

“I Will Listen For Thy Voice...”

2011 Morning Light Annual Meeting Address
given by Janet Horton, Christian Science U.S. Army Chaplain

- from Hymn No. 306 in the *Christian Science Hymnal*
“Feed My Sheep” by Mary Baker Eddy -

LINE 1:

*Shepherd show me how to go,
O'er the hillside steep,*

LINE 1 READINGS:

1A) Ps. 23: 1

1B) S&H 578:5 only

1C) MW 8:29 Blessed, 7 to ;

1D) MW 322:10-15

1E) Ret. 80:22-24

2) John 10:14, 15 (I lay down...), 16

LINE 3:

*I will listen for Thy voice,
Lest my footsteps stray*

LINE 3 READINGS:

3A) John 10:27, 28

3B) MW xi:11

3C) My 152:20-30

3D) MW 214:30-3

4) Deut. 28:2, 3

5) Rev. 3:20-22

Introduction: In my remarks when I refer to Mrs. Eddy's works, I will note the page number alone if I'm quoting S&H. From her other works, I will note both the title and page number.

Mrs. Eddy always cautioned those tempted to look to her or anyone else “personally” for the Christ, Truth. By her direction we are all students of the Bible and her writings. They are always with us and accessible. Today we will focus on the theme: “I will listen for thy voice.” Listening for the voice of the Truth that heals is the lost element Mrs. Eddy devoted her life to restoring to Christianity.

Let's begin at the beginning — Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God”

Mary Baker Eddy knew the importance of beginning correctly. “To begin rightly is to end rightly” (262:28). In our textbook, she starts the chapter titled Recapitulation with the definition of God. What a magnificent gift she has given the world in this revealed definition of God. The significance of that contribution to the spiritualization of thought is monumental. To begin rightly with understanding God correctly puts us on the “narrow way” to understanding the Principle of harmony.

“If Moses advanced a nation to the worship of God in Spirit” (220:4) — and that is just the first of the seven synonyms for God — what progress for mankind can follow as they understand individually and collectively the entirety of God’s nature and character. If you wish to come to any true conclusions, then, as a practicing Christian Scientist, there is no other way than to begin with this correct, provable definition of God.

Mrs. Eddy understood how many ways idolatry can sneak into people’s worship and therefore into their very concepts of reality and being. She created a revolution in thought with her revealed standpoint that united Science and Christianity. She started with a correct premise based on Spirit, God, the All-in-all, that “everything entitled to a classification of truth, or Science, must be comprised in a knowledge or understanding of God...” (127:4-7). Her use of capital letters to distinguish between God as Truth capitalized and human hypotheses truth with a small “t” is a precision of thought we take almost for granted. It is a specificity of thought that can’t even be read. It must be spelled out. I found even the sharpest analysts at The RAND Corporation were astounded at this new idea in specificity and meaning as late as 1995.

In all my studies of world religions at the graduate level, I have seen no greater god than God as understood in Christian Science. We may well marvel at the unspeakable gift (II Cor. 9:15) we’ve been given. To get this definition of God right is everything!

Mrs. Eddy got this right because she relied on the Bible. It was her only authority. She cites no other guide in the “straight and narrow way” of Truth (126:29-31). Today the world needs the correct definition of God as much if not more than when she recorded it. It is sobering to realize how many things it has protected us from individually and collectively as a movement.

When you begin with a wrong definition of God it inevitably affects the resulting definition of man. Mrs. Eddy established that “the foundation of all mortal discord is a false sense of man’s origin” (262:27-28).

To get it right one needs to understand the complete character of God. Each synonym has its specific and precise purpose in the definition. Christian Science reveals the precise significance of understanding God correctly by its reestablishment of the lost

element of healing. It was clear to Mrs. Eddy that “If God were understood and not merely believed, this understanding would establish health” (203:7-8). We will endeavor today to listen for Thy voice on these matters.

God, the great I AM

Let’s ask ourselves some pertinent questions. How large is your concept of God? The power of understanding and affirming his greatness, majesty, vastness his Allness daily and hourly is important.

Mrs. Eddy does remind us that “to understand God is the work of eternity” (3:14). Have no fear, my address today will not be anywhere’s near that long. For I also would not attempt to “treat in full detail so infinite a theme” (x:14).

“Christian Science takes naught from the perfection of God, but ascribes to Him the entire glory” (262:5-7). To ascribe to God anything less than perfection, goodness or any of his rightful attributes would be to dishonor God. Our priority in the endeavor to understand the fullness of God’s character is to listen only to *His* voice. This is a powerful step in the way to spiritual growth.

When the initial suggestions of a very aggressive cough presented themselves to my thought while I was driving home from Florida, I naturally turned to God. The atmosphere at work and in Florida had been one of great fear of a long, drawn-out, bone-rattling stint of this so-called malady. That night I awoke coughing as painfully as I have ever experienced. I sat up and declared what I knew to be true about God. “I insist[ed] vehemently ... There is no disease” (S&H 421:15,18). I firmly declared that I did *not* believe that a loving God could ever be responsible for inflicting such a thing on His beloved child.

The cough instantaneously disappeared, and that was it. An immediate healing effect followed the sincere declaration and accurate understanding of God as a loving Father-Mother. This declaration was undergirded by a supreme certainty. Mrs. Eddy speaks of scientific certainty (496:17, Ret. 24:10, Pul. 55:19), mathematical certainty (108:13, MW 210:5), solemn certainty (Ret. 31:4) and absolute certainty (’01 2:13). This is one indicator of understanding as opposed to mere belief. When you know the definition of God is right, this lays the unwavering foundation for correct conclusions concerning God’s nature and power. The certainty of inspiration (Pul. 83:10) permeates the textbook, the Bible and Mrs. Eddy’s other writings. When we listen for Thy voice there is no doubt or uncertainty when it speaks it heals you.

You can never study the definition of God too much. Every day can reveal new aspects of his infinite character. So it’s essential to begin with this Christianly scientific definition of God. How important it is to begin in the absolute and remain there, in thought, reasoning and treatment. We can listen to the voice of our Pastor and Mrs.

Eddy's writings, which have preserved — undivorced from Truth, uncontaminated and unfettered by human hypotheses and divinely authorized — all we need to know about God.

The encouragement to begin within your own heart comes from our Leader: "The purpose and motive to live aright can be gained now. This point won, you have started as you should" (326:16-17).

Let's look at this idea of coming to a position of attention, spiritually...or what it means to listen for Thy voice. (Hymn 304 vs.1)

I had an early insight when my family moved from a very small town in Michigan to Oklahoma. My dad simply took my brother and me to our new middle school and dropped us off. At the first recess I played with another quiet young girl. I had never seen persons of differing races. By the second recess the white children cornered me against a brick wall.

A girl who was probably well over five foot tall stepped out in front and demanded to know, "Are you a Yankee or are you a Rebel?" I turned with my whole heart to God and I stopped listening to the kids. I knew from Sunday School that I was a child of God, made in His image and likeness. I knew my identity was based on my relationship to Him. I knew with certainty and precision who I was and whose I was. It was the voice of our Pastor that had informed me correctly who I was.

I remember saying with more authority than I'd ever spoken with before, "I'm a Christian Scientist." They hadn't anticipated a spiritual answer. She turned to the other children and there was a very puzzled moment. When the girl turned back to me, she simply said, "Well, OK, as long as you're not a Yankee." The children had no criticism for an answer that was based on my Christian identity. The situation melted naturally into one of acceptance.

This phrase, "I will listen for Thy voice," brings to thought many ideas and differing meanings. Sometimes a single phrase can be very dense with meaning, such as "The Scriptures inform us..." (475:7). How could we be better informed than to hear the Word of God? Isaiah 58:14 declares it this way, "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." And we reply, "I will listen for thy voice." And as Christian Scientists, we are twice blessed, because we also have *Science and Health* and of course Mrs. Eddy's other writings.

[HOLD UP S&H THEN THE BIBLE]

This book [*Science and Health*] cannot help leading us to this book [the Bible]. There, the Apostle Paul puts it this way in I Corinthians 15:3: "According to the Scriptures."

We are powerfully blessed by the Comforter. "Christian Science separates error from truth, and breathes through the sacred pages the spiritual sense of life, substance and intelligence" (548:2). Mrs. Eddy states emphatically, in *Miscellaneous Writings*: " 'And these signs shall follow them that believe;...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' This declaration of our Master settles the question; else we are entertaining startling inquires, Are the Scriptures inspired? Are they true? Did Jesus mean what he said? ... we reply in the affirmative that the Scripture is true; ... His words are unmistakable, for they form propositions of self-evident, demonstrable truth." (MW 192:28-7).

In our study of the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's writings, we "listen for Thy voice" on any issue.

In college I had a pivotal recognition. It was a clear example of "listening for Thy voice" *versus* anything the material senses could tell us. As we look at what Mrs. Eddy says in *Prose Works*, she makes an important clarification. In the *Unity of Good* article, "Seedtime and Harvest" (8: 9-11), she says, "It is dangerous to rest upon the evidence of the senses for this evidence is not absolute, and therefore not real in our sense of the word." I was grasping the difference between the spiritual sense of man's identity and the fact that material sense can't be trusted to reveal anything real about our true identity. Events that could have been considered by mortal sense to be dangerous were actually God's opportunity to direct his children. It is in those rare events when it is clear to us that it is at God's direction, we can follow His commands, and it is our obedience that keeps us safe and rewards everyone involved.

The heart and mind wish to contemplate something higher, holier than the answers matter or material sense can provide. Mrs. Eddy proclaimed, "Christian Science meets a yearning of the human race for spirituality" (111:24). No human hypotheses nor mortal opinion can truly conquer fear or provide a deep inner peace and wholeness. In her sermon, *Christian Healing*, Mrs. Eddy writes. "[I]t is of the utmost importance that we ... gain our evidences of Life from the correct source" (16:25-27).

The Gospel of Luke noted, "And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, (Luke 5:21). Material reasoning can never reveal anything. When you compare Jesus' conduct to that of the Pharisees and scribes, it is distinctly different. We see that for him, the divine Mind always reveals what is the unalterable Truth. And the Christ Truth is always linked to a stunning and profound sense of compassion.

As the senator for my house in college, I was asked to contact a student bluegrass band for a dance. A friend told me she'd point out the man to ask at the Student Union. He and his friend were in Native American attire and were pretending to attack each other. My friend explained that the man on the right was the leader of the band.

As we approached them, his friend unintentionally cut the man's finger. I asked his permission to help stop the bleeding. He said, "Sure." I repeated the Bible verse,

Ezekiel 16:6: “And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood Live; yea I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood Live.” The bleeding stopped immediately. He kept looking at his hand, but agreed to provide the music for our function.

On every break at the dance, he kept asking what I had done to him. I shared with him some ideas about the Bible verse. We spent some time discussing Mrs. Eddy and *Science and Health*.

Two weeks later, late in the evening, he demanded I go with him. I listened and heard an urging from God saying I should go. As I watched, he retrieved a kitchen table full of drugs from many ingenious hiding places within his apartment off campus. He tore open and flushed thousands and thousands of dollars of drugs down the toilet, declaring that he couldn't sell them any more after I had stopped the bleeding on his hand.

He again demanded to know what I had done to him. A verse from my childhood Bible study came to me — Isaiah 50:4: “The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary....” I listened because I knew God would know the one thing I needed to say to the man. It came very clearly that I should ask him if he could promise to answer one question honestly. He agreed and I asked him if he wanted to be free of this activity. He paused, then quietly said, “Yes! But there's no way you could have known that.” I told him that Mrs. Eddy, in her chapter on Prayer, defined it as deep and sincere desire. I told him God knows what is on a man's heart. He obviously had wanted to be free of this immoral activity. He admitted he felt he was being told he had wasted his life when he heard the Ezekiel passage that day in the Student Union. God had put in motion the events and meaning from Ezekiel's words appropriate for him. Because this man had listened, it would change his life.

When I returned to my dorm that night, all the women asked me if I was the only person on earth who didn't know he was the biggest drug dealer on campus. I told them with spiritual authority that I had never seen him as a drug dealer. Only someone who knew he wasn't really a drug dealer could help him. Once the friend had pointed him out to me, I realized he was a guy I always saw with his dog. No matter where he was on campus, you saw Missy. I had seen the tenderness with which he treated her. I saw the distinguishable gleam of his spiritual individuality. Even if he had completely lost sight of the fact he was a child of God, I couldn't have helped him if I had lost sight, too.

It is good to examine our thought to determine if we're as astute at discerning the good in a man's character as we are at criticizing what seems to annoy us.

He moved out of the apartment. We found him other employment. Two years later, he called me to say he was living out West and had joined a branch church. His fellow brick masons had taunted him because he no longer cussed, smoked or drank. That same day

Missy chased a semi at the construction site and was crushed by one of the wheels. The men again taunted him. “If you’re so holy, then pray for your dog.” He picked her up and turned to God with all his heart and all his soul. He gave her back to her Creator in his heart and prayed. Within in a few moments, she jumped up, perfectly healed. He wanted me to know. Later I thought how he often said that Missy had been an instrumental part of metaphorically “saving his life.” And now, appropriately, it was his finding Christian Science that had saved hers.

It is good to examine our thought to determine if we are as astute at discerning the good in human character as we are at criticizing what seems to be difficult for us.

The Truth is spiritually discerned.

The Scriptures take us yet another step in “listening for Thy voice.” Genesis 41:16 points out that God will give you “an answer of peace.” You know the answer has come from divine Mind when you feel that peace and a consciousness of omnipresent Love. “The government of divine Love derives its omnipotence from the love it creates in the heart of man; ... and satisfies the immortal cravings ...” (*Miscellany* 189:15-16,20). “In no one thing seemed [Jesus] less human and more divine than in his unfaltering faith in the immortality of Truth” (*Miscellaneous Writings* 163:16-17).

Christian Science is the promised Comforter. “It is a divine utterance” (S&H 127:28-29) which is in accord with I Corinthians 2:4: “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” Your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. In *Christian Healing*, Mrs. Eddy states, “The genius of Christianity is works more than words; a calm and steadfast communion with God;” (2:1-3).

God is the All-knowing Mind. Our criterion is that it has a demonstrable Principle — “to know even as also as I am known” by Mind (I Corinthians 13:12). And conversely, because error is a lie, we are wise to defend ourselves against being deceived. It is very important to be firm and clear about what you believe — and what you don’t believe.

In John 11:26, Jesus challenges the people, “Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

We can be alert to the subtlety that might make the statements of Science we are familiar with take on the sense of dogma, merely appearing to be like statements in creeds which one mouths in the appropriate situation. The spiritual facts that we sincerely understand are “deep conscientious protests of Truth” (12:13-14). We must be as pure and adamant about what we believe. “Spiritual sense, contradicting material sense, involves intuition, hope, faith, understanding, fruition, reality” (298: 15-17).

In 1976 I found I was absolutely terrified by the thought of going into the gas chamber in my Army Basic Training for Chaplains. I had heard the war stories and knew I needed to get to a spiritual position of attention to meet these aggressive suggestions of fear immediately.

I prayed about what to pray about. I quietly listened, and it came very clearly to read the Bible account of the fiery furnace and Moses' experiencing a bush that burned but was not consumed, and to study the textbook's chapter on Animal Magnetism. I made a commitment to read the chapter once a day for two months. I thought it strange that such an important topic was only seven pages. So I figured there was more there than any surface assessment would reveal. I was so inspired by what I read that I found I would sometimes read it as much as three times a day. I often spent a whole day just contemplating one phrase of a sentence.

It was one of the most amazing periods in my life. From the Bible I was learning about how one can burn and not be consumed and how lovingly the Hebrew slaves faced the fire and how Moses was obedient to do what God told him to do. I learned how tempting it was to accept the repeated stories or distress in the tear gas or to accept the belief that any challenging thing had to be dreaded. I saw how these holy people had seen these threats as a joyous opportunity to experience God's presence with them in times of need.

I found people would literally come up to me at Burger King and say, "I don't know why I'm saying this to you, but can you tell me about Christian Science?" No matter what I was doing, someone would ask for help. As time went on, I forgot why I had started the study, and I continued to pray this way for six months. I got to the point where I knew every phrase of the study passages and many possible applications of their truths in life situations.

It wasn't until I was walking into the gas chamber that I remembered why I had begun the study. Our class was the largest class they'd ever had in the chaplain school. Officers who are combat arms soldiers conduct the tear gas mask confidence exercise.

The whole idea of the exercise is to learn confidence that the mask will protect you, if you keep it on. Therefore, they make you take it off in the gas! You're required to say your name, rank, social security number and the state you grew up in, all the while they force you to inhale the gas. My maiden name was Yarlott, so I was in the very last group.

As the last rotation of students, we had all the prior service men who had helped the cadre. For our group, the cadre majors threw a lot more gas crystals on the fire, and the gas cloud became very thick in the chamber. They warned us, "You thought you were going to get off easy because you helped us, but we're really going to get you."

I was immersed in the joyous thought that I'd done my prayer and I'd get to do this now! I had no sense of fear. I "listened for Thy voice," and this phrase from the Animal Magnetism chapter came to me, "Mind-science is wholly separate from any half-way impertinent knowledge" (S&H 103:12-13). That was perfectly and precisely what I needed to understand for that moment. I knew God governed the universe as divine Love and He never had ordained a law to harm or inflict His children. I felt God's presence with me. I knew I couldn't be separated from Him. It was as if He were my armor and protective shield from any harm. I felt like I was looking down on the experience, wholly separate from any human sense of being in the chamber. I felt a clarity of thought — that my "life [was] hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

We were told to remove our gas masks. Because the gas was so thick, even the prior service guys were choking and blinded by the amount of gas. They were literally in a pile attempting to get out the door. I stood still and calmly said all my information. Once the instructors had pulled the men apart, the cadre was able to get the door open. One of the majors walked back into the chamber. He had his mask on and stared at me just standing quietly — unmasked. I was reveling in gratitude that I had no reaction to the tear gas. Finally, the instructor said through his mask, "Humor me and go outside." He unmasked once we were out the door and said, "I have to ask you a question. Are you a Christian Scientist?" I said, "Yes!" Then he asked, "Were you in there praying?" In complete joy I replied, "Yes!" He remarked that he'd been there four years, through the peak Vietnam era, and had never had a single class when not one person got ill. I was even more grateful for that. The statement from the textbook that I had heeded was a pure statement of Truth that applied to the entire situation, not just to me. It benefited everyone else and kept them from the sickness that commonly plagued such exercises.

It wasn't until nearly twenty years later, when I spoke of that situation, that a woman reminded me that the actual title of the chapter is "Animal Magnetism Unmasked"!

Unbelief

From that point on I became more alert to dividing between what I should deny and cast out of thought and what was fact. A category of discernment that rightfully declares, with certainty, unbelief is an equally important step. Mrs. Eddy puts it very succinctly, "Spiritual sense is the discernment of spiritual good. Understanding is the line of demarcation between the real and unreal" (S&H 505:20-22). My Sunday School teacher in Iowa was also a CSB. She shared with me an unforgettable experience I found to be particularly instructive. It illustrates the need for unbelief at key times.

A young Christian Science girl in middle school was forced to take a physical science course and was punished because she wouldn't agree with the teachings. Her teacher was so put off by her denials of the health curriculum that she ordered her to write a number of times on the blackboard something to the effect that the heart and blood sustain life. She was appropriately obedient to her teacher, who then told her she could

leave. However, the teacher looked more closely and realized the child had held her ground absolutely and added in small letters underneath the statements, "But I don't believe it!"

A couple weeks later, when her teacher experienced a severe claim of heart attack and had been given a dire prognosis, she remembered the girl's stand for the truth and she summoned the girl's family to the hospital. She turned to a Christian Science practitioner and was completely healed.

This correct sense of what is spiritual fact and what is mortal error is what "Thy voice" helps us to identify. When we face an injustice, a challenge, a series of events, etc., we can see them as an opportunity for questioning false assumptions. We must learn to question what must be questioned. And to know what is unquestionably true by demonstration.

Spiritual understanding separates human conception, material sense, from Truth (paraphrase of S&H 505:7-8). We attain a scientific consciousness of our co-existence with God. We know that man's immortality and God's perfection are real. As we "listen for Thy voice," we are able to discern between the real and the unreal.

Nathan's Lie Detector Test

Jeff's son Nathan was training at the Vermont Police Academy to become a Burlington police officer. Part of the hiring process was to pass a lie detector test. Other officers told Nathan of feeling shame for inconclusive test results or failing the test. They told of feeling even greater fear and anxiety when having to repeat it. Some people had to take it three, four or even five times to pass. Some tests were non-conclusive and had to be repeated. You have to pass it to be hired. Some never passed it and therefore couldn't be hired. Everyone, including very seasoned officers, said it was the worst experience they had ever had. It was four hours of the most intense interrogation and grilling, conducted on the premise that everyone sometime in their life had something they would be tempted to lie about. Nathan had been so helped by cards I had made him with Bible Lesson passages. Those passages had enabled him to get through his first traffic stop without nerves or shaking in his voice, etc. He asked me how he might prepare for this excruciating ordeal.

I told him how I had prayed about having to take two very extensive mandatory physical exams for the military as I closed out my career. It had come to me that there had really been only one examination, and that was when "God saw everything he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31).

I had also realized, for that reason, I didn't have to dread any situation, because God was with me and would — just the reverse — be able to make it an opportunity to express love and to bless those I would encounter. I offered the thought to Nathan that

he could pause before he entered the room and ask God to precede him and make easy his way. I reinforced that we are never alone and that God is governing every situation. I told him he was a child of God and that was all that could be seen. That was his spiritual identity. I told him to take a Bible passage and think on it as he was being tested.

This is Nathan's description of what happened. "On a crystal clear winter night just before the test, I was walking the dog and looking at the sky. I was still feeling some concern about the test. At first the suggestion came to me: 'It all hinges on this session.' I was thinking, 'I've done all the things asked of me. I've passed the physical tests, the background checks and the orals.' It seemed they were putting all their trust in a machine. It seemed incongruent that it would all come down to this arbitrary test. Then I realized I was just thinking of myself. Then I became still enough to listen to God. I recalled the parable about the sparrow. I thought, 'If God's eye is on the sparrow, I'm more important than a sparrow. A machine isn't important to God.' I acknowledged that, as a child of God, I was divinely made. God was reminding me that he wouldn't take me halfway. Then I felt a certainty that God would take me the rest of the way. God assured me, 'It's a manmade instrument, just as imperfect as any machine.'

"I got up early to drive down for the test. They made me sit in a room with double-sided windows. It starts with a pre-brief. You set in a chair that's like a medieval chair. The intent is to plant a seed of doubt. The man said, 'You can't beat the machine. For twenty minutes, he explained that any hesitation or halfway response once I was hooked up would be identified. He repeated that it didn't matter how disciplined I was. He said he knew I was an athlete but the machine can pick up the slightest nuance and the subtlest variance. I was still for two hours. I sat so still there was no sensation in my legs. For two hours they read me the questions and recorded my responses. Then the second two hours they hooked me up to the lie detector machine and compared my responses. I pictured the 23rd Psalm as if it were a picture in my head, almost like a picture book. I kept thinking about what it meant. I recall especially being comforted by the words, 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ... He restoreth my soul' (Psalms 23:2,3) And 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee' (Isaiah 26:3). I also went back to the peace and calm I'd felt looking at that still starry sky. I even noticed there was only half a button on the jacket of my new \$400 suit. I was so calm I was more concerned about half a button than the test questions. The administrator told me to pay attention and don't look over there.

"During the session I noticed the interrogator kept repositioning the sensors, fiddling with the machine and even turned it off and on. At one point the tester even put the sensors on himself. I felt peaceful and just focused on the Psalm. When the test was over, the officer asked if I would speak to him outside the office. I asked if I'd passed the test and the officer said yes. I joined him in the hall. The man peered into my eyes and asked in an amazed manner, 'Who are you?' I thought, 'Gee! We just spent four hours discussing that.' I asked him, 'Didn't I cover that in the questioning?' The man looked seriously again deep into my eyes and said, 'No! WHO ARE YOU?' even more

emphatically. I had to ask him to explain. The officer told me he'd been a detective and state policeman for fifteen years. He had given lie detector tests for many years to literally hundreds of people, and he'd never ever had a test come out like that. He exclaimed, 'It was like I was hooked up to a dead man! You had no readings!' The man just shook his head and assured me he had tested and retested the machine to assure himself that it was working. It had worked fine on him. Then I explained that I had prayed, and then he just shook his head.

"I had initially been scheduled to take the test in March, but the date was moved up to February. That meant I was hired within three weeks of starting the initial application. For a typical applicant, the hiring process took three months. I called my stepmother afterward, very triumphant, and told her that I felt only a peace and calm during the entire test. I asked if she had any idea what had happened. She told me, as best she could explain, that I had grasped that I wasn't a mortal to be read and examined but one of God's sheep who followed and obeyed the Lord as his Shepherd. Having held in my consciousness that this was my identity, it couldn't be read on a lie detector machine. I had demonstrated the spiritual fact that there is no material man to be examined, for, as Mary Baker Eddy established in the scientific statement of being, 'man is not material, he is spiritual' (S&H 468:15).

"I carry the cards with the Bible lesson passages on them in my duty bag. I look at them from time to time when work slows down. It's been just over two years on the job. When I feel that I'm in a dangerous situation, facing the unknown, I still rely on the Book of Psalms. The 27th and 91st Psalms are my regular favorites. They assure me I am not alone and that God, as omniscient Mind, knows all. They allow me to face what might seem to be an unknown and think very clearly. I am very grateful for God's word every day or night I work."

During a tennis match on a very cold night, a woman fell down, seemingly seriously in trouble. As I sat beside her, I asked her if I could pray for her until the ambulance arrived. It seemed to me and another teammate that she was squeezing our hands in recognition of the request. I prayed with her, holding her in my arms and repeating the psalms I knew had been a part of her ethnic tradition. She was taken to a hospital and was in a coma. After a number of hours, she was put on life support, only because her husband was in Europe and they couldn't locate him. For several nights I prayed for a sense of peace about the incident and to erase any intruding pictures. I could not accept any arguments that life was in matter to be taken away by it. I prayed for all mankind to understand God as Life. I listened and finally felt a sense of peace. I knew instinctively that I could not allow an image of death or a death process to intrude on my understanding of Life as Spirit, God. I did not stop praying for several nights until I had established this clearly in my thought.

To the shock of the doctors, she began to improve and surprisingly recovered. She underwent some physical rehab, and one day several months later showed up on the

tennis court at a most unusual time. It was February in a northern climate and we had to chip ice and push snow off the court to have our team lesson. Only she and I had shown up in 22-degree temperatures. She was waiting when I arrived. She explained that she felt compelled to see me that morning. Although she always had remarked she wasn't religious, she wanted to tell me that the doctors had said there was no human explanation for why she was alive. She seemed to have had such a severe challenge that they felt there was little they could do. They had basically stabilized her. She had pulled through, according to them, not by anything they could identify they had done. She had wanted to tell me this because she and the other team members felt strongly it had to do with the prayer on the court that night. She said, "They have no explanation for why I am alive. No explanation for why I'm back here on a tennis court playing tennis." She asked me why I thought she was alive. I was then appropriately able to share with her some of the spiritual qualities I had affirmed she embodied. It was her extraordinary kindness she had shown her neighbor — *that* was who and what she was. These were immortal qualities and comprised who she really was. I shared that in Christian Science I had learned that God is Life. She just kept affirming that she knew the prayer had been effective.

Here are some quotes by Mrs. Eddy confirming prayer's results:

"The spiritual power of a scientific, right thought, without a direct effort, an audible or even mental argument, has oftimes healed inveterate diseases" (Rud 9:21).

"The moral and spiritual facts of health, whispered into thought, produce very direct and marked effects on the body" (370:18-20).

We do not trespass and give treatment not requested, nor do we mix Christian Science and medical methods. But we do have the right to clear our own thought of intruding pictures or erroneous arguments at the moment they attempt to appear before us. We should never simply just pass by in our neighbor's time of need, when they are unconscious or unable to consent specifically to treatment. At a minimum we can and should clear our own thought and establish the truth of being in our own consciousness. If we are subject to unsettling or aggressive public pictures, we can and must contribute, to the atmosphere of thought, a scientific and immediate correction of the intruding error. "[T]hrough divine help we can forbid this entrance" in our consciousness (see *Science and Health* 393:3). What divine Mind establishes and informs us of, is that such erroneous claims are unreal because they are untrue.

The time for healing is for all time.

The Bible didn't just record the healings done by Jesus and his disciples but also the healing work of Paul, Lydia, and other apostles.

“Organization and time have nothing to do with Life” (249:9) nor do they restrain or outline healing possibility or season. We should carefully listen in each situation and listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit to clearly direct us as to the appropriate actions in healing and sharing Christian Science.

In *Retrospection and Introspection* 9:23, Mrs. Eddy quoted from a poem by Mrs. Hemans,

*“Shall I not rejoice
That I have learned at last to know His voice
From man’s?”*

Elsewhere, Mrs. Eddy asks us to give “requisite proofs or [our] own piety” (S & H 25:24).

And she tells us, “To live so as to keep human consciousness in constant relation to the divine, the spiritual, and the eternal, is to individualize infinite power; and this is Christian Science” (*Miscellany* 160:5).

Thank you for taking these moments to investigate these few precepts and joining in our continuing efforts to understand even a small portion of what our Leader lived to establish in this “unspeakable gift” of Christian Science.