

Radical Reliance: The Foundation of
Morningside's Mission

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Thank you, Dick Shank. I appreciate the theme of radical reliance that's been chosen for this meeting. It makes me think of the feelings I had when I first started in the public practice of Christian Science.

I was in my early twenties when I entered the practice. I had been raised in Christian Science. I always loved it. But it was after college that it really took hold of me. I began to see its tremendous potential. I just couldn't get enough of it. I thought about it. Studied it. It became something I wanted to give myself to entirely. I felt the world needed this corrective truth more than anything

else and I would do what I could to give it to the world.

When I opened my office in Minneapolis I didn't feel I was the most experienced practitioner there was. But I did feel there was one thing I was very clear about: I knew the difference between radical reliance on Truth for healing and the use of material medicine. I was committed to maintaining that distinction.

My reason for believing in radical reliance was based on the concept of man that I had been taught. Christian Science teaches that man is consciousness and not a material physique. What appears to be a material physique is simply objectified thought. I could see that this materially, objectified thought couldn't be the true nature of man

because it included destructibility ,
limitation and imperfection. It was a
misconception of our real identity. If there
appeared to be suffering or sickness this had
to be a phase of the misconception. It was a
phase that was farther removed from the true
nature of being.

The way to eliminate this sickness or
suffering was to exchange the misconception of
man for the true conception. Then the thought
of sickness or suffering couldn't be
objectified.

In taking this approach I was applying one
meaning of the word radical. One sense of the
word radical is departure from the traditional.
That's what Christian Science is. It's a
departure from the traditional concept of man
as material and subject to disease. I'm sure

this radical or different view of man is one of the reasons that we run into so much resistance in human thought. It's evidenced in the current court cases. We see it in the constant debate about what is the safest and most effective way to care for the health of mankind.

Yet it's precisely this radical departure from the material view that holds out the true hope for healing of every one of mankind's ills. Disease is the acceptance of a material vulnerable view of man. Healing is a radical reversal of this view.

All of this, of course, ties in to the reason for the existence of Morningside, Inc. When a person is unable to care for themselves because of a physical disability and for some reason they can't be cared for at home, then they need a place where the care can be

provided. If that person is a Christian Scientist they want to take a radical stand for Truth. They want to depart from the traditional material view of body and align themselves with the spiritual, perfect view.

They select Morningside rather than a medical facility because of its agreement with this goal. The subject of our meeting today emphasizes this goal: Radical Reliance: The Foundation of Morningside's Mission.

But when we turn away from the traditional material view, does this mean we're turning away from all that is good and sensible and worthy on the human scene? Of course not! I love the message of hymn 140 that says, "Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be, As more of heaven in each we see."

There are normal procedures of eating,

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sleeping, bathing. There are right, happy, warm relationships we have with each other. There are normal functions and activities of the body --physical and recreational. One purpose of Christian Science treatment and care in a facility is to restore a person to normality on the human scene.

Mrs. Eddy brings this out in The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany (218:1) where she describes Jesus' healing. She says, "He restored the diseased body to its normal action, functions, and organization, and in explanation of his deeds he said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

Notice here that when Jesus said "Suffer it to be so now" he wasn't endorsing a backward step. He was referring to a step forward from

disease to normality. This wasn't the ultimate step. The ultimate step was the ascension or totally spiritualized identity. The forward step was what Mrs. Eddy refers to in this same article as "an improved belief". She quotes from Science and Health, (296:28) "An improved belief is one step out of error, and aids in taking the next step and in understanding the situation in Christian Science."

So radical reliance means turning mentally from the mortally accepted picture and focusing on the spiritually real. As we do so thought is spiritualized and the abnormalities and limitations yield to greater health and harmony on the human scene.

Maybe you've found, as I have, that it isn't always so easy to turn from the material picture. One of the reasons we're meeting here

today and considering some metaphysical ideas is our desire to be more effective in accomplishing this change. We want to turn from the material in order to benefit ourselves and also to benefit the general work of spiritual healing, with special interest in the healing carried on at Morningside.

Merely turning from the material of itself won't bring healing. For one thing the human mind of itself can't eliminate a material view. It can only exchange one material view for another. To be successful in making a radical change we have to look to a deeper source for our ideas. We have to look to God. In thinking about this we come to the original meaning of the word "radical".

The word radical comes from the Latin word radix which means root. So in its original

meaning radical signifies that we go to the root or source. Radical reliance then would mean depending entirely on God for everything we are and do. This broader meaning includes the ability to turn radically from whatever is not Godlike and good. But even more importantly it indicates what we turn to. We turn to God as the source and substance of all that exists. This answers the concern that the public has when it sees us rejecting traditional medical means. It answers the concern that the individual Christian Scientist might have in rejecting medical methods as well. Our reliance on God is the most dependable reliance we can have. God is the basis of our being. Nothing exists except God and His expression.

The world is continually trying to impress

mankind with the efficacy and in fact monopoly of the medical approach. It would say that a non-medical approach is the same as doing nothing.

But consider the logic of the Christian Science approach. Where do the ills of the body come from? Where could they come from except from the hypothetical mind that Mrs. Eddy has named mortal mind? It's plain that they can't come from the one intelligent Mind that we call divine Mind or God. We prove that divine Mind is the only source when spiritual healing results.

Or take the concept of justice. Suppose you have two people equally moral and well-intentioned. Is it just for one of them to contract a disease and the other one not to contract a disease? Or is it just for one

person to advance in years without problems or debility and another to suffer major losses of health and faculties? This doesn't fit in with a divine Principle that regulates everything in perfect order and balance under eternal laws. We gain healing by appealing to the justice of divine Principle.

The logic of Christian Science is undeniable. We see wonderful results from applying it. Yet we also find situations that seem to resist the healing power of Christian Science. What can we do about these? That's a very big question.

Two statements in the textbook describe this contrast. The first affirms the logic. It says, "The rule and its perfection of operation never vary in Science." This is very reassuring. Mrs. Eddy follows it by another

statement that I carried in my wallet for years. It's this: "If you fail to succeed in any case, it is because you have not demonstrated the life of Christ, Truth, more in your own life, -- because you have not obeyed the rule and proved the Principle of divine Science."

That seems to place an awful lot of responsibility on the shoulders of the practitioner! And when I say practitioner I'm referring not only to the public practitioner, but to each one of us, because each of us has one main patient all the time --himself!

What does this statement mean? Does it mean that each of us has to demonstrate a perfect, Christly life before we heal a difficult case? That wouldn't seem like a practical requirement since we're all very much

in the process of growing spiritually. No, this statement can be an incentive to reach the ideal that God has established for us. Can it be done with merely a human effort? Mankind has found that it cannot. Therefore we have to turn to a deeper source. We have to have radical spiritual reliance rather than merely human reliance. Only in this way can we truly obey the rule and prove the Principle of divine Science that Mrs. Eddy refers to.

Let me briefly mention three rules that Mrs. Eddy speaks of in connection with healing.

The first is the need to express love. Here are some familiar statements that underscore this. "If the Scientist reaches his patient through divine Love, the healing work will be accomplished at one visit, and the disease will vanish into its native nothingness

like dew before the morning sunshine." (S&H 365:15)

Farther down the page, "The poor suffering heart needs its rightful nutriment, such as peace, patience in tribulation, and a priceless sense of the dear Father's loving-kindness." (Line 31)

And elsewhere, "No power can withstand divine Love." (S&H 224:31)

Are we talking about human affection here? It certainly can't be excluded. Human affection provides an evidence of God's love for man. But human affection alone won't heal. Healing requires the ability to reject the material sense testimony. Besides that, human affection can sometimes seem very hard to generate if it's just on the basis of human effort. Some humans don't seem very lovable!

Radical reliance on God means drawing deeply on the infinite Love that is God. This love shows itself in warmth, in patience, in confidence and in spiritual strength -- a strength that reassures the patient and lets him or her know that they will get well and that they're worthy to get well.

The rule to express love is closely related to a second rule: remove fear. Mrs. Eddy says, "Always begin your treatment by allaying the fear of patients." (S&H 411:27)

She tells us the basis for doing this: it's the fact that the sufferer is exempt from disease and danger. We can't be free from fear if we believe there is something that can harm us. Here radical reliance shows us that there truly is no power beside God. His care, His totally intelligent creativity, maintain man

eternally safe and perfect.

A third rule is: seek the spirit not the letter. Not that the letter isn't useful. At this point it's indispensable. It describes what we're seeking. But Mrs. Eddy cautions us it is not the goal itself. She says, "Remember that the letter and mental argument are only human auxiliaries to aid in bringing thought into accord with the spirit of Truth and Love, which heals the sick and the sinner." (S&H 454:31)

The young man Elihu in the book of Job recognized the value of the spirit. He told Job, "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Job 32:8) There is in each individual a spirit, a divine intuition. Mrs. Eddy calls it "a divine influence ever present

in human consciousness." (S&H xi:16) This is what we appeal to in the patient and in ourselves because this is what lifts us from the human to the divine, from the unreal to the real. It's the spirit that heals.

How does our discussion today relate to you and your support of Morningside, Inc.? I know you support Morningside financially and perhaps you even take part in its actual operation. But the support that I've been talking about today is the spiritual thought that you will continue to give to its mission. I can't stress too strongly how important it is for you to uphold in thought the ideal of Christian Science. We bring forth what we think, and the more we lift our thought the more we'll see the ideal demonstrated.

Christian Science is a radical departure

from material beliefs. Everyone working in Christian Science faces in some degree the world's resistance to this radical departure. This is why we need each other. We need to feel the power of our united spiritual thought advancing the demonstration of pure Christian Science.

Let me conclude with a statement by our Leader that keynotes our theme today. She writes, "Only through radical reliance on Truth can scientific healing power be realized."

We're not talking here about substituting one material belief for a different material belief. That's material medicine. We're talking about "scientific healing power"-- the replacement of the material view with the spiritual. And that can only be accomplished by drawing deep from the roots of our being --

drawing from God. Then we know we're relying radically on Truth and we'll feel the effects at Morningside, in our Movement and in ourselves.