

# "Now is the accepted time"

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Each annual meeting is a joyous occasion, but this is a very special one—the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Arden Wood.

In her 1896 *Message to the Annual Meeting of The Mother Church*, Mary Baker Eddy speaks of how she "...turns to her dear church, to tell the towers thereof the remarkable achievements that have been ours within the past few years."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, we too can speak of the remarkable achievements of healing here at Arden Wood during the past 75 years. They confirm Paul's statement, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."<sup>2</sup>

We are all grateful for *every* healing because they are proofs of God's law operating right here and now for each one of us. And we are deeply grateful for all those individuals here at Arden Wood who have supported this healing work during the past 75 years.

The anniversary of 75 years leads us to the question, "What is a year?" Mrs. Eddy defines *year* as "A solar measurement of time..."<sup>3</sup> Just what is time? The dictionary defines *time* as an interval between events. But there can be no measure between material events because there is no matter, and without matter there could be no time. Since matter is only the suppositional absence of real substance, Spirit, then time is only an illusion. There is no past time, no future time, not even a present time. There is only divine presence.

Our textbook defines *time* as "Mortal measurements; limits, in which are summed up all human acts, thoughts, beliefs, opinions, knowledge;

matter; error..."<sup>4</sup> How often do we speak of needing more time? We feel we don't have sufficient time to accomplish all we need to do. But do we need more limits and mortal measurements? Certainly time would seem to play a major role in our daily experience. We live by our watches and calendars. Time is among the most familiar, yet least understood, concepts that humanity has ever encountered. Physicists have found an exact definition of *time* to be very elusive.

In a letter of condolence to the widow of his fellow physicist, Michele Besso, Albert Einstein wrote, "For we convinced physicists the distinction between past, present, and future is only illusion, however persistent." Brian Greene, a professor of physics at Columbia University, quotes Einstein as saying, "The passage of time is in the eye of the beholder." Consequently, we find physicists now speak of a "time sense." So time becomes a factor of sense. But it is a false sense. Time is a false state of consciousness. According to quantum physics, particles which are separated by vast distances relate to each other instantaneously. With this coincidence-ordinate, we are left with only consciousness, and time disappears.

This is nothing new to Christian Science. We know that time is a finite conception and can have no place in the infinite consciousness. We know that we do not live in a time-space universe. But we do live, move and have our being in divine Mind. In Revelation we read, "There should be time no longer."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, there shall be limits no longer as we throw off the false concept of a matter-based existence.

The concept of time plays an obvious role in what we call aging. Age has a direct relation to the false belief of time. Without time there could be no age. Age is a subject which may not seem to be relevant to everyone. Many of you may feel it is a topic that can wait a couple of decades before you need to consider it.

But Mrs. Eddy writes, "The acute belief of physical life comes on at a remote period, and is not so disastrous as the chronic belief."<sup>6</sup> So it is the chronic belief we ignore and then let slip up on us. Does one wait for the belief of age to creep up on him before handling the subtle suggestion? The lie of life in matter must be handled now, at this moment, for the lie is a deceiver and would rob those who believe in it of their divine heritage.

Mankind accepts advancing age as something inevitable. Age seems to creep up on us. It is very pernicious as one of the "creeping things" on earth. But God has given us dominion "over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."<sup>7</sup>

Do we claim our dominion over age or do we simply ignore it? The belief of old age is insidious. It is the mental assassin that would attempt to deprive us of our oneness with God, good. Yes, the lie of age has a direct relation to the belief of time.

The large majority of physicists accept the cat-kitten theory. For example, take two young twin women at the same location on earth. One departs in a rocket ship and accelerates far into outer space. When she returns she is still young. But the sister who remained on earth has grown old. The point is that the astronaut sister remains younger because she has reduced her travel through time and the speed of travel. It is not time, but the belief in the passing of time, which seems to produce aging.

We are all familiar with Mrs. Eddy's account of the British woman, who, disappointed in love during her youth, "...stood daily before the window watching for her lover's coming. In this mental state she remained young. Having no consciousness of time, she literally grew no older. Some

American travellers saw her when she was seventy-four, and supposed her to be a young woman.... Asked to guess her age, those unacquainted with her history conjectured that she must be under twenty."<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Eddy continues, "The bodily results of her belief that she was young manifested the influence of such a belief. She could not age while believing herself young, for the mental state governed the physical."<sup>9</sup> So we see the evidence of advancing years is only a manifestation of false suggestions taken into consciousness.

At a recent American Academy of General Practice Convention, held in Lansing, Michigan, it was stated that there was no real biological necessity for aging and that the physical symptoms and deterioration associated with aging are due in part to a "time neurosis," a morbid fear that the passage of time leads to decrepitude and disease. It was said that the fear of aging is a fatal concept. So, to repeat, it is not time but the belief in the passing of time, which seems to produce aging.

Mrs. Eddy writes, "Disease is a thing of thought manifested on the body."<sup>10</sup> Can we not also say that age is "a thing of thought manifested on the body"? We grow old as the effect of the belief that we will grow old. We are responsible for what we allow in our individual consciousness. So, if we accept that the passage of time can cause a deterioration of man, then we grow old in consequence of such belief.

Throughout the human belief of a life span, man is supposed to express certain qualities and to lack other qualities. So we label the young person as being energetic and enthusiastic, yet immature and inexperienced. Reaching what is called old age, we believe that man is wise but loses his energy and vigor. The truth is that as God's image, man always includes every divinely spiritual quality, and he can express these qualities fully and freely.

Mrs. Eddy writes, "Except for the error of measuring and limiting all that is good and beautiful, man would enjoy more than threescore years and

ten and still maintain his vigor, freshness, and promise."<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Eddy also writes, "Man in Science is neither young nor old."<sup>12</sup> The truth of this statement releases man from the limitation of time and age.

As we recognize and express this Godlike nature of our true selfhood, we are progressively freed from material limitations of every sort, including the defrauding belief of age. We must resist the belief of aging instead of becoming submissive to it and regarding it as inevitable. How do we refute the false belief of aging? How do we refute any lie? By knowing the truth! The truth is that God is not getting any older. Therefore, man, God's expression, cannot get any older.

The truth is that man is the expression of God, divine Principle. Principle does not get older. Has the mathematical principle that  $2 + 2 = 4$  grown old and only equals 3? Does a law grow old and deteriorate? Mrs. Eddy states that "decrepitude is not according to law, nor is it a necessity of nature, but an illusion."<sup>13</sup> There is no law of aging. What appears as a law of aging is not a law, but only a world belief. World belief is simply the supposition of many minds believing falsely. There are not minds many, but only one Mind, God. Therefore, world belief is only a term for something that does not have reality. How could that which does not exist be a cause? It cannot! Don't let a general world belief become a false law claiming to govern you.

Aggressive suggestion would have one believe that one's work is finished or useless, that it is too late to deal with age. But the uncovering of this aggressive mental suggestion shows that the opportunity to express God, to think rightly, to be active in doing good, never ends or decreases. The earnest student of Christian Science learns that the true purpose of life is to glorify God. There are no age limits preventing us from doing so. We have ceaseless and abundant opportunities to be God's representative. Man is always at the

standpoint of opportunity. Why? Because man is God's expression! Does God stop expressing Himself? Does man stop being the expression of God? No! It's not that you used to be God's expression but you are no longer so. The Father-Mother has not fostered a creation and subsequently turned away, leaving that creation to decline and fade out. God, divine Mind, could not express Himself in ideas that are perfect at the outset but do not remain so.

Man is never limited. A realization of this truth frees mortals from the temptation to accept the material belief that man is useful for only a certain number of years. As our Leader avers, "The divine Mind that made man maintains His own image and likeness."<sup>14</sup> Therefore, moment by moment you continue to be what God continues to express. You are—right this moment—what God is expressing right this moment. In Revelation we read, "Behold, I make all things new."<sup>15</sup> Because you are ever new, you can't be growing old. We need to discover the newness of life and see the timeless, boundless nature of man's being, undiminished by the false belief of age.

### ***Meeting the Challenge of Inconclusion***

Mrs. Eddy states, "Jesus of Nazareth was the most scientific man that ever trod the globe."<sup>16</sup> What today's physicists are striving to grasp, Jesus understood and demonstrated. He certainly proved his dominion over time. Time was never a factor in his demonstrations of divine law. His healings were instantaneous.

We are all striving to heal instantaneously as did Jesus. The question may be raised, "Why is it when one works faithfully, sincerely, and devotedly on a problem, that sometimes no apparent results come, and the passage of time seems to be a factor? We expect healing and yet the problem seems to persist without fruition." I call this the challenge of inconclusion. There is no one right answer to this question, because there may be several factors involved. Even so, it may be helpful to have a

"heads-up" to recognize some of them and handle them if they are presented to our consciousness.

One checkpoint leading to delay or inconclusion is to think of healing in terms of a time-related process. Process relates to time. There is no process in healing. That is, we are never changing a condition from imperfection back to perfection. We do not start with an imperfect condition and then use Christian Science to get to a point of perfection. Rather, we start with perfection and work *from* that state, not *up* to it.

Jesus knew God's creation is already perfect. Therefore, there is no process necessary and hence no time involved in reaching a point we have never left. There is no delay in being God's expression. It doesn't take time for  $2 + 2$  to stop equaling 5 and return to 4. We must take time out of the equation. If we would have quicker healings, then we must deny the hypothesis that we are correcting a real, imperfect condition. Every problem is an error of statement. An error is the absence of truth, the absence of reality. Hence, nothing!

Does it take time to eliminate something that doesn't exist? Does it take more time to eliminate a big nothing than a small one? Nothing is nothing! Thinking of healing as a material process and looking to the future for its completion is to reject that man is now what God is expressing now.

You don't stand in front of the mirror and eventually the reflection appears. The reflection appears instantly. Recognizing yourself as reflection conveys the concept of an instantaneous relationship between God and man. In short, we are setting ourselves up for delay when we think of healing in terms of a process, accepting that there was real imperfection in the past and it requires time to arrive at perfection in the future.

The individual who feels his healing is being delayed may be thinking of the Christ only in terms of the future and not the present. The orthodox Christian believes not only that Christ has come, but also that he has departed to return

in the future. The Christian Scientist is not hampered by the belief that we must wait for some future time for the reappearing of Christ. The Christian Scientist understands the Christ not only came as Jesus, but daily comes in a measure in each of us, "...a divine influence ever present in human consciousness and repeating itself, coming now as was promised aforetime...."<sup>17</sup>

Jesus told us, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?"<sup>18</sup> The harvest is now! "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Any failure to meet and master any phase of error is a failure to let the ever-present Saviour in so that the error may be cast out. No lie of disease can endure in the presence of the Christ. The seeming presence of disease or any other abnormality is the seeming absence of the Christ-idea.

You and I know that the problem is a false concept held in consciousness. Therefore, to eliminate the problem we need to eliminate the false concept. We know that we destroy the tares, the false concepts in our consciousness, with the Christ, Truth. We have all of the weapons necessary to gain the victory. We have the presence of the Christ with which to handle animal magnetism. It is never a question of how severe or how serious the problem appears to be, but it is always how real, how great, and how powerful is the Christ.

Perhaps we lack expectancy and confidence because we are looking to our own human mind to bring about a healing, rather than recognizing that it is the truth that heals. It is not one person correcting another person. It is the truth, the Christ within us, that corrects the lie about a person.

Another reason our healings are not more often instantaneous may be that we doubt the effectiveness of our treatment. After giving a treatment, do we stand on it and affirm it is complete and effective? If we accept that it is or may be ineffective, then we are literally malpracticing

our work. The treatment that brings forth results is a firm conviction in the truth and expectancy in the omnipotence of divine Love, which cannot fail, cannot return void, but accomplishes that for which it is intended. Yes, a second treatment may appear necessary. But do not negate the first one. Give the second treatment with confidence, knowing that you are not going over the same ground, but confronting a different arrangement of error.

Perhaps one of the more frequent stumbling blocks is that we focus our attention on correcting a physical condition of the body. This tends to make the problem more of a reality. We work and then check the evidence, work and then check the evidence. This indicates that we are using Christian Science as a tool to improve an imperfect physical condition rather than to disprove a lie about a perfect spiritual idea.

We know that every problem is only a false belief, a mesmeric dream. Therefore we must not be diverted into trying to change what is going on within the dream. Rather, we need to refute the dream itself. God never made a dream or a dreamer.

The belief of tenacity is another challenge that would seem to lead to delay in healing. When a problem seems to drag on and on, we often need to handle what Mrs. Eddy calls the "tenacity of error." Does she mean that error has staying power? No!

Remember, error is a term indicating the supposed absence of truth. Therefore, error has no power to do anything and has only the power we give it. But we do need to reject the claim that error has staying power. Only divine Truth has staying power. Darkness has no tenacity in the presence of the light, and likewise, error has no tenacity in the presence of divine Truth. How can that which doesn't exist be tenacious? There is nothing to impede, restrict, obstruct, or delay the truth. Mrs. Eddy writes, "Hold thought steadfastly to the enduring, the good, and the true, and you will

bring these into your experience proportionably to their occupancy of your thoughts."<sup>19</sup>

Sometimes a patient tells me that they are holding to the truth, and they feel the healing has come. But they state there is no change in the evidence. I'm thoroughly convinced that the most aggressive aspect of the challenge of inconclusion today is the suggestion, based on looking at the evidence, that Christian Science doesn't heal. This is the challenge of the hour, and I think it needs to be handled in every treatment.

The suggestion that Christian Science doesn't heal is absurd. We have hundreds of thousands of case histories of healing. Christian Science sees healing as the revealing in consciousness of what is true. The world sees healing as the change in the physical evidence. Therefore any attack on Christian Science healing is an attack on the evidence. That is why we need to defend ourselves against malicious malpractice which would try to prevent the evidence of healing.

If we feel we have been touched by the Christ and have gained great spiritual enlightenment, but have seen no change in the evidence, we need to handle the anti-Christ, alias animal magnetism. First, the anti-Christ attempts to block the coming of the Christ and prevent the healing, the revealing of the truth. Second, it would also attempt to prevent the evidence of the healing. Animal magnetism needs to be handled on both accounts.

There is no power of a suppositional anti-Christ that can prevent the healing or prevent or delay the evidence of the healing. Hence, it is vital to reject animal magnetism's suggestions that there can be a change in human consciousness and no change in the evidence. Of course we must have the evidence of the healing. Demand the evidence! In speaking of Jesus, Mrs. Eddy writes, "He demanded a change of consciousness and evidence, and effected this change through the higher laws of God."<sup>20</sup> Sometimes we are so focused on changing the evidence that we obstruct

the healing. We must work to see the healing. To repeat: The healing is the revealing in consciousness of what is true. Then we demand the evidence of the healing. Of course the healing and the evidence may be simultaneous.

We cannot ignore animal magnetism. We handle it! How? By refusing to give reality to the false supposition that it exists. Remember, animal magnetism is only a term used to indicate the supposed action of error: nothing! The truth of the Christ always destroys the error of the anti-Christ, as surely as light always destroys darkness. You are like a beam of light that darkness cannot reverse, oppose, or delay.

We handle the error with the consciousness of the truth. We make nothing of it! But this doesn't mean we ignore it. To ignore malpractice is as disastrous as to imagine that it has reality and the power to act.

Instantaneous healing is being conscious of that which already is. That's why being conscious of the

truth doesn't lead to healing. It is the healing! In Ezekiel we read, "The word that I shall speak shall come to pass: it shall be no more prolonged."<sup>21</sup>

To summarize: Mrs. Eddy explains Paul's statement (in II Cor. 6:2), "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." She tells us this does not mean "that now men must prepare for a future-world salvation, or safety, but that now is the time in which to experience that salvation in spirit and in life."<sup>22</sup>

Mrs. Eddy writes that "Mind measures time according to the good that is unfolded."<sup>23</sup> We have certainly seen a large measure of good unfolded here at Arden Wood. And this healing work shall continue and bless the world. Why? Because in the words of hymn 202, "The Christ is here, all dreams of error breaking, /Unloosing bonds of all captivity."<sup>24</sup>

"Now is the accepted time."

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<sup>1</sup> *Miscellaneous Writings*, 125:27-30, 2nd turns (to :)

<sup>2</sup> II Corinthians 6:2

<sup>3</sup> *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* 598:19, A (to ;)

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.* 595:17-19, *Mortal* (to 3rd ;)

<sup>5</sup> Revelation 10:6, *there*

<sup>6</sup> *Science and Health* 247:1-2

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 1:26, *over every*

<sup>8</sup> *Science and Health* 245:6

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* 245:23

<sup>10</sup> *Rudimental Divine Science* 10:15 (to ;)

<sup>11</sup> *Science and Health* 246: 20-23

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* 244:23 (only)

<sup>13</sup> *Science and Health* 245:30, *decrepitude*

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* 151:23-24

<sup>15</sup> Revelation 21:5, *Behold* (to .)

<sup>16</sup> *Science and Health* 313:23-24

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.* xi:16-18, *a* (to 2nd ,)

<sup>18</sup> John 4:35 (to ?)

<sup>19</sup> *Science and Health* 261:4

<sup>20</sup> *Unity of Good* 11:10-12

<sup>21</sup> Ezekiel 12:25, *and the* (to 2nd ;)

<sup>22</sup> *Science and Health* 39:19-22, *that*

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.* 584:5-6, *Mind*

<sup>24</sup> *Christian Science Hymnal*, Hymn 202:1, *The*



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