



# Christian Science Sentinel

"What I say unto you I say unto all, *Watch*" —Jesus

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## A Collection for Teens



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*It's never too late to love more. It's never too late to admit that you are deeply loved.*

—From *Love myself? Is that even possible?* p. 9.

# A Collection for Teens: July–December 2022

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We look forward to hearing from you!

# Pray about sports? Really?

Karen Trevor-Roberts

**I AM A FIELD** hockey goalie. I've also gone to Christian Science Sunday School my whole life. So it didn't come as a surprise when, during my first field hockey season, my dad encouraged me to pray about my practices and games. I have to admit, though, that at first, I just brushed off his recommendation as a pregame speech. Then I had an experience that helped me understand the value of prayer, even in sports.

It was a really hot day, and several of my teammates were exhausted because they'd had lots of tests in school that day. We were also losing 1-0 and the whole team seemed miserable. That's when I remembered that my dad had told me I could pray about the game.

When I pray, I often think about what I'm grateful for, but there are many ways to pray. Recognizing God's goodness and seeing each individual as God's child are also ways that I pray. Sometimes I also listen with my thoughts

**While I wasn't praying for us to win, I was excited to discover the way prayer brings out more unity and harmony on the field.**

for inspiration from God. When I did that this time, the first thing that came to me was the opening sentence from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: "To those leaning on the sustaining infinite, to-day is big with blessings" (Mary Baker Eddy, p. vii). I understood this to mean that when you lean on God rather than on a



AARON CRANFORD — STAFF

limiting, mistaken sense of having your own abilities, good things will happen. I took that seriously and thought about how my whole team was being supported by God. About a minute later, our team scored a goal! The team's mood immediately shifted from misery to hope and excitement.

Another team issue I prayed about was the way my teammates would hit the ball in the general direction of the goal instead of passing it to another teammate, which often allowed the other team to get possession of the ball. So, I prayed about God as Mind. I knew that there is only one Mind, not a bunch of minds that don't know how to work together effectively. And one Mind is expressed in qualities like intelligence, harmony, and cooperation. Shortly after praying this way, I watched as my teammates gracefully passed the ball to each other and then straight into the goal! Our team won with a final score of 2-1.

While I wasn't praying for us to win, I was excited to discover the way prayer brings out more unity and harmony on the field. And I also saw for myself that prayer isn't limited to those times when you're sick or injured. It can be part of every activity you do. As a result of my experience in this field hockey game, now I always pray about all of my games! ●

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# No more panic attacks

John Biggs

**Q: I'M SCARED OF** having another panic attack. Help.

A: I understand where you're coming from. But having one panic attack doesn't mean you have to have another. Ever. I know because of a healing I had.

I was at home by myself when I became overwhelmed by a feeling of mental numbness and almost dread. I felt disoriented, like I was in a fog. But I managed to find my way to the couch, where I lay down, feeling an enormous mental weight that I didn't think I could bear.

I realized I needed immediate help. I had never felt this way before, and though I've had other healings through prayer, I didn't feel as though I had any frame of reference for finding relief in this situation. I was grateful that the name of a Christian Science practitioner came to thought and that I was able to send him a brief email asking for help and telling him I thought I might be having a panic attack.

Soon I felt my phone vibrate with an alert about an incoming email. It was the practitioner, assuring me of his immediate availability to help and reminding me that I could meekly let God, divine Mind, show me the way forward.

This is such a helpful starting point for dealing with mental health issues in general: knowing that God truly is the one and only Mind and that He is totally good. We can pray from the basis that we don't have a mind or brain that can be panicked, anxious, or consumed with dark thoughts. Divine Mind is full of light, joy, and peace, and in reality, this is our only Mind. In addition, we can know that we are never on our own, struggling to find our way out of a scary problem. God's thoughts are always there to comfort us and show us a way forward.

The practitioner also shared this passage from the Christian Science textbook, *Science*



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and *Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy: “Let Christian Science, instead of corporeal sense, support your understanding of being, and this understanding will supplant error with Truth, replace mortality with immortality, and silence discord with harmony” (p. 495). This passage helped me see that instead of scrambling to find the ideas I needed to be healed, I could accept how completely cared for I already was and how dependable God's care is.

This idea of letting divine Mind inform me, support me, and heal me—instead of it all being on me—came as such a relief. I was still disoriented and overwhelmed, but I also felt so much peace knowing that it was not my personal responsibility to make the panic go away. Soon, the fear started lifting.

Within an hour, I was able to take my dog for a walk. I still felt a little shaky, but I kept turning my thought to God with genuine interest and meekly

**We are never on our own, struggling to find our way out of a scary problem. God’s thoughts are always there to comfort us and show us a way forward.**

listening for what He had to say—for a better understanding of how much He loves me. I found myself less and less concerned about what had been happening, and feeling more and more full of God’s love.

Within three hours, I felt exactly like myself again. And not only was I completely freed of this panic at that time but I have never experienced that sort of attack again.

This healing proved to me that no matter what the pattern seems to be with panic attacks, anyone can be free from this issue—and quickly—because the law of Love, God, that freed me is universal. It’s a law for everyone, and it’s consistent.

As you pray, the ideas that help you may be different from the ones that helped me. But you can know that this law is always operating on your behalf. And you can discover, as I did, that you can lean completely on God as you go forward—and find healing. ●

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**For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.**

—Jeremiah 29:11

# My relatives saw that I was healed

Avantika Dey



**I WAS STAYING WITH** my aunt while my parents were away for work. It was the first time I'd stayed anywhere for a long time without my mom and dad.

One day I started coughing badly. For a few days I ignored it, but then the symptoms became so intense and painful that I couldn't sleep at night. Because I've gone to Christian Science Sunday School since I was little, my first thought was to pray about this. So, I called a Christian Science practitioner back home in Chandigarh to pray with me. She reminded me of "the scientific statement of being" in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy (p. 468) and encouraged me to read it and understand it better, which I tried to do.

My aunt was worried about me, and since she is not a Christian Scientist, she wanted me to take medicine. But I told her that I wanted to rely on God for healing. As she'd heard about the healings my family had had through prayer, she supported me and didn't ask me to take medicine again.

During this time, I also visited another relative's house. I was afraid that my relatives there would also ask me to take medicine, so I told them that I was getting help from a Christian Science practitioner. They supported me, too. Even though my parents were not with me, I was not worried and kept praying.

One day the practitioner reminded me that God, being good, did not create anything apart from good. So, if God knows only good, how could I, as God's reflection, know anything except good? I understood that God and His reflection is the only reality and that there is no element called disease. I felt somewhat better and was able to enjoy outings with my relatives.

But when the coughing continued, I contacted the practitioner again, and she suggested that I pray with another passage from *Science and Health*. The section of this passage that touched me the most was, "Health is not a condition of matter, but of Mind; nor can the material senses bear reliable testimony on the subject of health." This section concludes, ". . . thus Science denies all disease, heals the sick, overthrows false evidence, and refutes materialistic logic" (p. 120). It was very powerful to realize that health does not come and go but is from God and so is permanent.

No sooner had I understood the truth of this statement than I realized that I was completely free from all symptoms. My relatives rejoiced with me when they saw me healed. I felt so grateful for Christian Science and for the fact that my relatives had supported me and were able to see that prayer is effective.

I thank God for this healing. ●

Originally published in the August 1, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

# Keeping up at camp

Owen Sipe

**I WAS WORRIED.** I was about to spend the summer as a counselor at a camp for Christian Scientists, and I wasn't sure I would be able to work to my full potential. I've often struggled with fatigue and lack of stamina, especially in sports. And now I was going to be working with the littlest kids at camp, who are always full of energy. On top of that, counselors face constant demands and a feeling of being pulled every which way, and I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to stay energized and excited to work.

Sure enough, after just a week with my campers, I was already starting to feel the work weighing me down. Fatigue was getting to me. I wasn't as present for the kids as I wanted to be, and there was still a lot of the summer left.

Praying has always helped me whenever I'm dealing with something in my life that seems challenging. So I began to pray about the fatigue. One way of praying that I like is to think about a passage from the Bible or *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* that gives me a more spiritual perspective. This time, the idea that helped me was "God rests in action" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health*, p. 519). The young kids were constantly full of energy,

**After just a week with my campers, I was already starting to feel the work weighing me down.**

and it occurred to me that they never worried that their energy could be limited. It was so easy to see that their energy comes from God—an unlimited source. This helped me realize



that my energy also comes from God, not from getting more sleep or working less. God is limitless, and therefore, we also naturally express limitlessness.

During this time, I was reading all the way through *Science and Health*, and a passage I encountered helped take this idea even further for me: "The scientific and permanent remedy for fatigue is to learn the power of Mind over the body or any illusion of physical weariness, and so destroy this illusion, for matter cannot be weary and heavy-laden" (p. 217). I really understood that Mind, God, has absolute control over my body, and since God wasn't giving me fatigue, I couldn't experience it.

This realization shattered what remained of my fear of fatigue and enabled me to continue working energetically with my campers for the rest of the summer. They had fun, and so did I. ●

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# Horse trouble. Horse triumph.

Relia Reed

**I'M USUALLY UP FOR** a challenge. But I wasn't sure I was up for this one.

I was participating in a horsemanship program at a summer camp for Christian Scientists. I've regularly been assigned one of the more difficult horses because my counselors know that I embrace challenges and can handle them. This particular year, though, I was given an especially troublesome and skittish horse with whom I had not worked well the year before.

At the beginning of our two-week session, I struggled to bond with her and quickly grew agitated when we could not complete simple drills. It seemed she was too afraid to do the drills properly, and we were also having trouble communicating. While I've struggled to connect with my assigned horse before, this year it was starting

**“While I've struggled to connect with my assigned horse before, this year it was starting to feel like it was never going to happen.”**

to feel like it was never going to happen. When I asked my counselors if I could switch horses, they told me to try one more day with her, and then if we were still struggling, I could make a change.

I'd done almost everything I could to work effectively with my horse, but I knew there was one other thing I still needed to do. So, that night I prayed with an idea I'd learned about in Christian Science Sunday School—the idea of one, divine Mind. Mind is a name for God that you can



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find in the Bible and in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy.

This idea really stuck out to me because, while it might have seemed like my horse and I were working as two separate minds that were incompatible, praying with the fact of one Mind gave me a different perspective. I saw that divine Mind, expressing peace, harmony, and intelligence, is really the only Mind there is, and that therefore my horse and I were fully capable of working together.

After praying with this idea, I was so filled with excitement. I couldn't wait to demonstrate what it means to know the reality of one Mind.

The next day in our program we played polocrosse—a sport that is very similar to lacrosse, but played on horseback. Since polocrosse has constant distractions and things flying through the air, it can be very frightening for some horses. However, now confident in God's constant protection and the harmony I knew I shared with my horse, I was able to enjoy the game with my horse without any challenges.

For the rest of the session we worked as one harmonious team, overcoming fear and new obstacles together. We also competed very well in our end-of-session rodeo and were awarded first place. My best take-away of the summer, though, was knowing that through prayer I can triumph over any challenge that seems insurmountable. ●

Originally published in the August 29, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.



# So *this* is why I go to Sunday School

Lona Ingwerson

**IT WAS A STORMY** Kansas night. My date and I were headed to the next town over when rain started coming down so fiercely that we knew we couldn't go any further. We actually slid off the side of the road into the mud, and stayed there while it rained and rained and rained.

I knew the rain would stop eventually. But if I got home late, I couldn't guarantee I'd ever be allowed to go on another date, and it looked as though we were destined to stay there all night. There were no other cars on the road; cellphones hadn't been invented yet; and I knew how worried my parents would be.

I stewed about it for a couple of hours, until I had a startling thought. I was a Christian Scientist. And I'd learned in Sunday School that God was right there with us and would send

**I knew how worried my parents would be.**

the help we needed. Words from a hymn in the *Christian Science Hymnal* came to me loud and clear:

In heavenly Love abiding,  
No change my heart shall fear;  
And safe is such confiding,  
For nothing changes here.  
The storm may roar without me,  
My heart may low be laid;  
But God is round about me,  
And can I be dismayed?  
(Anna L. Waring, No. 148)



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It was my answer, and I felt a total sense of relief. I didn't know how rescue would come, but I knew we would be OK.

Within moments, the first headlights we'd seen in hours approached us—a pickup truck with some good old Kansas boys in it. They quickly attached our car to their truck and pulled us out of the mud and back onto the highway so we could be on our way home.

It was the first time I'd really seen what Christian Science is all about. It taught me of a God, heavenly Love, who is always there to pull us out of mud of all kinds. And I got that this—*this*—was why I'd been going to Sunday School. Not because my parents would disapprove of me if I didn't, but because what I was learning in Sunday School was practical. And I was extremely grateful for it. ●

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# Love myself? Is that even possible?

John Biggs

**Q: EVERYONE IS ALWAYS** talking about how you should love yourself. But sometimes I feel like, How is that even possible?

A: I know what you mean. Sometimes it seems like it's really hard to love ourselves, and I think that's because of the things we tell ourselves about ourselves.

Now, most of us probably know we shouldn't tell lies or spread rumors about other people. But sometimes I think we do listen to, or tell, not-so-nice stories about ourselves. "I'm not fast enough." "I'm not smart enough." "I'm not . . . *something* enough."

Well, sure. Someone out there is faster than you. Someone may be better at math, or funnier, or whatever. But believe it or not, all those "I'm nots" don't actually define us. What we're bad at or where we don't measure up doesn't actually constitute our identity. And remembering that, at least for me, often puts a crack in that feeling that loving myself isn't possible.

How do I know that the bad stuff doesn't define us? It's because of something Jesus said that you can find in the Bible. I always appreciate

**What we're bad at or where we don't measure up doesn't actually constitute our identity.**

the things Jesus shared because he told us that he came to speak the truth and to tell us what's true. So, anything he says, we can really trust.

Here's something he said in his Sermon on the Mount, for example: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

To me, this says that each of us has a wonderful, unique light—our individuality, our gift to the



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world—and not only can we know it but we can shine it out confidently. But here's the interesting part of what Jesus was saying—it's in that second half. He said that when people see the good we do, it should lead them to glorify not us but God.

Maybe that sounds kind of like a bummer. If we're doing something good, don't we want that to be recognized? Isn't that part of being loved? But what's so safe about the fact that all our good qualities point back to the divine Mind, God, is that it means they're constant. They're not up for grabs based on what people think about us or what we think about ourselves. And since those qualities come from an infinite source, we can't be lacking in any area. Our spiritual identity is the "full representation of Mind" as Mary Baker Eddy says in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (p. 591).

You could also sub in another name for God and say that our real identity is the full representation of Love. And that really starts to get us somewhere in terms of loving ourselves. If we're the full representation of Love, then we must be loving, loved, lovable—whether or not we always feel that or believe it.

I found this out for myself one time when I went on a trip to France. I had been having a

really hard time at the start of this trip. I had left behind some hurt feelings and broken relationships, and I was feeling very unloved. But two weeks into my trip, I had an amazing experience early one morning on a French hillside overlooking the ocean.

At first, I was yelling at God about all the things that were terrible and asking Him why He hadn't done anything about it. But when I finally ran out of complaints, there was this space of sacred silence, and all of a sudden, I just felt loved. Profoundly, divinely loved. I knew without a doubt that I was loved. And this love was more important than any of the things I'd been yelling about; it was the reason I existed. I was healed, and I knew more clearly

who I was. Not a person with disappointments and problems—I *was loved*.

The rest of my trip—in fact, the rest of my life—was transformed by that quiet morning in France. After all, you can only give what you have. So if you know you're loved—if you know you have love—then you can freely give it. And when we do this, we feel that love come washing right back over us! You could say that knowing the fundamental spiritual fact that we're loved creates a continuous cycle of loving and feeling loved, feeling loved and loving.

It's never too late to love more. It's never too late to admit that you are deeply loved. Every day, every morning, you can remind yourself, "I am loved; I am loving; I am lovely; I am lovable." You'll find, as I did, that it really is true. ●

Originally published in the September 26, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

## You belong here

Jenny Sawyer

**I THINK I WAS** wearing jeans and a sweater that day. What I do remember for sure is that it was cold outside, I had two miles to walk after I got off the subway, and it never even crossed my mind that jeans would be the wrong thing to wear. But when I got to church, one of the members gave me the side eye.

"Jeans at church?" she asked, raising an eyebrow.

I hadn't been a member of that church for very long. I was fresh out of college, enthusiastic about being of service, and church had seemed like the perfect avenue for my prayers and energies. But that moment put me off. Suddenly, I found myself wondering if I really belonged.

There are lots of reasons any of us might wonder whether we belong among our fellow Sunday

School students or the people who make up our church. What we wear, how we identify, what we're sure—or not so sure—we believe about our faith, even how we talk about our own very personal experiences of God, could seem to lead to an uncomfortable conclusion: Maybe we're actually outsiders. Maybe we'll never be welcome.

But is that the right interpretation of these sometimes glaring differences? That's what I had to ask myself after the jeans drama.

I'd always thought of Christian Science as the most inclusive way of viewing the world that I'd ever encountered. All of creation, Mary Baker Eddy explained, is governed by universal spiritual laws of good. No one stands outside of them. Christian Science helps us understand these ideas and make them practical, but they include everyone, whether people call themselves Christian Scientists or not.

So why wouldn't the most inclusive, expansive spiritual system have only the most inclusive, open-minded church members? Praying about that question one day, I got a vivid mental image of the religious leaders of Jesus' time criticizing his healings and telling the people that he was doing the devil's work. Ouch. Rather than embrace him and the new ideas he brought, they criticized, mocked, and resisted them.

I understood then that this wasn't about the guys harassing Jesus any more than it was about my much less extreme situation of the lady at church who didn't like the way I dressed. It was simply the opposite of inclusiveness and expansiveness coming to mind in a way that seemed like these people's own thoughts. But those thoughts weren't theirs, or anyone's. They didn't come from God, so they had no source, no actual power. And no one could be fooled by them. Including me.

Yep, I had some better thinking of my own to do, as I realized how that woman's judgments had caused me to feel some judgments of my own. And my heart softened as I realized that whether or not she wanted to embrace me, I could still embrace her. I could bring to church what I believed was important—inclusiveness, open-mindedness, love—and that way, those qualities would always be with me in church, whether or not everyone else was expressing them.

After that, going back to church felt natural. And that woman never commented on my clothes again. A few years later, though, when I was having

a hard time after a breakup but hadn't told anyone, she surprised me by approaching me after the service one Sunday and inviting me to her house for lunch. It was exactly the love I needed at that moment. It was exactly the love I'd always known was there for all of us in church.

And it was as though God was saying to me what He says to each of us, no matter who we are, how we look, or whether or not we feel like we fit in: *You belong here.* Because you do. ●



AARON CRANFORD — STAFF

Originally published in the October 10, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

# When I wanted to switch dorms

Hanna Freund

**THIS WASN'T WHAT WAS** supposed to happen. I had just made the decision to switch from being a day student to a boarding student at my high school. But when I got there, I was in a different dorm than all of my friends. I felt isolated. Despite my attempts to stay focused on the good things in my life, I had trouble accepting this disappointment.

I wanted to switch to my friends' dorm, but the administration told me there was no space. Then, a student in the dorm with my friends asked to swap rooms with me. It was the perfect solution! Unfortunately, after I had already started to

**I realized there was nothing for me to do but trust God—and that was enough.**

pack and had told my friends about the switch, she told me she had changed her mind. I was devastated and angry.

That night, while I was upset and trying to fall asleep, an idea came to me to flip through a collection of Christian Science articles that I had been

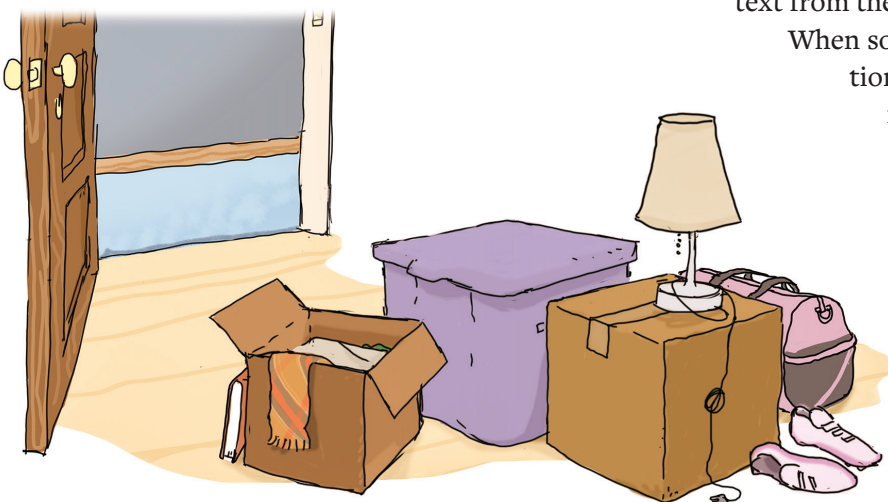
given at the end of my summer as a counselor-in-training at a summer camp for Christian Scientists. I flipped to an article from *The Christian Science Journal* titled "God's law of adjustment" by Adam H. Dickey (January 1916). I knew reading this article would help me feel better, because it's filled with powerful ideas that have healed many people.

As I read, one statement stood out to me: "All the power, action, intelligence, life, and government in the universe belong to God and have always belonged to Him." I knew this meant that this situation was entirely in God's hands—not mine or the other girl's. I needed to let go of my frustration, because the situation was not mine to manipulate. I could trust in God and God's goodness.

The article also helped me understand that I needed to be willing to let go of my own plans, opinions, and sense of what should happen, and that doing this would open the way for God's law to govern the situation. I realized there was nothing for me to do but trust God—and that was enough. I was no longer frustrated or anxious. I felt God's peaceful presence as I went to sleep.

I woke up the next morning feeling refreshed and not at all concerned about the outcome of the situation. Then, I saw that I had received a text from the girl, saying that she wanted to talk.

When some of my initial feelings of irritation started to come back, I reminded myself of another spiritual fact I'd learned from Christian Science—that the universal law of Love, God, never blesses one person by taking something from someone else. I knew nothing good could be taken away from me or her, because God provides infinite good in our lives. I could express God's love and share this love with her.



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When we talked, she apologized for any trouble she'd caused. She told me she had realized that her decision had been clouded by fear. She again offered to switch rooms and was prepared to make the move. I was overjoyed that things were working out for both of us.

This experience proved to me that as I trusted God and let go of my own anxiety and fear about what would happen, not only did I experience God's care but my rooming situation also changed for the better. I am so grateful to God for this healing experience. ●

Originally published in the October 24, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

## How you can pray about bad weather

Tyler Flavin

**Q: THERE ARE CONSTANTLY** so many storms and things now. How can I pray about bad weather?

A: It was my first year as a counselor at a summer camp for Christian Scientists. One night, in the very early hours of the morning, a major storm rolled in.

I was the first one in the cabin to wake up, and I heard deep rumbles in the distance, accompanied by flashes of lightning that happened what felt like almost every second. I looked outside, and even though it was nighttime, I could still see the dark clouds racing across the sky faster than I've ever seen clouds roll by. I knew the storm was headed our way.

I acted fast, awakening the other counselors in the cabin and helping to roll down the window hatches so rain wouldn't blow in. We also tried tying the doors shut, because the wind had started to pick up. Though we couldn't fully see the storm yet, I knew it was bigger than any storm I'd ever encountered.

Just before the storm hit, there was an eerie stillness—just for a moment. Then the rain came down hard, and I saw one of my fellow counselors, who was heading out to get further instructions from the camp director, disappear into the rain not five feet away from the cabin.



Even his neon jacket wasn't visible behind the sheets of water.

Our campers started to wake up as the wind blew hard and broke the ties we'd had on the doors, slamming them open and closed no matter how hard we tried to keep them shut. The kids were as scared as we were and came to us for help as rain poured into the cabin. I tried to read Psalm 91 from the Bible to one boy, but my fear was so great that I could barely finish it. Our campers were running around wildly. I could hear the crash of falling trees, and I was afraid one would hit our cabin.

Then, in the middle of all of this, I had a moment of surrendering. I sat down on the floor, right in the center of the cabin, and I simply surrendered to God because I had no idea what else to do.

This surrender took the form of a deep prayer—of asking God, “Where are You, God? We need You right now.”

That week, the Bible Lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* included an experience

of the prophet Elijah in the Bible (see I Kings 19:9–12). It featured cataclysmic events like an earthquake, a fierce wind, and a fire. Here’s how the Bible tells it: “Behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord;

**I knew that God was there with us, and I knew that the storm was not of His making.**

but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.”

As I sat there, I remembered this story, and as I listened for God, I heard the same still, small voice say to me, “I am not in the storm, and I will not let anything happen to you or My other children. You are all safe.”

Immediately, I felt peace. The storm was still raging, and the kids were still running. But I *knew* that God was there with us, and I knew that the storm was not of His making. His

power is only good—and it is the only power there is.

I also remembered another story from the New Testament, one in which Jesus calms a storm with an authoritative “Peace, be still” (see Mark 4:36–39). With this newfound trust in God, I got up, went outside, faced the storm, and rebuked it, saying, “You have no power over us. God is bigger than you. Peace, be still!”

And within a few minutes, the storm moved on, and we all went back to bed. There were no further weather threats; we were in the clear and went back to sleep as if nothing had happened.

At this point in my life, I was still at the beginning of my own journey of learning more about God, and this experience taught me so much about God in such a profound way. I had a tangible sense of His presence and power, and I caught a glimpse of the ultimate powerlessness of anything unlike God, good.

I was so grateful for this experience, because it taught me that no matter what storms we face in life—literal storms or mental ones—God is not in them, but He is still with us. We can know and demonstrate that His peace and His power can calm any storm. ●

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In heavenly Love abiding,  
No change my heart shall fear;  
And safe is such confiding,  
For nothing changes here.  
The storm may roar without me,  
My heart may low be laid;  
But God is round about me,  
And can I be dismayed?

—Anna L. Waring, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 148

# Was I going to flunk?

Bob Cochran

**IT WAS MY FIRST** year in law school, and one of my professors was completely intimidating. He was brilliant, but he didn't have much patience for mistakes. I studied hard, but still spent every class cowering in the back and avoiding eye contact.

The night before the final exam, I began to panic. Concepts that I had studied many times suddenly seemed fuzzy, and I would read the same sentence over and over without retaining any of it. I began to imagine flunking the test and—why stop there?—flunking out of law school.

Obviously, none of this thinking was particularly inspired, so it came as a welcome surprise when a thought came to mind that I recognized from my study of Christian Science as being from God. It wasn't your typical message. But it had a power and authority behind it that I'd come to identify with thoughts from God, rather than with something I'd come up with on my own.

The message said, "So you flunk this exam. So what? Do you really think God will love you less? Or love you more if you do well on it? The very nature of God is Love. His love doesn't depend on your performance on this exam, and your identity doesn't either. If law school isn't the right place for you, Love will guide you to a place that is right—one where you can find activity that satisfies you and blesses others."

In retrospect, I might have expected an idea more along the lines of "God is the source of your intelligence, and He will give you the answers you need!" This would have been equally valid, but the message I received got to the root of what I needed, which was to understand that neither this exam nor any other human circumstance held the key to my identity or my future. And this idea resonated with me so

much that the fear I'd been feeling completely vanished. I closed the lawbook and slept peacefully through the night.

The three-hour exam the next day consisted of three essay questions. As I read the first one, I understood immediately what to do. There was a straightforward answer, but the response that was needed was more subtle and required a deeper understanding of the material. The other two questions were similar.

The concepts and words flowed effortlessly as I wrote. I knew from the teachings of Christian Science that there's only one Mind, God; therefore, the intelligence behind the creation of the exam must also be behind the answers to the exam. And I felt the presence of that divine intelligence with every sentence I composed. I turned the test in, feeling that I had done reasonably well.

I didn't know how well, however, until a week later, when grades were distributed. This "intimidating" professor sought me out, shook my hand, and informed me that I'd received the highest grade in a class of over a hundred students. He graciously added that my answers had been "magnificent!" At first, I was shocked, but I was also filled with gratitude to God.

I wish I could say this was typical of the rest of my law school experience! It wasn't, but it did provide a solid foundation for successfully completing my studies. Interestingly, I practiced law for only a few years before moving on to other things, which just proves the point of the experience: It was never about a grade, a course, a degree, or a career. It was about trusting God and realizing that the substance of my life consists of the expression of His qualities rather than the particular form that expression takes at any given moment. ●

Originally published in the November 21, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.



# If your friend is feeling sad or depressed

Arnold Kalala

**Q: HOW CAN I** help a friend who's feeling sad or depressed?

A: I was at an event for my college when I noticed that one of my friends didn't seem to be doing well. I didn't want to ask her what was going on, since I wasn't sure if she really was sad or what. But if she was sad or depressed, I did want to help her. So I went back to my dorm room, and I started praying the way I've learned in Christian Science—talking to God, asking God for help, and listening. In my prayer I said, “God, if there is something I need to know, please tell me.”

One day, about a week later, I was playing some hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal* on the piano after a meeting when my friend came over and wanted me to play hymns for her. As I played, I noticed that she had tears in her eyes, so I stopped and asked her if everything was OK.

That's when she told me that her boyfriend had broken up with her. Out of nowhere, he'd said he didn't want to be with her anymore. She said she felt so sad and valueless.

It was a little intimidating, because I haven't been through an experience like that myself, so at first I wasn't sure what to say or do. But I also felt like this was the moment God had prepared me for, so I felt extremely humble to be there, and to be listening to what God was telling me and knowing that He was also speaking to her about His own nature as Love.

As she kept sharing her feelings, I had the idea to remind her about how God cares for each one of us as His child. To God we are infinitely valuable, and all that God gives us, including His perfect love, can never be taken away from us.

I was also able to say, “Yes, this may be a



AARON CRANFORD — STAFF

moment when you don't feel that. Maybe it seems like God's love isn't here right now. But we learn in Christian Science that this is just a suggestion that God is not All, that Love is not All. But Love is All, and ever present, so we can turn away from these suggestions and feel Love's presence, no matter what is going on in our lives.”

She was extremely receptive and became peaceful as we talked. And, long story short, she's now doing very, very well. I know she kept praying after we talked. And she said later that she had found comfort and that the pain and sadness had vanished.

The lesson I learned from this—and I think this can be useful for anyone who wants to help a friend—is that we don't have to be afraid of helping someone who is struggling. Thoughts come to all of us that say things like “I'm not going to be able to say anything”; “I'm not going to be able to comfort this person or bring them peace.” But right in that moment we have the opportunity to know that this is not our job; it's God's job. It's God's job to comfort His children and care for His children. And our job is to let that love and care and comfort be expressed in our prayers about our friends and in the words we say to our friends.

Mary Baker Eddy wrote, “Man is the expression of God's being” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 470). This assures us that we're not working on our own. God is doing the caring, and we are the expression of that care, so we are always equipped to help our friends in just the right way, and God will show us how. ●

Originally published in the December 5, 2022, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*.

# Learning to trust God for healing

Alma Mitchell

**FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS**, one of my ears had been bothering me. This concerned me because I swim a lot, and the pain was making it difficult to enjoy my regular practices. I've been swimming ever since I was a toddler, and I love it. I'm on my high school swim team and even swim for a club team.

All my life, I've relied on prayer for healing, with good results. So I felt that I should contact a Christian Science practitioner to pray with me. I knew that the only way to really deal with the fear and pain I was feeling was through prayer, and I also knew a practitioner would be the right person to help with that.

The practitioner asked me to think and pray about the definition of *ears* in the Glossary of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, which would help me get a

**I knew that the only way to really deal with the fear and pain I was feeling was through prayer.**

more spiritual perspective on my own situation. It says, "EARS. Not organs of the so-called corporeal senses, but spiritual understanding.

"Jesus said, referring to spiritual perception, 'Having ears, hear ye not?' (Mark viii. 18.)" (p. 585).

I thought about what spiritual understanding and spiritual perception meant. I realized that we don't listen to God through our physical ears. We listen to Him with our thoughts, and we understand Him as we know God as Spirit and ourselves as spiritual. This idea helped me listen to God instead of paying attention to my ear.

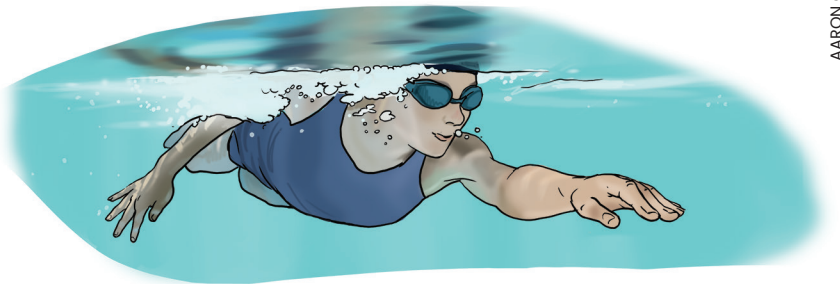
I continued to think about this idea throughout the day and listened for the truth God was telling me. This really helped quiet the other thoughts in my head related to fear and pain and made me feel peaceful and close to God.

Then, a few nights later the pain got so intense I wasn't able to sleep. My mom came to my room and stayed with me through the night. She prayed the Lord's Prayer from the Bible out loud with me and shared other truths about God's love for me and how this love is always present and can always be felt. Listening to her praying out loud helped me to focus on God rather than pain. Finally, I fell asleep.

In the morning, before I came downstairs for breakfast, I noticed that the pain in my ear had stopped. I was very happy to go to school feeling free.

All of this happened as final exams were beginning at my school and as I was planning to be away all summer as a junior counselor at a camp for Christian Scientists. I was really grateful because I knew this healing would help me in other experiences whenever I needed to feel more confident about my prayers.

This was a foundational experience for me because it helped me understand more about God. It also taught me that I can trust God and that listening to Him brings peace and healing. ●



AARON CRANFORD — STAFF

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