



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Sentinel

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

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“Are we benefited by praying?”

Jennifer McLaughlin

Mary Baker Eddy poses this question in ***Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures***—and immediately follows with the answer: “Yes . . .” (p. 2). As I was reading this passage recently, the words stood out to me as if they were the only ones on the page. It’s so clear: Yes, we are benefited by praying. I thought about that arresting, confident statement for days.

As I reflected, I realized that Mrs. Eddy expands on that “Yes” to give an even bigger sense of its promise. The full passage reads: “Are we benefited by praying? Yes, the desire which goes forth hungering after righteousness is blessed of our Father, and it does not return unto us void.” In this, we have a magnificent assurance that God hears and blesses our prayers and that they are effective. But if it doesn’t feel that way to us, it’s important to note that this inspired direction indicates a specific type of prayer: “the desire which goes forth hungering after righteousness.”

So if our role is to hunger after righteousness, what does it mean to do that? It must be important, for Christ Jesus referenced it in the part of his Sermon on the Mount known as the Beatitudes: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6). To be *hungry* for something is to want it, to seek it, to not be satisfied until we get it.

What is this righteousness we are to actively seek so that our prayers are beneficial? The meaning of the Greek word translated *righteousness* in this verse includes “the condition acceptable to God” and “integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon: Strong’s G1343—*dikaiosynē*; see blueletterbible.org). To be hungry for righteousness is to seek this state of thought and living with urgency and focus. And according to the Bible, qualities such as purity, virtue, and integrity are actually inherent in us.

The first chapter of Genesis says that God made man in His image and likeness—which is to say, in our true, spiritual identity as God’s child. Therefore, we are each the perfect and complete expression of God, Spirit. Christ Jesus’ magnificent words and works demonstrated the practicality of knowing this truth of the spiritual nature of man, and Christian Science explains that this is how Jesus healed. Where others accepted flawed mortality as the truth of themselves and others, Jesus saw all as that perfect man, and as a result of this right, or righteous, divine seeing, he was able to restore harmony of mind and body to so many.

We, too, can strive to see nothing but God’s likeness in ourselves and others, uncovering what we truly are and enabling us to see through anything that would impede such a pure view.

What an active, engaged way to pray! To pray with a sense of hunger for integrity, a hunger for virtue, a hunger for purity, a hunger for rightness and correctness. This is prayer impelled by self-reflection and infused with humility, spiritual discernment, and honesty. It’s deep and thoughtful and takes shape as a heart’s desire. This prayer is not passive or rote, not reliant on someone else’s work or effort, but is wholly individual to the one humbly turning to God for direction.

I’ve found prayer to be most effective when I start, and stay with, deeply cherishing what’s true about God—the nearness, nowness, and loving presence of our divine Father-Mother. Such an approach is beautifully captured by this Bible verse: “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all” (I Chronicles 29:11).

This kind of humble prayer, this earnest hungering after righteousness, this desire to gain and hold the right view—the Christ view or true idea—of God and all that God creates “is blessed of our Father, and it does not return unto us void.” The full promise is essential to understand and accept. Not only are these hungering-after-righteousness prayers blessed of God, but they’re also not void—meaning they’re not empty of substance

or effect. When we turn to God with all our heart, in prayer infused with a hunger after a clear, spiritual viewpoint and the purity, honesty, and sincerity that come with that, those prayers are never void, never inconsequential.

It's imperative that we don't believe any suggestion that sneaks into our thought arguing that our prayers are ineffective, unheard, or empty. Mrs. Eddy explains that these suggestions are nothing more than animal magnetism, which is "the false belief that mind is in matter, and is both evil and good; that evil is as real as good and more powerful." She adds, "This belief has not one quality of Truth" (*Science and Health*, p. 103).

If we find ourselves in a situation where we're tempted to wonder if God has heard our prayers, we can mentally step back to consider: Have I truly hungered after righteousness with my prayers? Am I striving to more fully express integrity, purity, honesty, and rightness through reflecting God? Above all, am I honoring what God is, or am I more focused on finding a solution to whatever it is I'm praying about?

Honoring God's majesty and allness keeps thought elevated and clear and enables us to better see whatever may need more attention in our prayers. And as we hunger for that righteousness and a clearer expression of it, our prayers are answered in ways that benefit us and others.

Are we benefited by praying? Yes!

Jennifer McLaughlin, Member of the Board of Trustees of The Christian Science Publishing Society

A divine blueprint for environmental stewardship

Learning from our spiritual and eternal origin, God, can drive the transformation so needed in our care for the earth.

Kim Crooks Korinek

Nature teaches humanity of God's sustaining love in so many ways—in the rooted connectivity of aspen trees, the consistent succession of the seasons, the synchronicity of a starling murmuration, and innumerable other forms. "All nature teaches God's love to man . . ." (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 326) and points to the divine intelligence that is its creator. The Bible gives us a divine blueprint that outlines a fresh and sustainable approach to nature, encouraging us to listen to and learn from our spiritual and eternal origin, God. This is what can drive the transformation so needed in our care for the earth.

"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).

So God holds all things in His hand as the only cause or Principle of existence—the one, infinite Mind. God causes the cycles of eternal life that renew, replenish, and multiply the fruits of the earth's ecosystems. This is reflected in the wholeness of those ecosystems.

But what about now, when these ecosystems are disturbed and their continued health seems precarious?

Many argue that the worst aspects of humanity—greed, selfishness, excessive consumption—are the primary causes of environmental decline. They fear that we are running out of time in which to solve environmental problems. In response to this, there is a growing movement of thinkers, scientists, activists,

and writers advocating for a radical reorientation of our relationship to nature, shifting from one of interruption, exploitation, and control to one of interconnectedness and even spiritual transformation.

In Christian Science, spiritual transformation starts with the understanding that God created both man and the universe harmoniously. “The Lord created the earth by his wisdom; by his knowledge he set the sky in place. His wisdom caused the rivers to flow and the clouds to give rain to the earth” (Proverbs 3:19, 20, Good News Translation). Wisdom and understanding are God’s creative forces, the causative intelligence that gives all creation an interconnected balance, a sustainable form, and a mutually beneficial relationship. In reference to the verses quoted here, a Bible commentary suggests, “He who surrenders himself to the ways of wisdom, will therefore find himself in harmony with the world about him” (Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds., *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 4, *Psalms, Proverbs*). In prayer, we listen to God’s wisdom and gain a heightened understanding of His control of the universe.

To me, being a good steward of the earth means praying for the earth by knowing that the origin and action of all creation is God, Love. This lifts thought into new possibilities, supporting the emergence of increasing receptivity to practical solutions that restore health and equilibrium to the world around us. Christian Science shows that it is thought that determines our actions. The way, then, to overcome the suggestion that we are divided and that opposing viewpoints can lead to destructive actions is to lift thought to a higher, spiritual understanding. This breaks through limited or selfish thinking and inspires innovative solutions that harmonize and unify and are sustainable.

An experience I had when I was managing an outdoor recreation company specializing in whitewater rafting and kayaking brought all these ideas home to me. We were dependent on a beautiful stretch of whitewater river that is the largest tributary to Lake Superior in the northern United States, and the very fact that our company was present there showed that progress had been made. Once considered one of the most polluted rivers in the US, it had reopened after persistent

cleanup efforts. The cleanup was so successful that the river could now be open to the public for recreation.

As I regularly prayed for this growing adventure company, I usually started by acknowledging God as divine Life. And I affirmed that nature and all of God’s creation—abundant, resilient, and vital—is ever governed by God’s law of harmony. I prayed, knowing that this law annuls so-called physical laws that claim the inevitability of lack, limitation, and deterioration. *Science and Health* defines river spiritually as a “channel of thought,” explaining that “when smooth and unobstructed, it typifies the course of Truth; but muddy, foaming, and dashing, it is a type of error” (p. 593). So whenever we had a problem, I changed my “river” of thought from muddying fears to trust in Life’s unobstructed flow of divine goodness.

This had happy results that steadily reached beyond our own business, which focused on trips delighting in nature and teaching team building. We had a good safety record. Our reputation grew positively, and local businesses saw that they were benefiting, too. Soon after a drought threatened our river’s water levels, a deluge of rain replenished upstream reservoirs, providing water for the entire season and making the year a success. It was a perfect expression of what I had been seeing in prayer: that infinite Life gives goodness to all and that this goodness is always overflowing.

In the following years, the company shared its ongoing success in wider circles by bringing positive state, national, and international attention to the area. This made us part of a transformative and interconnected effort to keep this river clean and accessible. And the momentum has continued to grow. In 2010, the river became part of the larger effort to restore and protect the Great Lakes through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Today, cleanup efforts continue to rejuvenate and revitalize the river, which helps the related aquatic and forest ecosystems thrive.

It was the selfless efforts to clean up the river that turned it from a polluted waterway into a resource accessible and beneficial to all. Once-destructive human actions were reversed, based on the thought that we could become better stewards of the river. To

me, it demonstrated the Science of being, in which “... whatever blesses one blesses all, as Jesus showed with the loaves and the fishes,—Spirit, not matter, being the source of supply” (*Science and Health*, p. 206). Thinking out from that same spiritual fact, we see that whatever sustains one sustains us all.

Humanity, as well as the sciences and technology, will undoubtedly be essential in efforts to continue caring for the earth. But just as I saw in my river experience, major environmental problems begin with thought, and thought—and the actions that follow—can change and improve. I learned profoundly that a consciousness filled with divine Truth, out of which come thoughtful actions, compassionate considerations, and intelligent solutions, can lead us all to become good stewards of the earth, realizing mutually beneficial outcomes that multiply and positively impact our earth—and us.

This is the shift we so need today. A consciousness filled with Truth sees God’s creation and understands that wherever we stand, we are standing on holy ground. This is the consciousness that wisely and effectively cares for our earth.

His Son: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (verse 17, King James Version).

Jesus’ later teaching and example, however, deepened the meaning of baptism. In contrast to water immersion, believers were to be baptized with the Holy Spirit—a dispensation first mentioned by the Baptist himself (see verse 11). Acts 1:5 records Jesus’ words “John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”

The Epistle to Titus calls this “the washing of regeneration” (3:5); Galatians 3:27 speaks of being “baptized into Christ.” Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, explains, “The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the spirit of Truth cleansing from all sin; giving mortals new motives, new purposes, new affections, all pointing upward” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 204).

For more on this topic, see “*Baptism: Its deep significance*” by Naomi Price.

Baptism

Baptism by water was an early Hebrew rite that represented purification and, for Gentiles, conversion to the Jewish faith. John the Baptist, Jewish preacher and preeminent forerunner of Christianity, employed baptism as a two-fold symbol—of repentance and of acceptance of the imminent fulfillment of Messianic prophecy (see Matthew 3:1–6).

Christ Jesus’ own baptism took place at the outset of his ministry. It was deemed remarkable because his sinless nature needed no repentance. Yet his charge to John was, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires” (Matthew 3:15, New Living Translation). And it was at this event that God first publicly endorsed

Saved from abuse, supported by church

Because of these church members, I felt God ushering me forward in what had felt like an impossible situation.

Name Withheld

Some time ago, I spent a couple of years doing some soul-searching. I had no direction for myself. I was unclear about what I wanted for my future and lacked confidence. During this period, I was living many states away from my family and working odd jobs. I began dating and found myself in a deeply abusive relationship. Just when I felt it was wise to end the relationship, I became pregnant. I worried for my unborn baby and felt completely lost.

A short while after deciding to move in with the baby's father, I lost my job. I experienced illness throughout my pregnancy; my child's father was stealing from me; and after I had been less than a month in his home, we were evicted because he had not been paying the rent. The abuse continued, even as we relocated to another state. While in the trenches of this relationship, I prayed, going to God and seeking direction, forgiveness, and love.

Because I was unemployed, I spent the days at home alone. I was truly grateful to be alone with God. Since I had been raised in Christian Science, I felt a strong desire to look up a local church. There was a branch Church of Christ, Scientist, nearby, and I decided to attend the next weekly testimony meeting.

When I walked into the church, I felt immediate harmony. I remember being so still and quiet and silently pleading with God to just tell me what to do. I didn't feel I had the strength to make a decision about whether to stay in the relationship or leave. I was fearful of the outcome because of threats my baby's father had made.

After the service, members of the church introduced themselves, and I was so grateful to meet such a wonderful group of people. They were joyous and delighted for me to be a part of their services. I returned the following Sunday and decided that church was exactly where I needed to be.

My baby's father tried to hold me back, telling me that I should not attend church and fighting with me before and after every Sunday service. I stood my ground and told him that he could never take God away from me and that I would continue attending church. I even invited him to come with me; he declined.

The Sunday after I began attending church, some members invited me to lunch with them. During lunch, they asked about what last-minute baby items I needed. I told them that I had a crib and a few baby bottles and that I had recently bought a few clothing items. I tried to brush off my lack of preparedness as no big deal. At the next church service I attended a few days later, these members came to me and asked if they could throw me a baby shower. I was speechless! I had known this group

for only a couple of weeks, and yet they insisted that they wanted to throw me a baby shower. I accepted the offer.

The weekend of the shower, my baby's father decided he did not want to be there. He packed some belongings and left for his home state, 12 hours away.

I was now alone in a state where I had no job, no money, and no family or friends, and I did not know what to do next. I felt it would be best to get through the baby shower, and then I would decide what to do. My mother traveled to attend the shower with me. We had a wonderful, spiritually uplifted time. The church members gifted practical items and shared spiritual truths that spoke to me deeply. They wrote cards and notes that I still have and think about today.

I was so touched and felt God ushering me forward in what had felt like an impossible situation. As I drove away after the shower, this thought came to me with such conviction: "This is love. This is what love feels like." I understood this to mean that what I had thought was love between my baby's father and me was a misunderstanding of what love is. His behavior and his treatment of me were not love at all. But this time spent with God and around people who truly cherished my spiritual growth, cared for me practically, and supported me so lovingly was true love because it expressed the pureness and tenderness of divine Love, God.

The Bible says very clearly, "God is love" (I John 4:8). I could finally see that this difficult relationship was not the right place for me to be. I wanted to show my daughter what love truly felt and looked like, and accepting abuse masked as love was not the way to do that.

Later that evening, I quietly said to God, as if I were talking to my mother, "God, just give me one more sign that this relationship needs to end, because I don't feel strong enough to leave." When I returned home an hour later, I found phone messages from several women saying that my baby's father had been maintaining relationships with them while he was with me. Here was my answer.

I packed my things and moved back home to live with my mother until I could get back on my feet. I stopped speaking to my baby's father and hired an attorney. I was four weeks away from my due date and had enough items from the shower to get me going in the first couple of months after the birth.

To my surprise, one door after another opened. I received homemade gifts for my daughter from members of the Christian Science church in my hometown. Package after package arrived for us, with baby blankets, toys, clothing, diapers, etc. I was even given a dresser where I could store the baby's things.

At one point, I was talking with a close friend who is also a Christian Science practitioner, telling her how grateful I was for what I was receiving, since I had been so heartbroken over the loss of most of my personal belongings over the course of this relationship. I felt that I was completely starting over. She said, "Everything I have is from Christian Science." I recognized that this was true for me, too—that I would get all I need through understanding what Christian Science teaches about the goodness of God. I could not be "punished" for going through with having this baby. And my child could not feel less loved without a human father in their life. I recognized that this child's Father-Mother is God, just as He is mine, and that everything we ever need, even clothing or a dresser, etc., comes from God.

After this conversation, I never felt fearful again that my baby would feel "less than" or unloved. I knew that I could provide for everything my child could ever need with God as my support. God would lead the way for both of us, just as He had led me out of a tumultuous and unsafe relationship.

Now, many years later, I can attest to the permanence of this spiritual growth and harmony. After my daughter's birth, I became employed, bought a new car, graduated from college, and got my own apartment—all within eight months. I learned that following God's direction leads to peace and the unfoldment of good. My needs were met and my life was restored by God.

Most of all, as I mentioned earlier, I learned that divine Love is "true love," and even when we feel as if we

are deep in the trenches of suffering, heartbreak, and confusion, God never leaves us. My eyes were opened to what love in relationships truly consists of, and I am happy to report that some time later, I married a man who truly loves me and my daughter—so much so that he adopted her. We went on to have two more children and have built our marriage on mutual support and unselfishness. Now I can truly say, just as my practitioner friend did, "Everything I have is from Christian Science."

Forever shining

Whit Larsen

The sun sets,
ducking below the horizon.
Darkness blankets the landscape.
Yet fear, the awful dim it seems to bring, is futile.

My heart inherently knows
the sun hasn't gone anywhere;
it only seems to have moved from my sight.
I am undisturbed by this limited perspective.

God, like the sun, and Christ, the light you shine,
continue on,
radiating a brilliant glow
on others we cannot see.

The sun has never set.
Life has never left.
And as God's light,
your shine can never be diminished.

Your life, as Life reflected,
continues on.
You have always been,
you will always be,
forever shining!

Weekly updates: January 5 & 12, 2026

New book from The Christian Science Publishing Society

Christian Science: Continuing Evidence of Christ-Healing presents verified accounts from people who were healed through relying on God through the teachings of Christian Science. In testimonies of healing originally published in the Christian Science periodicals—accounts that include healing insights from the Bible and the published writings of Mary Baker Eddy—individuals from six continents share how a renewed understanding of God brought complete freedom in challenges such as anxiety, seizures, cancer, alcoholism, and severe injury. This book joins previous book-length collections of healings published by The Christian Science Publishing Society—*A Century of Christian Science Healing* and *Healing Spiritually*.

Available at Christian Science Reading Rooms.

2026 Summit in Germany

You are invited to the 2026 Summit in Germany, March 20–22, 2026, at Jugendherberge Frankfurt am Main, Deutschherrnuf 12, 60594 Frankfurt. The focus of the Summit is to investigate the question “How are the uplifting qualities from the story of Noah’s ark represented in the *Manual of the Mother Church*?” Let’s explore how these resources can be loving guides for daily life.

Some activities will be in German and some in English; others will be bilingual. Find out more at christianscience.com/youth/summits/germany-summit.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

New Bible initiatives

New offerings that support a deeper engagement with the Bible are available now in both the *Sentinel* and *The Christian Science Journal*. These resources highlight the spiritual inspiration Christian Science brings to the Scriptures. Explore what’s new at jsh.christianscience.com/bible-resources.

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.

Writing for the periodicals? Let Christ lead.

Jesus would not have asked us to take up this work of communicating the gospel if we were unable to do it.

Kit Cornell Kurtz

In the gospel of Matthew, Christ Jesus promises: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations: . . . lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:18–20). What an assurance!

Though the man Jesus ascended, his divine nature, the eternal Christ—the “divine manifestation of God” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 583)—is with us always. Christ shows us all the power of God that fulfills Jesus’ directive to his followers to heal the sick, cast out sin, raise the dead, and preach the kingdom of God. The Christ does not present just a dab, a bit, or some, but the full picture of

what God provides to support us in our grand mission of preaching the gospel—in sharing with others the healing power of divine Love, God.

Writing for the Christian Science magazines can be thought of as preaching the gospel. It is one aspect of apostleship, and it is a joyous privilege. But how do students of Christian Science put a burning desire to follow this directive into practice? Not many of us are trained or experienced writers, and it may feel hard. Or perhaps we have so many article ideas in notebooks, on the computer, half-written, or tucked away in files that it can seem difficult even to begin, let alone complete the work, especially when we're busy or distracted by other activities. So, how do we start?

A good starting point is to remember that Christ is with us in the directive to “teach all nations” and supports our desire to communicate. As we are guided to share how the Christ has inspired and brought healing to us, that same inspiration will light and guide our writing. When Jesus spoke of the God-given power to heal sickness and to save from sin and death, this included communicating the gospel in order to help others find healing. And he would not have asked us to take up this work if we were unable to do it.

Science and Health tells us that Christ is “the divine message from God to men speaking to the human consciousness” (p. 332). The truth of God, and of man—the true, spiritual identity of each of us—as God’s image, speaks to us, revealing God’s law of infinite harmony and enabling us to share this understanding with others.

Mrs. Eddy wrote—at a time when *The Christian Science Journal* was the only Christian Science periodical—that students of Christian Science “should take our magazine, work for it, write for it, and read it” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 271). For many years, with great joy and gratitude, I have read and subscribed to the *Journal* and the other Christian Science periodicals. Although I have not worked directly for them, my daily prayer that the mission of each magazine is going forward through the power and effectiveness of God’s Word is a form of working for

them. But I was not doing what I saw was also my duty to do as a student of Christian Science—write for them.

I realized I could be more dedicated and answer this call, so I worked up an idea I’d had into an article. I wrote, revised, asked friends for feedback, rewrote, and submitted it. I received loving feedback from the editorial team, which I much appreciated, but the article was not accepted. To be publishable, the article needed more revision. I revised and resubmitted it, but it still wasn’t working. My first thought was, “This is too hard!”

But I put discouragement and frustration aside, knowing that I needed to uplift my thought and move forward with joy. Writing for the Christian Science magazines is about listening to God, divine Mind, for thoughts that bring healing love to the writer and reader—angel thoughts, messages from God. God wouldn’t give us a right desire without also giving us the ability to move forward to fulfill it. Sharing healing ideas through writing is a right desire. This task is not too hard for us, and God’s loving guidance is right at hand to help us prove that.

This prayer in the Bible applies perfectly to writers: “I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, . . . that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus” (Philemon 1:4, 6). The most important thing as we write is to acknowledge that good things—inspiration; persistence; love of God and His creation, including all of His beloved children—are present in each of us. And God works with us!

Praying with this idea, I began to understand that, just as the Christ had been present with me when I’d had healings that demonstrated God’s power over sickness and sin, Christ is with me when I am preaching the gospel—in this case, writing for the periodicals.

I continued, hand in hand with God, listening for the Christ message to share. I rewrote and resubmitted the article. This time it was accepted for editing and potential publication. Throughout the editing process, I continued to understand that the gospel—the good news that Jesus proclaimed of the kingdom of God within us—was the message that the editors and I were

putting foremost. All were listening to the Christ. And the article harmoniously moved forward to publication.

It can sometimes feel difficult to write and share healing ideas, but it is *not* too hard for us as the offspring of God, divine Mind. Mind is with us, giving us the thoughts we need. What a joy to write, knowing that God is with us and letting Christ, God's divine message, lead the way!

Christ Jesus tells us, "You must not judge by the appearance of things but by the reality!" (John 7:24, J. B. Phillips, *The New Testament in Modern English*). Christian Science explains that the Savior saw and accepted things as divine Spirit causes them to be and knows them. This spiritual discernment enabled him to heal disease, redeem sinners, and raise the dead, proving to his followers that the limited view of the physical senses does not present what's really going on. But how can we believe this when so much appears to be wrong in our world?

Just as mathematical laws—even when not understood or used—are always in operation and are needed to solve math problems, so the laws of Truth, God, are always operating, available, and key to solving any issue we may face, even when we don't realize it. And when we truly desire to better understand Truth, we can rely on spiritual sense in order to perceive and apply what we need to know.

The Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, explains: "To material sense, the unreal is the real until this sense is corrected by Christian Science.

"Spiritual sense, contradicting the material senses, involves intuition, hope, faith, understanding, fruition, reality" (p. 298).

This ability of spiritual sense to overrule what the material senses convey helps me to obey the Ninth Commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exodus 20:16). To me, this is saying that God's law is that we bear witness only to what God knows—to spiritual reality—and this witnessing of what is true *heals*.

Let me share an example of how adhering to the Ninth Commandment helped me be a true witness to the spiritual nature of my "neighbour." Once my daughters were both in school, I spent the summer looking for a full-time teaching position, but no elementary school positions were available. Then, a week after school started, a middle school principal invited me to come for an interview, explaining that their sixth-grade classrooms were overcrowded. Though I felt less confident teaching this age (generally eleven years old

King penguin, South Georgia Island

Photograph by H. M. Wyeth

Stand upright on thy feet.

—Acts 14:10

Blessings from the Ninth Commandment

The Ninth Commandment helped me become fully conscious of the beautiful, Godlike qualities that were innate in each child in my classroom.

Wendy Giersdorf

God's laws govern man—meaning all men, women, and children—and the universe. Although our creator's laws are perpetually in operation, we may be unaware of their eternal action and power unless we are relying on spiritual sense—our God-provided ability to perceive and understand Spirit, God.

in the United States), I felt this could be an answer to prayer. The principal told me that several teachers for whom I had substitute-taught the previous year had suggested that she call me, and this increased my confidence. I was hired.

Ten teachers sent me three students each, and I soon came to believe that at least one from every teacher was sent because the student was *very* difficult to manage in a classroom setting. Many mornings that fall, I cried while driving to school because the discipline problems and students' seeming lack of motivation were so stressful.

I had learned about Christian Science a few years before this, and now I was comforted by many hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal*, which helped me trust God and persevere. One hymn that I sang every morning was No. 136 (Violet Hay). The line "I yet shall know as I am known" helped me realize that God was not seeing me as inadequate or frightened, so I knew I shouldn't see myself that way either.

I called a Christian Science practitioner and explained the issues I was having. She agreed to pray for me, and shared some helpful ideas and references, such as Hymn 64, which includes this assurance: "I reach Mind's open door, and at its portal/I know that where I stand is holy ground" (*Violet Hay, Hymnal*, © CSBD). This helped me see that I was so much more than a mortal struggling with challenging circumstances: I was the beloved child of God, divine Love. I was standing on holy ground, placed right where I could find peace and do Love's will without giving up.

Yet there were still times when I wanted to give up, which I told the practitioner as I again asked her to pray for me. And that's when I realized that I had been wanting to change the "bad" students into good ones rather than letting prayer change my own beliefs about them. After our phone conversation, I finally understood that judging students' behavior according to what my eyes saw and ears heard was not discerning what God knew about His child—which every single child actually is.

The Bible says, "God formed man in his own likeness" (Genesis 1:27, James A. R. Moffatt, *The*

Bible, A New Translation). Whatever we're seeing that is unlike God, then, must be "false witness"—a lie. The labels the world had attached to these children—underprivileged, learning-deficient, hyperactive, disruptive, unteachable, and so on—were actually lies about them. The Ninth Commandment helped me reject the material evidence and focus on what spiritual sense was revealing. As a result, I became fully conscious of the beautiful, Godlike qualities, such as kindness, humor, intelligence, creativity, humility, friendliness, and even cooperation, that were innate in each child.

Mrs. Eddy writes in *Science and Health*, "To divest thought of false trusts and material evidences in order that the spiritual facts of being may appear,—this is the great attainment by means of which we shall sweep away the false and give place to the true" (p. 428). In essence, that is what happened for me. Rather than being reluctant to participate in class, the students began to ask questions, such as "Did I do this right?"

As the year went on, I was thrilled to see these students smiling, laughing, and expressing a desire to learn. Every student blossomed in their own way, uniquely shining their own special light that I knew came from God. I was so delighted with their progress that I even wrote them a heartfelt poem that included lines such as "I can't long forget your precious worth" and "I believe in your starlight"—the spiritual light they each shone.

After that year, I continued to cherish and obey the Ninth Commandment, and the next two decades of teaching were a tremendous blessing for both teacher and student. I witnessed spiritual good in myself and others. And thanks to Christian Science, I have remained very conscious of the importance of bearing witness only to our true spiritual nature. The results affect us, our relationships, our health, and even the world. Let's live the Ninth Commandment today!

Struggling with math?

Sophia Zinn

I'd always thought I was bad at math. The formulas and steps were confusing and most math concepts felt incomprehensible.

Junior year of high school, nothing in my algebra class made sense, and my frustration only grew. I believed myself to be "laughably terrible" at math.

And just to lower my confidence even further, I scored a surprisingly low grade of 20 percent on my first test. I hold myself to high standards, so this destroyed me. I felt that I'd disappointed my teachers and myself. I wondered how this would affect my GPA and how colleges would see me. I began to spiral and think, "Colleges don't want a failure! I won't be able to go anywhere! I'll end up with a terrible life all because of this stupid test!"

As the year progressed, I didn't pass a single math quiz, test, or lesson.

I thought that I was lacking the knowledge I needed to do well in this class. I was constantly worried—worried about my future, worried about my grades, worried about my capabilities. I was so stuck in a never-ending loop of fear.

Following winter break, our class got a new math teacher. While my failure in math had had nothing to do with my previous teacher, I did appreciate something this new teacher brought to the table.

I go to a school for Christian Scientists, and before each test, my new teacher would share an idea that was helpful for our prayers about the exam. One in particular stuck with me. It's from the Bible, and it says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6, New International Version).

What I took from this passage was to show gratitude, even when it doesn't seem like you have much to be grateful for. Gratitude is the opposite of lack; it is the very essence of abundance! As I'm learning more about

Christian Science, I'm understanding that God is the source of all good. The truth is that God created us, His children, to express Him. So really, I don't lack anything—especially knowledge. I saw that I was capable of understanding anything in my math class because God is all-knowing and I reflect Him.

I also realized I was surrounded by people who wanted to help. My community consisted of math teachers who cared, tutors who showed up and were helpful, and most of all, friends and family who stood by my side, and loved me unconditionally despite my math grades. All of this was a reminder that God is always with us, giving us everything we need.

With gratitude, and a newly developed spiritual understanding of myself, I found that my performance in math turned around. Thanks to Christian Science, I was able to successfully pass Algebra II my junior year.

A healing on the mountain

Sean

One time, I was snowboarding and was having trouble because I kept catching edges. This is when your snowboard gets caught in the snow and causes you to fall. I was so focused on constantly falling that I forgot about all the fun I was having.

On the way down one of the slopes, I started singing a hymn from the *Christian Science Hymnal* that had helped me before. The first verse says,

Shepherd, show me how to go
O'er the hillside steep,
How to gather, how to sow,—
How to feed Thy sheep;
I will listen for Thy voice,
Lest my footsteps stray;
I will follow and rejoice
All the rugged way.

This was really helpful. I started thinking about how God was guiding me the whole way, even though the hill was difficult and steep.

After singing the hymn several times, I realized that my problem was that I felt my footsteps were straying. I had been thinking that I was the one in control. But just then, I heard an angel message. This is when God speaks to us in our thoughts. The message reminded me that God, good, is always in complete control.

After hearing this comforting thought, I went back to the basics of snowboarding, leaning on God the entire time. With every turn, I felt calmer, and I continued holding on to God's message. When I made it down the mountain, my mom asked me how I was feeling. I was feeling great, so we went two more times.

Later, when we stopped for lunch, I started feeling dizzy. I was discouraged because this had happened before, after I'd had a concussion the previous summer. Now I just wanted to give up and go home. Nothing seemed to be going my way.

Then I remembered the healing I'd just had on the slope. With the reminder that nothing could get in the way of my freedom, we decided to go up and try another run. My mom was singing hymns on the chairlift all the way up.

I was able to tune out the fear of being dizzy and tune in to God. I was no longer convinced that the dizziness would stick around. My mom and I went all the way down the mountain, singing from top to bottom.

After that, everything was smooth. And not just with snowboarding. Since then, I have done many other activities, like competitive jujitsu and ultimate Frisbee, and I haven't felt any dizziness since that day. The best thing is that I am also able to play my saxophone again!

I am so grateful for this experience and, for future healings, will keep it close as a reminder of God's power.

Recovery from illness and effects of a fall

Diana Trinder

I **had traveled from** Europe back to my home in Sydney, Australia, with long layovers between three connecting flights, and upon arriving at the Sydney airport, I didn't feel well. A gentleman kindly helped me with my large bag on wheels, while I wore my backpack, which seemed to get heavier with every step.

A few days later, I felt even more unwell, with a high fever and exhaustion. I contacted a Christian Science practitioner, who agreed to pray for me and shared these statements from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "The recuperative action of the system, when mentally sustained by Truth, goes on naturally" (p. 447) and, "Even though you aver that the material senses are indispensable to man's existence or entity, you must change the human concept of life, and must at length know yourself spiritually and scientifically" (p. 359). The practitioner also reassured me with this spiritual fact from the same source: "Being is holiness, harmony, immortality" (p. 492).

These ideas stirred me to be grateful. I appreciated the kindness and love of my family and the practitioner. My physical and mental health began to improve, and within a few days, the fever disappeared, and my natural vitality returned. I was very grateful to be able to attend my Christian Science students' association not long after the healing was complete.

At another time, I noticed cobwebs in one corner of the ceiling. I took a long-handled duster and climbed up to remove the webs, using a folding stool. The stool wobbled, causing me to fall to the floor. The tip of one finger was bent backward at a right angle, but I was able to gently move it back to its normal position.

Family members who were in the house heard me fall and came and helped me up from the floor to a comfortable chair. I was grateful for God's ever-

presence bringing me perfect peace, and I rejoiced, knowing that in God's care, I was whole and free of pain and had nothing to fear. I was confidently undisturbed and, with praise for God, considered what my dad often shared as his favorite quote: "The God-principle is omnipresent and omnipotent. God is everywhere, and nothing apart from Him is present or has power" (*Science and Health*, p. 473).

Divine peace and strength prevailed. I stood up, went downstairs, prepared lunch for my family, and cleaned the kitchen before returning to the task of cleaning windows during the afternoon. I was also very grateful to be able to play the piano for our church's Sunday School just a few days later with no discomfort or limitation, just freedom and joy.

Lines from a favorite hymn in the *Christian Science Hymnal* describe God's loving care:

Everlasting arms of Love
Are beneath, around, above;

He will keep us all the way,
God, our refuge, strength and stay.

(John R. Macduff, No. 53, adapt. © CSBD)

My thanks go to our Father-Mother God for His love, as well as for the enduring Holy Bible, which teaches that we are all children of God. I'm also grateful to Mrs. Eddy for sharing the healing power of Christian Science with mankind.

Diana Trinder
Botany, New South Wales, Australia

Full use of immobilized arm regained

Kathie Ann Walter

In April 2025, I awoke to find that, for no apparent reason, my right arm ached with every movement. Nothing unusual had occurred during the night or the day before that might have caused this discomfort, yet I wasn't able to use the arm at all—to eat, cook, shower, dress, drive, etc. Throughout the days that followed, I was grateful to be able to do most necessary things with my other hand, although it was awkward and took a lot longer.

I knew from my study of Christian Science that I could pray about this by reasoning from a spiritual basis. This meant that I needed to stop accepting as legitimate what the physical senses were reporting and start acknowledging what was spiritual and therefore true—what Spirit, God, was knowing about me as His creation. I knew that pain and immobility do not come from God, because He is entirely good. The Bible says that man is created in His image (see Genesis 1:27), so since we reflect God, we can experience only good. God's loving provision for His creation includes only freedom and harmony, not restriction and pain.

As I prayed this way, I recalled a favorite quote from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: "If the medium of hearing is wholly spiritual, it is normal and indestructible" (p. 214). Although this statement specifically refers to hearing, I've always enjoyed adapting it to a variety of situations. In this instance, I replaced the word *hearing* with *movement*. I reasoned that if the source of my movement was Spirit, God, then it was "wholly spiritual" and "normal" (harmonious, painless, and unrestricted), and since it was also "indestructible," it had to be permanently so. Because God is all-acting and I reflect God, my right activity could never be curtailed in any way.

These thoughts were uplifting, but after two days, there was little improvement, and the inability to find a comfortable sleeping position at night was wearing. I wanted to continue praying, so I opened that week's

Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*, where this statement caught my attention: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16).

This reminded me that I was not pursuing a healing understanding of God on my own. Rather, I was one with God, bearing witness to His allness and goodness and to the harmonious operation of all things under His caring command. It occurred to me that God, divine Love, never leaves us unattended.

That citation was followed in the Bible Lesson by this assurance: "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). I felt supported in knowing that every spiritual truth I declared and applied was active and effective because it had all the power of God behind it.

Despite all of this helpful inspiration from my study, the discomfort remained. I realized that it might be wise to call a Christian Science practitioner to pray for me. However, before I did that, I read an encouraging article from *The Christian Science Journal* that helped me to see more clearly that we communicate with God through spiritual sense (see Susan Booth Mack Snipes, "Walking through the mirage of pain," April 2025). In truth, there are no physical senses in Spirit's creation to report inharmony. Spiritual sense enables us to feel Love's uninterrupted guidance and comfort at hand. This so uplifted my thought that I no longer felt the need to call a practitioner.

I also noted the marginal heading for a statement from *Science and Health* that was included in the same Lesson: "Resist to the end" (p. 406). This prompted me not to give up or doubt, but to continue to trust God's omnipresent care every moment.

When I awoke on the fourth day, I was delighted to discover that all discomfort was gone. I rejoiced that my right arm had regained its full range of movement—just in time for me to welcome family who were arriving that afternoon. In the months since this experience, I've had full use of this arm without pain or restriction.

I am so grateful for the Christian Science Bible Lessons, which help us on our spiritual journey to gain a

better understanding of God and His creation. This healing illustrated the truth of another statement in that week's Lesson: "Divine Science reverses the false testimony of the material senses, and thus tears away the foundations of error" (*Science and Health*, p. 273). God enables us to leave behind discordant, material beliefs for spiritual truth. How comforting to know that Love never leaves us unattended.

Kathie Ann Walter

Chico, California, US

Quick healing of a deep cut

Sok Yeong Goh

I wish to acknowledge and document the quick healing I had when I cut my finger severely and rang a fellow Christian Scientist for help.

About five years ago, I was using a very sharp knife when it slipped and sliced through the tip of my index finger. It was very painful, and the finger started bleeding profusely. I immediately prayed with "the scientific statement of being" from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Mary Baker Eddy, p. 468), which begins, "There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter." This helped me stay calm despite the wound's appearance and pain.

I prayed as I had been taught in Christian Science, affirming the truth of man's spiritual identity as the creation of Spirit, God, but I still felt anxious. I found it difficult to uplift my thoughts beyond the sight of the blood-soaked bandaging, so I called a fellow Christian Scientist to pray with me. The practitioner took my case immediately and told me to think of being wrapped in the garment of Christ, which is "without seam or rent" (*Science and Health*, p. 242).

This idea did not make much sense to me at the time. However, after I hung up from the call, I continued to hold to the truth that I am spiritual, that Life is God and therefore not in matter, and that man—as an expression of Spirit—cannot be cut, bleed, or be in pain. Then, as I thought more deeply about being wrapped in the garment of Christ, the Bible story of the woman with “an issue of blood” (see Luke 8:43–48) came to mind. I was comforted by the fact that the woman “touched the border of [Christ Jesus’] garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchéd.”

I thought about being wrapped in Christ’s garment, and I became convinced that I, too, could experience the healing power of the Christ, just as that woman did. I held to the truth that Christ heals and that man cannot be sliced or subject to any material condition because we are actually spiritual. Within a short time, the throbbing pain ceased. After a few more minutes, I knew, even without checking, that the bleeding had stopped. I felt a calm assurance that all was well.

I was deeply grateful for how quickly the healing occurred, and I rang the practitioner to let him know that all was well. I cleaned the cut, put a new bandage on the finger, and had a restful night.

While the cut took a few more days to close completely, I had full use of my finger to play the piano for a church service the next week, and once the healing was complete, it left no scar. As thankful as I am to have been healed, I am even more grateful for a deeper understanding of God’s healing power as demonstrated through adherence to Jesus’ teachings.

This experience showed me that by understanding our true, spiritual nature and firmly trusting ever-present Christ, Truth, we prove the omnipresence and omnipotence of God, good, in everyday life. I am profoundly grateful for the teachings of Christian Science and the practitioners who help us with healing prayer.

Sok Yeong Goh

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Letters & Conversations

Bruce Patterson, Bruce Patterson, Patti Faulkner, The Editors

> New Bible initiatives

I am grateful for both the effort put into preparing the Bible Lens and its timeliness. I will miss being able to read the passages, look at the research, then go back and read the passages again. Your new approach seems rather non-specific. However, I will continue to watch and pray to the best of my ability with the tools provided. Maybe it will be better, but I thought you had it spot on.

Bruce Patterson, *Tulsa, Oklahoma, US*

I love the Bible and have grown to love it more and more through the gift of Christian Science and the key to the Scriptures included in its textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. I’ve been inclined not to turn to others’ interpretations of the Scriptures but always to Christian Science in striving to discern their spiritual and true meaning.

Judy Woodson, *Palm Desert, California, US*

With the Bible Lens wrapping up, I wanted to reiterate how much I appreciated it. I loved the research shared and especially the linked articles from the JSH-Online.com archives. They always brought new ways of looking at Bible passages and stories. I’m looking forward to what the new feature “The Bible: Our Sufficient Guide” has to offer.

Patti Faulkner, *Tecumseh, Ontario, Canada*

We're happy to let you know that you will still find a link to a Bible-focused piece from JSH-Online.com in most issues of the *Sentinel* in our new feature "Loving the Scriptures," and that we have several curated Bible Collections up on our site, with more appearing in 2026. See page 8 of this issue for more information on the Bible Collections.

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