



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Sentinel

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

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Freeing ourselves to find real good

Lisa Rennie Sytsma

It's quite a promise. "In thy [God's] presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" the Bible's book of Psalms assures us (16:11). From a spiritual perspective, this promise of "pleasures for evermore" makes perfect sense. God, Spirit, created all that is real and created it spiritual and good. Because Spirit is unlimited, Spirit's creation is equally unlimited. And everything in it is enjoyable. Forever.

But it's a promise that's hard for the human mind to grasp. "All good things come to an end," goes a popular saying. We remember good things in the past and look forward to good things in the future. But whether or not we are enjoying what's happening right now, everything material is ephemeral.

There's an undeniable crossroads to be faced. One road is the assurance of the deep spiritual joys that were so tangible to the psalmist. The other offers a tempting path of plunging deep into materialism, seeking pleasure, happiness, and satisfaction through the material senses. But clinging to the belief that we can find lasting pleasure in matter is like trying to hold on to a sleeping dream when the alarm clock is ringing. Because the alarm is always ringing! We each have an innate spiritual sense that yearns for and insists on all that is spiritual and good.

So why do we try so hard to, metaphorically, stay asleep, when our spiritual sense is waking us up to accept the Bible's promise of never-ending good?

Perhaps it's because spiritual goodness can feel distant and abstract rather than something tangible that we can actually feel and enjoy. But, in fact, we can easily see and feel at least the symbols of the genuine, spiritual good that is already present here and now. The laugh of a cherished friend, the reflection of a sunset in a mountain lake, the harmonies of a favorite piece of music—all are hieroglyphs of real, eternal good. But a hieroglyph is not the thing itself. A laugh ends, a sunset

fades, a piece of music reaches its conclusion. But God's goodness—real, present, and eternal—never ends, is forever new and fresh. We can increasingly bring that real and permanent good into our lives just by looking for it in the right place.

The right place is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus told his followers to seek this kingdom first precisely because that's where all good is found. Does that sound hard or scary? It shouldn't. Jesus also assures us that the kingdom of God is already right here, within us. To find it within us, we just need to be willing to give up the materialism and faith in matter that would hide it from us.

Maybe we can learn from the example of a rich man who asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life (see Mark 10:17–23). The man doesn't seem to have done anything wrong to get his wealth. He doesn't appear to have been a sinner in the conventional sense of deliberately doing things that were evil. He told Jesus he had obeyed God's law his whole life, and Jesus didn't contradict him. But Jesus pointed to one thing, and one thing only, that the man lacked: He needed to sell everything he owned and give the proceeds to the poor and follow Christ. The Gospel writer reports that the man "went away grieved: for he had great possessions."

Jesus didn't tell everyone who followed him to sell everything they had. The rich man's material stuff doesn't, in and of itself, seem to have been the issue. The issue seems to have been the man's faith in his material stuff. Was he trusting in matter or God, Spirit, for his happiness and well-being?

Outwardly, the man was faithful to God and His law. But he appeared to expect this outward fidelity alone to win him access to the divine reign of harmony. Jesus was apparently demanding that the man's outward obedience be matched by an inward conviction of, and joy in, the fact that God truly was supplying him with everything he could possibly need, including real pleasures that never end.

"Christians rejoice in secret beauty and bounty, hidden from the world, but known to God," writes Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science. Jesus wasn't asking the rich man to give up a single

truly good or necessary thing. After all, Jesus' promise included the assurance that when we seek spiritual good first, the practical good we need at the moment is "added unto [us]" (Matthew 6:33). Rather, obedience to Jesus' instruction would have helped the man cut the chains binding him to a limited, material sense of good, so he could soar freely in God's universe of boundless bliss.

Mrs. Eddy's description of that secret beauty and bounty continues: "Self-forgetfulness, purity, and affection are constant prayers. Practice not profession, understanding not belief, gain the ear and right hand of omnipotence and they assuredly call down infinite blessings" When she adds, "A great sacrifice of material things must precede this advanced spiritual understanding," she isn't telling us to be martyrs, but that this is how to wake up to the good that we truly desire (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, pp. 15–16).

So many have found that as they turn away from materialism to God, their health, happiness, and ability to bless others increase rather than decrease. God does, indeed, love each of us tenderly and completely. Let's be willing to trust with our hearts, our thoughts, and our actions that there are, as the Bible assures us, "pleasures for evermore" at His right hand.

Lisa Rennie Sytsma, Editor

How does divine Love meet every need?

Jesus proved that Love is deeper, broader, higher, and mightier than any human contingency.

Abigail Mathieson Warrick

God's ever-present care for humanity is shown throughout the Bible. It is articulated this way in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy,

who discovered Christian Science: "Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need" (p. 494).

Given all the suffering seen in the world, we could ask how this statement could be true. In answer, we might start by considering that divine Love, God, being infinite, is more than equal to any human circumstance, even ones we can't see. This is because human circumstances are confined to what is perceived by the physical senses, which could never even begin to challenge the magnitude and omnipotent capacity of the limitless, eternal harmony, safety, and peace of divine Mind, God. It is God's love that shows us, through Christ—the true, wholly spiritual idea of God—how to understand and demonstrate this.

When we call out to God and pray for help, God's answer is essentially, "I have helped you. I have given you My laws. They will keep you safe in all situations. Trust them. Obey them." So our work is to know God's laws and live by them.

The First Commandment is a perfect place to start. When we truly know and live by the fact that there is only one God, this knowledge opens our thought to the present possibilities implied by this truth. As we act on it and trust only in God's goodness, we find that our needs are indeed already met by divine Love, by the spiritual harmony of active faith, patience, and grace that we are freely given in any situation.

As we contemplate some of the world's worst crises, we can remember that peacemaking, justice, and beneficence are attributes of God that are freely and fully available at any time and place to guide and govern our actions safely and humanely. We need only look in the right direction—to Spirit, God—to find all good.

If, however, we are not the ones making the decisions, can our prayers avail in this regard? Assuredly! There are many instances in history of tragedy, conflict, and devastation averted or corrected through the preparations and actions of those who were guided by moral and spiritual sagacity and were no doubt supported by the prayers of those around them.

This opportunity to improve human life at every juncture applies as much to our individual relationships as to dilemmas in our local, national, and world communities. How often have we seen how to defuse an argument and maintain peace with a friend or family member by not reacting but by responding instead with patience and kindness? We can likely all draw lessons from times we've been tempted to act rashly, willfully, or self-righteously and perhaps found ourselves in an unpleasant argument, but where a shift to meekness and generosity ultimately paved the way for peace. We could recognize then that the sweetness and gentleness of meekness and generosity were present throughout to guide us peacefully and justly. We just needed to turn away from fear and blame.

These peacemaking motivations continue to be present in us all at every moment. They can't be used up or lost. They possess immortal endurance and liveliness to redeem and reclaim any situation at any time. This is because God, our divine Father-Mother, Love, is ever present and blesses Her creation with truth and love perpetually and universally. Even when we can't see it. All it takes is turning to God and seeking good from a higher source than our human emotions or material knowledge.

I saw this firsthand when, one morning, an Iraqi man came into our Christian Science Reading Room in Melbourne, Australia, where I was serving. He took my hands in both of his and kissed them, saying fervently, "Abigail, you changed my mind!" I had never met him before, but I found out that he had walked into our Sunday church service two days earlier, where I had been serving as Second Reader (reading aloud Bible passages from the Lesson-Sermon published in the *Christian Science Quarterly*). These Bible verses had clearly had a strong impact on this visitor, and he had asked my name and where he might find me.

This occurred when the Iraq war was raging, and like many others, I had been praying to see a path to peace. He told me that a relative of his had been taken hostage and that the hostage-takers' demands had included ending the United States' invasion. He indicated that he had been considering taking violent action to bring more attention to this emergency, but that the words

he had heard from the Bible had made him rethink and not pursue this plan. Following what we could call the promptings of divine Love, he had found his way into a Christian Science service, where he had heard the Word of God, which had changed his mind.

He told me his name and the position his relative held in the Iraqi opposition party, and I was later able to follow the story in the news. It was a joy to find out that, although the war continued for a while longer, his relative was safely released at the end of that week without any ransom being paid.

Examples like this show how divine Love meets human needs through Christ's influence. They point to our opportunity to listen in prayer and avail ourselves of this immediate source of good. Christ Jesus proved that Love is deeper, broader, higher, and mightier than any human contingency. The Apostle Paul had a perception of this when he said, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38, 39).

We, too, can utilize what Love has given us to meet each need always, all the way.

Jonah—a lesson in obedience to God

Jonah was a Hebrew prophet in the 8th century bc. His biblical record, rather than a collection of prophecies, is a single tale that teaches both obedience to God and God's compassion. At its outset, Jonah is divinely ordered to preach in Nineveh—one of the largest cities in the world at the time and home to worship of the pagan goddess Ishtar. It was also the capital of Assyria, a nation known for brutal warfare against its neighbors.

Perhaps understandably, Jonah refuses to go. In rebellion, he embarks on a long voyage to escape God's decree. His destination is believed to have been almost five times the distance to Nineveh—but in the opposite direction.

What follows graphically illustrates God's authority and forgiveness. First, the sea voyage is interrupted by a great storm. Then, revealing to his fellow sailors that he is the cause of the trouble, Jonah volunteers to be thrown into the sea, where he is swallowed by a huge fish. After three days of humble prayer, Jonah is vomited onto land. He is finally ready to obey God's charge—and as a result, Nineveh repents of its wickedness.

“Self-ignorance, self-will, self-righteousness, lust, covetousness, envy, revenge, are foes to grace, peace, and progress; they must be met manfully and overcome, or they will uproot all happiness,” writes Mary Baker Eddy, Founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist. “Be of good cheer; the warfare with one's self is grand; it gives one plenty of employment, and the divine Principle worketh with you,—and obedience crowns persistent effort with everlasting victory” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 118).

For more on this topic, see “Deep waters” by Robert Ellis Key.

Is morality relative?

As we allow Love to govern our thoughts and actions, we feel the healing presence of true morality.

John Russell

A neighbor once commented, “Morality is relative. What's right and wrong is different for everyone.” Her opinion reflected a familiar modern belief—that morality shifts with personal preference or cultural trends. In this view, right and wrong can feel like

moving targets shaped by circumstance rather than principle.

As I listened to this neighbor, I felt the need to pause and pray. Is morality truly relative? Or is there a deeper, spiritual foundation for assessing right and wrong—one that doesn't depend on human opinion?

Through my study of the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, I've come to see that morality is not relative. It is grounded in God, divine Principle, Love. True morality is the natural expression of God's unchanging law practiced in every aspect of our human experience.

Mrs. Eddy writes, “Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals” (*Science and Health*, p. 13). Since divine Love is All and governs all, morality cannot be personal, shifting, or fear-driven. It must reflect Love's constancy and care for each of us and all creation.

This spiritual foundation runs throughout the Scriptures. In Hebrew, the word *shalom*—often translated *peace*—means far more than the absence of conflict. It points to wholeness, harmony, completeness, and well-being, both individually and collectively. I understand these qualities to be rooted in obedience to God, and that this idea is reflected in the Ten Commandments, which are not restrictive rules but spiritual laws designed to unify, protect, and bless.

The theme of *shalom* flows through the Old Testament and into the New. The two commandments cited by Jesus as the first and second greatest “in the law,” could be considered as summarizing all moral law: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (see Matthew 22:36–39).

To me, in highlighting these two commandments, Jesus was saying that loving God and your neighbor as yourself is at the heart of all moral action. These rules are imperative and cannot be separated because each expresses divine Principle, Love. Taken together, they embrace everyone, including ourselves, in God's love.

Jesus lived this moral clarity without compromise, often in the face of criticism from Jewish authorities. He healed wherever and whenever he found a need—including on the Sabbath—spoke with outcasts, refused to condemn a woman caught sinning (while still rebuking the sin), and embodied forgiveness even in the face of violence. In the midst of the crucifixion, he said of those responsible, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

His moral authority flowed from his understanding of his oneness with God. He said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30), and his life shows that morality is not based on human will, fear, a need for control, or social custom; it is our response to Love’s unifying embrace of all. Jesus lived the spiritual harmony that *shalom* represents.

The Apostle Paul gives us practical guidance for living divine Love. He writes, for instance, “Let all your things be done with charity” (I Corinthians 16:14). In the thirteenth chapter of the same letter, he describes charity as patient, kind, humble, forgiving, and steadfast. To my understanding, what Paul is actually referring to here is spiritual love, and these qualities reveal how to be “love in action” with each individual we encounter and with ourselves as we go about our day.

Christian Science teaches us to watch our thinking and distinguish between thoughts that come from divine Love and those that stem from fear. Many of us know the strident voice of self-condemnation—“I’m not enough,” “I don’t belong,” “I can’t measure up.” But these and similar thoughts don’t express humility; they express fear. And they are not of God.

Mrs. Eddy writes, “Man is God’s image and likeness; whatever is possible to God, is possible to man as *God’s reflection*” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 183). As we accept this, our inner dialogue begins to shift from critical self-judgment to grace, compassion, patience, and forgiveness. And we find ourselves naturally acting more in accordance with our true selfhood as God’s, Love’s, expression.

I experienced this during a home repair project. Things didn’t go as planned, and I grew increasingly frustrated

with my mistakes. But I paused and asked, “Is this the way divine Love sees me?” I replaced irritation with compassion, tenderness, and patience toward myself. A few days later, when I felt the familiar pull of impatience while waiting for my wife to get out of the car, the same shift happened naturally. Patience and gratitude for her replaced frustration. At that moment, it made all the difference in our relationship. Feeling God’s love for me helped me feel His love for her.

As we practice receiving God’s love and reflecting it, something begins to shift our thoughts and actions. Seeing more of God’s likeness in everyone leads us to judge less. We are more open to receiving expressions of love from others. We listen more openly because Love quiets fear and self-concern. Our decisions become less reactive and more responsive to Love’s guidance. Little by little, we feel the spiritual harmony—the *shalom*—that comes from yielding to God’s government instead of exercising human will. These changes aren’t the result of personal effort; they come from allowing divine Love to transform our thoughts and show us what is truly moral and right.

Morality, then, isn’t a cultural trend or a shifting human standard. It is the natural expression of the divine Principle, Love, which is universal and unchanging. Mrs. Eddy states it simply and powerfully: “Right is radical” (*Science and Health*, p. 452).

As we allow Love to govern our thoughts and actions, we feel the healing presence of true morality—steady, graceful, and deeply compassionate. Then we truly are expressing our real nature as Love’s reflection, blessing ourselves, each person we encounter, and the world.

Working out our own salvation

We're not here to judge another's journey, but to keep our own consciousness one with God.

Name Withheld

I received a call to pray with a woman who was experiencing challenges in her marriage. She and her husband had young children and were behind on paying bills. He wasn't bringing income to the household, and their relationship was deteriorating. The situation seemed overwhelming, and it seemed that the problems were multiplying daily. As she and I prayed together, with each new problem, we'd go back to the truth—God's spiritual truth—and affirm her and her husband's forever status as children of God.

While my patient's desire had been to heal the marriage, she filed for divorce when she found out that her husband was having an affair. It felt as though everything was crashing down on her and that she was being punished for his bad decisions. She said to me, "I'm trying to do the right thing. Why am I the one getting stuck with all the problems?"

Then one day, while I was praying and listening for inspiration from God, a thought came to me that helped us both: "Someone working out their salvation cannot hurt us." To me, this meant that whether she could see it or not, her husband was working out his own salvation, and that his actions and behavior could not hurt her as she worked out her own salvation.

As I pondered this thought, a couple of quotes came to mind. One is from the Bible: "Work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12). The other is from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "'Work out your own salvation,' is the demand of Life and Love, for to this end God worketh with you. . . .

"Final deliverance from error, whereby we rejoice in immortality, boundless freedom, and sinless sense, is not reached through paths of flowers nor by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort" (p. 22).

To me, the latter means that we can't rely on Jesus' profound work alone to save us. Each of us must follow him and do our own work, including deepening our understanding of divine Truth. This means that we need to work out our own understanding of God as the source of all truth, good, and reality, and our understanding of the nature and meaning of our life—of our identity, substance, wholeness, place, and purpose in all of creation.

As a student of Christian Science, I understand there to be just one reality: Spirit, God. So, working out my salvation means first understanding who and what God is and what I am to God. We can't effectively work out our salvation or find our purpose without God being front and center in our thoughts and actions.

Christ Jesus is our role model for understanding God. He was the Way-shower, demonstrating through his healings and teachings our relationship to our divine source. Mrs. Eddy writes of Jesus, "He did life's work aright not only in justice to himself, but in mercy to mortals,—to show them how to do theirs, but not to do it for them nor to relieve them of a single responsibility" (*Science and Health*, p. 18).

Each of us has to work out our own individual life. We can't sleep, eat, or live for someone else. Likewise, we can't work out someone's understanding of life or salvation for them. We can help them and pray with them, but ultimately, each individual has to take their own spiritual journey. Likewise, we can't look to others to work out that understanding for us.

Our role as a witness to someone else's life is always to strive to know them as God knows them—beloved of God, spiritual, innocent, whole, and loving.

To understand true life, we go to our source, God, who is Life itself. Through prayer—through communion with Spirit, God—we get clearer views of ourselves and others. We discover the goodness and infinitude of God, from whom comes all individual life and purpose. And on this basis, we can demonstrate, in small and large ways, God's goodness through the understanding that evil, mortality, and human personality have absolutely

no power because they have no place in God or His creation.

I got some great insights from an essay titled “Taking Offense” published in Mrs. Eddy’s *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896* (see pp. 223–224). They helped me to see that each of us has our own unique relationship to God that no one can take away from us. Knowing our purpose and place is between God and us alone. Therefore, in working out our salvation, we can understand that no one can block our good, our purpose, or our supply. We each have an unbreakable individual connection to God, Love, our divine source.

As we strive to understand more deeply that God is the only source and power, we find that neither we nor others can have any desire or ability to victimize another, so we cannot be victimized by another’s actions.

At one point, my patient asked me why her ex-husband didn’t seem to suffer the consequences of his actions. (She felt that she was the only one suffering as a result of his actions.) We talked about the fact that acknowledging each person’s freedom to work out their own salvation means that how and when another works out their salvation isn’t any of our business.

This doesn’t mean we ignore problems or condone wrong behavior. Instead, we can know that such behavior is no part of who anyone is as God’s child; it is a false belief about humanity that we can address in prayer. I find it helpful to be clear in my own thinking that sin in any form is unreal and powerless and can’t be attached to anyone, anywhere.

Jesus said, “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven” (Luke 6:37). As we understand and put into practice this instruction, we are able to turn feelings of victimization and disappointment into grace and humility. This enables us to be less reactive and more gracious when dealing with others. We understand that they, too, are working out their lives and have no power to hurt us. We’re not here to judge another’s journey but to keep our own consciousness one with God.

My patient wondered whether she could let go of those judgmental thoughts and really forgive, considering all the injustice she felt she was experiencing. As she prayed, however, a healing thought from the Bible came to her. It’s a promise from God that says, “I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten” (Joel 2:25). Whatever she felt she had lost would be restored to her by the only power in her life—God.

She also knew that in Christian Science, instead of praying for a specific outcome, we can trust Jesus’ promise “that the works of God should be made manifest” (John 9:3)—that her prayers were not to tell God how things should be handled but to let divine Love’s goodness be revealed and guide her. She realized she needed to let go of any resentment she felt toward her ex-husband and just let God love him.

Trusting God more deeply and knowing Him as both her true husband and her constant supply, my friend was able to pay off their collective debt. She moved closer to her job, where she was promoted. She has since married a man who loves and respects her and her children, and theirs continues to be a harmonious home. Not only did she survive what seemed to be a devastating situation, but she and her children have thrived. Now, whenever she thinks of or interacts with her ex-husband, she sees him as God’s beloved child, owing her absolutely nothing. She found out that God was her only source of good.

We are both so grateful for what we learned from this experience. No one can do our spiritual work for us, nor can anyone’s actions victimize us if we understand that God is the only power. Nothing can block our understanding of the wholeness and fullness of God, because He is Love itself, consistent and ever available to all. We can trust Love to guide and care for each individual in working out his or her own salvation.

Moving forward

Diane Warneck

No, losing you is not what I'd expected,
not what I had hoped,
and now, here I am,
standing alert and still,
hearing my Father's clear voice:
"Drop the baggage of the shadowy past—
the fleeting joys and lingering sorrows—
and move forward
with Me
to serve and grow, to help and heal,
in fearless, fadeless joy
with Me.
Move forward!"

And yes, I am ready!
Moving forward with my Father,
there's no place I'd rather be—
always on God's holy ground.

Weekly updates: April 20, 2026

Loving and introducing the Christian Science Bible Lessons

Christian Science Reading Rooms are appreciating the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons as a powerful introduction to the healing truths found in our dual pastor, the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.

Recently, staff members from two Reading Rooms participated in a free-flowing webinar conversation about the Bible Lessons and the prosperity of Christian Science, including how sharing the Lessons has been

instrumental in welcoming newcomers. You can find the replay at christianscience.com/blwebinar.

Three new Reading Room posters and flyers speak to the light, strength, and freedom the pastor brings to our days. Designed to show a Bible verse "unlocked" by *Science and Health's* Key to the Scriptures, they illustrate the unity of the pastor's message. These materials—available in English, Spanish, French, German, and Portuguese—feature a QR code that links to biblelesson.com, an introductory web page for newcomers, including a new Church Community panel that provides information about local churches and Reading Rooms as well as Christian Science practitioners and upcoming lectures. The posters are available to download at christianscience.com/blmaterials.

The natural moving of our hearts to share the precious gifts of inspiration and healing found in these Bible Lessons brings to mind a letter to Mrs. Eddy from one of her early students, James Rome, after the completion of the extension of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston: "But what of this magnificent structure? Whence did it come? To me it is the result of the love that trembled in one human heart when it whispered: 'Dear God, may I not take this precious truth and give it to my brothers and sisters?'" (Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 62).

Thank you for taking part in loving and living the healing ideas in these Bible Lessons and helping introduce them to the world.

A spiritual response to feeling overwhelmed

Amarachi Ejimadu

At one point in my college semester, academic demands—combined with leadership responsibilities, work, athletics, and family—became overwhelming.

I enjoy pushing myself and keeping busy, while still prioritizing my academics. But when my academic performance suddenly wasn't meeting my expectations, I began to panic. I had papers to write, finals to prepare for, and numerous assignments to complete, all within a few weeks. And with the semester nearing its end, I knew asking for extensions was not an option.

At first, I felt I had no choice but to push through. But then I realized I could do what I have always done when life feels overwhelming: pray. I've learned from attending Christian Science Sunday School that prayer is something effective I can turn to during a challenge.

While praying, I realized that nothing is truly in my control and that instead, there is a divine power governing all things. God is that power, and God is all good, so that means good is governing everything.

I knew that my initial impulses about how to solve things on my own had failed me. They'd told me to keep stressing, stay awake late into the night, and keep pushing hard instead of sleeping. But knowing I could trust God silenced that negative, unproductive thinking. Yielding to God brought me joy and peace. Most importantly, it reassured me that everything would be fine, because when I've trusted God in the past, things have always worked out.

With that realization, I was able to let go of a lot of the pressure I'd been feeling. I found comfort in singing hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal* and listening to streamed Christian Science church services, as well as the Christian Science Daily Lift and *Sentinel* Watch podcasts.

For example, one night when I couldn't sleep, I listened to an episode of the Daily Lift and then started praying.

In moments like these, when I'm quietly praying, I often receive a message from God that I reflect on—pray with—and it stays with me. This time, the message was the word *patience*.

At first, I thought that was strange. How could I be patient when time seemed to be moving faster than my ability to complete my tasks? Still, I accepted the message and said, "Thank you, God, for this reminder." I trusted that this feeling of pressure would pass and that these tasks would get completed as I relied on God. I knew that I could be patient and find joy in the process.

Even so, I wasn't immediately sure how to practice patience, so I turned to giving gratitude as a way of being patient with what was getting done instead of focusing on a long, overwhelming to-do list. Every morning and night, I thanked God for every completed task and for those who were supporting me. I noticed small accomplishments and was grateful for them, and I knew that what had gotten done that day was enough. I didn't have to be impatient about the rest.

Turning to gratitude restored my joyful demeanor. Even when circumstances felt out of control, I remained at peace, and I even started to enjoy what I was doing. I began completing tasks more efficiently and finished the semester successfully, having fulfilled all my responsibilities.

Patience, expressed through gratitude for the small things, became my reminder that there is joy in the process and that I can trust God when life feels out of control.

Thank you, God!

Healed of monthly menstrual pain

Stefania Passaglia

Originally published in Spanish

Throughout my teenage years I was mostly free of menstrual pain. Only a few years ago did I begin experiencing regular discomfort. Whenever my friends shared symptoms related to their menstrual cycles, I would make negative comments about what it means to be a woman. I had latched on to the general belief that such pain was normal, and that us women are subject to suffering once a month.

It seemed easy to believe that Eve's "original sin" of eating the fruit God had forbidden had condemned all women to menstrual pain. The media is constantly telling us that we have flaws and that monthly discomfort is normal. Perhaps it was these thoughts, and my lack of consistency in countering them, that led me to believe that there wasn't much I could do about the discomfort. I had surrendered to what I believed to be my fate.

Early one Sunday morning I was awakened by intense abdominal pain. I couldn't move freely, sit, or lie face down. That day I was responsible for covering for one of my colleagues at work, but I didn't feel well enough to go. A wave of negative thoughts hit me: anguish about being a woman, guilt about not being able to go to work, and fear people would feel I was irresponsible if I didn't. It was clear to me that this entire mental landscape was not conducive to, or supportive of, healing. Had I spoken with my friends about this, they would have recommended medication to alleviate the pain. But I wanted a permanent healing, not temporary relief, and to be at peace, with this false belief lifted from my thoughts.

Instead of contacting my boss and spending another day in bed, I decided to put an end to the situation and pray for myself. I grew up with Christian Science and had felt the power of prayer, which was why I was certain of its efficacy. Countless times I had managed to overcome evil with good by affirming I was perfect, without a defect or fault, the reflection of God's spiritual

nature. God had never abandoned anyone to the fate of material existence. Therefore, neither I nor any other woman had any reason to suffer.

When I dig deeper to better understand God's nature and our inseparable relationship to God, and the many other spiritual concepts I was taught in Sunday School and continue to learn about in our weekly Bible Lessons, doubts about God's healing power cannot remain. Nothing can cloud my view of God's spiritual creation, or the way He created us.

As I prayed for myself, I thought about "the scientific statement of being" in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. The first sentence of the statement declares, "There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter" (p. 468). I reasoned, "If there is no intelligence in matter, how can my body tell me that something hurts? How can the body communicate this to me?" The answer was so obvious that I wasn't surprised when the thought came, "It can't." If the material senses are a product of the so-called laws of matter, and my being is spiritual, I cannot feel pain. Pain only manifests the belief of being apart from God, and as God's reflection, I am one with God, incapable of any disturbance.

Another thought that came to me related to Mrs. Eddy's reference in *Science and Health* to intelligence as "omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence" (p. 469). I reasoned that if God is omniscient and knows everything, and fills all space and is all-powerful, then matter and pain cannot exist; there isn't even a millimeter of space for them in spiritual creation.

"The scientific statement of being" also declares, "All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All-in-all" (p. 468). Each of us, as the infinite manifestation of the one Mind, reflects health and harmony.

By relying on these simple truths, I quickly became free of the pain. It was an almost instantaneous healing. I was able to fulfill my work responsibilities that day without any relapses, and I felt free from the guilt that had been plaguing me.

Today, several years later, I remain free of monthly discomfort. I am infinitely grateful to God for always lifting me up and showing me what I need to see and understand, and also to Mrs. Eddy for following Christ Jesus and dedicating her life to sharing her discovery of Christian Science—the most significant discovery of all time—with the world.

Stefania Passaglia

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Rapid healing of a deep cut

Jill Longanecker-Wiedman

I was using a knife to cut a dinner roll that I was holding in my hand, and I was hurrying because relatives were to arrive shortly. The knife quickly sliced right through the roll and into my hand. It felt like the deepest cut I'd ever had. I yelled out in pain and was quite stunned for an instant.

I resisted looking at the injury, but fearful images of what my hand might look like and what I might have to deal with flooded my thought. I bent over the kitchen sink in prayer.

The first thing that came to thought was the phrase “disbelief in physics.” Mary Baker Eddy states in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: “When an accident happens, you think or exclaim, ‘I am hurt!’ Your thought is more powerful than your words, more powerful than the accident itself, to make the injury real.

“Now reverse the process. Declare that you are not hurt and understand the reason why, and you will find the ensuing good effects to be in exact proportion to your disbelief in physics, and your fidelity to divine metaphysics, confidence in God as All, which the Scriptures declare Him to be” (p. 397).

My four-year-old daughter was also in the kitchen. As I was silently praying, she said so compassionately and meekly, “Mommy, God is all around you, and His love can never go away.” This reminded me of why we disbelieve in physics—because God, Spirit, is All; His love is infinite and therefore always all around us, so no part of our true being, which is wholly spiritual, could ever be severed from His love.

The time I spent in prayer wasn't more than a few moments, after which I wrapped the hand in a paper towel and finished up what I needed to do in the kitchen. The pain was completely gone; however, I went into another room and prayed for just a minute more, denouncing the so-called laws of physics and attributing all power to God, Principle, whose spiritual law of perfection was always governing me.

At that point, I thought it would be wise to clean my hand and cover the injury with a bandage. But when I began to run the water, I found that the wound had already closed and that there wasn't anything to clean off. Prayer had had an immediate effect.

I am so grateful that even while I was trying to let go of the belief in false laws about matter-based cause and effect, my daughter's simple statement had cut through all that and just declared my inseparability from God, good. *Science and Health* explains, “While age is halting between two opinions or battling with false beliefs, youth makes easy and rapid strides towards Truth” (p. 236).

On the third morning after this incident, my daughter said, “Mommy, these beautiful thoughts keep coming to me.” She added, “I am still praying for your hand, even while I'm playing.” I was so impressed with this evidence of her receptivity to the one, all-powerful Mind—God. The next day, my hand was completely free of any evidence of a cut.

This was such a great lesson to me, helping me understand what Christ Jesus meant when he said, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein” (Mark 10:15). Healing involves letting go of a lifetime of false beliefs of

material pain and pleasure and entering with childlike trust into the light of spiritual reality.

Jill Longanecker-Wiedman

Ormond Beach, Florida, US

“Where is the pain?”

Louise D. Shapleigh

Several decades ago, on Independence Day in the United States, I awoke with an excruciatingly painful toothache. I tried to pray for myself, but the pain was so great that I couldn't think clearly. I tried listening to an audio recording of the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, but when I felt no improvement by midday, I called a member of my branch Church of Christ, Scientist, who is a Christian Science practitioner. I was grateful that he was available to pray for me, despite it being a holiday.

I recounted my tale of woe, explaining that the pain in my mouth was extreme and that I needed help. He immediately asked me, “Where is the pain?” My first reaction was to be upset, as I felt he had not listened to what I had said. The pain was in my mouth! We talked very briefly, and he said he would pray for me.

After we hung up, I pondered the question he had posed: Where is the pain? I was relatively new to Christian Science at the time, but I knew enough of spiritual truth to have it dawn on me that the pain was actually in what is termed in Christian Science *mortal mind*. Upon the heels of that thought came another simple truth—that mortal mind doesn't exist, because there is only one Mind, God, which is infinite, as Mrs. Eddy teaches us throughout her writings.

Then, the simple logic of Christian Science, which I so dearly love for its absolute clarity, came to me as follows: “If the pain is in mortal mind, and mortal mind doesn't exist, then the pain doesn't exist.” This logic

was so clear and unambiguous to me. I pondered this line for several minutes before falling asleep. I awoke 10 or 15 minutes later, completely free of pain. It was 100 percent gone. I got out of bed and put in a full day's work at the horse stable where I was the head trainer and instructor.

This instantaneous healing, which came within minutes of contacting a practitioner for treatment through prayer, is undeniable proof of the effectiveness of the truth of what is taught in Christian Science.

As we read in the textbook, “Man . . . is not physique” (p. 475). Pain is not in the physical body. It is a false belief that exists only in mortal mind, which is non-existent; therefore, pain is unreal, an illusion, a dream from which we need to be awakened. The practitioner's simple, four-word question had awakened me. Through the practitioner's prayers and mine, divine Mind revealed to me—as accurately as a laser beam—the truth that I needed to understand in order to eradicate the pain I had been experiencing.

God is omnipotent. He has the power to heal anything and everything. He is omnipresent, “a very present help in trouble” (Psalms 46:1). And He is omniscient. The divine Mind provides us with the guidance and truth that meet our every need. God's healing power is available to everyone, at all times.

I am so very grateful for this healing, for the opportunity to share it, for our great God, and for Christ Jesus, our Way-shower. I'm also grateful for the truths that Mrs. Eddy discovered and wrote down in order to give us the tools we can use to heal any problem. Finally, I am thankful for Christian Science practitioners, who share their clear understanding of the truth, which brings relief and healing!

Louise D. Shapleigh

Ballwin, Missouri, US

Letters & Conversations

Justin McCarthy, Kathleen Cramer, Dawn Rehnstrom

> Jenny Sawyer, “Want to pray for the world? Start here.” March 23, 2026

Thank you for this article. It was very helpful and uplifting.

Justin McCarthy, Fayetteville, West Virginia, US

> Lisa Rennie Sytsma, “The big picture and the little things,” March 9, 2026

This editorial shared some very good ideas. However, the statement about Joseph being Jesus’ human father is not correct. Jesus did not have a human father. Mary Baker Eddy was very specific in stating Jesus’ spiritual origin and conception.

Kathleen Cramer, Azusa, California, US

You are absolutely correct; Jesus was indeed born to a virgin. The sentence should have read, “The man the world saw as Jesus’ father, Joseph, was a carpenter.” It has been corrected on JSH-Online.com. Thank you for calling this to our attention.

The Editors

> Whit Larsen, “Forever shining,” February 23, 2026

Praise for this beautiful poem. Having recently said farewell to two friends, I was encouraged by the work done by this author to see beyond the limiting belief of life in matter.

Dawn Rehnstrom, Savannah, Georgia, US

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