

Suncoast Care and Services, Inc.

THE EFFICACY OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE:  
BASIS FOR NURSING

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It's wonderful to get together like this. It's fun to see our friends and other Christian Scientists, and I do see lots of friends here and many familiar faces. We feel a special bond with each other in our mutual understanding of Christian Science and our commitment to it.

But that isn't what really brings us here today. You're really here because you believe in the purpose of this activity - Christian Science nursing. And you believe in its value because you believe in the efficacy of Christian Science - the power of Christian Science to heal. You want to support this activity spiritually and practically.

But I think you're also here because you expect a sharing of spiritual ideas - ideas you can apply to your

own life. Some of the ideas may reinforce your conviction of the truths you already know. Others may provide insights that you hadn't considered. But in any case, I'm sure each one of us is always looking for ways we can deepen and broaden and clarify our understanding of this Truth.

As we do so, we can care for our own health more effectively. We bring a greater happiness and meaning to our human relationships. We gain a more confident view of our finances. And we then can bring this same healing support to others and to humanity in general.

But are these so-called material effects what we're really most interested in? Deep down in our heart of hearts, we know that the real goal we're striving for is to understand God so clearly and to feel so much at one with God that body, relationships, and substance are uplifted in our consciousness so that we see them as they eternally are.

Then we find we're enjoying the concept of what health really is. We see that the body isn't an enemy, ready to strike at our peace and our comfort. The body is our consciousness of identity. It's designed to fulfill God's purpose. The Manual quotes the Bible, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (47:11) The nature of God is represented in the true concept of Body.

The same applies in our human relationships. The harmony of divine Love is what we're looking for, where each individual is cherished and appreciated, and where everyone's activities coordinate with others' in a constructive way.

In our finances, we want to see that the resources of Spirit are infinite; that means with no limitation whatever. We can keep drawing on the resources of Spirit as a well of ideas that do meet every need.

What I've described here is the ideal. It's a quick sketch of spiritual reality. Christian Science is effective

because it defines reality. Christian Science isn't just some mental construction that allows us to drift off into an imaginary peace. It's a science. It's the knowledge of what is real, what is true right now. Truth is that which is permanent. That which is perfect. That which is unrestricted in beauty, in strength, and in happiness. Truth refers to all that is Godlike. It expresses the very essence of God, infinite Mind and infinite Soul.

How does all of this relate to Christian Science nursing? It relates very directly because it points up the nature of Christian Science nursing in contrast to the conventional nursing from a material standpoint. Basically, nursing is designed to meet the practical needs of a person who is not entirely able to care for himself or herself and who needs healing. It involves knowing what to do to meet those needs. In the Manual By-Law relating to nursing, Mrs. Eddy refers to the "practical wisdom necessary in a sick room."

(49:12) And in Science and Health, she refers to additional elements. She speaks of unselfish affection, common sense, common humanity, and specific qualities of cheerfulness, orderliness, punctuality, and patience.

Are these elements of nursing to be found only in the Christian Science nurse? Certainly not. I have the greatest admiration for the love and commitment I've seen in nursing both inside and outside of Christian Science. High moral and spiritual qualities are not a monopoly of Christian Science. They're actually the true nature of every individual, and they're very widely expressed. Christian Science shows how we can avail ourselves of these qualities more fully and it especially shows how these qualities point to the nature of man as being not physical but Godlike and spiritual.

This fact of man's spiritual nature underlies all genuine healing in Christian Science, and it's because of this that the Christian Science nurse has such a unique contribution to make. She or he is constantly

challenging the limitations or abnormalities that the material senses would try to present.

What I'm saying here is that even though someone may express high moral and spiritual qualities, this doesn't necessarily mean that they perceive the non-material nature of man. This revelation is the unique contribution of Christian Science. Other systems may affirm the spiritual nature of man, but it's only in Christian Science that the line is drawn so completely in regard to the absolute spirituality and perfection of God and man. Christian Science shows us how to translate this into practice. Truth is shown to be not abstract but related to the human scene in a way that is applicable in every situation.

Christian Science doesn't create perfection. Perfection already exists just as God has established it. Christian Science reveals perfection. Christian Science nursing builds on this revelation. It supports the patient's effort to see his or her spiritual perfection, cooperating with the efforts of the practitioner.

When this realization takes place, the abnormality or apparent imperfection fades out - the healing takes place - because the problem never was more than a mental misconception of the perfect action or substance that God has established. This improvement appears then in the form that is most tangible to the present thought. It's comforting to know that the process of spiritual correction will continue to go on with each one of us until every problem is solved. And in the meantime, we can also know that no problem actually touches our real being.

Christian Science isn't something apart from you and me. It's our true spiritual sense speaking to us about reality. It may be described in words, but it's really what our spiritual sense is telling us. Mrs. Eddy heard and felt this spiritual sense speaking to her so clearly that she was able to set down the Truth and guide us in hearing our own spiritual sense more clearly. Her perception of the glory of Truth made her

pursue it further. Her spiritual sense also included a deep compssion reaching out to relieve the suffering of humanity just as she had found relief from her own suffering. The resistance to Mrs. Eddy's efforts was immense, but she persisted in spite of the most subtle and the most blatant forms of opposition.

Does this mean we have to expect resistance and problems in connection with our own efforts to apply the Truth? At times it may appear so. But what was it that gave Mrs. Eddy the victory over vrious forms of resistance? It was the very Truth she was working to promote. The resistance came in the form of medical beliefs. It came in the form of false theological beliefs. But the truth about health and the truth about theology included the power to neutralize this resistance.

So it is with us when we run into resistance of any kind. The truth we're affirming is challenging and correcting some false human belief, and as we do correct the belief, the very act of correcting deprives the resistance of its identity and power.



Everone really wants what Christian Science has to offer. Mrs. Eddy refers to "a divine influence ever present in human consciousness." (Pref. xi:16) That divine influence in human consciousness is constantly speaking to each individual. It's what produces the urge to be good, to be kind, to be helpful. It's what gives assurance of safety and the expectation of good health and wellbeing. This divine influence is the divine power governing each individual whether he or she knows it or not.

Recently a man was in my office, and he asked me this question: "How can people who know nothing of Christian Science be just as healthy and experience safety just as much as the Christian Scientist?"

Then he gave me this example. He said he was driving up from Chicago in a heavy snowstorm. Maybe some of you remember that such things do exist! He said they were crawling along in a single file, and he was praying constantly because the road was slippery

and dangerous. Then a large semi started to pass them in the inner lane of the freeway. As it pulled past, it began to lose control. It jackknifed in one direction, the driver straightened it out and it jackknifed in the other direction. Again, the driver straightened it out and was able to bring the vehicle under control.

The man's question was, how was this driver protected when he probably didn't know anything about Christian Science or God's spiritual laws of safety.

There's a statement in the textbook that answers this: "Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals." (13:2)

I gave him the example of the law of gravity. Humanly speaking, the law of gravity governs everyone whether they're aware of it or not. And it's helpful to everyone. It keeps the plates on our table from floating off into space. It keeps things in place. As we understand more about the laws of gravity, we

are able to use them beneficially. We're also able to avoid the problems that would come from infringing the law of gravity.

As I say, this is just a human example, but it does illustrate how a law governs everyone whether they understand it or not. In a higher sense, God's divine law governs everyone. So even in instances where we don't understand fully or in instances where a problem is not fully solved, God's law is still operating. It continues to operate, and it continues to care for us until we do realize our perfection and realize the perfection of others as well.

The work of the Christian Science nurse is to be aware of this divine law of God acting on behalf of the patient and on behalf of everyone. A law can't be a law if there are exceptions. The law of God governs everything perfectly and harmoniously. This fact is a counteractive to what we call universal general belief. This is where a lot of people are accepting a particular

disease or limitation. In realizing this law of God, the Christian Science nurse isn't giving treatment to the patient but maintaining an atmosphere of thought that is conducive to the patient's spiritual awareness. In fact, this is the first requirement of a nurse in the Manual By-Law. It says the "nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice."  
(49:10)

This awareness and conviction of God's all-governing law is most important in Christian Science nursing. But equally important is communicating a sense of love and caring to the patient. This love includes the warm, human expression, but it draws itself from the very source of love, which is God. This is what makes it constant and strong and meaningful and keeps the love uplifted so it can be entirely supported in the Truth.

A feeling of being loved is so important for the patient and for everyone else, for that matter. I

received a call a few weeks ago from a young woman who suffered periodic headaches. When these would come on her, she would be completely knocked out and unable to do anything except go to bed until they were over. I spoke to her about some truths, and then I said to her, "God loves you."

I can't recall when I've said this to a patient, but in this instance I felt she needed that particular comfort because of the pain and suffering she was having.

She called me back the next morning and said that within a relatively short time, she had been healed, which was quite contrary to her experience in the past even though she always endeavored to apply Christian Science when these times came.

Then she brought up this statement that I'd made. She said, "I've heard 'God loves me' a million times." (That may have been a slight exaggeration.) "What does it really mean? Is it like God is one object, loving me as another object?"

This girl is quite intellectual academically, and that simple bit of humanized concept of God wasn't entirely satisfactory to her. I told her that even that sense of God loving her can give her a feeling of warmth and reassurance and that of itself will help to heal. It will take away the tensions and the fear of pain that were involved in her problem. But of course the deeper meaning of the statement "God loves you" is that God is Love itself - infinite, all-embracing, universal Love that expresses itself individually as you and me. We're not simply an object that is loved, but we're the direct objectification of Love that is God. Everything about us shows forth the beneficence of intelligent Mind, the joy and vitality of Spirit, and the total harmony of Soul.

It's this love that the Christian Science nurse draws on to help with the healing.

In talking with Mr. Guiosky beforehand, I asked him what special needs should be considered. He said that one was the need for the nursing service to be used sufficiently.

Well, this is a need that I faced when I first entered the practice. I'd just finished my military obligation in the Army and had moved to Minneapolis to start in the public practice of Christian Science. I'd never been there before. And at the beginning, I didn't receive many calls for help - to put it mildly. I wasn't that concerned, but I did want to know how I could pray for activity in my practice.

I knew I couldn't pray for people to be sick so they would call on me for help. As I thought about it further, I realized that there were already many, many people in need. My prayer then would be to know that nothing can prevent them from seeing the Christ as the answer to their need. One obstacle might be belief in medical theories. The Christ shows us that the problem is not a material one, as medicine assumes, but that our experience is entirely mental and therefore the correction of any problem has to take place in thought. All is consciousness, and the Christ-Truth acts on and

within our consciousness, correcting and healing whatever needs to be healed.

Other obstacles could be false theological beliefs, could be absorption in mere materialism, or simply ignorance of what the Christ can do. As I continued holding to the Christ as the answer to people's needs, I found that more and more sought out this answer.

I think this is the approach we need to take in regard to the general activity of our Movement and to the nursing service: to realize that Christ is the answer and that nothing can prevent people from seeking it out.

The second need that Mr. Guiosky mentioned was for financial support of the nursing service.

Again, I have to think back to when I was starting in the practice. I had no financial capital to begin with. I took out some notes at the bank to get going, but of course it was necessary to earn income to support myself and take care of my obligations. The



answer to my needs came in many ways and included sacrifices and stringent efforts, but I always felt sustained and inspired by feeling the value of the Christ-work I was involved in.

There was one particular metaphysical concept that I adhered to and continues to be a foundation of my approach to this whole question of supply. It was this: I looked to God to supply me with spiritual ideas that I could turn into service. I can even remember coming into the office and deliberately looking away from the mail, which might have a check in it, and turning my thought to divine Mind to receive the spiritual ideas that I could use in service.

These ideas, of course, might be directly applicable to the practice cases I was working on, but I also thought of the ideas in a broader sense. I thought of them as ideas that I could use to translate my material environment and the activities going on in the world into spiritual terms. I felt that this was also a service

that I as a metaphysician could render on behalf of others.

I believed strongly in Jesus' assurance that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." (Luke 10:7)

I didn't have to outline what form the payment for my service would take. I was convinced that there was a law of justice that would balance everything out. The main thing for me to give attention to was the service I had to perform, and this would come from using the ideas I received from Mind.

Divine Mind is giving each one of us spiritual ideas. These ideas are clear views of the value and efficacy of Christian Science. They're clear views of the value and efficacy of the nursing service. They're clear views of the love that impels us to share and to support the Christly method for meeting humanity's needs.

The effect of spiritual ideas is never to deplete resources. They always lead to progress, and that's what we can expect of the nursing service and what we can expect for each one of you.