

The Birth of a New Idea

By Janet Y. Horton, *Chaplain, (Colonel) Retired*

Excerpts from a talk given at Arden Wood, October 2, 2016, that featured rich personal experiences; hence, the conversational writing style.

As a U.S. Army chaplain from 1976-2004, Janet was the first woman assigned as a Division or Corps Chaplain and the first woman promoted to Colonel in the Army Chaplain Corps. She was at the Pentagon during the 9/11 attack, and subsequently advised the Dept. of Defense and other Inter-Agencies on Muslim issues and the Terrorist mindset. Currently, Janet serves as the Christian Science Endorser and Trainer for The Mother Church for all military chaplains and trainees at Boston University School of Theology.

Being a Christian Scientist, I like to go right to Mrs. Eddy's writings and start there. This is a quote from *Miscellany*, page 286: *"For many years I have prayed daily that there be no more war, no more barbarous slaughtering of our fellow-beings; prayed that all the peoples on earth and the islands of the sea have one God, one Mind; love God supremely, and love their neighbor as themselves. National disagreements can be, and should be, arbitrated wisely, fairly; and fully settled. It is unquestionable, however, that at this hour the armament of navies is necessary, for the purpose of preventing war and preserving peace among nations."*

When people think about what Mrs. Eddy thought about being in the military, they often read what she wrote about pacifism. She was very much someone who thought pacifism was the way to go, but she realized in that day and age that the armament of navies was probably necessary. So when you think about her, we have a church that's a lay-church of Christian Scientists, and now we're talking about having military chaplains. I refer to that as "the birth of a new idea," partially because I think any time you have a really new idea presented, some people have labor pains with it. (It seems to me to be a pretty good analogy to refer to!) It's interesting because Kim Schuette, a fellow Christian Scientist, wrote a book called, *Christian Science Military Ministry: 1917-2004*. He noted that in 1915, the editors of *The Christian Science Monitor* took a stance against pacifism, and instead supported the national policy with its call to arms. In 1917, the Christian Science Church was actually invited to be part of the military chaplaincy. As a result, The military created a new term for those few chaplains, calling them "chaplains-at-large." Before that, there were only a tiny number of churches that were allowed to have military chaplains.

Early on, before the Constitution or pre-Constitution, whenever the militia was activated, the local pastor would go, too. The pastors weren't considered to be what the military calls a "noncombatant" now: they would take a rifle with them and go with their soldiers to the front and fight. But there came a point when chaplains were considered noncombatants, and by the terms of the Geneva Convention, they could no longer bear arms. They have a very special designation in the military. And so in 1917, five religious groups were allowed to have one single chaplain to serve their soldiers. They were Christian Scientists, Mormons, Jews (all of the Hebrews in the military were permitted one rabbi), Catholics and the Salvation Army.

If you look at the history of that time, this was an amazing healing. At that time, nerve gas was being used in the conflict, so it was not uncommon to hear that a soldier had been in that

nerve gas. When the Christian Science chaplain found out that one of his Christian Scientists had been affected by the nerve gas, he began to make his way back to the hospital where the soldier had been evacuated. It was a fair distance to the hospital, so the chaplain began to give a Christian Science treatment as he worked his way to the young man. By the time the chaplain got to the hospital, the guy was already

healed and had left and gone back to his unit. That chaplain set a pretty high standard in that situation. That's why one of the ways we refer to our military chaplains is as "practitioners in uniform."

What I've been referring to is the fact that any time there's a birth of a new idea, it has very humble beginnings. As I said, for Christian Science, initially we were only allowed one chaplain. From 1936 to 1946, because of what was happening in the world historically, our government knew that there were going to be huge numbers of people activated into the military since there was a draft at that time and people were expected to go. So, Christian Science chaplains were allowed to serve, but serving was a very different concept at that time. Prior to that time period, a chaplain basically served people of his own denomination. But at that time, the powers-that-be made a radical change in their thinking, and they designated that there would be Catholic chaplains and everyone else was to be called a Protestant chaplain.

Part of the reason for this new designation was that the chaplains were embedded right in the units with the soldiers, so wherever those soldiers went, a chaplain could not say, "Okay, I need a Catholic priest in here," or "I need a person who's a Lutheran," or another specific denomination. The chaplain who was with the unit would do everything the unit did, and if it was marching somewhere, that chaplain marched there, too. At that time, the chaplains went through everything those soldiers went through. As a result, the soldiers began to think of them as their chaplain, and denomination began to matter less and less.

Basically, chaplains were encouraged never to violate their conscience—not to do something in the ministry that they wouldn't do in their own denomination's ministry—but to realize that they were there to meet the needs of any soldier. And it wasn't just the Army; it could be Sailors and Airmen and eventually Marines who needed the support of a chaplain. It became kind of a two-lane street: the chaplains are going

to be there to meet the needs of their own church, but they're also going to meet the needs of the individual.

One of the examples I give of this change in the way chaplains support soldiers took place on 9/11. When we were in the Pentagon and the plane hit the building, the firemen were bringing out the casualties and laying them on the grass. There were only three of us chaplains there, so there were only three denominations represented: a Baptist, a Christian Scientist (me) and another guy who was another type of Baptist. I prayed with a woman who was Catholic, so when we prayed the Lord's Prayer and held hands, I called it the "Our Father" simply because that's the manner in which she would refer to that prayer. When a chaplain talks to a soldier, he or she always asks that person, "What is your tradition?" Then the chaplain tries to pray in a manner that is meaningful to the soldier. All of us talked afterwards, and we were struck by two things that day: the first was that there wasn't a single person brought out as a casualty who said, "No, I don't want to pray." That was very striking to us. The second was that everybody we prayed with and for that day was a Christian, so there wasn't a huge jump that we had to make because there was no way to get an imam in there for Muslims or a Buddhist chaplain for Buddhists. We did not have that need that day.

Chaplains perform a specific ministry if they can. If it's for another Christian, they perform the thing the soldier needs done. If the soldier wants to pray or wants a service of some sort, then the chaplain is going to perform it. If the chaplain cannot perform that rite—say it's for a Muslim—then the chaplain makes sure he or she can provide for the soldier's needs by coordinating to get an imam to that location. On 9/11, of course, we didn't have the luxury to do that quickly. But for a military operation, they try to take a great variety of chaplains and put them into that operation so that the chaplains can coordinate to get the rabbi for Passover, for instance. In Bosnia, I flew down with the rabbi; he was going to do the Passover, and I was going to do the Easter Sermon. It's wonderful how the military really wants to be attentive to try and meet everyone's needs. Sometimes, if there isn't a Mormon chaplain there, then whoever is there has to find a civilian soldier who is Mormon who would be what's called a lay-denomination leader. Sometimes Christian Scientists do that. So, they would be what are called military ministers; but they are not officers, which a military chaplain is today.

In the old days, before 1912, the chaplain just showed up with his gun and was accepted. When someone goes into the military now to be a chaplain, it's quite a commitment. From 1936 through 1946, the military instituted an educational requirement to be a chaplain. Before that, if you were a lay-tradition, you didn't have to have a Seminary degree, but since then every single military chaplain, regardless of whether your church would require it or not, has to have a Masters of Divinity. Because Boston University School of Theology is very close to The Mother Church, our chaplains have always gone to Boston University. We bring them over to The Mother Church on Fridays (because they don't have classes on Fridays), and we go right to the metaphysics, right to the books, and prepare them

the way we would prepare them as Christian Scientists.

Women were introduced to the chaplaincy in the mid-seventies. I refer to that as the birth of a new idea, too, because birth is something kind of common to women, and again they had some labor pains with this change. When I share experiences that I've had, if it was a challenging experience, a lot of people ask, "Well, now, did that person resist you because you were a Christian Scientist or because you were a woman?" And I say, "Well, when that guy spit on me, he didn't say, 'Excuse me, I'm spitting on you because you're a woman or because you're a Christian Scientist.' It could be both." A person doesn't really say, "This is why I kind of pushed back on you" because to many folks, they don't understand what Christian Science is about. So, we're not only practitioners in uniform; a lot of people learn about Christian Science because of the Christian Scientists in the military.

When I started out in the chaplaincy, I worked with two very important metaphysical ideas. The first one is in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, pages 235-236, lines 27-5:

"Clergymen, occupying the watchtowers of the world, should uplift the standard of Truth. They should so raise their hearers spiritually, that their listeners will love to grapple with a new, right idea and broaden their concepts. Love of Christianity, rather than love of popularity, should stimulate clerical labor and progress. Truth should emanate from the pulpit, but never be strangled there. A special privilege is vested in the ministry. How shall it be used? Sacredly, in the interests of humanity, not of sect."

So Mrs. Eddy starts right out saying, "listeners will love to grapple with a new, right idea and broaden their concepts."

The other thing that prepared me in thought to go into the military chaplaincy is also in *Science and Health*, page 450, lines 15-22. It has to do with how challenging this new idea of Christian Scientists being chaplains is, and then add in the woman issue:

"Some people yield slowly to the touch of Truth. Few yield without a struggle, and many are reluctant to acknowledge that they have yielded; but unless the admission is made, evil will boast itself above good. The Christian Scientist has enlisted to lessen evil, disease and death; and he will overcome them by understanding their nothingness and the allness of God, or good."

These were the metaphysical ideas, the types of things that we studied when we were at The Mother Church while we were in Seminary. We really talked about the beauty of the ideas Mrs. Eddy had for elevating the concept of the ministry to the people.

I'm from Iowa, so people who know me frequently refer to me as "Pollyanna from Iowa." I was pretty naive when I got interested in the military; growing up, I would never have even thought I could do anything like that. At that time in my life, I was so shy that I couldn't even look another human being in the eyes. So one day, I was praying about that while I was at school. My family had moved from Michigan to Iowa, and I remember a young man that I had a crush on. I was about 12 years old at the time, and I walked up behind him just as

someone was saying, "That new girl has a crush on you." He said, "Well, who is she?" And they said, "That new, really smart girl." And he goes, "Well, women who are walking encyclopedias should remember that text books are never taken out." I went home that night and cried, and I couldn't stop crying. What's interesting is that the answer you get from God is that voice of rebuke because the voice said, "This is nothing more than selfishness." As shy as I was, I remember thinking, *Boy, that's the last thing on earth I would've thought I'd hear.* And then the voice said, "You think people are always looking at you and constantly criticizing your modest dress." I was the size of a 2nd grader in 6th grade; I was so teeny that people would often say, "Oh, honey, you're in the wrong end of the building. The Elementary school is down there. This is the Junior High." In every way, it was very difficult for me. But it came to me that I needed to read a page in the Bible every night before I went to bed. I decided I would read another page in *Science and Health*. In the textbook, I chose the chapter "Footsteps of Truth," and in the Bible, I chose the book of Isaiah. I'll never forget this passage when I read it in 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: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." It was like somebody snapped their fingers and the animal magnetism broke of the shyness, and I even kind of forgot why I had started studying all that. But I did it for months; I wouldn't go to sleep without reading a page in "Footsteps of Truth" or in Isaiah. At the end of that school year, my friend said, "You almost fell out of your chair when they announced the school elections" because I was elected Vice President of my class, cheerleader, and President of the choir. It was like a 180 degree turn around. I was so grateful that God helped me understand that He had given me intelligence for a reason. Chaplains are there to comfort people in the military, to bring them that word of comfort from the Scriptures.

When I was asked to go into the chaplaincy, I had given a testimony in a church in Iowa City where I was in graduate school. The First Reader came up to me afterwards, and he said, "I think you should go into the military chaplaincy." I said, "Do we have one?" He said, "Yes," and I said, "Do they let women do that?" And he said, "Well, I'm sure that's not going to stop you!" And I said, "Okay."

So, I interviewed with an Air Force chaplain, and I got a call from The Mother Church a few weeks later, saying they wanted me to come to Boston. I didn't even know how to fly on a plane, so they had to explain to me how to do that. I interviewed and this is how loving The Mother Church is: I didn't know enough, so I showed up in blue jeans and a halter top and sandals because it was 107 degrees when I left Iowa. The three men who were interviewing me were in three-piece suits. I thought, *Well, I probably messed this up.* But, they were very loving.

They asked me why I thought the Reader in Iowa City had told me I should go into the chaplaincy. I'd had an experience when I went to a Reorganized Latter Day Saints college because they gave me my tuition. While there, I was a senator in the house where I lived. (Twenty years later, I realized my nickname in

college was "Chaplain" even though I was actually a senator.) Also, I wasn't a Reorganized Latter Day Saint; in fact, I was about the only person on campus who wasn't. Anyway, we wanted to put on a dance, so this friend said that I needed to contract a Bluegrass band. I said, "Okay," and she said she would show me whom I needed to talk to—this guy in a Bluegrass band. So, we're in the Student Union and this guy walks in with another friend. They're dressed in Native American outfits: they've got the headgear and the feathers, and they're jumping around. And my friend says, "That's the guy you want to play at the dance." So I walked over to him. But just as I did, the other man slit the first man's finger open with a pocket knife (by accident), and he was bleeding. When I got to him, I asked him if I could pray for him and stop the bleeding. We'd never seen each other before. But he said, "Knock yourself out!" and gave me his hand. So I took his hand in my hand, and I prayed with a verse that helped my mother who was dying of a hemorrhage when a Christian Science practitioner healed her instantaneously. The verse was, "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." It's Ezekiel 16:6. The bleeding instantly stopped and this guy just kind of looked at his hand. Then he said, "Okay, I'll do the music."

On the night of the dance, on every break, he came over to me and demanded to know what I'd done to him. We started talking about Christian Science. I explained to him how we study the Bible Lesson and I showed him what *Science and Health* was. Even after the dance for an hour, he talked with me about Christian Science.

I was attending a church college; it was much like Principia. Almost every single person lived on campus, except for five or six people. They lived off-campus in an old house that was rickety. So this young man shows up at my dorm way back in the Dark Ages when women had hours. It was 10:30 at night and he demands that I go with him to this place where he lives off campus. I had to pray about that, but the voice in my head said, "This is that exceptional situation. You need to go with him." So I go with him to this house, and out of hidden compartments behind paintings on the wall and hidden compartments on the floor, he takes out bags of drugs and piles them up on a table in the kitchen. It's full of bags of drugs. He gives me a lecture on the different drugs and explains the differences and the dangers. Then he begins to tear the bags open and to flush everything down the toilet—thousands of dollars of drugs. And he says, "I want to know what you did to me. I have been a drug dealer since I became a Vietnam vet, and I don't know how I'll make my living anymore because I can't sell these drugs. Ever since you stopped the bleeding on my hand, I cannot sell these drugs." And I said, "Well, if you'll answer one question honestly, then I'll tell you." I said, "Did you or did you not want to be free of this selling drugs?" He took some time and he said, "Well, yes, I did. But there's no way you could have known that." And I said, "But God knew it and He sent that situation, and sent me to let you know." What he'd heard in that Bible passage was that he had wasted his life selling those drugs, and he decided that he couldn't do it anymore. When the Reader in Iowa City heard that

story, he said to me, "You need to go be a military chaplain."

So, when I interviewed, I was very grateful, even though I came in blue jeans and stuff. They felt that the healing with this young man was something that indicated that I could be a military chaplain. Of course, the idea of women being military chaplains was pretty new. I remember Seminary was wonderful. We learned the human thought on things at Boston University, but what we learned at The Mother Church was what truly prepared us for the military.

When I went in the military, I always said the first week would be the hardest, but I wasn't really concerned about going through basic training. In my whole life, I've never been afraid of anything once I got through being 12, and so it was a surprise to me when I began to be afraid of going into the tear gas chamber. I asked God what to pray about and the thought came to me, "You need to read the chapter on animal magnetism." So, in preparation to go into the Chaplain officer basic course, I read that chapter. I decided I was going to read it every day for two months—that was my commitment. Well, I got so into it; I was just thrilled with it. And I kept thinking, *It's this tiny little chapter in Science and Health and such an important topic: why would Mrs. Eddy have it be the shortest? I must be missing stuff in there.* So I was reading it sometimes three to four times a day, and then I forgot why I even started reading it. I ended up reading it for six months.

The day I remembered why I started reading it was the day of basic training when I was walking into the tear gas chamber. There was an important sentence that had always stood out to me. It's from page 103 in *Science and Health*, lines 12-15: "On the other hand, Mind-science is wholly separate from any half-way impertinent knowledge, because Mind-science is of God and demonstrates the divine Principle, working out the purposes of good only." My experience of that was that I was wholly separate from the experience of going in the gas chamber. It was kind of like I was up here looking down on it. Our class was so large, and we did it in alphabetical order. My maiden name was Yarlott, so I was with the very last group going in, out of 200-and-some people. All these prior service guys were helping out because the class was so big. When we went in there, the Infantry officers who were running the tear gas device said, "I know you prior service guys think you're going to get off easy, but we're really going to get you." So they took a lot more tear gas crystals and threw them on the fire, and you could see the billows of tear gas coming up out of the fire. We were supposed to stand there in a position of attention and wait until we were told, one by one, to say your name, your Social Security number, and the state you grew up in. This was to get you to breathe the tear gas. When they did that, you took off your tear gas mask because you wore it in to understand that it would protect you, but then they made you take it off so you would never want to do that in any kind of gas. And so, when everybody took the gas mask off, there were so many crystals in there and it was so heavy that even the prior service guys panicked; and they were trying to get out the door, and they were all in a pile, literally; and they couldn't see because so much water was coming out of their eyes. So, the Infantry

guys were over there trying to pull them off of each other, and they finally got the door open and pushed the guys out because they couldn't see. And I'm still standing in there because they didn't give me an order to say my name and Social Security number. So the Infantry Major came back in, and he had his tear gas mask on, and he looked at me and said, "Humor me and go outside." I said, "Okay," and went outside. Then he took off his mask and said, "Who are you?" And I said, "Well, you didn't have me say my name in there." He said, "What were you doing in there?" And I said, "Well, I was praying." And he said, "Oh. Are you a Christian Scientist?" And I said, "Yes, I am." And he said, "Okay."

I had absolutely no reaction to the tear gas. I would often share that testimony when I went to church wherever I was stationed. 22 years later, a woman came up to me after I'd shared that testimony, and she said, "Now, you do know that the name of the chapter is "Animal Magnetism Unmasked." I'd studied every iota of that chapter, but I hadn't thought about the title.

As you go through the military, you start out with the rank of Captain because you're a professional officer, so the first type of ministry that you do is what's called individual ministry. One of my favorite experiences was when I was in Korea. We were up on the DMZ and we found out that Jane Robbins was going to give a Christian Science lecture. We only got one lecture a year, and we had to go clear down to Seoul to the Christian Science Society there to hear it. I found my one Christian Science soldier, and we had it all planned how we were going to go down to the lecture. About a month before the lecture, we found out that a huge warfighter exercise was going to take place that week and that we weren't going to be able to go. I told him, "We're not going to resent this. There's nothing that can deprive us from being part of that lecture. Wherever you are on the exercise, I will find you, and you and I will sit down, and we'll read the Lesson about the time that lecture is going to happen." Sure enough that day, I find him. They were doing a water crossing in their armored personnel. He and I get up on a rock, and we're sitting there and we open the Bible and *Science and Health* (This is back when you marked them!), and this General comes walking over the top of the rock. He sees us sitting there, and says, "Chaplain Horton, what are you doing?" I explain: "There is this one Christian Science lecture each year, and it's going to start in a couple hours in Seoul; and we want to be a part of it, so we're reading our Christian Science Bible Lesson." He goes, "Well, when does it start?" And I say, "In about an hour and 45 minutes," and he says, "Well, I'm flying to Seoul for a meeting. I have to be there for over two hours. I have extra seats in my helicopter. I'll fly you down there and you can get a taxi and go to the lecture and then come back, and then we'll fly back over here." I say, "That would be awesome." But the Private is standing there, looking at this General, and he says, "Oh, sir, my Sergeant would never let me go." And the General points at his star and says, "Oh, yes, son, he will."

That General so valued that that was the one time of year that we could get to a Christian Science lecture that he stepped in. It would be very rare to have an important exercise like that and

take somebody flying off to Seoul. We got there. He landed the helicopter on the compound, and right as we landed, this car pulled up. It was the Air Force Christian Science chaplain with his two Air Force guys. So, we were able to get out, walk over, get in their car, and drive to the lecture at the Society. Of course we were there with camouflaged faces, and my private had his M16 rifle with him. Jane Robbins never batted an eyelash when two camouflaged people came in and sat in the front row. Afterward, she came over and talked to the Private, and she was just lovely. It was so beautiful to see how harmoniously that all went together. As soon as the lecture finished, we hugged everybody, and went back to the compound. The General came out of his meeting, and we got in the helicopter. Within about a 4-hour time period, we were back at our exercise. To me, it shows how Christian Science chaplains are going to rely on prayer to do their ministry. That's the ministry you do for the people of your own denomination.

There were also times that Christian Science chaplains will talk about when people resisted the idea that a Christian Scientist should be a chaplain. With me, as I said, I never quite knew whether it was the Christian Science edge or the woman edge or both at the same time. One time after I'd come home from Korea, there was an event we had to go to in formal uniform, which meant wearing all your ribbons. I'd only been in the Army for four years at that point, and I already had two meritorious service medals, so I had them on my uniform. This male chaplain walked up to me as we walked out of a big gathering, and he looked at me and said, "You couldn't possibly have deserved those" and he spit on me. As I quoted from Mrs. Eddy's writings, when a new right idea is presented, sometimes listeners resist it. My initial response was a lot like a gas grill lighting up. I had been a gymnast and I could do 47 push-ups, so I was a little worried about how I might respond. But I knew I had to do it through prayer, so I just got very quiet. The thought came to me from *Science and Health*, "You must control evil thoughts in the first instance, or they will control you in the second" (p 234:26-27). I heard it as "If you don't control evil in the first *instant*" because I knew I had to get myself in control that quickly. So, I said, "Okay, Lord, I'm listening." Then the voice said, "The soldiers spit on Jesus," and that pretty much finished it. Then the voice said, "When you said you wanted to follow me, did you think I meant in only the easy footsteps?" I said, "No, Lord. If I have to follow you all the way to the cross, I'll follow you that far."

Then the voice said, "What must a man have been through in order to be able to bring himself to spit on another human being?" One of the things you learn about military ministry is that many times it's not about you at all. I found myself reaching out and putting my arms around this man and hugging him, and saying, "What must you have been through in order to be able to bring yourself to spit on another human being?" I think the reality of what he had done hit him in the face like a brick because it had been an emotional reaction to begin with, and I don't think he even realized what he had done in such a hot moment. When I hugged him and said that, he fell to his knees and cried, and begged me to forgive him. And I said, "Well, of course I can forgive you!"

So when the idea of a Christian Science chaplain or, for me, a woman and a Christian Science chaplain, kind of pushes against some of the other chaplains, you find that it is an opportunity to heal something. Many people say to me, "Who was that guy?" You know, the other thing that occurred to me is that I didn't want to attach the action to him in any way. I didn't even want to see a face, and after that, I never even saw the face. You don't want to give a personality or an identity to anything that's erroneous. I was just grateful that having gone through the beautiful training at The Mother Church, we're prepared to handle some pretty dire situations, and that we're not going to give evil an identity—it's not a person, it's not a place, and it's not a thing.

Q&A

with Janet Y. Horton
Chaplain, (Colonel) Retired

1. Are there any other women Christian Science chaplains?

Yes, there are several now. It's interesting because there are not a lot of women chaplains in the military chaplaincy per se, but we have a number of women who have been and are Christian Science chaplains.

2. How many Christian Science chaplains do we have now?

That's kind of a complicated question. For many years we had 25-30 chaplains in the military. Then there was a Mother Church Board of Directors that closed the military chaplain program for 15 years, so we had no one going into the chaplaincy during that time. I was asked to restart it in 2006, but now the military requires three years of Seminary and two years of post-Seminary experience to get a chaplain ready to serve, so we're just now rebuilding the number of folks in the military.

Currently, we have five active-duty and reserve chaplains and five or six more in the pipeline that either have the Seminary done or are in the post-Seminary experience. We have a flow coming; it just takes a while when it takes roughly five years to get someone ready.

3. Are all religious groups allowed to have chaplains if other requirements are met?

You have to register with the Department of Defense, and to do that you have to meet certain requirements, and there are a lot. It's interesting because the Wiccans once wanted to have military chaplains, and recently it's been the Atheists. When a spokesperson for Atheists called me about having a token representative, he said, "You know, I've probably called 100 people and you're the only person that would even talk to me." I talked to some people who at least got to the point where they could talk to him.

People from other military branches, like Transportation, Personnel or Infantry, understood that being a Christian Scientist or being integrated as a woman was a matter of

opinion. They would say, "Well, this is my human opinion and that's your human opinion." Chaplains from other churches would say, "You just have different beliefs than we do." But they were also very quick to tell you, "God told me you shouldn't be here;" the other chaplains would have a different edge than any other branch in the service. That's another reason I called it the birth of a new idea.

As mentioned, I was spit on. I also had my tropical fish poisoned, and I was run off the road by men wearing stocking masks. People who heard these stories would say, "I can't even believe you continued!" And I'd say, "But so many of those people, at least they were honest enough to come to my face and tell me they have a real problem with me." Many people were doing things behind your back and didn't have the moral decency to even admit what they were doing. The people who were pushing on you the most and coming up in your face and saying things, at least they were honest. I always want to recognize the spiritual qualities they are exhibiting; they were honest. To me that showed that at least their thought was receptive because they were wrestling with the idea the way that Jacob wrestled with the angel. I was looking at how they were at least being upfront. Again, that's why I relate that to the birth of a new idea.

4. What denomination is Boston University?

The Methodist Church founded Boston University and the Seminary. However, they have tons of people of different Christian traditions and different faith groups that attend the Seminary there. Boston University grants our students 35% of their tuition and then Boston University's School of Theology grants them another 40% of their tuition. This shows how much value BU puts on us! My sister, who is of the United Church of Christ, had to borrow so much money to do her Seminary that she didn't pay off her loans until the week she retired.

One day we were training at The Mother Church, and Boston University came to talk about our chaplain training program because they were starting a new chaplain track at the BU School of Theology. Dr. Porter from the Theology Department said, "You know, I wanted to tell you that your church's candidates are superior morally, and they have the intelligence beyond what we are seeing anybody else having!" He began to name spiritual qualities, and he said, "We want to know what it is you're doing over here." The humility it must have taken for another church to say we want to come over here and figure out why you're so superior was so interesting to me.

So he asks, "As a Christian Scientist, how would you teach about something like PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)?" I told him the first thing we do is to go to this book right here—the Bible. I put it down in front of him and we went through 20 Bible stories—like Daniel in the lion's den and Joseph, when his brothers stripped him naked in a pit and sold him into slavery. We went through all the things that Bible characters went through: Paul when he was going to be thrown off a cliff and stoned, and everything Jesus went through. And we went through all the things that he could

name. And I said that in every one of those experiences, you would have said the main character had to have PTSD, having been thrown in the lion's den, or Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who were thrown into the fiery furnace. But the Bible doesn't record any one of them having a single thing like that. So we went through and studied the passages and then we studied each thing that we could relate to it, whether it was in the Psalms or elsewhere in the Bible, that assured us that God is who cares for us and where our true spiritual strength comes from. I gave him some of the ideas that we researched and explained that that was how we talked about that particular issue.

I also mentioned that when we were in the Bosnian campaign, one of the things the Bosnians had said to me was, "Oh, you Americans, you just are such weenies! We go through all this stuff and we don't come up with PTSD." What they went through in the Balkans was horrendous. They said, "You know, we don't have people going through that." So Dr. Porter was interested that the Bosnians themselves had said that. We talked about some articles that were written on PTSD, and I told him that we really want our chaplains to understand what public thought is on it, but we're going to go right back to this book. There's quite a difference in how we train.

5. Can you tell the story about the coyotes?

In 1977, women had just been integrated into the military for about a year. One of the things that military people do in the morning when they get up is to go for a run. A bunch of us chaplains were at a very remote retreat center in Arizona, and about 12-15 male chaplains said they were going on their morning run. I asked if I could run with them, and they said I'd never be able to make it. I asked how far they were going, and they pointed out in the desert to a little foothill and mentioned going around it and then running back. I told them that I'd been running 6-9 miles with my infantry guys each day, so I thought I could probably make it. They agreed to let me go and told me to fall in the back if I couldn't keep up.

So we go out there and we're running toward the little foothill. And we run, and run, and run. Finally, about 5 miles out, we realize we are no closer to that foothill than when we started. We're not desert people, so we don't know the illusion of the desert. Not too much later, we realize we need to turn back, so we flip around. When I do long distance running, I don't like to think about the number of steps I've taken, so I'm thinking about the weekly Bible Lesson. It's about Caleb going to spy on the Promised Land. I'm so struck and wrapped up with thinking of this that I really am not seeing anything around me. I'm not just mindlessly running—my thought is on the Bible story and how Caleb has the diametrically opposite view from the other people who are with him. They say, "We cannot go in there and possess that land because there are giants in there, and it would kill us." But when Caleb looks at that very same thing, he says, "No, it's a land that flows with milk and honey, and it will bless us, and we can go in there and possess it." I'm thinking about that beautiful demonstration of

the mortal sense of something versus the spiritual sense of something, so I do not see the pack of coyotes coming.

But the men see the coyotes coming, and it's a pack of about 12-15, the same number as the men. They come running towards us, and the men sprint ahead and get up in two trees and on top of two brick walls. The coyotes circle me, and as they circle, the lead dog growls, and when he tightens-in, the rest of them tighten-in. Then they circle again and he growls, and they tighten even more and circle. I remember thinking how much I love dogs. These coyotes are a form of dog and the only thing they can feel is that I love them. I say, "Lord, what should I do?" and the thought comes to me to get down on one knee. So I get down on one knee...and he lies down. When he lies down, the whole pack lies down. Then I start talking to the lead coyote, "In the beginning, God created the Heaven and the Earth and the Sea and all that therein is and he created the beasts of the field." I explain to him that God divided the light from the darkness, and I go on to explain to him that God saw everything that He made and behold it was very good. I motion with my hand, and he nods his head. I explain to him that God created him with a purpose but it wasn't to harm me, and God created me with a purpose but it wasn't to harm him. And he nods his head again. Then I say, "But this isn't your right place. You need to get up and you need to go back out there where you belong." And he jumps up and runs off, and all the coyotes run off after him, back into the desert.

The men then start coming down out of the trees. Again this is 1977, so the first guy steps up, and he says, "Well, you know we really didn't think women should be in the military." And the second one steps up and says, "And we really didn't think women should be in the chaplaincy." And the third one says, "And we don't like Christian Science. But you know, if you can preach to wild dogs and they'll listen, I think soldiers will, too." It's interesting how different the spiritual sense of something is versus the mortal sense of something. The key to me in the chaplaincy was being very clear about the difference between the two.

6. How would you pray about Syria?

What I found was that you work with people from every background. We were in one of the Bosnian parts of the campaign—I think it was the Kosovo part—and we were having a video teleconference with our General as well as people from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They were wanting to have a separate chapel, what's called a containerized chapel. I've explained the chaplaincy to you to quite a degree, yet some people in the military don't even get how it runs. So the General was saying to the United Arab Emirates guys that they were in an American operation and they were going to do it our way, and we have one chapel, and everybody comes in there to worship, and they're not having their own chapel. I stepped up and said to the General, "Sir, could I explain something to you? Allah cannot be worshipped at the same altar as any other God. Even if you just restricted things to the three Abraham traditions, it would even be a little bit difficult. But we have Buddhists come in there, we have

Wiccans, we have people of every background, and Allah cannot be worshipped at the same altar." When you say the prophet's name, you always say, "Peace be upon him." I explained this and the background to the General. The General then said, "Then we're going to get them their own containerized chapel."

And to show you how far people's thought comes, as soon as that video teleconference stopped, every one of those UAE guys came over to me and said, "We want to shake your hand." That's completely against their beliefs! I said, "Oh, no. I completely understand and I understand your gratitude." They said, "No, we want to shake your hand." Now, even though that was against one of their beliefs, they wanted to cross that line because their gratitude was so great for someone not vilifying them. They said, "Thank you for not vilifying us." Just someone seeing them as having genuine religious needs and having genuine religious beliefs, and that perhaps they should be accommodated, was so striking to them — that I crossed that distinctive line for them—that they wanted to show their gratitude in an actual physical way.

I also gave a briefing about the terrorist mindset at PACE University, and I used quotes from *The Christian Science Monitor* all the way through it. No matter where I briefed, whether it was the CIA, the DIA, the Joint Military Intelligence School, the National Security Council, you name it, they took me to brief on the entire homeland defense. Everybody at the end would say, "I learned more from *The Monitor*, an open source, than I did from my classified sources." It was neat to see the impact that *The Monitor* had on the people. They even said that that's one of the few American newspapers they read. It was beautiful to see the recognition of the spirituality of what goes into our work at *The Monitor*. We offer a more truthful and a more loving and a more spiritual concept of the people in the world. We don't dwell on what a small percentage does.

One of the things in my briefing was that extremists represent a tiny percentage of Muslims, and you can't vilify nor write-off all Muslims because of a small percentage. They like that I compare it to the fact that Christianity also had a problem with a tiny percentage of people taking the Abraham tradition and perverting it — at Waco, Jonestown, the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments in Uganda. They loved that I at least said we're not the only tradition that had a small tradition of extremists wrestle with that, and we're not responsible for what this tiny percentage did. You don't want to vilify an entire major religious faith group for what a tiny percentage of people do. You want to pray about its nothingness and that its only power is to destroy itself because it's not either a moral or a spiritual power. It's human, and it's something that's motivated by self-indulgences for different things, and it has nothing to do with real religion. ❖

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