

PRAYER AND HEALING

Articles republished from the Christian Science periodicals
Published as a pamphlet in 1910 by
The Christian Science Publishing Society
and now in the public domain

Published in e-book transcription and presented as a gift of love by
cslectures.org

*"The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches
over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound.
The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind,
'as when a lion roareth.'"*

— Mary Baker Eddy

PRAYER AND HEALING

CONTENTS

His Presence	3
Effectual Prayer	5
Unbelief and Faith	12
Neither Lapse Nor Relapse	16
The Church of Christ, Scientist	19

PRAYER AND HEALING

HIS PRESENCE.

IN "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 512, we read that "Spirit is symbolized by strength, presence, and power." When Moses was called to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt he asked whom God would send with him. The answer which he received was, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." The psalmist sang, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy."

Christian Science is teaching us the nature and character of God's presence and bringing that fulness of joy which comes from a realizing sense of His nearness. It teaches us that God's presence is always with us; that wherever we are, whatever our burdens may seem to be, God's love sustains us. Love alone is the nature of the presence which never leaves us nor forsakes us. Because the spiritual presence of God is ever with us, here and now, there is nothing material or mortal with power to make or to mar our happiness. Until we learn this we shall be in cruel bondage, like the Israelites of old, ever struggling against weakness, pain, or fear, looking either backward with regret, or forward with forebodings. From the inspired writings of Mrs. Eddy Christian Scientists are learning how to apply in daily life Jesus' command, "Take no thought for the morrow." We are learning that only the present is ours and that our duty is to rightly improve each present moment, to keep ourselves busy striving to realize God's presence now. Doing this, our recollections of the past are filled with gratitude and our anticipations of the future with the loving trust which knows no sense of anxiety.

If we are God's children — His image and likeness — today, then in reality we have always been the object of His tender love, from which nothing can separate us, even though this likeness doth not yet appear. That which we really reflect can never be taken from us; otherwise we should lose our identity as God's children. This abiding consciousness of God's loving presence lifts the burden imposed by

PRAYER AND HEALING

envy, jealousy and kindred traits resulting from a belief of partiality — a belief that God has given to some of His children gifts and blessings which He has withheld from others.

As we assimilate the teachings of Christian Science we find that our sense of a limited supply in any direction is the result of a lack of understanding. It results from ignorance of the fact that supply is really spiritual, even when manifested materially to the human senses, as was the case when Jesus fed the multitude with the few loaves and fishes, thus proving God's presence then and there.

Through a careful study of the Psalms in the light thrown upon the Scriptures by our text-book, we see what it meant to the sweet singer of Israel to dwell in the sacred presence of the most High. He knew that God can furnish a table in the wilderness, and every Christian Scientist is learning, perhaps slowly, but always surely, that divine Love through its ever-presence is meeting "every human need" (Science and Health, p. 494).

PRAYER AND HEALING

EFFECTUAL PRAYER.

"THE effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," wrote St. James, "availeth much;" and James was a follower of him who said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." It is to be noted that this apostle saw not only the power of true prayer, but that he discerned as well the reasons for unanswered prayer: "Ye lust, and have not," he declares. "Ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." This is an arraignment which brings the mortal face to face with himself upon this whole question; a charge which exposes self-interest, dishonesty, greed; an analysis which lays bare the whole human deflection from Godlikeness. The inspiration of righteous communion and the vanity of perverted petition were alike evident to this clear-eyed disciple; and they can be equally plain to the men and women who attain today a like measure of spiritual understanding.

"Ye worship ye know not what," said Jesus to the woman of Samaria; "we know what we worship." And then he defined God as Spirit, and declared, "They that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The worldly-minded have long prayed to they "know not what." The revelation, however, of all that is true about God, unfolded by Christ Jesus and again set forth in Mrs. Eddy's teaching of Christian Science, shows the Christian Scientist more of what he worships and helps him to pray with growing sincerity and grace. Christian Science elevates prayer, and will continue to uplift and enlarge it until it becomes that fervent and effectual thought-process of "a righteous man" which does avail. Christian Science holds for the world a crystal-clear perception of prayer, and makes possible such prayer by revealing spiritual man, the likeness and image of God, as thinking no thoughts of his own but as always reflecting the divine Mind. To reflect divine Mind is perfect prayer.

PRAYER AND HEALING

Concerning this question of prayer, Mrs. Eddy has written on page 20 of her book "No and Yes": "Ever-Present Love must seem ever absent to ever-present selfishness or material sense. Hence this asking amiss and receiving not, arid the common idolatry of man-worship." And again, in the same book (p. 39), "Prayer can neither change God, nor bring His designs into mortal modes; but it can and does change our modes and our false sense of Life, Love, and Truth, uplifting us to Him."

Prayer, then, is not for God, but for us. Prayer is not to persuade nor to placate God, but to make room for more of God manifest in us. Prayer benefits essentially him who prays, for if it be true prayer it transforms his consciousness, purifies his desire, enlarges his outlook, increases his expectation of good. Prayer, like Jacob's ladder, is the celestial stairway upon which the angels of thought ascend and descend; lifting honest hope to God; bringing heaven's will to earth. Prayer raises thought to the higher uses of good; to oneness with God and with all that is Godlike. Prayer explores the kingdom of heaven; it goes about the righteous business of acquainting thought with God. It stirs the moth and rust of earth; bares our human mildew to heavenly sunshine; renews life. Under the influences of true prayer goodness thrives; evil passes, and the law of God prevails.

What mortal is ready to admit that the presence of God is absent to him, as Mrs. Eddy has declared, because of ever-present selfishness? And who is honest enough to see, as James points out, that his requests, if granted, would strengthen him in his own wilful way? He who is, is ready to utter his first availing prayer; he is no longer thankful with the Pharisee that he is not as other men, but rather sees with the publican his own distance from Godlikeness. Thought must distinguish between spiritual man in God's likeness and the mortal which counterfeits spiritual man; must see the error of the latter, and rise from it into the reality of being, if the right basis for prayer is to appear. The perception of man's spiritual perfection and the uncovering of the material imperfection which hides God's man, go

PRAYER AND HEALING

hand in hand in Christian Science. Solomon approached God when he knew himself to be "a little child," in need of guidance; Peter saw, at the first touch of the Christ, his own sinfulness; even the sinless Master declared, "None is good, save one, that is, God."

When one sees the unworthiness of all that is mortal, he enters upon a humility which is the first requisite of effectual prayer. Intellectual perception, logical reasoning, even unflagging devotion to good purpose, without "a contrite spirit" avail little. The true Christian feels safest when possessed by humbleness of spirit. To be able to say honestly and spontaneously, "I was wrong," or "I am sorry," and then to do better, means spiritual protection, for it puts to flight whole troops of damaging thoughts, — thoughts self-righteous, self-opinionated, and self-inflating. It should be noted, however, that this spirit of true humility differs from self-depreciation or self-condemnation. The latter traits are the human recoil from disappointed self-confidence and self-love. Actual humility is the desire to know God because even the best of self fails to satisfy, and it exalts God and knows His presence to the exact degree that the whole human point of view is surrendered.

Humility, then, comes first in preparation for true prayer. It is that quality which confesses, "I need thee every hour." Not until the prodigal of Jesus' parable saw his food to be husks, saw his own distance from his father's house, saw how unsatisfying, in fact, was everything outside his father's house, did he cast it all from him and go to his father. In like manner, it is only when the spiritual analysis of Christian Science strikes a proud spirit contrite that the heart can say truly and wholly, "I will arise." The Christian Scientist maintains that Christian Science brings about a thought-adjustment which compels humility, and that its teaching, obeyed, leads logically to availing prayer.

Not that Christians in all ages have not prayed, and frequently with "signs following." But no philosophy or religion save that wrought out by Christ Jesus and elucidated today by Mrs. Eddy's teaching has

PRAYER AND HEALING

ever revealed the spiritual man's inseparability from God; has ever set forth the entire unreality of evil; has ever even attempted to annul sickness and death in conjunction with the destruction of sin; has ever claimed that answer to prayer comes logically, by reason of spiritual law, as such law is understood and obeyed. So, the student of Christian Science knows he has found that which puts mortal selfhood where it belongs, and that which exalts God's power and presence as absolute. He prays, consequently, if he prays rightly, with no sense of human righteousness, and his confidence that right prayer and its answer are inseparable follows increasingly his larger sense of God and of man's relation to God. With this much understood, he must acknowledge honestly that nothing less than Christian Science could give him this infinite basis for praying aright and for gladly expecting the answer he earns.

With meekness and with confidence of answer, then, the student of Christian Science prays; and from this righteous beginning he may steadily improve the nature of his prayer. Much has been said about the insufficiency of petition; the value of affirmation. Christian Science says that we may pray in any way that makes God nearer, dearer, more available to us; the desire to approach Him needs only to be based upon the admission of His ever-presence and ever-beneficence. If prayer begins with petition, it must, to be availing, end with affirmation. "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory," prayed Jesus, after he had told his disciples to ask for daily bread, for forgiveness, and for deliverance from evil.

A cry for help may be the first reaching out for God. If thought is at-one with God, it is serene and knows the safety of all created things. But if human will and desire are wandering, an appeal for help is often the mental pivot upon which thought swings back to God, and so has its uses to the straying mortal. To beg God for help and still remain in doubt, is, however, to let doubt and fear govern the situation and work out their evil purposes. Christian Science alters the character of prayer by leading it beyond this point of insecurity to a living certainty of the goodness of God. It enlarges the prayer which asks for

PRAYER AND HEALING

help until it is a prayer which finds joy in knowing how God helps. And it adds to the Christian's prayer just what the Christian desires to have, — the unshaken expectation that the will of God shall prevail.

The prayers of scholasticism have for their basis a belief that God knows both good and evil, and that He frequently withholds good, or for inscrutable purposes sends evil; therefore those who so pray waver and suffer disappointment. The prayer of Christian Science stands squarely upon the understanding of God as creating and knowing and sending only good; hence the Christian Scientist knows God's plan for him to be all good, and his prayer is steadfast in trust and rejoicing. He enters into prayer in order to rid his own thinking of fear and doubt and confusion; to find what is really God's purpose for him. And he does this by knowing that God, divine Mind, is the only original thinker; that man in His likeness is mentally reflecting God, and so is thinking God's thoughts by reflection; and that all unlike divine Mind, or supposedly outside it, is not Mind at all, but a passing erroneous belief to be neither honored nor feared. He puts away so-called material thinking and cherishes spiritual thinking, until the one departs from him and the other possesses him. Then appears that wonder called answered prayer. Sin lessens, temptation departs; sickness is healed; dominion over evil enters into human affairs. This is the prayer of affirmation; this the basis for Christian Science treatment.

The Scriptures as interpreted by the Christian Science text-book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, reveal the truth about God and His creation; the material senses testify untruthfully about the creator and about all created things. Prayer readjusts thought, that Truth may appear and all untruth disappear; hence its necessity and value. True prayer is the declaration of spiritual law coupled with living trust in the availability of this law to meet all human need. It is the meditation of the heart which lays hold of spiritual law and enlists its activity to undo specific evils. It is the transitional, transforming state wherein thought reverently and piously yearns for good. It is the open mental doorway through which Christlikeness enters to handle the serpent of sin. Prayer that is right

PRAYER AND HEALING

makes over the mind of him who prays; it is evil giving up its boast; its logical result is increased selflessness. And thought thus purified cannot fail to receive answer to prayer with its prayer. It is ignorance and sin and doubt and fear which separate prayer from its answer. Really, the possibility of prayer presupposes the existence of its answer; if prayer dwells with men, answer must exist in God. And so, when thought becomes one with God, it becomes one with answered prayer.

Concerning what is generally called the prayer of affirmation, the human heart must be carefully watched. It is true that the understanding of the all-power and ever-presence of God, affirmed and realized as Christian Science reveals it, heals the sick, annuls sin, and otherwise destroys evil. But to affirm God's care and protection for any specific personal purpose is to be in danger of praying amiss. The righteous prayer does not concern itself with human wishes; does not ask God to enter upon the scene of human affairs and rearrange them to suit the petitioner. To affirm the success of human plans and policies, even though they seem at the time to be altogether good, is to pervert in most unholy fashion the offices of true prayer.

The human will, until unselfed by divine Love, is by nature a lawbreaker, and its prayer, whether of petition or affirmation, is for self, and in consequence untrue and deservedly unavailing. The genuine Christian Scientist, therefore, does with his own desires as Abraham did with Isaac, and nothing short of such complete surrender can make his prayer prove true. He must renounce all that constitutes a material sense of existence, and lay down his personal outlining of plans, if he is wholly to trust his welfare to the law of God. He must, in short, mean "thy will be done" when he prays it. Let him who prays cast out of himself the will to shape the answer to his prayer, and he prays truly.

He who prays, then, should gladly lay aside his human will and seek safety in acquaintance with the divine Mind and with all that this Mind holds for him, else his prayer is a mockery. If he desires only

PRAYER AND HEALING

comfort in the flesh, and has no longing to be more Godlike, he should not, to be consistent, be praying at all; nor should he be expecting help from God. The only genuine prayer asks for redemption from matter, not for peace in it; for deliverance from the things in ourselves that make us sick, not just for relief from sickness. Such prayer is righteous, for it defeats everything that would obstruct spiritual progress. It is effectual because it casts out of thought the causes for trouble and there is consequently less trouble.

"The effectual fervent prayer," said St. James; and the fervency of prayer is determined by our interest in the things of the Spirit. That which concerns us most we are most fervent about. He who prays in lukewarm fashion will very likely find, upon analysis, that he loves God least, worldliness most. When prayer is a living and refreshing mental oneness with God and Godlikeness, and thought is happier in this than in any human point of view, prayer is fervent. When, with this, thought is sufficiently enlightened to understand somewhat the ever-presence of God and the nothingness of evil, prayer becomes irresistible; no evil can withstand it. Christ Jesus said, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." And Mrs. Eddy, whose life is a prayer that has uplifted her generation, defines clearly the conditions which make possible answered prayer, when she writes (*Science and Health*, p. 495), "God will heal the sick through man, whenever man is governed by God."

PRAYER AND HEALING

UNBELIEF AND FAITH.

THE unbelief which stands in the way of spiritual progress is not so much disbelief of the truth which has been presented, as it is the occupation of the mind with beliefs which are contrary to the truth. Since the mind is thus preoccupied, it has no hospitality for the truth. "Why do ye not understand my speech?" asked Jesus; and in reply he went on to say, "even because ye cannot hear my word." He was speaking to those who claimed to be the children of Abraham without discerning the spirit which had animated Abraham; they were proud of their lineal descent, but unable to discern the qualities of mind which exalted their great ancestor. Their formality and pride prevented them from accepting the teaching which was in accord with the vision and faith of Abraham. Later, Jesus made the sweeping statement, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." The converse of this would be that they who were of error did not hear, because they were listening for something else than the voice of Truth. "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them," is the explanation given by John, regarding those who affiliate with the "spirit of error."

Unbelief, then, is that condition of mind which is so receptive of erroneous views that the word of Truth seems to be a strange language, and there is no hospitality for its messenger. Disbelief may express itself in argument and controversy, and finally be changed to a new conviction as it yields to facts; but unbelief is of the nature of apathy and deafness, and it is necessary that there should first be an arousing, an awakening, then a clearing of thought, whereby the beliefs in error sheltered in the house of unbelief are dispersed. In speaking of the kind of grieving which effects repentance, Paul said, "For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves."

The abolishment of unbelief is accomplished by such a clearing of thought that wrong beliefs are seen to be without basis, and as they

PRAYER AND HEALING

are dispersed there comes a vision of that which has basis and enduring cause. The false sense of man as a composite of sensations, errors, sicknesses, sins, and unsatisfied desires, yields to a vision of the truth of being. As discernment of that on which being depends, the creative power which we name God, becomes clearer, eventually it can be said that by faith we understand what man is; we are able to see the causal connection between the Father and the son who is the expression of the Father's being and character.

When we consider this matter practically we recognize that every argument we use to favor the prepossession that evil is power, whether we give to the argument the name of any one of the thousand diseases which men believe to be hurtful, or the name of any one of the innumerable sins which men believe to be delightful, is really a statement of unbelief in God. Any belief in sickness is really an expression of unbelief in omnipotent goodness; if there were faith, there would be healing. Every sin is an expression of unbelief in omnipotent goodness; if there were faith, there would be righteousness. If men fear evil so as to be sick, and love evil so that they are sinful, what is this but unbelief in the real power which manifests itself in healing and happiness among men? How shall we help this unbelief, or rather help men out of it and bring them into the salvation which comes by faith?

The expression of unbelief may be in a variety of beliefs. In this usage of the word a "belief" is a conviction as to the reality of something not caused by God, and a consequent experience of conditions which correspond to the conviction. James Whitcomb Riley tells a pathetic story of a man who came to believe that he could not speak, and met the love and persuasion of his family with apparent stubbornness in the conviction that it was of no avail to try to use his voice. At last the tenderness of his daughter so touched his own love, that he broke through the barrier of his fear and false belief with answering speech to hers.

In the case of the epileptic boy brought by his father to Jesus

PRAYER AND HEALING

after he came down from the mount of transfiguration, the measure of the father's conviction as to his son's affliction was the measure of his unbelief in any healing power. His doubts were confirmed by the failure of the disciples to help him, but his strong belief in the reality and incurable nature of the disease had practically brought the disciples to his way of thinking; hence they were for the time in a state of unbelief. To meet the need of them all, and of the world, Jesus analyzed the error, and sharply rebuked the father of the boy when his recital of the symptoms and manifestation of the disease ended with the doubt, — "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." Jesus replied to him in words that awakened a new sense of the case, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The man was trying to put the responsibility upon the healer; now he was shown that faith leads to the power which heals, and his heart melted with new love and hope. How graphic is the record: "Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Then followed the healing of the boy, and it was a permanent cure; "the child was cured from that very hour," as one of the evangelists affirms.

The disciples were still puzzled over their failure, and not discerning their Master's method, asked him why they were not able to cast out the demon. Jesus showed them that they were in the same case as the father of the boy, who had a prepossession as to the reality of the disease, and had affected them with the same belief, and thus had brought them into a state of unbelief. "Why could not we cast him out?" asked they. "Because of your unbelief," replied Jesus, with the indisputable authority of the completed demonstration. Furthermore he said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Further instruction still he gave them, when he said, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." As ceremonially observed, fasting was merely abstinence from food, or from certain proscribed kinds of food. Of course it cannot be within the power of

PRAYER AND HEALING

either fasting or feasting, in a material sense, to deliver one from unbelief; but when we consider how with greediness the mortal mind assimilates the various beliefs in error which human imagination has originated, one can see that a fast from such indiscriminate gorging would be a blessing. Like the "crop-full bird," men become heavy and sordid with their beliefs, and their eyes become too dull to have any vision of divine realities. To fast, in the sense of giving up such sense-gratification, and to pray aright, which is to commune with God, to turn one's thought to the contemplation of that real cause of happiness and well-being for man, that source of life which to every returning prodigal is Father, cannot fail to establish faith in good. The process is well stated by Isaiah: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord." If we recall the word spoken by Jesus in connection with salvation, "With God all things are possible," it must be evident that when through fasting and prayer we both forsake the false belief, and also realize the new vision of divine goodness, we shall be equipped for the work of casting out demons, as the disciples desired to be.

Casting out false beliefs, we assail unbelief; but the mind must not be left empty, lest they return with added torment. The truth of being which expelled them must also exclude them. The false beliefs which are the expression of the attitude of unbelief are eradicated by the action of the spirit of Truth. They are from no heavenly origin of good seed; where they seem to grow, it is from such sowing as the perverted imagination of men has been doing for ages. There is comfort in knowing of the impermanence of all these conditions. Our Master declared, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." As one comprehends this, faith becomes his attitude to God; and the good which he expects from God is done unto him, and proved to others.

PRAYER AND HEALING

NEITHER LAPSE NOR RELAPSE.

A CURE in Christian Science is based upon the scientific fact that since true health is spiritual and eternal, there has never been a lapse from this genuine health, never any cessation of harmony nor any interference with God's government; so that man is amply justified in looking upon God as the health of his countenance. From this it logically follows that disease and discord have never been created, that they have no law to support them and that they have never come into real being for an instant. It further follows, that since there has never been any lapse from harmony, so there can be no relapse, for a lapse necessarily precedes a relapse. Mrs. Eddy tells us that "Science knows no lapse from nor return to harmony" (Science and Health, p. 471).

"But," says the average reader, "what about all the sick people one sees, do you ignore them?" Christian Scientists are very far from ignoring suffering, and the lives of practitioners are devoted to the relief of the sick. Their plea that God did not create disease nor ordain suffering, has the authority of Truth, and consequently the patient's fears and symptoms commence to abate as he takes in right ideas and gains quietness of mind and reassurance. When spirituality, transcending the evidence of the five physical senses, gives us a glimpse of creation as it really is, spiritual and perfect, we are faced with the fact that it is not so much a disease that has to be healed as a false belief to be obliterated and a dark fear to be dispelled.

Truth and Love are the only healing agents the world can ever need or ever have. Some may argue that suffering is experienced, whether the sufferer is made sick from a physical or a mental cause. True, and to say that a person is merely suffering from the effects of fear and to leave the matter there would not go far toward healing him; but truth drives the lie from its hiding-place in declaring that neither fear nor false belief was ever created by God for the torment of His creation, and that if He is in no way discordant, neither can His creation or reflection be so. In the words of our Leader, "Science saith

PRAYER AND HEALING

to fear, ' . . . You do not exist, and have no right to exist, for "perfect Love casteth out fear"" (Retrospection and Introspection, p. 61). Thus, speaking from the spiritual standpoint, which is the only absolutely true one, sickness has no true cause, whether moral or physical. That disease will continue in human experience so long as sin remains, is indicated by the utterances of Jesus, but sin has no origin in God, since He is of too pure eyes to behold evil; and His omniscience includes no consciousness of this human invention.

Thus Science leads us again and again to the primal fact of harmony, which fact has been hidden by a maze of mistaken beliefs and theories, though all the while creation has lain intact and unsullied as the snow-capped mountain at which mortals gaze from distant valleys. Infinite good, however, is not distant from any one, nor is Truth remote; and mistaken fears have only the density which we ourselves accord to them. It is well to remember always that evil is a nonentity which never had any action of its own, nor ever suspended or accelerated the action of the one infinite and all-inclusive divine Mind. Some may suggest that even although the falsity of one's viewpoint has been recognized, this recognition carries with it no remedy for the existing state of things. It should not, however, be forgotten, by students of this Science, that a false claim is no claim at all; indeed, Mrs. Eddy strongly emphasizes the fact that "to say there is a false claim, called sickness, is to admit all there is of sickness; for it is nothing but a false claim. To be healed, one must lose sight of a false claim. . . . As it is with sickness, so is it with sin" (Unity of Good, p. 54).

The honest student of Christian Science is endeavoring to gain dominion over the belief that there is any evil power, or any power in evil, or even any claim to such power. In this way Truth drives out error and all its false claims. Jesus maintained scientific facts so faithfully and dwelt upon them so constantly that he performed miracles such as the world had not witnessed before. Christ Jesus has given to humanity evidences of the true, sinless, deathless, spiritual creation, free from all that is material and perishable; he has shown us

PRAYER AND HEALING

glimpses of a mountain-peak lying serene above the clouds of mortal belief, accessible to all, and each glimpse of which should heal some traveler in the valley, besides giving joy and buoyancy to the mental footsteps of the explorer in this spiritual realm. Our gaze should remain fixed upon the summit, so that the eternal light may stream through a consciousness that refuses longer to harbor darkness. The reflection of light alone includes no shadows. When the one creation stretches before us, more and more clearly outlined in peace and harmony, our health and happiness will cease even to appear liable to lapse or relapse.

PRAYER AND HEALING

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST.

IT is very desirable that all who join the Church of Christ, Scientist, whether it be The Mother Church or one of its branches, should be thoroughly familiar with the object for which this church was founded, as set forth in the "Historical Sketch" in the Manual; namely, "To organize a church designed to commemorate the word and works of our Master, which should reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing" (p. 17). The precise purpose for which the Christian Science Church was formed, and which is here so definitely stated, should be ever uppermost in the thought of the members of The Mother Church and of the branch churches. The nature of the church, as it is understood in Christian Science, is further defined by Mrs. Eddy in *Science and Health*, (p. 583), as "that institution, which affords proof of its utility and is found elevating the race, rousing the dormant understanding from material beliefs to the apprehension of spiritual ideas and the demonstration of divine Science, thereby casting out devils, or error, and healing the sick."

The foregoing brief quotations from our Church Manual and our text-book should be enough to remind us that we, as members of the Christian Science church, are identified with the most important religious movement since the early Christian era, and are engaged in the most splendid undertaking in which it can possibly be our privilege to participate. Having once fully realized this fact, we should not lack inspiration for faithful, persistent, consecrated activity. We should be able to see that in the work of Christian Science there can be no idleness, apathy, self-ease, self-complacency, or any other form of selfishness which might creep in and delay if possible the coming of Christ's kingdom to individual and universal humanity. We should understand that in the institution which "is found elevating the race" there can be no place for personal ambition, self-seeking, love of leadership, or desire to control, dominate, and manage the affairs of others.

PRAYER AND HEALING

"Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all," said Jesus; and we, as professed followers of the Master, should make certain that his "Father's business" is not obstructed, hindered, or confounded by wrangling, friction, hatred, envy, jealousy, criticism, and misjudgment of the motives of others. We should be ever on guard against the subtle suggestions of evil which seek to find their way into the "house of prayer" and which would turn it into "a den of thieves." We should be faithful and vigilant in protecting ourselves from the serpentlike sins which, if unnoticed, would crawl into consciousness and defile our moral nature with their stupefying poison. We should avoid even the "appearance of evil." By our alertness we shall be better fitted to "rouse the dormant understanding" of others "to the apprehension of spiritual ideas" and shall thereby prove ourselves to be in deed as well as in name, Christian Scientists.

The organization of the Christian Science churches is simple in form, and their government is democratic in the extreme. Inasmuch as the Readers who conduct the services, and the trustees or directors who are entrusted with the spiritual and temporal affairs of these churches, are elected at stated intervals by vote of the members, it is of the highest importance to the welfare of the churches that the members thereof take an active and intelligent interest in the business meetings at which these officers are elected, as well as in other regular and special meetings. When officers are to be elected, the members should be prepared to vote wisely for those of their number who are best qualified metaphysically, morally, spiritually, educationally, and by experience, to fill acceptably the respective offices. The members should not be prejudiced or biased in their choice by personal considerations. They should not be unduly influenced by human opinion. They should not be limited in their selection of officers to the students of one teacher, but should be free to vote for those best adapted to serve the Cause, even if they are not class students at all. They should go to these elections with the utmost freedom of thought, willing to be guided by divine Love and knowing that they cannot be influenced erroneously nor swayed by animosity or "mere personal attachment" (Church Manual, p. 40).

PRAYER AND HEALING

One who has freed his thought by demonstration will not be likely to listen to idle rumor, slander, or gossip. Because he is conscious of being governed by the Mind which is God, he will have the wisdom to know what to do and the intelligence to know when and how to do it. It is obvious that if every member is thus governed, the action of the church as a whole will be right and the result harmonious. Having made their choice of officers, it becomes the duty of the members to support them in every right way, and officers thus supported will give the church better service than they could possibly give if hampered by criticism and opposition. When officers have been elected, they should assume the administration of the affairs of the church as a sacred trust from the members. If they prove faithful to the trust reposed in them, they are entitled to cordial support. If not, they should be removed. If they make mistakes, they should be treated charitably, for they do not claim to be perfect and in most instances have not sought election. Church officers who have been wisely chosen will always be found seeking divine guidance and serving humbly and considerately those who have chosen them. They will not assume proprietorship or superiority, although they will strive to carry on the work of the church with dignity and decorum.

Thus between members and officers there should prevail mutual sympathy, cordial cooperation, and an unselfish desire for the welfare of the church and for the prosperity of the Cause. In this way will the Christ-idea be lifted up in our churches and draw all men unto it. The lives of all Christian Scientists, each word and deed, should point to the fulfilment of that desire so finely expressed by Samuel Longfellow:

—

O living Church, thine errand speed,
Fulfil thy task sublime;
With bread of life earth's hunger feed,
Redeem the evil time.