

Emergence into Light

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Dear friends, today we are going to be talking about some big ideas, some big words. Now, I'm not typically the kind of person who uses big words. Medium-sized words, definitely. But really big words? Words like *antidisestablishmentarianism* or *sesquipedalianism*, which actually means "the tendency to use long words"? Definitely not!

But I am interested in the two words that Mary Baker Eddy called the "largest words in the vocabulary of thought." They are "**Christian**" and "**Science**" (*No and Yes*, 10:6-7). Let's think about this for a moment. Linguists estimate that there are more than a million words in the English language alone. And here is Mrs. Eddy, describing these two words as the largest, not just in the *English* vocabulary, but in an even larger vocabulary—the vocabulary of *thought*.

Think of what this means! It means that every day, when you read the *Christian Science Bible Lesson*, or *The Christian Science Journal and Sentinel*, or *The Christian Science Monitor*, every time you attend a church service or a Wednesday testimony meeting, every time you read and pray and ponder the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, you are considering "the two largest words in the vocabulary of thought." As students of this Science, that is what you are entertaining...continually.

Now, after Mrs. Eddy identifies these words as the two largest "in the vocabulary of thought," she writes, "the former [that's *Christian*] is the highest style of man; the latter [and that is *Science*] reveals and interprets God and man" (*No and Yes*, 10:7-9). For our purposes today, I would like to switch the order in which we discuss these words. I would like to talk about the **Science of Christianity**. Because in *Science and Health*, Mary Baker Eddy says, "Science will declare God aright, and Christianity will demonstrate this declaration and its divine Principle, making mankind better physically, morally, and spiritually" (466:28). So, it's Science that "declare[s] God aright," "that reveals and interprets God and man," and then Christianity "*demonstrates* this declaration and its divine Principle." Christianity expresses the "highest style of man." It makes mankind "better physically, morally, and spiritually."

You see, we can't have Christianity without Science because Science is the underlying Principle and Christianity is the natural outcome of understanding that Principle. There is always an outcome, isn't there? There has

to be because God doesn't exist in a vacuum. God is inextricably linked to His expression, man. And this is what Science reveals and interprets: God and man. Infinite Mind cannot exist without its infinite manifestation. Infinite Life would not be Life

if it weren't expressed in being. And divine Love must be reflected in love. So it is with divine Science; it is made evident in health. In other words: physical, moral, and spiritual redemption. Interestingly, the marginal heading for the paragraph in which Mrs. Eddy discusses this Science and its effect reads, "Mankind redeemed." Mankind. That's all of us.

Now, how does this work? What does physical, moral, and spiritual redemption look like? What is the effect of this Science, understood? Fortunately, we have many powerful examples to draw from in the Bible—starting in Genesis and appearing all the way through Revelation. Today, I would like to look at the **hardest cases**, at the individuals who appeared to have the longest road to travel toward redemption and whose natures were so dramatically transformed that, for all intents and purposes, they became different people. The three men I would like to consider were criminals: they had all committed what is generally considered to be the worst crime of all—murder.

The first is Moses, whom we know killed an Egyptian guard who had beaten a Hebrew slave. He fled Egypt when the ruling Pharaoh learned about the crime and tried to have him executed. In other words, Moses was a fugitive from justice. The second man is David, who not only used his power as king to seduce the beautiful Bathsheba, but also to send her husband into the front line of battle to be killed. The third man I would like to discuss is Paul, who, as a Pharisee, made it his mission to persecute Christians "beyond measure" (Galatians 1:13). We know he admitted to being present at and consenting to the stoning to death of one Christian in particular—Stephen. Yet, despite these brutal crimes, where did these men end up? Why, these are the men who wrote the Ten Commandments, most of the Psalms, and a substantial portion of the New Testament! These three men became spiritual pillars of the Bible.

So, what happened? How did men who had committed such horrible crimes change so dramatically into the great spiritual leaders of their day? How were they transformed

into “the highest style of man”? How did they emerge from such deep darkness into such profound spiritual light? That, my friends, is the subject of our discussion today: “Emergence into Light.”

A Light from Heaven

In Mary Baker Eddy’s autobiography, *Retrospection and Introspection*, she writes under the heading “Emergence into Light” that she was “waiting and watching” when the light came, when “the character of the Christ was illuminated” (23:15-16). She saw the true nature of God and man, perceived that “being was beautiful, its substance, cause, and currents were God and His idea.” She had, she writes, “touched the hem of Christian Science.” The full radiance of the Christ transformed Mrs. Eddy, as a glimpse of it had transformed Moses, David, and Paul. For we know that when Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the Ten Commandments, “the skin of his face shone” (Exodus 34:30). Paul was literally blinded by “a light from heaven” on his journey to Damascus (Acts 9:3). And David, in psalm after psalm, speaks of spiritual illumination. “The Lord is my light and my salvation,” he writes (Psalms 27:1). “For in thy light shall we see light” (Psalms 36:9). “Unto the upright,” he says, “there ariseth light in the darkness” (Psalms 112:4). Clearly, this was a man who knew something about the light of God.

Light characterized the life of Christ Jesus from the start: from the star that heralded his birth, to his transfiguration, in which “his face did shine as the sun” (Matthew 17:2), to his eventual resurrection and ascension. “I am the light of the world,” Jesus said. “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). But this Christly light did not begin with Jesus. As Mrs. Eddy notes:

The advent of Jesus of Nazareth marked the first century of the Christian era, but the Christ is without beginning of years or end of days. Throughout all generations both before and after the Christian era, the Christ, as the spiritual idea,—the reflection of God,—has come with some measure of power and grace to all prepared to receive Christ, Truth. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and the prophets caught glorious glimpses of the Messiah, or Christ, which baptized these seers in the divine nature, the essence of Love (S&H 333:16-26).

Spiritual illumination in the Bible begins in Genesis, where God says, “Let there be light: and there was light” (1:3). What is this light, this Christ? It’s the Word of God. Truth. The revelation of Divine Science, which “brings to light Truth and its supremacy, universal harmony, the entireness of God, good, and the nothingness of evil” (S&H 293:28). To emerge into this light is to see what already is. The illumination of spiritual sense doesn’t create anything; it reveals the already present—the always present—reality of being. As John tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”

(John 1:1). The word of God Mrs. Eddy defines as “the great I AM; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal” (S&H 587:5-6). Eternal. Without beginning and without end. Ever-present and all.

The Word of God, or Truth, also reveals God’s eternal creation as inseparable from its Maker. The illumination of spiritual sense, then, is the revelation of “the eternal verity and unity of God and man, including the universe” (S&H 502:25-27). It is the dawning in human consciousness of this ever-present fact: the creation of Genesis 1—in which God *is* and man *reflects*—is the only reality, and that the so-called creation of Genesis 2—in which life *begins* and man *becomes*—is nothing but a myth. It is not revealed through material sense, but through the illumination of spiritual sense. “Felt ye the power of the Word?,” Mrs. Eddy asks (*Miscellaneous Writings*, 398:23 only). When the light of Truth dawns, it is felt. What we are talking about is not an intellectual exercise. It is a wholly spiritual experience. We feel the warmth, the light and the love of God’s presence. This is what Moses and David and Paul—and countless others—experienced as they emerged into light. And it was the recognition of this eternal verity—the forever unity of God and man—that transformed their natures and their lives.

This dawning of Truth in human consciousness is not an historical event. The power and grace of the Christ are as available to each of us as they were to these spiritual leaders in the Bible. But how do we experience them and feel the power of the Word, the grace of God? How do we emerge more fully into the light of Truth?

Honest Seekers for Truth

First, we must know what we are seeking. Mrs. Eddy dedicated her textbook to “honest seekers for Truth” (S&H xii:23). Not to seekers for cures of illness, but to seekers for Truth. The mission of Christian Science is not to take away the sickness of the world; it is “to take away the sins of the world” (S&H 150:12)—in other words, all unspiritual thinking. Physical healing is the effect. It’s not the goal. None of these individuals—Moses, David, Paul—was looking for healing. They were looking for Truth, for a better understanding of God and their relationship to Him. They were hungering for it. And that’s how the light came to their consciousness, how it was *able* to come. They were looking in the right direction.

We, too, must look in the right direction. We, too, must strive for the realization of “in the beginning, God.” We always begin with God. It can seem at times, metaphysically, that we’re working up to God, appealing to God, or applying God to a problem. And in other traditional theologies, that is what man needs to do. He needs to get God on board somehow. That’s because those theologies are starting with a man who is separated from his Maker and susceptible to disease, aging, frailty, terror—starting with the mortal man of Genesis 2. But those leaders from the

Bible all glimpsed the error of that belief with the realization of “in the beginning, God.” And that’s where we must begin.

An early worker in the Christian Science movement, Kate Buck, shared a compelling explanation of this from her own experience. She wrote:

My own healing in Christian Science is what is called slow, for I took treatment for nine years before I received the freedom I sought from very severe attacks of suffering... I believe the logic and theory of Christian Science was fairly clear to me within a month or two, but to trust to it and make it practical took years. Looking back, I can see some reasons for delayed healing. In the first place, I believed absolutely in the reality and power of that from which I had suffered. Then, too, I wanted to be healed above all else and this is something disastrous. Invariably I read the textbook with the thought of being healed in my mind. I would read a powerful statement and then think, “Maybe that will heal me,” or “maybe this will heal me” and I would earnestly warn others against such practices. I thought practitioners were wasting their time when they talked so much about God, because I was not seeking a religion. I wished to be free from suffering...

A few years ago a certain healing came to pass that showed plainly how the work should be done. A man came simply asking to know more of God and his individual relationship to God. The physical was not mentioned and that, as every practitioner knows, is extremely rare. Yet on his face was an angry ugly-looking growth, which had been there for years and about which he was very sensitive. Still he did not refer to it. I wish I could say I did not see that thing—I cannot honestly say that, but I can say that I lost sight of it. No treatment was asked and no treatment was given. We spent two hours talking about God and man, trying to realize that individual being is the one Being individualized. We both felt the inspiration and uplift of that time of earnest communication with God, as best we knew how.

In the morning his wife telephoned saying that quite early she had heard him cry out and when she ran to see what the trouble was, he simply said, “Look at me.” And there was nothing on his face. That minute I saw the way of true healing. The physical was forgotten, and I certainly did not do anything. We cannot admit the existence of something and then try to destroy it. But when we realize, even in a degree, the allness of God and man’s oneness with Him, there is nothing to heal.

I know in my own experience it was not until one day I laid the textbook down and said, “Well, whether I am ever healed or not, I am certainly finding God as I never knew Him before,” then better conditions began to be manifested. I turned to Christian Science with the thought of finding God rather than of seeking healing, and the suffering lessened and finally vanished (Extracts from an address entitled “Progress in Healing” by Mrs. Kate

W. Buck, given at A Century of Progress. Exposition, Chicago, Illinois, October 8, 1934).

So, our first step is to know what we are seeking: the realization—even in a degree—of the allness of God and of man’s oneness with Him, the reality of “in the beginning, God.”

As for our next step, I would like to go back to Mrs. Eddy’s statement that the Christ has appeared in all generations “to all prepared to receive Christ, Truth” (S&H 333:22-23) because she introduces another concept here, and that is “preparation.” We must be prepared to receive Truth.

How do we do that? How do we prepare ourselves to emerge into light?

“The Way” of Preparation

Fortunately, Mrs. Eddy has given us something of a blueprint. In an article entitled “The Way,” she explains that we need to develop three qualities in order to “reach the heaven-crowned summit of Christian Science” (MW 358:18). The first quality is self-knowledge. The second is humility. And the third is love.

Let’s consider these. First comes self-knowledge. “Learn what in thine own mentality is unlike ‘the anointed,’” Mrs. Eddy says, “and cast it out” (MW 355:21-23). A life corrected, she notes, will “illumine its own atmosphere with spiritual glow and understanding” (MW 356:3). A life corrected. Isn’t this what our friends from the Bible did before they were illumined with spiritual understanding? David certainly needed correction after he had Bathsheba’s husband killed. The Bible says that God sent Nathan to David to show him the error of his ways. And what did David do when confronted with this criticism? He acknowledged his fault. He said, “I have sinned against the Lord” (II Samuel 12:13). He recognized that something in his thought was less than Christ-like, and he endeavored to cast it out.

Mrs. Eddy tells us, “Self-ignorance, self-will, self-righteousness, lust, covetousness, envy, revenge, are foes to grace, peace, and progress; they must be met manfully and overcome, or they will uproot all happiness” (MW 118:21-24). We need to ask ourselves, “Do I think of these characteristics as foes, as enemies to my progress, my grace, peace, and happiness? Do I guard my thought against them as I would a malicious intruder and sincerely endeavor to root them out? Or do I entertain them, humor them, minimize their presence or their impact on my practice of Christian Science?” We must be truly willing to remain vigilant and root out anything that would impede our progress if we would be prepared for the dawn of Truth in our thought.

Cherish Humility

“The second stage of mental development,” Mrs. Eddy writes, “is humility” (MW 356:22 only). She goes on to say, “One can never go up, until one has gone down in his own esteem” (MW 356:24-25). Isn’t that interesting? Never!

So, in order to go up, to rise out of the darkness of error into the light of Truth, we must cultivate humility. Moses certainly did. Imagine what it must have been like for him to go from being raised as the son of the pharaoh—Egyptian royalty—to working as a lowly shepherd for Jethro, the priest of Midian. That must have been a tremendously humbling experience. Later, when God appeared to Moses and directed him to free the Israelites, Moses responded, “Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11). It was only after Moses developed such profound humility that he had his revelation, his perception of God as the self-evident and eternal “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14).

The world’s idea of meekness might be weakness instead of spiritual strength. But Mrs. Eddy pairs the word meekness with might.

Meekness also goes hand in hand with obedience. Anyone who is truly meek is willing to do whatever God asks of him, no matter what the request. Consider Paul, who literally reversed course. Imagine the humility it took for him to do that: to deliberately go from being the persecutor to the persecuted, to exchange the status and standing of a Pharisee given great authority by the high priests for the status of a criminal, essentially—hunted and stoned and imprisoned for the sake of Christianity. Yet when God spoke, Paul said, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). And then he did it. This is the essence of meekness, of obedience.

“Cherish humility,” Mrs. Eddy writes, “‘watch,’ and ‘pray without ceasing,’ or you will miss the way of Truth and Love” (MW 356:30-31). We don’t want to miss it!

“The Greatest of These is Charity” (I Corinthians 13:13)

We’ve discussed the first two qualities that need to be developed in order to follow Jesus in “the way.” Now comes the third: love, which Mrs. Eddy calls “the greatest of all stages and states of being; love that is irrespective of self, rank, or following” (MW 357:20-21). She’s not talking about mere human love, of course, but about the kind of love that Jesus so naturally expressed—a wholly unselfed, practical, healing love. As Jesus says: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35), and, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12). How, exactly, did Jesus love others? Humbly, purely, selflessly, spiritually. Without hesitation and without constraint. Consider this account from the book of Mark: It is early in his ministry, and news of Jesus’ healing works has gotten out, to the point where people all around Galilee have heard about him. He has just healed Simon’s mother-in-law of a fever, and now, as the sun is setting, the crowds come. Here’s what happened next:

At even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door.

And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils;

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils... And they came to him from every quarter (Mark 1:32-34 [to ;], 35-39, 45 and they).

So here is Jesus, who has just healed “all the city” that was clamoring for him outside his door—quite a night’s work! He gets up in the wee hours to have some time alone, to pray, to recharge, and what happens? People follow him! More clamoring. He’s told, “More crowds need you.” And what is the Master’s response? “For therefore came I forth.” In other words, that’s what I’m here for. That is my purpose—to show forth the Father; to love, to teach, to heal.

We see a similar kind of love expressed by Moses, David, and Paul. Moses devoted his life to leading the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt toward the promised land—out of darkness into light. In addition to being a righteous and effective king, David wrote some of the most powerful verses ever recorded. How much selfless love did he express in writing down his psalms so that others could be blessed by his spiritual insights? And Paul. Think of the love that must have motivated him to endure all that he did to bring Truth to hungering humanity. As he said, “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (I Corinthians 13:13). Mrs. Eddy concurs. “Divine Love is the substance of Christian Science,” she writes, “the basis of its demonstration, yea, its foundation and superstructure” (MW 357:31-358:1). The substance, the basis, the foundation, the superstructure. In other words, the bedrock. And it must be cultivated in our thought in order to demonstrate Science.

Unselfed love is really Christianity, isn’t it? It’s the demonstration of the divine Principle—*divine* Love. Have you ever considered how many times Mrs. Eddy uses the phrase, “the divine Principle, Love,” or “Love, the divine Principle”? More than 50 times in her published writings. So, when she says that “Science will declare God aright, and Christianity will demonstrate this declaration and its divine Principle,” isn’t she saying that Christianity demonstrates Love? It is the active, practical, healing expression of divine Love—the life and love that Jesus so thoroughly embodied.

The Letter and the Spirit

This brings us back to where we started today, to those two largest words in the vocabulary of thought, “Christian” and “Science.” As we’ve seen, the practice of the Science of Christianity is two-fold. We must understand the letter, the Science, and we must demonstrate the spirit, the

Christianity. We cannot have one without the other. Our Leader says, "We must receive the divine Principle in the understanding, and live it in daily life; and unless we so do, we can no more demonstrate Science, than we can teach and illustrate geometry by calling a curve a straight line or a straight line a sphere" (S&H 283:27). Science—the letter, the law, the understanding of Truth—leading to the demonstration of Love—the spirit, the gospel, Christianity. This is Christian Science, and this is our Church. The structure of Truth and Love.

Now, Christian Science nursing is an integral part of our Church. It is not separate and distinct from the Church of Christ, Scientist. It's part of the very fabric of our Church—right there in our *Church Manual*. And really, doesn't the work of a Christian Science nurse exemplify the liberating Truth and healing Love that define this Church? Consider this testimony from a friend of mine:

Early one morning a few months ago, I woke up with some internal discomfort. Within a short time, the pain had escalated to a point that was initially alarming to me. I readily called a Christian Science practitioner for prayerful treatment. Her response was quick and immediate and I knew strong, effective metaphysical work was going on. I live alone and I knew it was wisdom for someone to be with me. A dear friend—a fellow Christian Science nurse—answered my call and came within a short time to my home. Though the picture was extremely aggressive—the pain, at times, seeming beyond what I could endure—Christian Science nursing surrounded me with such deep compassion and calm—and with crystal clear clarity of my dominion and present perfection. I felt so supported in claiming and feeling my dominion despite what material sense testimony was trying vigorously to insist was real. My dear friend stood steadfast by my side for several hours caring for me, nursing me, with metaphysical alertness, wisdom, and tenderness.

At one point, I desperately yearned for stillness, both mentally and physically, to be able to hear God's word—though I never doubted for a moment His healing presence and the efficacy of Christian Science treatment. With the unwavering support of the practitioner and the sweet and reassuring activity of Christian Science nursing embracing me, I began to find the rest I felt so in need of. The healing came that afternoon. It was instantaneous and complete in every way. The presence of a Christian Science nurse and the ministry of Christian Science nursing I was so blessed to receive that day were clearly significant to this healing and to my ability to stand firm and fearless during this wonderful proof of God's care.

Isn't this a perfect example of the mission of our Church and of the power of the Word? This dear Christian Science nurse held fast to her understanding of Truth, "with crystal clear clarity of [the patient's] dominion and present perfection," while reflecting divine Love by demonstrating

deep compassion and tenderness, attending to her human needs. And what was the result? A full salvation. A patient made better in every way, not just physically. What a contrast to a medical diagnosis used to patch up matter, a process that leaves the patient, at best, in the same place it finds one—still believing that one is susceptible to illness, injury, suffering. With the practice of Christ-healing, we are not unchanged. Our natures are transformed and we are made better—physically, morally, and most importantly, spiritually. We have drawn closer to God.

While Mrs. Eddy does not devote a chapter to Christian Science nursing in her writings, she does devote a chapter in *Science and Health* to Christian Science practice. And what is the *Manual's* first requirement of a Christian Science nurse? "A demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice" (*Manual of the Mother Church*, 49:10-11).

Then, in our textbook, she says a nurse should be "receptive to Truth and Love" (S&H 395:20). Truth and Love—the law and the gospel. Mrs. Eddy says:

Christian Science demands both law and gospel in order to demonstrate healing, and I have taught them both in its demonstration, and with signs following. They are a unit in restoring the equipoise of mind and body, and balancing man's account with his Maker. The sequence proves that strict adherence to one is inadequate to compensate for the absence of the other, since both constitute the divine law of healing (MW 65:21).

This is the example that Jesus set for us. "The divinity of the Christ...made manifest in the humanity of Jesus" (S&H 25:31)—Truth made manifest in the demonstration of Love.

Remember Peter's declaration to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)? This is the truth that Jesus built his church on: the living God. That means everything to do with Church is living! Living Truth, living power, living Love. This is our Church, the structure of Truth and Love. We understand Truth and we live Love, and healing is the effect. This is what it means to be a Christian Scientist, a follower of Jesus. But in order to do this, we must do our work. There is no way other than "The Way."

And so, this must be our aim: to cultivate self-knowledge, humility, and love in order to be prepared to receive the light of Truth. To understand the true nature of being, of God and man, and then demonstrate that understanding in active, practical, living love. To really be a follower of Christ. To emerge into light. And to not rest until we do. As Mrs. Eddy puts it, paraphrasing David, "All men shall be satisfied when they 'awake in His likeness,' and they never should be until then" (MW 358:12-13).

"Awake in His Likeness"

Now let's talk for a moment about that word, "awake." When we emerge into light, we're not becoming something different, something new, although it can feel like that.

Truly, we're waking up to who we already are. That's what light does. It dispels darkness and enables us to see what has always been present. Light doesn't create anything, or even change anything. It simply illuminates reality. This means we don't have to force anything or push through anything. We only need to yield. Yield to our dominion, yield to spiritual growth, yield to a higher form of humanity. Because what appears to be transformation is really illumination. We call it healing or regeneration. But it is actually the illumination of our thought—where we perceive reality. We don't undergo a process of redemption. Redemption is simply an awakening to our original, true, forever selfhood. And that can happen in an instant.

I would like to share a beautiful illustration of this from a friend of mine. Here's what she said:

My husband had been struggling with emotional challenges and I was aware that he hadn't really been himself for quite some time. But I was not prepared for the discovery that he had been unfaithful to me with one of my closest friends. I learned about the relationship when I stumbled upon a series of text messages, and what I read was incredibly upsetting. The extent to which my husband and this friend had vilified me was shocking, and I simply couldn't believe that two people who knew me so well could actually think that I was so evil. For well over a year—after my husband ended the relationship and began to work with me to repair the marriage—I struggled to understand how my friend could have believed the crazy things he'd said about me while he was in the middle of a mental breakdown. I could not have felt more humiliated, and at times, it was all I could do not to pack my bags and walk out the door.

Then, recently, my husband was feeling quite ill and asked me to pray for him. As I was considering the Scientific Statement of Being, I realized that I had never really paid attention to the second "infinite" in the phrase, "All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation" (S&H 468:10-11). I had always thought, "Right. God is infinite Mind, and all that exists is this infinite Mind and its creation." But this time, I was struck by the fact that the creation, the manifestation of Mind, is also infinite. Infinitely good.

I had an image of a black night sky stretching out for infinity and thought, "There can't be any holes in that. Not even a pinprick of error, or evil. If there were, it wouldn't be infinite." And then I saw really clearly that I had accepted that my husband and this friend had done something horrible to me, and that I needed to "get over" that something horrible. But if the manifestation of God, good, is infinite, then there is no horrible. There are no villains. And that meant these two people couldn't have done something villainous. It simply could not have happened.

At that moment I realized that the very thing I thought they'd done to me—vilification—was the same thing I'd been doing to them. I had felt justified, but in reality, there

was no difference. I had been given a choice to buy into the same belief they had—that evil can be present in the midst of God's infinite manifestation of good. And that was just a lie, a mistake, which I could choose not to accept.

Instantly, I felt Love wash over me. It seemed silly to think that these two people could have ever been villains. I knew who they really were, and I loved them. I shared these insights with my husband, who had been crippled by the self-recrimination he felt over the affair. The physical complaint was healed immediately and so was our marriage.

For more than a year, I had wanted to get to a place of love and forgiveness with these two, but it had felt like Mt. Everest, like it would take years and years to claw my way to the top. But in the end, all it took was that brief glimpse of God's infinitely good creation and, in an instant, I was there.

Isn't that a wonderful example of everything we've been talking about? My friend knew what she was seeking—a change in her own heart, not a change in the human condition. And she had been earnestly endeavoring to root out whatever needed to be corrected in her thought, which took great humility, given the circumstances. And then, as she was expressing love for her husband, the light came, dispelling every trace of self-righteousness and transforming her thought. The result was complete redemption of the situation—physically, morally, and spiritually.

Revelation, Reason, and Demonstration

Now, it's important that we talk about what happens after we get this glimpse of spiritual reality. Because it can be tempting to think that the moment of revelation is the ultimate, the pinnacle. Actually, it's the foundation for what comes next. It's not the peak or the end. It's the continuity of the beginning. The fact is, there is work to be done after the light of the Christ dawns in human consciousness. Look at Moses. He spent 30 years working on character issues after he glimpsed "I AM THAT I AM" on Mt. Horeb. Paul's light-filled revelation was followed by a time of reflection. Even Jesus spent time in the wilderness after his baptism. What were they doing? Mrs. Eddy recounts her post-revelation experience like this:

For three years after my discovery, I sought the solution of this problem of Mind-healing, searched the Scriptures and read little else, kept aloof from society, and devoted time and energies to discovering a positive rule. . . I knew the Principle of all harmonious Mind-action to be God, and that cures were produced in primitive Christian healing by holy, uplifting faith; but I must know the Science of this healing, and I won my way to absolute conclusions through divine revelation, reason, and demonstration (S&H 109:11-22).

Revelation, reason, and demonstration. We glimpse the truth of being, the immutable fact of "in the beginning, God." Then we reason through this fact—

and its implications—and this makes it our own. And in that way, we're not just quoting truth, we're living it. It becomes our character, our nature, and then we demonstrate it.

It's also important to note what Mrs. Eddy turned to as she reasoned her way through her discovery: the Scriptures. "The Bible was my only textbook," she writes (*S&H* 110:13). She searched it, "reading little else," because the Bible is the basis, the source, of Christian Science. From those glorious glimpses seen by the prophets, to the full glory of the Christ as presented by Jesus—the Way-shower, the master Christian—to the acts of the apostles, the Bible presents the eternal verity of "in the beginning, God." It represents the unfoldment of God and man to human consciousness. Now, unlike Moses, David, and Paul, Mrs. Eddy had no need of serious redemption. She had always read the Bible, had always been a good Christian, had always had a hungering heart. And she had even healed without understanding the Principle behind it. But when that moment of light came, our Leader's mission was illuminated: to present the final revelation of Truth as promised by Jesus. This moment really marked the beginning of her lifework. And, she says, she followed the leadings of this revelation until "reason and revelation were reconciled, and afterwards the truth of Christian Science was demonstrated" (*S&H* 110:15-17).

While no one can take the place of Jesus or Mrs. Eddy, we each have our own individual mission in the "cycles of divine light" (*S&H* 135:31). Each one of us is vital, an integral part of the revolutionary struggle against error, and of the ultimate redemption of mankind. "Each individual must fill his own niche in time and eternity" (*Ret* 70:18), Mrs. Eddy says, and as we reason through our spiritual insights, that niche is revealed.

Our Niche in Time and Eternity

Let me share a sweet story about this from my own experience. My husband and I were newly married and just starting out in the arts in Manhattan. My husband had an odd job painting the apartment of a Christian Science teacher who had just moved to the city. We were watching our pennies, so I made a peanut butter sandwich for my husband's lunch and walked all the way across town to deliver it.

While my husband ate his sandwich, I started talking with this teacher. And when he asked what we did for a living, I told him that my husband was an actor and I had a number of little artistic endeavors going on. And then, he quoted Mrs. Eddy's statement: "This divine Principle of all expresses Science and art throughout His creation, and the immortality of man and the universe" (*S&H* 507:25-28). And then he looked at me and said, "You are that art."

I was still a relatively new student of Christian Science, and this statement floored me. I understood it immediately: Man is the art of creation. Before this, I'd thought that I was God's child, and I was creative, and art was something

I produced. But now I saw, "No. *Man* is the art." And I perceived the truth of this statement in two ways: "You are that art," meaning it was my identity, and the identity of everyone, and all creation. But also, "You *are* that art," meaning it was a present reality forever. And that's the truth of creation. Eternally.

The next day, my husband had an audition in our neighborhood for a summer theater job, and I went with him. After we had waited hours for his turn to audition, the director came out and said that their time was up on the room rental, and no one else would be able to audition. I was still pondering, "You are that art." And before I knew it, out of my mouth came the words: "You know, we live around the corner and we have a piano. Why don't we finish the auditions at our place?" Now, trust me, people don't do this. I mean you *really* don't do this. But everyone thought it was a great idea, and off we all went. I didn't make the offer for my husband's benefit. I just was so inspired with the idea of "you are that art" that I saw everyone there as an expression of the art of creation, an expression that was ongoing and never-ending.

As it turned out, my husband got that job. And I ended up meeting someone through that experience who got me started on my own career, a career that developed and grew continuously in the subsequent years, until I eventually left it to enter the full-time public practice of Christian Science. So, you see, what was true for Moses, David, and Paul is true for us as well. That same action of the Christ, illuminating spiritual sense, lights our pathway forward and reveals a larger purpose, a larger career because, as I saw so clearly, "We are that art."

And *you* are that art. You *are* that art. Creation is just vivid with life and color, creativity and music, freshness and vitality. That needs to be a part of our understanding of Life and of who we already are: creation unfolding itself as us. This creation is universal, and yet each one of us is individually unique. Each one of us has our own niche to fill in time and eternity. To think that it's an earthbound niche or career, defined by time, is a mistake that will limit our lifework. God is in charge of our lifework, and its progress is perpetual. This is the new birth, "going on hourly" (*S&H* 548:15-16). Continually. There is no beginning, no end, no inaction or stagnation. There is only the infinite idea, "forever developing itself," as Mrs. Eddy tells us, "broadening and rising higher and higher from a boundless basis" (*S&H* 258:13-15).

The Continuous Walk

There is nothing—no power, no person, place, or thing—that can impede or thwart this action of the Christ. There can be no force, no entity, no circumstance able to controvert the Word of God. God made all that was made, and all that He made was good. That doesn't mean we won't face challenges. Life did not suddenly turn into a bed of roses for the Biblical figures we've discussed. Or for

Mrs. Eddy. Or even for Jesus. But like them, we can resist the temptation to stop working when something needs correcting, and to continue straight through until it is healed. We can look at trials and challenges as proofs of God's grace, and be grateful for the opportunities they present for us to mature spiritually. The fact is, the same issues *they* struggled with, *we* struggle with: Moses with self-righteousness, David with pleasure in matter, Paul with theological ignorance. Haven't we all found ourselves tackling those? That's the thread that runs through the Bible all the way to us today. The story of *them* is the story of *us*. And they have given us powerful illustrations of how to do the work, of how to walk the walk, and of the results that are assured for us if we do: spiritual illumination, transformation, continuous growth, a lifework created and governed by God.


Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32 If). That word, continue, is essential. Think of Mrs. Eddy's prayer, "To the Big Children":

*Father-Mother good, lovingly
Thee I seek,—
Patient, meek,
In the way Thou hast,—
Be it slow or fast,
Up to Thee (MW 400:19).*

"Be it slow or fast." It doesn't matter. We won't stop being seekers for Truth until we understand Truth. It doesn't matter what the guy to the right of us or to the left of us is doing. It doesn't matter what our circumstances are. It just doesn't matter. All that matters is that we continue in His word. That's what makes us free!

"Ye are the Light of the World" (Matthew 5:14 to first .)

And so, my friends, this is our work, our continuing walk. Like Moses, David, and Paul, we must hunger after righteousness—after a better understanding of God and man. We must make ourselves fit to receive this understanding through self-examination and the cultivation of humility and love. And, as we perceive this Truth, this light of the Christ, we must demonstrate it through the active practice of living love. This is our duty as followers of Jesus, as members of his Church, and as practitioners of those two largest words in the vocabulary of thought: **Christian Science**. Like those who came before us, we must not rest until we "awake in His likeness" so we can share this Truth and this Love with the world, casting out error and healing the sick. This will happen only as it is first lived by us, as we are individually transformed. Then we are ready to share it with the world, and that is what transforms the world. As both Jesus and Mrs. Eddy have told us, we are the "light of the world." It is up to us to ensure that this light of divine Science isn't hidden, but that it "radiate(s) and glow(s) into noontide glory" (S&H 367:23).

Let us be diligent and obedient. Let us live the love of Love, alert and awake and undistracted by anything that would counteract or deter our thought or actions. Let us remember that the divine Principle, Love, not only works with us, but that this is His intention, His very purpose. And as we walk this walk, let us hold to this promise from Mrs. Eddy: "Hungering and thirsting after a better life, we shall have it, and become Christian Scientists; learn God aright, and know something of the ideal man, the real man, harmonious and eternal. This movement of thought must push on the ages..." (MW 235:18-22). 



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