as existent in matter" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 308), and decided that I would not quit the mental fight until I had the spiritual understanding I needed and was healed of my fear for Oriana's well-being. I needed to truly understand that God is all-powerful.

We got the rest of the horses through the obstacle to a safe place, where we camped for the night. My husband

and I went back and searched for Oriana, but night had fallen, and we couldn't find her. Back at camp, I couldn't sleep and was afraid, so my friend and I prayed together most of the night. I found comfort in this verse from Psalm 23: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (verse 4).

The next day, my husband and friend went to look for Oriana while I stayed at camp to watch the other horses and to read that week's Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*. I wanted to work on overcoming fear and correcting my thought.

In the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health*, I read: "Science reveals Life as not being at the mercy of death, nor will Science admit that happiness is ever the sport of circumstance.

"Fright is so great at certain stages of mortal belief as to drive belief into new paths" (pp. 250–251). This passage reassured me that Oriana could reflect only God, Life, that our long-awaited, happy trip could not suddenly turn into a nightmare, and that great fear often impels us to reject the material picture and seek spiritual understanding.

I also read, "The divine Mind, which forms the bud and blossom, will care for the human body even as it clothes the lily; but let no mortal interfere with God's government by thrusting in the laws of erring, human concepts" (*Science and Health*, p. 62).

I had to see through the deceptive, false image and grasp the truth that God fully cares for *all* of His creatures, including Oriana. I put all my trust in God and steadfastly guarded my thought, allowing in only thoughts of God's care and love. *Science and Health* states, "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 learned that I needed to yield to divine harmony. As I did so, I was filled with peace and an expectation of good. I was gaining a new confidence that anything is possible with God.

After a couple of hours, my friend ran up the trail shouting, "Good news!" They had found Oriana alive and well. A fallen tree two hundred feet below the trail was holding her and preventing her from falling further down the canyon to the rocks below. She had stayed calm and waited for help.

Soon, we had a rescue team on site to help get Oriana out of there. As each challenge came up, we addressed it through prayer. Finally, a new trail was cut in the side of the mountain, and Oriana walked out safely. A vet whose presence had been required by the rescue team declared that other than minor abrasions, my mare was fine. When she walked into our camp that evening, she was greeted by a chorus of nickering horses.

Oriana's safety and rescue are a testament to the fact that God's protection and care are constant and that spiritual law is stronger than gravity and overcomes fear.

Jessica Mandt
Beavercreek, Oregon, US

I am the friend mentioned in this testimony. Jessica and I were up most of the night, talking and praying. We discussed the fact that we needed to lift our viewpoint to God's view of things. Several times throughout the night, I declared that Oriana was safe. I truly felt that.

This was a demonstration of God's law in full operation! Though the situation suggested that a good outcome was impossible, reliance on God's law brought about a harmonious resolution.

Laura Spieker
Minneapolis, Minnesota, US

Character transformation brings healing

Gustavo Briñez Quimbayo

Originally published in Spanish

Some time ago I was having financial, spiritual, and also relationship problems. All of this led to my frequently getting sick. I couldn't see a way out of these problems, and I became very bitter and desperate. I no longer saw a purpose to life.

But thanks to a friend with whom I kept in touch, I learned about Christian Science. He invited me to come to his church's Thanksgiving Day service, thinking I would enjoy it.

Although I had zero knowledge of Christian Science, I agreed to go. There were a lot of people at the service who gave gratitude to God and confidently shared examples of how Christian Science heals and had blessed their lives. This gave me hope that my problems could be solved.

I continued to go to that church every Sunday, and it was there I was given some Christian Science literature, including the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. I began reading the book. Although I didn't grasp the content at first, I felt it would do me some good, so I continued to explore it. I bought an issue of *The Herald of Christian Science* in Spanish. As I was reading it, I began to understand more.

First, I learned that health is not a material condition. Health is a condition of divine Mind, or God, and is therefore always available. Being God's reflection, we include perfect health. When I realized this, my problems began to resolve.

It started with changes in my character: I had been very bad-tempered and got irritated very easily. Once I began to study Christian Science, I learned about my relationship to God and my divine nature as His reflection. As a result, I felt a transformation in my character. It was as if I woke up and realized that I had changed in certain aspects and was seeing life

in a different, more spiritual way. I started to value Christian Science more and more, and in proportion to my understanding of Science I overcame many things. I became more patient and understanding of others. Many financial, health, and other issues were resolved. Now, I feel calm and at peace, even when facing difficult issues.

Today, I try to live in service to others, and I feel very grateful, happy, and peaceful—something I had not felt for a long time.

Gustavo Briñez Quimbayo

Bogotá, Colombia

Healing of abnormal growth

Robin Krauss

One morning several months ago, I felt a sizable hard lump under my armpit. I didn't look at it, but it was painful when I touched it and when my shirt brushed against it. My first thought was to just ignore it, thinking that it might go away on its own. But right on the heels of that thought was a spiritual correction: This thought that it "might go away" was both suggesting that the condition was real and attributing power and intelligence to matter.

Christian Science doesn't teach us to ignore problems but instead to address them right away through prayer, and that evening I began to do this. Prayer in Christian Science helps us gain a better understanding of our true identity as children of God, Spirit—as wholly spiritual, not in or of matter. I've learned that if there seems to be something wrong or malfunctioning in my body, it can always be traced back to the belief that I am mortal and can be sick or suffer.

As I was praying, this thought came to me: "Matter is nothing—no thing, mind, or power." (This echoes

a statement from page 330 of the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "Evil is nothing, no thing, mind, nor power.")

I knew this was a message from God because it assured me that there was nothing to fear and that matter had no mind or power to create or to cure itself. I reasoned that whatever seemed to be abnormal or painful was not created by God, and therefore it was nothing more than an illusion and had no power over me. As God's harmonious expression, I couldn't be intimidated by matter or fooled into believing that my being was susceptible to any abnormal growth or condition. *Science and Health* says, "Truth bestows no pardon upon error, but wipes it out in the most effectual manner" (p. 11). I love that statement because of its promise of Truth's decisive and swift smackdown and elimination of every erroneous thought.

I kept my thought on God and His perfect creation. For a year before this, I had been praying and studying the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's writings to understand more about God as All-in-all—something that had seemed abstract to me. But what helped me better understand this is Mrs. Eddy's definition of God in the Glossary of *Science and Health*, which includes "all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal" (p. 587). In her writings, Mrs. Eddy also describes God as omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent good. To me, these words express the totality of God's goodness. As God's creation, we embody and express this goodness and all the qualities of God, including harmony and health. This is our eternal inheritance.

A couple of days later, I noticed that my shirt was wet under my arm and the lump was gone. It had drained, and the skin had completely closed up. The pain had gone as well, and everything was—and is—normal.

Robin Krauss

Hartford, Wisconsin, US

Letters & Conversations

Susan Lapointe, Marion Harding, Jack Mathis

> Larissa Snorek, “The far-reaching blessings of daily practice,” *Sentinel*, December 1, 2025

This editorial is very meaningful and helpful. Thank you, editors.

Susan Lapointe, Lexington, Massachusetts, US

> Douglas Paul, “Whose hand is on the spigot?” *Sentinel*, November 10, 2025

I love the imagery of this article. God controls His endless flow of good to individuals and the universe. A material concept of good is always limited, but knowing that God’s hand is on the spigot is an unending flow of His goodness.

Marion Harding, Melbourne, Australia

> Melissa Frontczak, “God is not at a distance,” *Sentinel*, November 3, 2025

This is an authentic and powerful article. The last paragraph says it all: “When we’re feeling distant from God, the mental chatter can be aggressive and demoralizing. But it never changes the truth that God is here, right now, pouring love into our hearts.” Thank you!

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