



# The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through  
God to the pulling down of strong holds. —II Corinthians 10:4

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# Welcome - November 2025

By *Roya Sabri*

**Dear Friend,**

If life were truly a mixture of good and evil, could we ever be wholehearted in our gratefulness to our creator? There'd always be something holding us back—a whispering that God has allowed for imperfection, lack, vulnerability to harm, that He's only giving us *some* good.

That dispiriting view can help explain why Adam and Eve, in the biblical account, hid from God after they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All it gave them was a sense that they were far from “very good,” as God defines us earlier in Genesis. And they felt, not reverence, but fear and shame in the presence of their Maker.

But when we glimpse the truth—that God is perfect good and supplies all good—we don't want to hide from, but bask in, that spiritual light. A “Hallelujah!” might even spring from our lips as we recognize ourselves as His whole and harmonious children.

There's much giving of thanks in this month's *Journal*: gratitude that's a window to ever-present spiritual reality, and gratitude that both precedes and follows prayer and healing. In every piece, love for God shines through and lifts our lives higher, too.

God is giving us limitless reasons to be thankful with *all* our hearts. As we sing in Hymn 181, “May we all awake to praise Thee/For Thy good gifts from above” (Rosemary B. Hackett, *Christian Science Hymnal*, © CSBD).

*Roya Sabri, Staff Editor*

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## LETTERS

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### Readers Respond

By *Mary Catherine Coolidge, Chris Wye, Kristie Marinello, Jan True, Donia Bath*

**Jens Borghoff, “Parenting—bearing witness to God's complete creation,” *Journal*, August 2025**

Though I don't have children, Jens Borghoff's beautiful sharing of his approach to parenting resonated with me. It occurred to me while reading that these values—kindness, respect, and avoiding patronizing behavior—can be just as easily (and necessarily) applied to our interactions with anyone with whom we might be involved in a parenting or guiding way, regardless of their age or relationship to us.

**Mary Catherine Coolidge**

*Sarasota, Florida, US*

August 2025 *Journal*

The August 2025 *Journal* is spectacular! It is filled to the brim with deep metaphysics and healing.

**Chris Wye**

*Washington, DC, US*

**Rob Gilbert, “The power and reach of scientific thought,” *Journal*, July 2025**

This is such an excellent, teaching article, and most of all, it gave me great encouragement to keep working to help meet the seemingly desperate need that people around the world are facing at this particular time.

**Kristie Marinello**

*Santa Monica, California, US*

**Inspiration I needed**

When the *Journal* arrives in my mailbox, I can't wait to begin reading it! When I'm troubled about world, church, or even personal issues, it always lifts my thought, and I gain new insights on how I can pray

to help bring about practical solutions. And the July 2025 issue was no exception. The articles, editorial, and testimonies were just the inspiration I needed. I always read the issue from cover to cover. I don't want to miss anything! Blessings to all those who write for and edit these healing magazines.

**Jan True**

*Laguna Hills, California, US*

**Kit Cornell Kurtz, "The magnificent," *Journal*, July 2025**

I am so grateful for this poem. In the first stanza I saw a phrase that jumped out at me: *mortal drama*. Yes! So much seeming drama all over the world.

God was there

. . . . .

putting mortal drama  
in its place  
as nothingness—  
voiceless.

*Voiceless* started my thinking immediately. Stop giving drama a voice! I am striving each day to do just that. What an inspirational poem!

**Donia Bath**

*Kirkland, Washington, US*

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## FEATURE

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# Gratitude that heals bodies and transforms lives

*By Whit Larsen*

**When I was a** young boy and acting pouty, my mom would always remind me how much I had to be grateful for and ask me to list a few things. I'm not sure which I liked hearing less: "What are you grateful for?" or "Eat

your vegetables!" I didn't want to be grateful. I wanted to sulk and complain. Plus, I thought I first had to have something, or things needed to go my way, before I could be thankful: *I'll be grateful when ... I get my way, my body feels better, or it's Thanksgiving and we're all being grateful.*

In growing up and learning more about God and His law of universal good, I came to realize that gratitude always comes first! Gratitude is a game changer. It's not just positive thinking or looking on the bright side. Gratitude is a transformative force that plays a vital role in healing because it is the affirmation of already-present health, harmony, and goodness from God. It is the way of seeing spiritual harmony, sometimes right when there seems to be a disturbed sense of ease, or dis-ease.

The consciousness of the ever-presence of God results in healing. Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, writes in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, "Become conscious for a single moment that Life and intelligence are purely spiritual,—neither in nor of matter,—and the body will then utter no complaints" (p. 14).

Gratitude is being thankfully conscious of ever-present good, and it reverses every form of evil, or a sense of not-present good, including fear, lack, infirmity, and discord. Evil of any kind cannot exist in the allness of God any more than darkness can exist in light. The acknowledgment of the power and presence of God, our divine Father-Mother, results in healing, by revealing that there is no other power, presence, or influence. Then what had appeared outwardly as lack, depression, obstruction, or disease is eliminated from our experience, because it has been removed from thought and replaced with the consciousness of divine Love's ever-presence.

I've experienced the transformative power of gratitude in my life. For several years, I struggled with darkness and depression after a traumatic experience had left me with an ongoing and paralyzing sense of fear. There were days and nights I didn't know if I would make it. My wife and I prayed together daily, and I engaged different Christian Science practitioners to pray for me.

I am grateful to each one of them for the freedom I eventually won.

A practice I began that made all the difference was to make a daily gratitude list. When I couldn't focus on anything other than darkness or fear, I could at least be grateful for obvious things, like my family, Christian Science practitioners, and my home as a place where I could quietly get to know and love God. These lists turned me to the source of all blessings, God, and often became the catalyst for my Christian Science treatment.

As I was winning my way to understanding God's present power in my life and seeing tremendous progress, I returned home from a walk one day and felt a strange sensation in my leg. I didn't think much of it, but within a day or so, I was unable to walk or even stand. Sleeping also became nearly impossible because of the pain. When I looked at my leg, I became very alarmed. I did not have it diagnosed, but it appeared to be a severe case of varicose veins.

This felt like yet another daunting issue to make me feel discouraged, and I called a Christian Science practitioner to pray with me. I recommitted to starting every day praising God by adding to my gratitude list. It didn't matter how small or insignificant each entry might have seemed; I noted the presence of good in my life, and acknowledged God as the source. I saw that loving God is a way of thanking Him for loving us.

As often happens when turning to God for healing, bad habits came to the surface to be corrected through prayer. During this time, my country and the world were going through quite a bit of turmoil, and I became suspicious, impatient, irritable, and easily distracted and annoyed by the latest headlines. And yet, I felt almost addicted to the bad news. It was clear that this habit needed to be addressed in my prayers. I felt divinely impelled to turn it all off and focus solely on what God was revealing.

If I was tempted to peek at the sensational headlines, the debates on social media, or my leg, I instead kept my eyes on the books in front of me. I was reading biblical accounts of Christ Jesus' healings and teachings; accounts of Mrs. Eddy's discovery of Christian Science and how she healed others as a result

of her understanding of God; the weekly Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*; and *Science and Health*, which includes one hundred pages of healings people experienced just by reading that book. Like a horse with blinders on, I stayed focused on the truth that was shining up at me through those books. I did not stray!

But when there wasn't much improvement physically, I was tempted to feel discouraged. My wife had a talk coming up in another state in a few weeks, and I felt strongly that it was right for me to be there and support her in this healing activity. By the day we were to leave I was using crutches, but with humility, I went.

The night before my wife's talk I had an honest conversation with God, beginning with humbly and wholeheartedly thanking Him for the small evidence of healing I had witnessed thus far, and acknowledging that He would most certainly bring me all the way to realize a complete healing.

As I was cherishing this gratitude, I thought about how we read in Mrs. Eddy's writings that "Mind governs the body" (*Science and Health*, p. 111). In quiet desperation, I reached out to God and asked, "What does that even mean—'Mind governs the body'? Does God govern a brain, a material body, its functions and movements, veins and arteries?"

The answer was almost immediate, so simple and tender, yet it came with authority and conviction: "God, divine Mind, governs my thought *about* my body." That was the answer! I felt a gentle, deep-seated calm.

*Science and Health* says, "Immortal Mind feeds the body with supernal freshness and fairness, supplying it with beautiful images of thought and destroying the woes of sense which each day brings to a nearer tomb" (p. 248). These "beautiful images of thought" govern our thinking about every aspect of our lives, and we find we have exactly what we need every moment.

Gratitude and love brought both physical and mental healing. I was free from the addiction to "bad news"—whether it was turmoil in the country, in my body, or in my past. I became more joyful, more at peace, less stressed, slower to react, and quicker to love. I was less impressed with human hate and more interested

in seeing divine Love in action. The state of constant fearfulness and anxiety that had plagued me for so long faded.

Not long after this wonderful spiritual insight, my wife and I spent six months traveling tens of thousands of miles and visiting nearly a dozen countries. We walked hundreds of miles, climbing steep hills and countless flights of stairs—all with freedom, dominion, joy, and humble gratitude! There was no trace of a problem with my leg.

*Science and Health* says, “Hold thought steadfastly to the enduring, the good, and the true, and you will bring these into your experience proportionably to their occupancy of your thoughts” (p. 261). We can hold our ground and not be influenced by anything that does not contribute to knowing and loving God. This stand, as an expression of gratitude for divine Mind’s ability to lovingly maintain His own ideas, is truly transformative.

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## ARTICLES

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# Knowing ourselves by first knowing God

By Don R. Adams

**All my life** the biggest hill for me to climb in practicing Christian Science has been wondering whether I know God well enough. After some years in the public practice of Christian Science, it finally dawned on me that I’d been starting with me, human effort, and human reasoning in attempting to answer this question. It became clear that I had it backward: I was approaching Science as a mortal struggling to become an immortal.

Intellectually I knew better, but this was where I honestly was in my heart. Then a light shone, showing me that it’s God who heals, it’s God who knows, and we reflect His healing power and knowing. I’d been

thinking mostly about who *man* is and had given precious little effort to learning about who *God* is. But *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy states, “We know no more of man as the true divine image and likeness, than we know of God” (p. 258).

The shift in my approach, from starting with man to starting with God, has made my practice less labored and more inspired and fruitful. Instead of identifying myself as a little struggling “I,” I see my true identity as the reflection of the divine I, or Us.

Most of us would answer the question, “Who are you?” by stating our names. Or if we’re speaking only for ourselves, we may just say, “I.” But who, really, is this I?

The Hebrew prophet Moses, known for leading the Israelites out of slavery and giving us the Ten Commandments, wasn’t always sure of his identity and purpose. When he first learned of the magnitude of God’s request of him, he hesitated and asked God two questions—basically, “Why me?” and, “What is Your name?” or “Who are You?”

In regard to Moses’ first question, God reassured him, “Certainly I will be with thee” (Exodus 3:12). As far as His name or identity, God replied, “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14).

Eddy defines *I Am* in the Glossary of *Science and Health* in part as: “God,” and “the only Ego” (p. 588). And in the definition of *I, or Ego*, she says, “There is but one I, or Us” (p. 588). And she defines *God*, in part, as: “the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal” (p. 587).

Moses’ receptivity to spiritual ideas made it possible for him to know God. *Science and Health* describes this type of seeing or knowing as spiritual sense: “Spiritual sense is a conscious, constant capacity to understand God” (p. 209). Moses felt, heard, understood, and obeyed God—and God was with him.

Developing spiritual sense opens the way for all of us to begin seeing and feeling God as the only real I, or Us, and ourselves as His reflection. This is the opposite of what we might consider the normal way to identify

ourselves—with physical bodies, human personalities, and limited minds. The human I is so familiar to us that it can feel unnatural to contemplate a different Ego, or “center of the universe,” than ourselves. To read or be told we are spiritual and at one with a higher Being is one thing. But to internalize this—to feel it in our hearts—requires sincerity, humility, persistence, patience, and intuition.

*Science and Health* also says, “Spiritual sense, contradicting the material senses, involves intuition, hope, faith, understanding, fruition, reality” (p. 298). Human consciousness is awakened by Christ—the spiritual idea of God, which Jesus demonstrated—and lifted higher. Our problems and challenges nudge (or force) us to consider and explore these new views of identity.

*We all must grow.* Like a caterpillar becoming a butterfly, we are transformed through spiritual development. But spiritual growth isn’t physical growth. It actually can turn our material view of life completely on its head, so to speak.

Spiritual growth upends conventional thinking about life. Material premises crumble and yield to the solid base of divine Spirit. The so-called human mind diminishes in our lives in proportion as Mind, God, becomes more real to us. Spiritual sense becomes more vivid, more substantial. We find ourselves beginning to see and hear, like Moses, the voice of God.

This is evidence we’re beginning to experience what Eddy terms a change of base of thought. “The effect of this Science is to stir the human mind to a change of base, on which it may yield to the harmony of the divine Mind” (*Science and Health*, p. 162).

One thing spiritual sense has opened for me is a better understanding of this divine Mind and its seeming opposite, mortal mind (see *Science and Health*, pp. 115–116). I used to see myself as a mortal man climbing up a ladder, from sinner to saved. This material-sense reasoning turns out to be a backward perspective. Eddy writes: “Delusion, sin, disease, and death arise from the false testimony of material sense, which, from a supposed standpoint outside the focal distance of infinite Spirit, presents an inverted image of Mind and

substance with everything turned upside down” (*Science and Health*, p. 301).

The so-called mortal or human mind is a limited conception of the one and only true Mind, God. Limited mortal concepts don’t grow or ascend a ladder; they diminish and, by degrees, disappear as Spirit, Mind, and Mind’s real idea, man, appear or are understood.

Some years ago I experienced a significant moment of spiritual light. Instead of continually worrying that I didn’t know enough about God, or hoping that maybe someday I would, I glimpsed the awesome fact that only God knows, and only God does, and His knowing and doing are manifested through man, His idea, rather than man being a separate expression or a separate being trying to know God.

This inspiration shifted my approach to Christian Science. I began to see that it’s not what man does (or doesn’t do), as if I were an originator, a source, a separate entity. I reflect. I am the reflection of God, the expression of His being. This was showing me that God is the source of, and constitutes, my identity. God is the impetus, cause, and strength of my entire being. I saw more clearly that because nothing can impair God, nothing can impair His individual expression or manifestation. Our unique identity is in our unique expression of Him. I’ve felt my oneness with God more clearly, knowing that God isn’t expressing Himself *to* us but *as* us.

The First Commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3), was Eddy’s “favorite text” (*Science and Health*, p. 340). What can this mean except to have no other sense of I than God? Aren’t we breaking this First Commandment when we think that God is Ego, but we are also another ego? To think that God is Mind, but we also possess another mind which He inspires? God is all-knowing. Doesn’t this mean God does 100 percent of the knowing that is known, and man reflects that knowing? This precludes a separate ego knowing Him.

We must let go of the belief that we are another god, ego, soul, or mind, doing our own separate knowing, seeing, acting, and feeling. The great I am is our I am. That is, the one God is the only I, or Us. Moses

initially felt unworthy and unqualified to carry out God's assignment. What changed? He learned the I am was his I am and was always with him, always guiding him. Moses reflected the intelligence and wisdom of God.

Christ Jesus claimed no personality or personal abilities. He said, "I cannot do anything on my own" (John 5:30, Contemporary English Version) and "The Father who lives in me does these things" (John 14:10, CEV).

Learning from the prophets—and, especially, Christ Jesus—Eddy devoted herself to the First Commandment's command to lay aside a mortal ego. She once told a student: "All I have ever accomplished has been done by getting Mary out of the way and letting God be reflected. When I would reach this tone, the sick would be healed without a word" (*We Knew Mary Baker Eddy*, Vol. 1, Expanded Edition, p. 270).

The First Commandment isn't only a command—it's also a promise and an assurance that we, as God's beloved ideas, will never have another ego, identity, or self separate from the great I am. Eddy also writes, "The one Spirit includes all identities" (*Science and Health*, p. 333). We will forever be individual expressions of the one Ego, each reflecting Him in our own unique, original, intelligent way.

So, for each one of us, the true answer to "Who are you?" will always be "I am the manifestation of God—Life, Truth, and Love individually expressed."•

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## Caring for family members as a Christian Science nurse

By Elizabeth Moreira Queiroz

Originally published in Portuguese

**My daughter had** just had a baby, and as a master's degree student, she needed help reconciling her studies and motherhood tasks. She lives in another country and asked me if I could come and help her out for three months.

At first this seemed like a long time to take off work. But as I turned to God in prayer, I understood that being by her side for this period would be good for both of us. As I prayed to be sure that everything would work out with my job, I held firmly to the idea that we live and move in God, good, divine Life and Love.

That week, this passage appeared in the Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Colossians 3:12). I decided to mentally "put on" the qualities described above and acknowledged that it was impossible for good not to be expressed. I also recognized that our Father-Mother God is always by our side, never leaves us, and always provides an answer.

I spoke to my immediate supervisor about my work shifts, as it would be necessary for someone to cover mine while I was away. These words from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy came to mind: "Desire is prayer; ..." (p. 1). It was clear to me that my desire to be with my daughter at that moment was right and just. I also felt the inspiration to volunteer for a few extra shifts that were still uncovered in the following weeks, to make up for some of the days I would be away.

In *Science and Health* it also states, "Father-Mother is the name for Deity, which indicates His tender relationship to His spiritual creation" (p. 332). This statement eliminated every feeling of fear and uncertainty as I began working the extra shifts.

It felt crucial to recognize that good was unfolding in my life, especially when I felt exhausted. The certainty that God was my very present help, my Rock, and my refuge did not allow material sense to cause me to doubt the truth that I am the image and likeness of God as a



spiritual idea; I knew I was there to express Him with wholeness, health, good cheer, joy, and gratitude.

It states in the Bible, “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (I Corinthians 3:9). I contemplated this idea and the reality and the power of good on every shift, and stopped feeling overwhelmed and tired. When the day arrived for the trip to my daughter’s house, everything was in place so that I would be able to spend the three months with her.

I am very grateful for the teachings of Christian Science. I attended Sunday School from the age of nine, continued on to become a member of a branch church, and later took Christian Science Primary class instruction.

At the time of my trip, I had just started to take a Christian Science nursing training course, which I plan to finish this year. In this training, I learned that “a member of The Mother Church who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, who thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room, and who can take proper care of the sick” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Church Manual*, p. 49).

The training was very useful during the time I spent with my daughter and grandson, and I was able to practice my “demonstrable knowledge” of Christian Science in many situations, turning to Mind, God, in prayer for guidance, and listening to the ideas and inspirations from this ever-active divine Mind. I felt wisely guided in the care of my daughter and her baby.

At one point during a distressing situation, I reached out to one of my mentors from the Christian Science nursing course. She immediately offered clear and firm guidance on what I could do, which helped me uplift my thinking and my understanding of the work I was doing. With this perspective, I felt more ready to put into practice the Christian Science nursing skills I’d been learning. It was also very helpful to study the Christian Science Bible Lesson daily, and to attend my branch church’s Sunday services, broadcast in Portuguese via Zoom from Brazil. I really felt supported

by God and His ever-present, ever-active love. And this was all the support I needed to carry out my tasks and help my daughter.

I returned home feeling confident that my daughter and the baby were managing very well. I am very grateful for the knowledge that Mrs. Eddy gave us about our true identity as children of God, and about the fact that the only reality we can truly experience is that of the kingdom of heaven.

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## Can you accelerate your pace to heaven?

*By David Fowler*

Addressing the question of how long it may take for sin to be destroyed, Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, wrote, “This may take millions of cycles, but of the time no man knoweth” (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 160).

But does anyone really want to endure “millions of cycles” bound by the flesh?

Revealing the “fast lane” to heaven, a topic which occupied Christ Jesus’ life ministry, he said, “Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 16:25). *Heaven*, as described in the Christian Science textbook, is: “Harmony; the reign of Spirit; government by divine Principle; spirituality; bliss; the atmosphere of Soul” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 587).

By giving up the false sense of self which obscures heaven, the consciousness of heaven is revealed. Fortunately, there are no speed limits on the highway to heaven! We can all increase our current pace toward finding it.

We enter the “fast lane” to heaven by following Christ Jesus’ lead. This requires that we lose the false sense of self, if we’re going to find and feel the joy of heaven

within. We need to realize the human mind won't just give up and go away on its own. Like Jesus, we too must challenge the human mind and its personality traits head-on. And as divine Love begins to displace sinful thoughts and motivations, we discover ourselves becoming immersed in the infinite ocean of divine Love, wherein is revealed endless peace, eternal bliss, harmony, and home.

So then, isn't it worth asking: Is heaven my all-consuming goal? Or are there competing goals inevitably adding "cycles" to the journey?

While the Bible gives no numbers of those Jesus healed, I've imagined it to be in the thousands, all within his short, three-year ministry. To heal as often and as quickly as he did requires continuously lifting thought to unite with the consciousness of God and heaven, or harmony, where health actually resides.

The activity of spiritual healing through Christian Science has given me a taste of heaven. In Science, healing through the divine Mind destroys the mental error manifesting itself as sin or sickness, thereby removing obstacles in our way heavenward. Think of it: The more often we exchange the sense of the reality of sin and sickness for the consciousness of Spirit, the more quickly we assimilate the character and nature of heaven, until we see it as the present reality it is.

In *Science and Health*, we read that the spiritual interpretation of this line from the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," is "*Enable us to know,—as in heaven, so on earth,—God is omnipotent, supreme*" (p. 17).

Because God is "omnipotent, supreme," only the divine Mind can "enable us to know" precisely how to enter heaven. So, how is it done? Again, Jesus, through the inspiration and understanding of that Mind, was enabled to know God's thoughts and pointed to self-sacrifice: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). But what does it mean to deny ourselves, and how do we do it? Jesus explained this, too, in the humblest of terms: "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek

not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30).

Several years ago, my wife, who was a practicing medical doctor, and I took a vacation. Our first day involved a long hike, so we retired early. In the middle of the night, my wife suddenly jolted me out of a deep sleep. She appeared terrified. "I didn't take my medication this morning," she said, her voice shaking with fear. Years prior, she had been diagnosed with a life-threatening strain of hepatitis C. Now, some years later, she had agreed to be part of a medical trial to test the effects of a new drug to treat the disease, and her doctors had warned her that without this daily medication, the effects of the disease would be dangerous and even deadly.

My immediate response was, "Let me call the hospital," but she replied with absolute certainty, "No. Please pray for me."

Initially, I was stunned because my wife had never had anything but negative things to say about religion and prayer in particular, although we had managed to avoid these topics. But of course I said I would. Then I closed my eyes to pray.

At first, I felt her extreme fear and an intense pressure to heal her. Then, I went straight to God for help. In a few moments, I felt peaceful. I wasn't seeking the aid of my own thoughts. Rather, the need in this extreme moment was to abandon my thoughts per Jesus' instructions—to exchange my sense of having a mind separate from God for God's view of His image and likeness—and to do so as quickly as possible.

What happened next was quite remarkable. As if someone had flipped a switch, my mind suddenly went silent. I could not hear myself nor could I generate a thought on my own. I was definitely in tune with divine Mind, unconfined by any human so-called mind. I know because I was receiving an inflow of pure, spiritual thoughts. No words were spoken. Instead, these spiritual thoughts were more like spontaneous feelings or "knowings," where I completely understood them the very instant they came to me. For example, I absolutely knew, through the divine Mind, that all life was perfect, flawless, orchestrated by one intelligent

source—one that was a tangible, all-pervasive Love. I knew this not because I *believed* it to be so, but because I felt and *understood* it was so.

There was no sensation of being connected to a body. Nothing in this uplifted mental state resembled a three-dimensional world. A mortal sense of self and material senses were nowhere—they had no purpose here. The overall feeling was that of being submerged in a warm ocean of pure, infinite Love.

Light emerged from everywhere at once, not from a single point. The atmosphere exuded a sense of serene, effortless order. Nothing indicated the passing of time. In this glorious dimension—clearly above and outside the illusion of so-called material life—I felt enveloped in a rarefied realm of gentle, pure Love, permeated with peace and an effervescent bliss. In this heavenly atmosphere, it seemed my purpose was simply to witness Love delighting in itself and its manifestation.

I found it interesting (thinking about it later) that no thoughts of my wife or her physical condition were permissible. Instead, the divine Mind's singular purpose was to immediately immerse me in its presence. This action erased any possible thought of illness. I felt saturated in absolute, pure Love.

From the perspective of time, I'd say the entire experience occurred within a minute or two. And then in an instant, I was back, sitting in bed.

The fear in my wife's eyes was no longer there. "I don't know what just happened," she said, looking surprised and confused. "All the pain in my liver is gone. I think I'm completely well."

And she was. We continued our trip as planned, and my wife remained free from any pain or illness. After our vacation, during a routine checkup, two of the medical trial doctors, seeing that the disease was gone, retested her liver several times, thinking maybe the first results had been flawed. Finally, they acknowledged that she no longer had the hepatitis C virus, and she never had the problem again.

If heaven, harmony, isn't our primary goal, how can we wholeheartedly appeal in prayer to the God of

heaven? Wouldn't our healing work be done far faster and more effectively by getting out of a mortal sense of ourselves and into God, where the consciousness of health, heaven, is revealed?

Each and every one of us will experience the consciousness of heaven as Jesus did. So why not increase our pace? Let's turn moments of self-surrender to God into minutes, minutes into hours, and hours into days and months. Steeped in the nature of heaven, the ills of mortality have no alternative but to dissolve. And our forever home can then begin to appear within us.

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## "We glory in tribulations"

*By Andrea Jenks McCormick*

**Not many people** would agree with those words written by the great Apostle Paul in his letter to the early Christians in Rome. Rather than rejoicing in the midst of tribulation, aren't we more apt to feel afraid or burdened, or wonder, "Why me? What did I do to bring this on?"

Yet, after facing twenty years of trials beyond what most people could endure, Paul proclaimed triumphantly: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.... For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:8, 9, 17).

Considering the stoning, beatings, imprisonments, and trials Paul endured as he carried out his Christ-appointed mission to spread the Christian message, how did he come to such a positive outlook?

Here is his answer: "We glory in tribulations... knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad

in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:3-5). He even adds, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:10).

When we are in our weakest moment and give ourselves wholly over to God, not relying on any human reasoning or our human will, God promises, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9).

Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, agrees with Paul. She writes: "Christians to-day should be able to say, with the sweet sincerity of the apostle, 'I take pleasure in infirmities,'—I enjoy the touch of weakness, pain, and all suffering of the flesh, *because* it compels me to seek the remedy for it, and to find happiness, apart from the personal senses....

"... he took pleasure in 'necessities,' for they tested and developed latent power" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, pp. 200, 201).

This is clearly not an easy teaching to understand until you have experienced its truth by giving yourself wholly to God and witnessing the verity and efficacy of Paul's words. We are all faced with repeated challenges, and how often we are tempted to ask ourselves, Did I do something wrong? Did I bring this on myself? Was it chance or accident? A resounding *No* is the answer to each of those, because God is nowhere to be found in those questions. God is the only cause, and He is incapable of causing anything but good.

Of course, if we have brought trouble on ourselves because of sin, that is a different story, because sin always punishes itself. That is the means of its destruction. But our Leader assures us that "all untoward conditions, *if without sin*, can be experienced without suffering" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 385).

As we grow in Christian Science, we are called to go up higher, to learn and demonstrate more of the truth of being. When you finished elementary school, you didn't say, "I've learned everything I need to know.

I don't need to be challenged anymore." Of course not! We never stop learning, growing, and progressing. Mrs. Eddy affirmed that "progress is the law of God, whose law demands of us only what we can certainly fulfil" (*Science and Health*, p. 233).

Jesus declared that we must be "born again" of the Spirit, or we cannot see or enter the kingdom of God. Being born again means we must adopt an entirely new way of seeing ourselves and others—as spiritual ideas rather than material beings.

Every so-called challenge is an opportunity to prove the omnipotence of God, Spirit. What good are all the words we read in the Bible and *Science and Health* if there is no power behind them? They are not magic, any more than sending a man to the moon or creating fire by rubbing two sticks together is magic. Metaphysics, like mathematics, is made up of laws that work every time when we know them and understand how to properly apply them. And that is what Christian Science does for us: It shows us how to apply the laws of God to defeat sin, disease, and death—the lies of life in matter. The truth of divine law destroys the illusion of anything opposed to it.

Understanding how this would be received by most people, Mrs. Eddy wrote, "That you are feeling 'Who is sufficient for these things?' is not strange. But you must remember that our heavenly Father does not require of us more than we can do. Each victory won over self and sickness strengthens you for the next contest, and so on, until you can say with the Apostle, 'I have fought the good fight.' We shall never know our strength until it be put to the test, and then *His* strength is made perfect in our weakness, and we learn from humility the might of divine Truth and Love" (Yvonne Caché von Fettweis and Robert Townsend Warneck, *Mary Baker Eddy: Christian Healer*, Amplified Edition, pp. 239-240).

*Science and Health* promises, "Each successive stage of experience unfolds new views of divine goodness and love" (p. 66). So whenever a challenge arises, we can immediately declare, "I can't wait to see what new views of Your goodness and love You're going to show me, Father!"

Christian Scientists sometimes feel confused by repeated challenges, thinking that Christian Science doesn't work for them anymore. That is no more possible than mathematics working in one instance but not the next, or working for some people but not others. "Principle is absolute," *Science and Health* states. "It admits of no error, but rests upon understanding" (p. 283).

No matter how convincing a falsehood seems to be, as we embrace the eternal fact that matter—including all evil, error, and mortal mind—is nothing but an illusion, it will cease to fool us. A lie is a lie. It never can move into the realm of reality, even if a billion people believe it, and even if it appears to have hung around for years. Think of how many false beliefs the world has embraced for hundreds, even thousands, of years!

It is only our belief in material conditions that needs to be gotten rid of, not the "condition" itself, which is an illusion. Mrs. Eddy writes, "Mortal mind sees what it believes as certainly as it believes what it sees" (*Science and Health*, p. 86). If you think a problem truly existed and then disappeared, then you could think it could come back. If it never existed in the first place, however, then there is nothing to come back. Is it possible that one day the world will become flat, or that the sun will rotate around the Earth—two beliefs that were once widely held? Of course not! When we stop believing in lies, it is impossible to be fooled by their false appearance anymore, and we no longer suffer from them in our experience.

Mrs. Eddy observes, "My faith in God and in His followers rests in the fact that He is infinite good, and that He gives His followers opportunity to use their hidden virtues, to put into practice the power which lies concealed in the calm and which storms awaken to vigor and to victory" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 204). That is surely a reason to glory in tribulations!

Some years ago, while dealing with several physical challenges, including two heart attacks, I was working with my husband and daughter on running three businesses in New York City and also helping to oversee the renovation of our congregation's hundred-year-old

church building. Each and all of these challenges could have been seen as personal attacks or tribulations that could possibly end my life, destroy our businesses, or halt the church project. Or I could face them as Paul did and declare, "I am troubled on every side, yet not distressed; I am perplexed, but not in despair; I am being persecuted, but I am not forsaken; I may be cast down, but I am not destroyed."

Obedying the First Commandment and refusing to acknowledge any power apart from God, good, I was able to see that those tribulations never touched my true identity as a spiritual idea of God. They were aggressive mental suggestions claiming that I was something less than the beloved child of God, endowed with Love's power, dominion, and freedom.

With each challenge, I made the choice to cling to God's all-power as our Leader taught us to do when the illusion of sickness or sin tempts us (see *Science and Health*, p. 495). And just as Christ Jesus, Paul, and Mary Baker Eddy promised us, I was the victor over the lies of heart trouble or any aggressive suggestion of life in matter—the belief in a carnal mind apart from God. In the 25 years since, I have had no sign of a heart problem.

God has told us unequivocally, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10). Amidst all my tribulations, I obeyed this admonition, and He kept His divine promise and delivered glory.

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## A "sound mind" in times of crisis

By Brian Webster

**In the first** chapter of Genesis, we read that God made man—the true identity of you and me—in His image and likeness. But that's not all. He also gave

us dominion over all the earth. While that may be easy to claim in the comfort of an easy chair, it's a whole different story when facing what appears to be a crisis. What is one to do, for example, when confronted with threats of a raging inferno, powerful flood, serious accident, crippling health challenge, or any other seeming threat?

The Bible is filled with such accounts. But it is also filled with remarkable examples of God's deliverance, as when David sang, "When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; ... in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.... He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; he delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me" (II Samuel 22:5, 7, 17, 18).

A perusal of biblical accounts leads to a striking revelation: Deliverance from a crisis never begins with a physical action or reaction, but with a mental, prayerful response. The victor is impelled to trustingly turn to God to begin to witness the coincidence of God's divine influence with the human need. The practical benefit of such a response cannot be overstated. It is summed up this way in the Bible: "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7).

A "sound mind" never concludes that God, the only Mind, is the source of any destructive element. As we learn from studying the Bible and the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, the Founder of Christian Science, God is only good and therefore creates only good.

One might ask, though, "Of what use is a sound mind when the crises we face are physical?" It's everything. It has the potential to still crises. That's because, as we learn in Christian Science, our experience is actually the projection of consciousness—it is our thought externalized. Mrs. Eddy writes: "Mortal mind sees what it believes as certainly as it believes what it sees. It feels, hears, and sees its own thoughts" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 86).

This is illustrated in the book of Mark in the Bible, where we read that Jesus and his disciples once found

themselves engulfed in a violent storm on a boat (see 4:36–41). Buffeted by gale-force winds and threatening waves and fearing for their lives, the disciples awoke Jesus from his sleep and pleaded with him to save them. He stood and "rebuked the wind" and said to the sea, "Peace, be still." Then "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

Jesus was in the same boat, on the same lake, at the same time as his disciples. How could he have been asleep? What set him apart from his students was that he was not in the storm in consciousness. The only way to understand Jesus' peaceful state in the midst of what appeared to be a crisis is to realize that he understood that in reality, in God's kingdom of perpetual harmony, there could never be a storm.

Mrs. Eddy writes of Jesus, "Let us remember that the great Metaphysician healed the sick, raised the dead, and commanded even the winds and waves, which obeyed him through spiritual ascendancy alone" (*Message to The Mother Church for 1901*, p. 19). His elevated thought, at one with God, included no suggestion of anything not of God, good.

Mrs. Eddy elsewhere writes: "Jesus taught us to walk *over*, not *into* or *with*, the currents of matter, or mortal mind.... he commanded the winds, he healed the sick, —all in direct opposition to human philosophy and so-called natural science. He annulled the laws of matter, showing them to be laws of mortal mind, not of God" (*Unity of Good*, p. 11).

As we follow Jesus' example, we find that what we entertain in thought before or during a crisis is of utmost importance and directly influences our experience. Whether in advance, when we're working to disbelieve that there are powers acting contrary to God and His goodness, or when facing dire circumstances and listening closely for God's dependable guidance rather than allowing ourselves to be gripped with fear, we need to abide in that "spiritual ascendancy" that Jesus demonstrated.

I had the opportunity to demonstrate this when facing a crisis. As a young adult, I led a group of teenagers on a high-country backpack trip. A few days into the trek, we found ourselves exposed on a ridge above timberline,

when a ferocious storm descended on us quickly and unexpectedly. We raced madly to put up tarps to protect ourselves and our gear from the rain, but the wind was so intense it snapped the tent poles and blew our gear around like tumbleweeds. With lightning dancing around us, it seemed there was no place to take refuge.

Fear appeared to be calling the shots at first, but reaching out to God for help, I got a very clear direction to have everyone lie on the ground side by side in groups, pull tarps over ourselves, stake them down, and wait the storm out. Packed like sardines under our tarps, someone pulled out a Bible and began reading—practically yelling—the twenty-third Psalm out loud. Then others began sharing familiar passages as the book was passed around. It was like a church service on the mountaintop. A sense of calm fell on us and we became less disturbed by the chaos around us.

Eventually the storm moved down the valley and the sun broke through the clouds. I hiked to a rocky point where I could observe it and thank God for our deliverance. A few minutes later I realized I wasn't alone. One by one, the group had gathered around me in quiet reverence. It was a holy experience.

I later learned that our protection had been greater even than I had understood at the time, when I was told that the proper position to take when caught outside in a lightning storm is a crouching position, and that lying flat exposes one to greater danger. But, in fact, we had been protected, not by the position of our bodies, but by the trust in God in our hearts.

We act most sensibly in times of crisis when we handle fear first. "Perfect love casteth out fear," we read in First John 4:18. Knowing that God knows nothing but love for us and continuously wraps us in His love casts out the fear that we can ever fall out of it. Then we have the soundness of mind to hear God's angel messages guiding us in the steps we need to take. At some point, we will learn that destructive events, because they're not of God, have no more reality or ability to harm us than the storm did Jesus and his disciples.

Christian Science teaches the importance of turning from fear in health crises as well. Doing so enables us to maintain the consciousness of truth and avail

ourselves more of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God's goodness. We read in *Science and Health*, "As human thought changes from one stage to another of conscious pain and painlessness, sorrow and joy,—from fear to hope and from faith to understanding,—the visible manifestation will at last be man governed by Soul, not by material sense" (p. 125).

I experienced proof of this when facing what felt like a bodily crisis. Doing some landscaping work, I cut and removed several armloads of plant trimmings while wearing a sleeveless shirt and shorts. All was fine until that night, when a terrible rash began to spread over much of my body. I later learned that the trimmings had included poison ivy—something I had no experience with, since I had never lived in places where it grew.

The challenge seemed more than I could handle by myself, so I called a Christian Science practitioner to pray with me. I felt some relief immediately, but the real healing didn't take place until a few days later.

I was walking alone, reveling in the fact that the irritation had subsided to the point where I felt as though the challenge was almost over. But at that moment, there was an onset of symptoms again, this time more aggressive. It felt like a personal crisis, for sure. But I had just been reading this in *Science and Health*: "Mind is the master of the corporeal senses, and can conquer sickness, sin, and death. Exercise this God-given authority. Take possession of your body, and govern its feeling and action. Rise in the strength of Spirit to resist all that is unlike good. God has made man capable of this, and nothing can vitiate the ability and power divinely bestowed on man" (p. 393).

With this truth in hand, I spoke with authority to the suggestion that a rash had any power over me, or even existed. I spoke out loud and with conviction. As I did so, I felt the power of divine Truth and Love wash over me. Instantly, the irritation and other symptoms stopped—purely from my speaking the truth with conviction. And they never came back.

The Apostle Paul said, "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the

knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:4, 5). This is truly what a sound mind does. Its thoughts are in alignment with, or obedience to, Christ, the true idea of God. This enables us to awake to God’s omnipresence and omnipotence.

We will one day discover that we can have a sound mind in every circumstance. It is naturally ours, since we are God’s image. He gives us the ability to feel His omnipotence reign in our consciousness, and therefore in our experience. This is accompanied by the peaceful assurance that God’s spiritual creation—the only creation there actually is—is intact, unchangeable, harmonious, and at hand to be seen.

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## Thanksgiving’s vital role in Christian Science healing

By Matthew Hansen

**In the first** Presidential Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, George Washington noted the request of Congress for “a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God,” and assigned November 26, 1789, “to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be.”

Years later, Thanksgiving would become an annual tradition in the United States, with the first of these national celebrations taking place in the autumn of 1863, during the throes of the Civil War. At that time, Abraham Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving Day Proclamation urging that, amidst giving thanks for bountiful blessings, fellow citizens “commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and

fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation.”

Ever since, in America it has been a common practice for friends and family to gather together on Thanksgiving to share a meal in gratitude to God and in commemoration of the many sacrifices made by heroes and heroines, past and present, who have helped to establish and defend the freedoms we enjoy. And a number of other countries around the world have similar observances.

Yet, to those who may be without a meal, or those who look in vain for friends and family, hungering and thirsting, as it were, to experience more of Love’s presence and power and to receive and impart more of its blessings, the merriment and festivity of Thanksgiving Day can leave one feeling utterly alone. Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, shared her prayer for all of those who may have reason to feel this way: “God comfort them all!” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 232). She was keenly aware of the need for that comforting love because she knew what it meant to be “a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit” (Isaiah 54:6).

Like the valiant Pilgrims who sought distant shores at extreme peril in furtherance of their desire to freely worship God, Mrs. Eddy gave her whole heart to serving Him and set out to assuage human woe and bring blessings of heavenly love to mankind. Her discovery of Christian Science came at a tremendous cost, and some of the crucible through which she passed can be seen in a letter she wrote to one of her early students on Thanksgiving Day (likely in 1872, at a very difficult time in establishing the Cause of Christian Science).

The letter begins: “They tell me this day is set apart for festivities, and rejoicing; but I have no evidence of this except the proclamation and gathering together of those who love one another. I am alone today, and shall probably not see a single student—family ties are broken never to be reunited in this world with me.

“But what of those who have learned with me the Truth of Moral Science [later, Christian Science] where do



they find their joys, where do they seek friendship and happiness? Shall I see one of them To-day?...

“My spirit calls To-day, but who of all my students hears it? Who of you are thinking of the hungry and the stranger To-day?” (FOO351, The Mary Baker Eddy Library; © The Mary Baker Eddy Collection).

I will never forget the effect this letter had on me the first time I read it. It made me consider: Would I have thought of and visited our Leader during this time of distress? To support and express gratitude for the one who was so unselfishly sacrificing all to bring God’s healing message to the world? And do I today remember and honor her life and mission by serving “the hungry and the stranger” in the highest way possible, in the way she taught—through following the Master, Christ Jesus, and healing the sick?

As I read the letter, I felt as though I wanted to be alone with God. I knew then, as I know now, that there is a deep spiritual message of comfort and love to be gained by anyone who contemplates the sentiments expressed in it. Although my understanding of what Mrs. Eddy wrote continues to broaden and deepen, I’ve been impressed by the fact that serving “the hungry and the stranger” is a recurring theme in Scripture that points to the very essence of Thanksgiving and its relation to Christian Science healing.

Mrs. Eddy’s letter refers to Jesus’ story of the King who says, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in” (see Matthew 25:31–46). Here the King—Christ—is identified as a “stranger” (which Christians sometimes define as one not conformed to the world and not accepted) whom we are to serve with loving gratitude—both directly and through loving and caring for others. The King goes on to say, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Might this speak to the spirit of Thanksgiving that we are to embrace continuously?

One of the first metaphysical healings in the Bible illustrates the moral of this story. It occurs after “three men” appear to Abraham in Mamre (see Genesis 18:1–15). Upon receiving these three angel visitants—we could think of them as strangers—Abraham

summoned his wife, Sarah, to help him prepare a feast for them. This unified, spontaneous expression of thanksgiving for God’s messengers set the table, if you will, for Sarah’s healing. After the two had faithfully served their guests in the spirit of loving gratitude, the angel messengers reaffirmed to Abraham God’s promise that Sarah, who was ninety years old and had never been able to have children, would conceive and give birth. Accordingly, Sarah conceived and gave birth to a son, Isaac (see Genesis 21:1–8).

So such grateful hospitality to God and His messengers provides us with much more than a mere insight as to how to be a good host on Thanksgiving Day. It shows the exalted mental state that very naturally blesses us with a harvest of Christly healing. Abraham and Sarah’s *welcoming* of God’s messengers included *receiving* the abundant blessings naturally bestowed through Christ, the true idea of God. As the King in Jesus’ story said to those who cared for God’s little ones, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34).

Christ Jesus’ ministry further established the importance of beginning with gratitude in healing. On two separate occasions, the Master fed the multitude in a most unusual way—once feeding five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes and then at another time feeding four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes. What was it that brought this about? In a word, thanksgiving.

The Gospels reveal that on both of these occasions, in the face of severe lack and limitation, Jesus gave thanks to God for His ever-present abundant supply (see John 6:11 and Matthew 15:36). Then followed the outflow of a most astonishing provision, feeding and blessing every individual in the multitude, who could be considered strangers in the more customary sense of those in need.

Not only did this reveal that what Jesus actually had was infinitely more than what met the eye—even unlimited, inexhaustible spiritual resources from God that were ever at hand—but it also showed that giving thanks is essential to the realization of divine Love’s largesse through Christian scientific practice.

Thanksgiving, as exemplified by Christ Jesus, enables the Christian Scientist to be most effective in meeting the needs of hungering humanity. Thankfulness for all that God has given us in Christian Science equips us to receive its healing power and impart it to untold “strangers” in want.

Another use of the word *stranger* appears in the Christian Science textbook: “Science is the ‘stranger that is within thy gates,’ remembered not, even when its elevating effects practically prove its divine origin and efficacy” (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 146). We’re called upon to recognize and welcome in deep gratitude Christ and divine Science and not reject them in any way.

This call came to me like an angel visitant a number of years ago when I suddenly became incapacitated with debilitating pain in my body. The thought of being openly receptive to and grateful for Christian Science and its healing power was the holy message that not only brought relief from the pain, but ultimately enabled me to realize a complete healing in a matter of days.

The following passage from *Science and Health*, in conjunction with the illustrative drawing “Truth versus Error” in Mrs. Eddy’s poem *Christ and Christmas* (in which a woman bearing a message of Truth is knocking at a door), was profoundly enlightening, instructive, and meaningful to me then and remains so now: “A higher and more practical Christianity, demonstrating justice and meeting the needs of mortals in sickness and in health, stands at the door of this age, knocking for admission. Will you open or close the door upon this angel visitant, who cometh in the quiet of meekness, as he came of old to the patriarch at noonday?” (p. 224).

To answer this call—to open this door—is to receive God’s greatest gift and blessing, even the gift and blessing of Christian Science healing.

Our practice of this Science must be the consummate expression of thanksgiving as introduced by Abraham and reiterated by Jesus. We could say that our thanksgiving to God through the practice of Christian Science is Abraham’s Christly legacy which enables us to realize the enduring promise that God gave to him

and to us by extension: “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

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## Know who you are

By Gay Bryant Flatt

**A television show** called *Who do you think you are?* traces celebrities’ family histories, sometimes going as far back as William the Conqueror and King Henry VIII in the British version. Its popularity hints at our innate desire to know who we are and where we come from.

Some years ago, after I had given up a career of my own and was at home with my first baby, I began to wonder who I was. I had moved away from family and friends and seemed to have lost some of my identity—or so I thought.

Around that time I had become deeply interested in Christian Science. I felt that my answer as to my identity was going to be found in its teachings, so I had set about reading the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy. When I reached this passage, I knew I had my answer: “In Science man is the offspring of Spirit. The beautiful, good, and pure constitute his ancestry. His origin is not, like that of mortals, in brute instinct, nor does he pass through material conditions prior to reaching intelligence. Spirit is his primitive and ultimate source of being; God is his Father, and Life is the law of his being” (p. 63).

Those words hit me like a sledgehammer! I wasn’t the person I thought I was. I needed to identify myself as God’s offspring—not as a mortal mother or wife, etc. I was God’s child, and I belonged to God. There lay my true family connection, which was not in mortality at all. God was my Father-Mother, and my ancestry, my history, was spiritual. I really rejoiced in this. I knew who I was!

This was quite a revelation and overturned a lot of perceptions I had held about myself. For one thing, I now understood that it was not humility to put myself down or feel guilty over past events. For example, I had made a career change that had greatly disappointed my mother. Knowing who I truly, spiritually was gave me confidence and an inner strength I hadn't known before. I was able to keep on loving and not react to criticism. Tensions abated and our relationship became more harmonious.

As long as we cling to a false material concept of ourselves, we identify ourselves from a skewed point of view, like looking through the wrong end of a telescope. And this becomes the lens through which we see the world.

Looking through the lens of Spirit, though, we see ourselves and our fellow man from a spiritual viewpoint, not according to the outward appearance. In the Bible, the prophet Samuel is sent by God to find a new king among Jesse's eight sons (see I Samuel 16). Samuel is successful when he follows God's direction to look on the heart, not on the outward appearance; through spiritual discernment he recognizes David as the one. David had a reputation as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person," and people knew "the Lord is with him."

Spiritually viewed, we are all anointed by God, for we are all His children. And we are capable of rising to appreciate our full stature as a child of God. It is inspiring to claim this as our spiritual heritage, our true being. And didn't Jesus say to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)?

Why should we doubt this? Our Father-Mother God loves us and wants and causes the very best for His children. God's infinite plan for each of us is wonderful and wholly good.

*Science and Health* also states, "The admission to one's self that man is God's own likeness sets man free to master the infinite idea" (p. 90). If we don't admit and accept our own Godlikeness, how are we going to behold it in another? How are we going to be a transparency for

divine Love, which is the healer in all cases, if we don't admit who we really are?

We may not fully understand who we are spiritually, but we can admit it. The open door of thought admits, welcomes, and embraces the spiritual reality of man. It lets the true man be entertained in our consciousness.

In turn, this enables us to follow Christ Jesus' instruction, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). What a great rule for how to relate to others, as it requires not only kindness and tenderness but seeing others in their true light as children of God. Having regard for our fellow man is an unselfish way of living, and it also speaks volumes about oneself.

As God's own likeness, man is pure, gentle, intelligent, and wholly good. Everyone is precious, valuable, and treasured by God, the divine source from which we come. There is no condemnation of God's man, only of the wrong sense of man as mortal. Divine Love looks on the heart and sees its own ideas as spiritual, innocent, and flawless.

I recently had the privilege of visiting Mrs. Eddy's home in Swampscott, Massachusetts, where she experienced a healing of a severe internal injury in 1866, which in turn led to her discovery of Christian Science. The visit was a humbling experience. It occurred to me that Mrs. Eddy had discovered, or rather uncovered, something that no one else had since Jesus—that man is wholly spiritual. As with David, Mrs. Eddy was called of God to a holy purpose; she would later write, "God had been graciously preparing me during many years for the reception of this final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing" (*Science and Health*, p. 107).

In her autobiographical *Retrospection and Introspection*, she ends the chapter on "Marriage and Parentage" with this profound, scientific statement of truth: "God is over all. He alone is our origin, aim, and being. The real man is not of the dust, nor is he ever created through the flesh; for his father and mother are the one Spirit,

and his brethren are all the children of one parent, the eternal good” (p. 22).

Opening up thought, surrendering a mortal sense of ourselves (and others), and admitting the truth of our spiritual selfhood is the most unselfish thing we can do! In this way our thought is being constantly prepared step by step to accept and demonstrate who we truly are as God’s beautiful, spiritual offspring.

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## INTERLUDE

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# God’s eternal kingdom

*By Malissa Lakin-Watson*

God is Mind that we reflect.  
God is cause and man effect.  
We are one in Love’s design,  
Health and peace the very signs  
Of His kingdom, full of grace,  
Where vain evil has no place.

So-called kingdoms built on sand  
Claim to have the upper hand  
With the boast that swears to rule,  
With intent to harm and fool.  
Know this lie can never win,  
Since its base is mindless sin.

God’s eternal kingdom, fair,  
Governs nations everywhere.  
Sing out loud this ancient chord:  
“Peace on earth” and “Love is Lord!”  
God is All-in-all right now.  
Before this Truth all knees do bow.

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## TESTIMONIES OF HEALING

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# Healing of mental turmoil and insomnia

*By Jill Longanecker-Wiedman*

**When I was** a young mother caring full time for my two small children, I went through a period of many weeks where I experienced extreme fear, distress, and loneliness and was unable to sleep through the night.

I prayed with the weekly Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* and further studied the Bible and the writings of Mary Baker Eddy whenever I got the chance. I also read that Mrs. Eddy once said, “There has been a voice saying to me, ‘Mary, take yourself out of the way and let God act through you’” (Irving C. Tomlinson, *Twelve Years with Mary Baker Eddy*, Amplified Edition, p. 163). I was deeply touched by this and applied it to myself, acknowledging that I have my being in the divine Mind, and only this Mind is able to see, hear, feel, think, speak, or act.

In the midst of my search for healing, I was sidetracked by a plumbing leak in our home, which was difficult to locate. We had two choices—to rip up the bathroom where the plumbers thought the leak might be (but weren’t sure), or we could take the expensive step of running a completely new pipeline over the existing pipes. The first option would be inexpensive if the leak could be found quickly, but it was a gamble because we might need to rip up other areas of the house to locate the leak.

I knew that no human reasoning could put me at peace about this, but I could trust God, Mind, to lead me. I called a Christian Science practitioner to support my prayer. Christian Science explains that what we see, hear, and feel through the physical senses is an illusion based on false, material beliefs. To find healing and peace, we must translate things into thoughts and understand that God has complete control over His spiritual ideas. I began seeing the thoughts flowing through my home—my consciousness—as reflecting

God's continuous flow of goodness, which is perfectly complete and protected.

Later that afternoon I was reading hymns and a verse jumped out at me:

Make channels for the streams of Love,  
Where they may broadly run;  
And Love has overflowing streams,  
To fill them every one.

(Richard C. Trench, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 182, © CSBD)

I knew the answer immediately—we would run a new pipe. I was at peace, confident that this was the right thing to do, and I was so grateful for God's loving guidance. We had the plumber completely cut off the old pipeline with the leak and reconnect a new pipeline over the old, corroded one.

But the blessings didn't stop there. As time went on, I realized that this plumbing problem had a lesson for me about healing the dark, anxious thoughts I had been having. During one of my sleepless nights, I applied to myself the spiritual truths I had applied to find the answer about the plumbing. I acknowledged that God is the only source of my thoughts, and there could be no holes in His "pipeline" that could result in leakage of good or contamination by fear and distress. Rather, I saw the negative thoughts as false suggestions coming from a mistaken sense of a mind apart from God. So I cut off the flow of these corroded thoughts, just as the plumber did, and allowed flood-tides of Love to flow to me through a perfect, unflawed pipeline.

Immediately every aspect of my distress was lifted. I was healed and completely at peace. But the next day, all the fearful thinking returned, so I prayed as before and again felt free. The cycle kept repeating, and my prayer treatments continued to evolve as inspiration opened up new views. This time of spiritual growth went on for several months while complaint, self-pity, burden, irritation, impatience, and remorse were replaced by joy, harmony, patience, gratitude, and forgiveness.

Then one night at 3:00 a.m., I again awoke with extreme fear. I held very strongly to the comforting power of the ninety-first Psalm. I also thought about this passage

from Romans: "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" (8:38, 39).

I held to the truth, with absolute divine authority, that I could never be separated from God's love, no matter what seemed to be going on. My thought was lifted far above the seeming repetition of evil, and I came to the beautiful revelation that I was eternally untouched and eternally safe in God's arms. Suddenly I felt a change taking place. I experienced a feeling of intense love and serenity that I had never felt before. I felt God's divine presence surrounding my entire being as I wept with joy. This divine healing presence was so strong, the fear simply melted away, and I knew I was completely and permanently healed. It felt so wonderful to finally be free—I was filled with the light of Christ. I will never forget this beautiful experience!

This healing took place many years ago, but blessings still flow from its lessons. If suggestions of fear and distress come to me now, I am able to dismiss them immediately, knowing they are not from God. This experience helped me better understand how to heal as Christ Jesus did, and many wonderful healings in our family followed.

**Jill Longanecker-Wiedman**

*Ormond Beach, Florida, US*

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## Quick recovery from Squirrel Bite

*By Margee Lyon*

**I was out** for a walk in a public garden one cold winter day, when a squirrel ran up to me. He got up onto his haunches and begged me for food. I happened to have a small bag of unsalted peanuts in my pocket, and I was so

taken by his sweet face that I couldn't help but offer him one. He quickly took it and ran off, but other squirrels in the park started to come up to me. Before I knew it, a scuffle broke out that resulted in my hands being badly bitten and scratched. I stood up, shaking a hand vehemently and telling one squirrel that was hanging on with his teeth and claws to let go of my thumb! Finally, he did. Both hands were bleeding badly, so I covered them to prevent further loss of blood.

I wondered where to get help and remembered that a building management company was nearby. As I started in that direction, I met two employees headed back to work there and they immediately offered to assist me. I cleaned up in their facility while they found some bandages and helped me apply them. They were very concerned as I continued to bleed through the bandages and said they thought I would need stitches and a rabies shot. I was so grateful for their care, and immediate help. I felt love for all they were doing in their kind actions, and I assured them I would get it taken care of.

As I left to go home, I thought about what they had said, but then another thought came to mind: I could be healed through prayer as taught by Jesus and explained by Mary Baker Eddy in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. I knew there were Christian Science practitioners who could help me with this type of healing prayer and Christian Science nurses who could support me with bandaging the wound. I humbly asked, "God, what should I do?" Then I listened. That's when this line from the Bible came to me: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10), followed by the ideas from Isaiah 41:10: "I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Immediately, I felt peaceful. I was not afraid and wasn't thinking about my thumb or hands. Instead, I was thinking about "righteousness" and what it means to me: that God is only good, right, pure, kind, and caring. I thought of God's "right hand" of righteousness leading and guiding my every step.

Then I thought about the squirrels and how much I still loved them. I saw them as innocent and playful.

*Science and Health* explains, "All of God's creatures, moving in the harmony of Science, are harmless, useful, indestructible" (p. 514). I knew that in truth squirrels couldn't hurt me, and I couldn't hurt them. I felt such love for them and the employees who had just helped me. I felt loved by God, as if I were held in a warm embrace.

When I got home, I went to wash up and put on new bandages before taking any other steps. But when I removed the old ones, the wound on my thumb was completely and perfectly closed, and there was no more bleeding. All I could see was an inch-and-a-half line—I could hardly tell it had been injured! Within two days, all evidence of a wound and scratching was entirely gone.

I learned several things from this experience:

First, I learned how important it is not to be overcome by fear. When I wasn't afraid, the result was this quick and rather dramatic healing.

Second, I learned the importance of focusing on God instead of the wounds. *Science and Health* talks about looking away from the body to Truth and Love in order to experience health (see p. 261). Rather than focusing on the body, I was more focused on the love I felt from God and the two people who were so kindly caring for my well-being. They were expressing love in the best way they knew how.

Third, I saw the importance of being humble and still so that I could hear guidance from God, divine Mind. I turned wholeheartedly to God without any preconceived notions about what should happen.

Fourth, I learned that God is an ever-present help, always there when we turn to divine Love for aid.

All this brought peace and left no room for fear. As it says in First John 4:18: "Perfect love casteth out fear." I experienced the loving, healing presence that makes disease "vanish into its native nothingness like dew before the morning sunshine" (*Science and Health*, p. 365).

I am thankful to God and for the love, health, and joy that He provides. I am also grateful for Mrs.

Eddy's devotion to sharing the Science of the healing Christ. The Church of Christ, Scientist, she established provides many avenues for helping humanity gain a better understanding of God and His healing power.

**Margee Lyon**

*Boston, Massachusetts, US*

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## Back injury healed

*By Dewi Mahendra*

**One afternoon**, while getting up from a chair at my office, I suddenly lost my balance and went crashing down hard on the floor. As it happened during lunch break, nobody was around.

I immediately declared to myself, "Accidents are unknown to God." This statement of truth is found in the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy (p. 424), which brings out that God, divine Mind, is the only cause and governs the universe harmoniously. Knowing that this is a spiritual law governing me and everyone immediately calmed my fears. Although the pain in my back was quite intense, I managed to get up by myself and found someone to drive me home.

Once I was home, I called a Christian Science practitioner for treatment. My fears were growing again, as the possibility of a back injury seemed so real. I struggled with intense pain every time I moved. This went on for quite some time and I began to worry about whether I would be able to travel to attend a church-related event in the coming weeks. The practitioner lovingly reminded me of two passages from *Science and Health*: "Mind is the source of all movement, and there is no inertia to retard or check its perpetual and harmonious action" (p. 283) and "Mind measures time according to the good that is unfolded" (p. 584). I knew then that only good—not pain or fear—was unfolding for me every moment.

One morning, a friend who is a doctor and knew about the injury offered to take me to the hospital to have an X-ray. She told me that I needed a clear diagnosis of the injury. I politely declined her offer.

Some time later a cousin called and suggested some painkillers. She told me that she'd had a similar problem and it took her four months to heal.

I suddenly realized that both of these suggestions, intended to be caring, were opportunities for me to stand for the truth that Christian Science heals. I've had many physical healings through applying the truths I've learned in Christian Science. Once I recognized this, I knew I had uncovered the error in thought that needed correction: I didn't need to get a clear diagnosis of the physical injury; I needed to keep a clear sense of what was spiritually true.

Mrs. Eddy writes in *Science and Health*: "When the illusion of sickness or sin tempts you, cling steadfastly to God and His idea. Allow nothing but His likeness to abide in your thought. Let neither fear nor doubt overshadow your clear sense and calm trust, that the recognition of life harmonious—as Life eternally is—can destroy any painful sense of, or belief in, that which Life is not. Let Christian Science, instead of corporeal sense, support your understanding of being, and this understanding will supplant error with Truth, replace mortality with immortality, and silence discord with harmony" (p. 495).

The practitioner and I continued to know that my real structure is spiritual, which means always intact and without pain.

One day I read an article in the *Journal* called "A little book with big ideas" (October 2018), which references an article by Robert Peel about the *Manual of The Mother Church* by Mrs. Eddy—a book that establishes the structure and governance of the Church—and says the Peel article brings out that "the *Manual* must serve as a backbone of effort, not as a straitjacket for inspiration serving." This spoke to me, as I was using a back brace for support and it felt to me like a straitjacket. I began to see it was inhibiting healing inspirations, as I felt I was giving power to material support when I knew that man, being spiritual, is truly supported by God.

I also realized that the church-related event I was due to attend was supported by the *Manual*. I saw the correlation and rejoiced to know that I was healed, even though physically it didn't seem apparent yet. Confident of this, I went ahead with my trip three weeks later and noticed that I'd had a full healing only after sitting on the plane for about three hours without any pain or discomfort.

I am deeply grateful for this healing and for the spiritual growth gained through a better understanding of God that demonstrates that Christian Science does heal.

**Dewi Mahendra**  
JAKARTA, INDONESIA

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## Saved from riptide

*By Edna B. Craft*

Many summers ago, my husband, our four sons, and I were invited by dear friends to join them for a day at their beach house. As everyone was getting out of the car, one of our sons asked me to stay, as he wanted to share a thought he had read in the current Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly*. It was about God being present wherever we may be.

During our visit, this son and I decided to go for a swim. The water was smooth and we were enjoying ourselves. However, it wasn't long before a riptide had formed—something I had never experienced before, even though I had been involved in water sports for years and felt that I knew how to handle myself in the water.

As the current was pulling me away from shore, I remembered what my son had said earlier as we left our car—that God is present wherever we may be. I felt as if I was being sucked underwater as waves crashed over me. I was hardly able to get any air. Then this line from a hymn came to mind: “In atmosphere of Love divine,/ We live, and move, and breathe” (H., *Christian Science*

*Hymnal*, No. 144, adapt.). It was just what I needed, and it helped calm my fears.

By now I had lost sight of my son. Suddenly another wave hit me. But this time it buoyed me above the water, allowing me to inhale a big breath of air. However, as I tried to swim, I was once again tossed about and wasn't sure what direction I was going.

I continued praying, knowing that God's hand reaches where no man's can, when all of a sudden I had an intuition to raise my hand as high as I could above the water. My son saw my hand and swam over and pulled me out of the riptide. He had managed the waves better than I, and helped me to the shore, where I was able to breathe and just lie quietly on the sand.

I had never been in such a fearful experience before with hardly a moment to choose what to do. Even then, though, I knew God's love was guiding and supporting me every moment. I am so grateful for the numerous healings my family and I have had during many years of living and applying the truths of Christian Science.

I was honored to serve my former branch Church of Christ, Scientist, for years in various capacities, including as a Reader, Executive Board member, and Sunday School teacher. All those experiences strengthened my understanding that God's love is ever present, and therefore healing is assured.

I am so grateful for Christ Jesus, our Way-shower, and for our Leader, Mary Baker Eddy.

**Edna B. Craft**  
Santa Monica, California, US



# Safe from threats and harm

By Frank Lloyd Smith

**The healing I'm** about to share happened at a time when much anger was being expressed toward the place I worked and those who were working for that organization. I was very much aware of this. One part of my job required me to be in a rather isolated location, often with no other people nearby.

One day, I suddenly became very faint and felt as if I was losing consciousness. At that very moment, my wife, who also worked for the same organization, felt she should phone me. At first she thought, "Well, I'll do it after I've done something else." But then she thought, "No, I need to call right now," and she was obedient to this spiritual intuition.

When I picked up the phone, I told my wife I didn't know what was happening to me but that something was wrong. She then got in touch with my manager, and before long they were both at my side. Meanwhile, I had managed to phone a Christian Science practitioner.

My wife and manager helped me down to our car, and my wife drove us home. I was still pretty woozy but was beginning to feel more like myself. Once we got home, I rested for the remainder of the afternoon. That evening I was feeling well enough to go with my wife to our church so that she could practice reading the Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* with her fellow Reader.

After going to bed, we got a phone call in the middle of the night. I answered it, and the voice on the other end of the line said, "You're going to die." My wife asked me what the caller had said, and I sleepily repeated the message. She started vigorously praying out loud, affirming God's ever-presence and protecting power, and she had me call the practitioner to report this specific threat.

When I talked to my wife about this later, she said she recalls emphatically affirming the allness of God, good, and the nothingness of evil, and saying something she'd heard a Christian Scientist mention,

that "mental malpractice" is actually "no one, nowhere, doing nothing to nobody."

*Mental malpractice* is a term Mary Baker Eddy uses a number of times in her writings. In her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, she says: "All mental malpractice arises from ignorance or malice aforethought. It is the injurious action of one mortal mind controlling another from wrong motives, and it is practised either with a mistaken or a wicked purpose" (p. 451). And in other places in her writings, she is quick to state that mental malpractice cannot in reality harm us, but that the belief that we can be harmed must be challenged.

So I knew that dealing with the concept of malpractice didn't need to be spooky or mysterious, but that it was necessary to defend myself mentally from malice, impositions about my good work, or anything else that would seem to interfere with my safety and oneness with God, divine Love.

That night, my wife continued to state and know that God is all good and the only Mind and power, so "there is no power apart from God" (*Science and Health*, p. 228). Soon, we both went back to sleep.

I was able to return to work the next day. When my wife reported the whole story to her manager, we found out that I wasn't the only one from the organization recently to have had to face such an experience. We continued to pray, and I'm grateful to say that I experienced no more threatening phone calls and no more fainting spells. And I continued to work safely at the organization for many years after this.

Although I don't remember precisely which metaphysical truths my wife and I were praying with during this time, I'm sure this favorite Bible verse, or one like it, was included in our prayers: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

I am so thankful that no matter how frightening the circumstance might seem, we can turn to God, divine Love, the only power, and find safety and protection.

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BRANCHING OUT

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## Friends, let's cherish the Explanatory Note together

By Madeline Cassidy

**When I'm driving** to my local Church of Christ, Scientist, on a Sunday morning, I'm filled with gratitude. I know that God's divine grace permeates every part of the church service.

One of the things I like to do during the drive is to think about the "Present Order of Services in The Mother Church and Branch Churches" as described by Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, on page 120 of the *Manual of The Mother Church*. It so clearly sets forth the purpose of each activity to bless the congregation.

Lately, I've been thinking about and deeply valuing the healing ideas expressed in the Explanatory Note. This is the text found on page two of the *Christian Science Quarterly*.

My recent focus on the Explanatory Note has led me to explore its origin, which was at church services in the late 1890s. The congregation of each branch church elects two members to read from the Christian Scientists' dual pastor, the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mrs. Eddy, at each service. These two elected members are called "Readers." At the time of the Church's inception, First Readers were describing what was about to take place at the service so that congregants would know what to expect. Sometimes these explanations were lengthy. In November of 1896 Judge Septimus J. Hanna, the then First Reader of The Mother Church in Boston, Massachusetts, wrote to Mrs. Eddy suggesting that a consistent introductory statement be provided

to the Field of Christian Scientists and placed in their *Quarterly*. Mrs. Eddy agreed, and accordingly, the first iteration of the notice was placed in the January–March 1897 *Christian Science Quarterly*. Over the years Mrs. Eddy edited the note, with its final version—the one we have today—first appearing in the January–March 1911 *Quarterly* (see "What is the origin of the Explanatory Note found in the *Christian Science Quarterly*?" [marybakereddylibrary.org](http://marybakereddylibrary.org), March 23, 2020).

The Explanatory Note is an inspired introduction to the Bible Lesson heard in Churches of Christ, Scientist, worldwide. The Note is so vital to the tenor of the service that the *Church Manual* instructs that the reading of the citations from *Science and Health* be introduced with the words, "As announced in the explanatory note, 'I shall now read correlative passages from the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy' (Manual, p. 121).

I'm finding it helpful to take the Explanatory Note line by line in order to highlight the significance of each thought expressed there. Here are some insights that have come to me so far:

"Friends:" The very word embodies the spirit of Christian fellowship. What better way to welcome the listener than with this all-inclusive greeting? It signifies that no one is an outsider. It says that this church service is meant for everyone, everywhere.

"The Bible and the Christian Science textbook are our only preachers." This statement shares that the truths found in the dual pastor are at work, lifting hearts and thoughts above the fray of personal interpretation. As a former First Reader, I can say that this line helped me many times to eliminate any sense of false responsibility for the service.

"We shall now read Scriptural texts, and their correlative passages from our denominational textbook; these comprise our sermon." The sermon read aloud on Sunday is a collection of passages from both the Bible and *Science and Health*. I admit that sometimes I take for granted having an impersonal dual pastor, when it was actually a revolutionary idea. I need this reminder! This format is the outcome of the

extraordinary revelation that came to Mrs. Eddy as the result of her consecrated prayers. Twenty-six subjects, appearing as 26 topics in the *Christian Science Quarterly*, presented twice annually, were to replace personal homilies so as to maintain a consistent presentation of the Word, directly from these books.

“The canonical writings, together with the word of our textbook, corroborating and explaining the Bible texts in their spiritual import and application to all ages, past, present, and future ...” This part of the passage shows how remarkably *Science and Health* is truly and faithfully the *Key to the Scriptures*. Hundreds of Bible quotes and references can be found within its pages. It also shows how timeless and continuously relevant and present are the truths presented in both books destined for “all ages.”

Next, these writings: “... constitute a sermon undivorced from truth, uncontaminated and unfettered by human hypotheses, and divinely authorized.” I often love to pray with the thought that, along with the sermon, we too are undivorced, uncontaminated, and unfettered by human hypotheses or assumptions in our quest to know and live the truth of Christ Jesus’ teachings. And it’s heartening to know that we have divine permission to do so; we, too, are “divinely authorized.” We are authorized by God.

From its welcoming salutation of “Friends” right through to its concluding promise that we will know the truth about God and ourselves, the Explanatory Note sets the tone for the reading of the Lesson-Sermon. It blesses eager listeners. It is truly a blessing for all.

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## Christian Science Reading Rooms support our neighbors

By trevor yates

**I’ve loved serving** as a Reading Room librarian and attendant over the years, and so appreciate this important work.

While I was serving in a Reading Room one day, a young visitor came in and introduced herself as a graduate school student. She said she knew nothing about Christian Science and had just decided to walk in. Then she suddenly told me, before bursting into tears, that her friend had committed suicide. She was sobbing and trying to understand “why,” so we sat down with a box of tissues. As I prayed about how to respond, spouting citations to her didn’t feel like it would be a helpful step to take. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy says, “The tender word and Christian encouragement of an invalid, pitiful patience with his fears and the removal of them, are better than hecatombs of gushing theories, stereotyped borrowed speeches, and the doling of arguments, which are but so many parodies on legitimate Christian Science, aflame with divine Love” (p. 367).

The “tender word” that came to me to say at that moment was that I was so sorry to hear about her friend. And to her question of “why?” I shared what I had learned from Christian Science. I was inspired to tell her that there’s no point in trying to understand the darkness. There’s no logic there. If we look for light (ideas, insights, or inspiration) within the darkness, we find none. Instead, if we turn on what I told her was the Christ light, then we start with what we know is true.

In this case, the Christ light illumined the fact that her friend *was* loved, as evidenced by the very conversation we were having; it was obvious this woman felt love for her friend. We acknowledged that she wished her friend knew that life is good, that we each have something precious to share with others, and that someone who isn’t seeing this simply isn’t seeing the full picture. I knew that God’s love and care for His creation, which

included this woman and her friend, was eternal and unchangeable. I'm grateful to report that this young woman heard these messages. Her tears dried, and she thanked me and went on her way.

The Reading Room is a special place. It's a vital resource for the community, a beacon of hope and spiritual understanding, making products available to the public that can deeply impact those who read or listen to them. The presence of these resources is an expression of God's love. And healing comes from our individual interactions with those people who come in to explore.

I like to think about how a Reading Room's public outreach isn't a kind of human marketing endeavor for our church. Yes, it is public, and yes, our prayers for our community reach outward and people may seek out our church as a result, but the Reading Room is not primarily a place to encourage people to attend church. Each of us who supports a Reading Room gets to participate in a divine healing ministry through introducing people to the Science that can change their lives and loving them in a way that helps them to experience healing.

One of the things that's helped me most, specifically in serving in a Reading Room, is to look beyond religious denomination when I think about this Science. Christian Science is universal. How many people wandering down the street do you know that are shopping for a new religious denomination? Not as many as are openly hungering to know who they are spiritually. If we see Christian Science as nothing more than another denomination, then we're limiting its import and impact.

When we put healing at the forefront of our conversations (because nearly everyone has some issue they'd like resolved), we can be a better support to our neighbors, bring about more healing, and inspire others to find that their lives are happier as they learn more about Christian Science.

Over 25 years ago, I was given a copy of *Science and Health* and read the whole thing from cover to cover in about 36 hours. This led me to attending branch church services, and I was just so eager to learn more that I visited a Reading Room. I just remember being so

warmly welcomed in by that Reading Room attendant. The smile she gave me as I walked in the door was unforgettable. It felt as if there was no one else in the world she could be happier to see! And I can tell you, that's a feeling and a memory that doesn't go away.

I've often thought about that first visit to a Reading Room. The attendant's thought must've been so wonderfully receptive to God's goodness, for her to greet me with such a smile.

The Bible assures us that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalms 46:1). *Science and Health* expands on this by stating: "In divine Science, where prayers are mental, *all* may avail themselves of God as 'a very present help in trouble.' Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals" (pp. 12-13). I've found it so important to remember that this impartial, universal Love is not just for those who visit the Reading Room, but for the attendant as well. After all, "Love is reflected in love" (*Science and Health*, p. 17). We feel divine Love when we express divine Love.

Shedding light on another Bible passage, *Science and Health* speaks of divine Love as "the open fount which cries, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters'" (p. 13).

I like to think of the Reading Room as inviting the spiritually thirsty in to taste these living waters and understand the Science behind God's law of goodness for all of us. And, with a heart intent on caring for others, we can give "a cup of cold water in Christ's name, and never fear the consequences" (*Science and Health*, p. 570). In this way, we will help our neighbors, towns, and cities thrive.

## Children's school issue resolved

*By Russell Whittaker*

**One day at work**, a colleague who was a single mom told me that she had gotten her children through school by relying on this one Bible verse: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13). This made such an impression on me that I never forgot it.

Many years later, my wife was teaching at a private school. A benefit for qualifying teachers there was that their child was welcome to attend without charge. This applied to my family.

Soon, my wife and another teacher each had additional children. But when they prepared to enroll these other children, expecting them to also have free tuition, some members of the school board raised questions. When this benefit had first been instituted, siblings of the first child had not been taken into consideration. A clash of opinions ensued, and it threatened to divide the school staff.

As the spouse of a staff member, as well as the parent of an enrolled student, I had a very strong interest in the outcome, and yet I certainly wanted a resolution that was fair both to the families and to the school administration.

As I turned to God, who is divine Mind, in prayer, I remembered my friend's experience with the Bible verse about God's children being "taught of the Lord." I thought that the ideas behind the verse could apply to me and everyone involved, so I cherished this passage. To me, it meant that God, our Father-Mother, is the one real teacher, and She teaches all Her children lovingly, fully, and completely. No one is left out, "for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

Another passage that helped me was from the chapter called "Prayer" in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, where Mary Baker Eddy writes: "In divine Science, where prayers are mental, *all* may avail themselves of God as 'a very present help in trouble.' Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals" (pp. 12-13). To me, this meant that God loves all of Her children and therefore will treat them equally. I knew that this was true for our education situation, and that all could be satisfied. Since God is infinite, and therefore includes all, a spiritual resolution would apply unconditionally, and I remained open to a solution that would embrace all concerned, even if that included enrollment at another school.

I held these ideas close while the school deliberations continued. Those involved amicably decided that the benefit would indeed extend to all the children of qualifying teachers, not just one child. At this time, adjustments of staff and board members also took place. Over twenty years later, that school is still in operation, two of our children have finished college, and a third is happily enrolled in one.

Truly, we are all taught by God.

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## Relying on God for test-taking

*By Roberta Alkire*

Although my life was active with children and a busy husband, I decided to return to college. It was a challenge!

At one point, a two-hour-long test was looming and my professor suggested that we study hard because it would have a lot of weight on our final grades. I studied the notes I had taken during the lectures. I had been trusting, as I listened in class, that God was giving me spiritual intuition to hear the important points, and my notes consisted of these points.

This intuition, I've learned through Christian Science, is called spiritual sense. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy says, "Spiritual sense is a conscious, constant capacity to understand God" (p. 209). This is an ability we all possess to perceive God and His guidance.

When the day of the test arrived, I felt a bit uneasy, although I had studied diligently. I finished it and looked at the clock—of the allotted two hours, only 15 minutes had elapsed! I wondered if I had failed but didn't think changing my answers would help.

After turning in my test, I walked out of the classroom. My stomach was upset and my steps were shaky, but words from "Mother's Evening Prayer," a poem written by Mary Baker Eddy, came to me:

O gentle presence, peace and joy and power;

O Life divine, that owns each waiting hour,

Thou Love that guards the nestling's faltering flight!

Keep Thou my child on upward wing tonight.

(*Poems*, p. 4)

These words comforted me, and shut the door on my fears about failing.

The following week, when the professor reported the test results, he stated that out of the four sections of the class, only once had a student scored 100 percent on a test, and that student was me! I had gotten every answer right on my test and was so grateful. This experience showed me that God was always with me—throughout college and beyond.

## Blessings—poured out and poured upon

*By Catherine de Jocas with contributions from Philippe de Jocas*

**Four years of** university, then postgraduate courses, followed by career, employer, and location changes—much of this in the midst of a pandemic—had culminated in our son's precarious employment as a gig worker (an independent contractor who performs short-term or freelance jobs). My husband and I stood on the sidelines thinking, "Why is this happening?"

As I prayed about the situation, it helped me to think about how the Israelites must have felt during their Exodus. They forged ahead, armed with the promise of a land flowing with blessing and prosperity, yet they were met with scarcity and poverty, and often complained to Moses about their lack.

Then I was awakened to this promise from the Bible: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

I saw that our son was both the "poured out" and the "poured upon"—a wonderful blessing to the world and the receiver of Love's blessing. As I yearned to understand what a blessing of this magnitude might look like, my prayers displaced the desire for a specific outcome.

Within three days, our son received 13 invitations for interviews, and he subsequently received five formal offers for permanent employment in his field. God had, indeed, poured out a blessing beyond what our son could possibly accept humanly. Spiritually, this outcome represented the blessing of infinite opportunity for our son to work and shine in God's vineyard.

So why the long struggle? The Bible says: "So God chose a different, longer path that led the community of His

people through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites marched out of the land of Egypt like an army ready for battle” (Exodus 13:18, *The Voice*).

When it feels like a long march through the desert as we strive to reach ever higher spiritual ground, our loving Father-Mother God is cultivating unselfishness, persistence, and patience in His child, and abundant blessings are assured.

**A note from Catherine’s son:** I have been employed for six months, and I have not forgotten the sequence of events that led to this new career. I am thankful for my mom and her deep understanding of Christian Science, which helped to turn what seemed to be a dead end into the beginning of a new chapter in my life. My current job requires patience, a cool head, and a prayerful approach at all times. I am grateful that, since finding my job, I am continuing to rely on Christian Science throughout my day.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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# Thanksgiving Bible Lesson for 2025

“**Oh that men** would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (Psalms 107:15).

This psalm, together with many others in this year’s Thanksgiving Bible Lesson, shows us that gratitude is inseparable from praising God. It’s a joyful acknowledgment of the blessing and care that He provides. In this spirit, gratitude is truly a declaration of the tangible existence of good in our lives—with God as its source.

As in previous years, the Thanksgiving Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* is available for free online to read, study, and share with others. You can

find it in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish at [biblelesson.com/thanksgiving](http://biblelesson.com/thanksgiving).

Our study of the Pastor, together with the expressions of gratitude shared in Thanksgiving church services, supports our demonstration of the two greatest commandments: loving God with all our heart, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. We would love to hear how this Lesson inspires you to demonstrate your gratitude, so please write to us anytime at [quarterly@csps.com](mailto:quarterly@csps.com).

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## Keeping our periodicals timely and relevant

*By The Christian Science Publishing Society Board of Trustees*

**In many ways**, our Church’s periodicals represent a covenant between Christian Scientists of today and the discovery found in the textbook of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Through the pages of these magazines, we are recording our collective demonstration of the power of God’s Word as found in the Bible and our textbook.

In her *Manual of The Mother Church*, Mrs. Eddy’s divinely inspired By-Laws give clear direction about the Church periodicals, including this: “It shall be the privilege and duty of every member, who can afford it, to subscribe for the periodicals which are the organs of this Church; and it shall be the duty of the Directors to see that these periodicals are ably edited and kept abreast of the times” (p. 44).

These “organs of this Church” enable and foster a rich sense of community with readers living across the globe. They connect us in our shared demonstration of Christ’s precious Science. They address the needs of today with relevant, healing content.



In the next few months you'll notice changes to these periodicals designed to strengthen and broaden these qualities of relevance and connection between readers, writers, church members, and subscribers. Taken together, these changes represent a significant step forward in our collective efforts as a Church community. They include:

**Subscribing:** An effort has been underway for many years to improve the experience of subscribing to the periodicals, including the ability to use one username and password for all Christian Science Publishing Society subscriptions. That functionality is expected soon.

**Reading:** Content will be prepared more closely to the date of an issue, allowing editors to choose content that is most relevant to the practice of Christian Science in addressing current world thought. Newly designed sections of the *Christian Science Sentinel* and *Journal* websites will allow readers to explore this prayerfully chosen content in fresh ways.

**Print delivery timing:** In the past, print magazines typically arrived much earlier than the issue date, but much later than when they were prepared. We want readers to have access to healing content as soon as the issue is ready. Beginning in late 2025, there will be a period of transition when there may be some disruption in delivery timing, but the new norm will be that print issues arrive much closer to the date printed on the cover.

**Contributing:** "Writer's Corner," a guide on JSH-Online.com, provides educational resources to support and encourage Christian Scientists in contemplating metaphysically what it means to write for the periodicals. Repeatedly we hear from authors that even the process of writing and submitting an article or testimony draft supported their spiritual growth, and we've all been blessed by the generous contributions of others. If you haven't seen the new section, please visit [jsh.christianscience.com/submit](http://jsh.christianscience.com/submit).

**Church demonstrations and information:** These periodicals should be the first place members and subscribers can visit to find out what's going on with The Mother Church and its worldwide branches

and societies. In these pages, we'll amplify churches' victories and demonstrations to reach readers and listeners all over the globe within days or weeks of the event. What's more, if a branch church has wrestled with an issue and found resolution, their sharing of that demonstration can in real time inspire a church facing the same situation.

**Bible content and Bible study:** To further readers' Bible study through our periodicals, we're introducing a new monthly series in the *Journal* titled "The Bible: Our Sufficient Guide." This series will focus on a specific Bible passage, concept, or theme and bring out a spiritual perspective on the Scriptures based on Mrs. Eddy's teachings that strengthens Christian Science practice.

The intent of these changes is to rejuvenate, deepen, and broaden our individual practice of Christian Science and to foster a deeper sense of connection with The Mother Church. We are sincerely grateful to you for subscribing, reading, and contributing to these periodicals. Thank you.

With warm appreciation,

*The Christian Science Publishing Society Board of Trustees*

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## EDITORIAL

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# Gratefully acknowledging our infinite blessings

*By Lisa Rennie Sytsma*

**The book of Luke** in the Bible reports that ten individuals with leprosy asked for help from Jesus, who had been demonstrating the healing power that accompanies an understanding of God. He cured all ten of them (see Luke 17:11-19). But only one of the ten returned to thank him. That is, all ten were blessed, but only one acknowledged the blessing.



What did the one who returned gain that the others lost? In other words, what difference does it make if we express gratitude for the good we receive? The Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, answers that question with this simple passage: “Are we really grateful for the good already received? Then we shall avail ourselves of the blessings we have, and thus be fitted to receive more” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 3).

Nine of the lepers took the blessing they’d received and walked away, uninterested in what had healed them. By returning, the one who gave thanks showed that his gaze had been turned heavenward, toward Principle, God, the very source of all healing. The other nine lepers were like miners panning for gold in a stream. They were healed—they found some flakes and nuggets that had been carried downstream from their source. But the grateful one wasn’t satisfied sifting through the mud to see what scraps he could find. He turned to the source itself, the vein from which the gold flakes, the healing, had come.

A material vein of gold will eventually run out. But the blessings God bestows are infinite. If our gaze and our trust are directed earthward, toward matter and materialism—whatever would claim to be either the opposite of good or the absence of it—we are denying God as the only creator and source of all true being. Looking to matter for substance and power will inevitably limit the good, even on the human plane of existence, that we are able to perceive. It’s not that good isn’t there—it always is. It’s that we’re blinding ourselves to it.

When we acknowledge something, we accept that it exists or is true. Before we can see God’s blessings made fully manifest in our lives, we must acknowledge that both God, divine Love, and those blessings are real, that they exist. To the extent that we believe in the reality of matter, we disbelieve in the good God bestows. But when we begin to understand that man, God’s expression, is as wholly spiritual as God, his creator, our faith in matter begins, however slowly, to dissolve.

Of course, at this point none of us has wholly given up our belief in the reality of matter! But when we turn

Godward in humble receptivity, we allow Christ, the true idea of God, to operate in our consciousness to begin destroying our faith in matter and opening our eyes to God’s ever-present good embracing us in perfect health and safety. One definition of *perfect* is “lacking nothing essential to the whole” (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*). Mrs. Eddy writes, “... an acknowledgment of the perfection of the infinite Unseen confers a power nothing else can” (*Unity of Good*, p. 7).

This is why gratitude for the good God, divine Love, provides—an acknowledgment of what Love is and what it does for us—is so powerful. Gratitude grounds us in God’s goodness, strengthening our understanding of its presence and power at every moment. It lessens our fear when we are confronted by challenges, because we know God, Spirit, is able to meet whatever need we may be facing. And it’s empowering to realize that this is true for us because it’s what’s true for everyone.

I once found myself suffering from what appeared to be a bad case of seasonal allergies—something I had never experienced before. As I prayed for freedom from the problem, I suddenly realized that even as I was working to see for myself that allergies are no part of God’s kingdom, I was subconsciously accepting the claim that this was an issue other people had. I needed to acknowledge God was indeed perfect and that all of His creation expressed that perfection. I was suddenly filled with a sense of wonder and awe at the magnitude of God’s work, immediately followed by a deep feeling of gratitude. The allergy symptoms began to disappear. Within a few days—though the same plants were still producing pollen—the symptoms were gone, never to return.

The textbook of Christian Science opens by telling us that, when we lean on God, our days are “big with blessings” (*Science and Health*, p. vii). To lean on Him is to acknowledge Him, and to acknowledge Him is to be grateful. If gratitude is the price of blessings, it seems worth it!

**Lisa Rennie Sytsma**

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## THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL

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PUBLISHED BY THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY

**EDITOR**

ETHEL A. BAKER

**ASSOCIATE EDITORS**

TONY LOBL, LARISSA SNOREK, LISA RENNIE SYTSMA

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

PETER WHITMORE

**PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT**

GRAHAM THATCHER, KARINA BUMATAY

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

PETER WHITMORE

**CONTENT & YOUTH**

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**PRINT & WEB PRODUCTION**

SAL GILIBERTO, GILLIAN A. LITCHFIELD, MATTHEW MCLEOD-WARRICK

**DESIGN**

NADINE MARCZI

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## CONTACT US

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**THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL (ISSN 0009-5613).** PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY, 210 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, P02-25, BOSTON, MA 02115 US, AN ACTIVITY OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, IN BOSTON, MA [PRINTED IN US]. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. THE DESIGN OF THE CROSS AND CROWN SEAL IS A TRADEMARK OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND IS USED BY PERMISSION. THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL IS A TRADEMARK OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY. BOTH ARE REGISTERED IN THE US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES. CANADIAN GST REGISTRATION NUMBER - 126916436. CPM NUMBER - 40030806. © 2024 THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PUBLISHING SOCIETY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL, CUSTOMER SERVICE, PO BOX 6082, HARLAN, IA 51593-1582 US, OR MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT ONLINE AT [WWW.CSSUBSCRIBERS.COM](http://WWW.CSSUBSCRIBERS.COM).