



W I D E H O R I Z O N , I N C .

A Christian Science Nursing Facility

One Grand Brotherhood

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An Expanded (though somewhat different) Version of the Keynote Address

Presented at Wide Horizon's Annual Meeting September 22, 2013

Mary Baker Eddy wrote, “In the order of Science, in which the Principle is above what it reflects, all is one grand concord” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 262). Think about the import and progression of this statement: 1. there is established order; 2. it’s wholly of Divine Science; 3. its Principle is above all; 4. yet Principle is and must be reflected; 5. all is one, it’s grand, and it’s in accord or harmonious. This is another statement that the all-harmonious Mind is reflected continually in Science. In addition, one definition of “grand” is “that which elevates and expands the mind” or thought. Thus, a mind or thought in accord with Science will be elevated and expansive, assisting others to rise higher in understanding and the practice of Christian Science.

Peter asked Christ Jesus, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven” (Matt. 18). He may very well have been emphasizing that you’re going to have to do it A LOT!

In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Apostle Paul basically asked, “Can Christ be divided?” Then he encourages Christians by answering, “No, let there be no divisions among you; ...be perfectly joined together in the same mind...” (I Cor. 1) Having the same Mind enables us to see more nearly and more clearly true brotherhood and unity.

We should turn also to Mrs. Eddy’s counsel, “To begin rightly is to end rightly” (S&H 262). She also informed us that, “One infinite God, good, unifies men and nations; constitutes the brotherhood of man...” (S&H 340) You can’t underestimate the power of how central the idea of “ONE” is in Christian Science. You get no where without beginning rightly. Spiritual reasoning begins with One omnipotent God, good, ONE Mind, one man—God’s spiritual idea. To allow the slightest doubt or exception is the temptation that discord is possible and therefore real.

Mrs. Eddy wrote, “Immortals, or God’s children in divine Science, are one harmonious family...” (S&H 444) and “with one Father, even God, the whole family of man would be brethren; and with one Mind and that God, or good, the brotherhood of man would consist of Love and Truth, and have unity of Principle...” (S&H 470)

Thus, to experience a more present sense of such harmony and brotherhood we must entertain a more spiritual sense of existence. And we’re reminded that “Spirit, God, is heard when the senses are silent” (S&H 89); for “spiritual sense is a conscious, constant capacity to understand God” (S&H 209). Mrs. Eddy also gave us some insights on how spiritual sense differs from mere physical sense testimony in her Communion Hymn. It is a key to discerning true harmony and concord in life. Let’s look at the three lessons in the opening of this hymn (*Christian Science Hymnal*, 298).

“Saw ye my Saviour?” (Hymn 298)

What did Saint John tell us about this? “And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long doest thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not...” (John 10) It is vital to believe, to understand with spiritual sense the true nature of Christ. Mrs. Eddy told us, “Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appeared to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God’s own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick” (S&H 476). How much do we work to behold, to see in Science, as our Master did? How powerful is it to perceive the Christ in each child of God? And I would say from my experience, for me, I had to work to see it in myself even more diligently than to see it in others, as I am often very tough on myself. When very young, I took it to heart when I read Mrs. Eddy’s counsel to “give much time to self-examination and correction; you must control appetite, passion, pride, envy, evil-speaking, resentment, and each one of the innumerable errors that worketh or maketh a lie” (*Miscellaneous Writings*, 137). Her counsel to “see the Christly man,” not a material or mortal man was also instrumental in preparing me for my periodic examinations in the military.

“We have a house, not built with hands, eternal in the heaven.” (II Cor. 5)

Everyone in the military is required to submit periodic physical examinations about every five years in order to be cleared to continue to participate in daily physical fitness training. I reported for a special “over 40” medical screening. I prayed specifically before reporting, reinforcing my convictions that I didn’t ever need to dread a required activity. I needed to understand it could be just the reverse. I began to see there was no reason it couldn’t be an opportunity to share my faith in God’s constant care for me. When I reported to the designated start point, the receptionist told me I should tell my boss it was the correct reporting area. She told me I looked way too young and asked me verify my birth year. At every station I reported to I expressed gratitude that the people were remarkably kind and quick. I kept focused on the spiritual idea that there really had only been one examination, and that was in Genesis 1, “And God saw everything that he had made and behold it was very good.” I held in my thought this highest standard. God’s children were “made in [His] image and likeness.” I prayed to acknowledge all that could be seen was as St. Paul spoke of our existence in II Cor. 5: 4-6. I took the Bible at its word, “We have a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” And I would be “absent from the body and present with the Lord.” I affirmed that this spiritual identity spoken of in the Bible was all that could be seen.

When I return for a complex readout of the “Risk Assessment,” I was surprised to see an entire panel of doctors. The head doctor of the clinic said they wanted to interview me because they had never had an officer receive a nearly perfect score on the assessment. The lead doctor started by saying, “You’re in amazing shape. We’ve never seen someone with a perfect EKG, a 131-cholesterol reading and a perfect chest X-ray, and so forth. The nutritionist began by asking me what I ate for breakfast. I told her I didn’t eat breakfast or lunch much. I explained I ate M&Ms, potato chips and a soda at about 10:30 in the morning. She laughed and said, “No, really, what do you eat?” She pressed me again and again until she closed her notebook and stated, “You defy every nutritional law.” She asked how I’d explain my unorthodox eating habits in such striking distinction to my healthy scores on all the tests. I told her, “I never fear my food.” And I added, “I always resist any temptation to worship my food.” The panel seemed baffled but thought about the idea. They asked me about my workout regime. I told them I only did the three exercises required on the Army Physical Fitness test and only because that was the Army’s expectation. I told them I had always been able to do any distance running my units required. They asked

how far I had run. I told them I ran two miles in basic training and had no problem immediately running six and a half miles with my first unit. It seemed incredible to them I did that with no soreness or negative physical repercussions. At that point they asked me why I thought I defied all of the normal physical rules. I told them for me it was a matter of daily specific prayer. They stopped the interview and decided there was nothing they could learn from me. But the woman doctor in charge of the Pentagon Clinic asked how she might study this manner of prayer. I told her I would bring her a The Bible and a copy of our denominational textbook. She asked if I could get them to her by 0730 the next morning.

My final exit physical from the Army was also equally remarkable to the medical clinic staff. It normally included a two weeks long series of tests and a four hour debrief about all the disabilities you could claim. The Pentagon Clinic apologized to me profusely for losing my medical record. They couldn't believe it when I said the one folder with five pieces of paper it in was all there was. Most Colonels had two to three very thick files of medical history. The woman doctor said, "As a doctor, one may only see a file like yours maybe once in an entire career. You have a child's cholesterol." We spent nearly an hour discussing Christian Science. I went to my car to get copies of *Science and Health* for the doctor and the ladies in records who staffed the various parts of the clinic. The woman announced as I left that it was the shortest exit physical in history.

The second part of developing a more spiritual sense of each day's events, whether they are common place or highly unusual, is Mrs. Eddy's admonition:

"Heard ye the glad sound?" (Hymn 298)

We read in the Bible, "Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee" (Job 42). And of course we know the account of the man who was born blind, trapped by the erroneous beliefs of those around him. Yet Christ Jesus saw the man as sinless and healed him. (See John 9) This account concludes with, "Since the world began was it not *heard* that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (italics added)...It's important to recognize that "the rich in spirit help the poor in one grand brotherhood, all having the same Principle, or Father;" (S&H 518).

A Defining Event of Love, September 11, 2001

When I recall the events of September 11, 2001 and the immediate days following, the most striking and vivid difference that stands out to me would be the comparison between what the architects of those events intended them to be and what indeed was their result. They seemed to have hoped the attacks on America would come to be known as "defining events of their hatred for our ways of life." However, what we would experience that day was to see first hand the truly amazing response of the American people. Countless acts of heroic courage by Americans would transform dire circumstances in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. into "defining events of love for their fellow man." (We saw this repeated more recently in the responses of people at the 2013 Boston Marathon.)

For me the memories start vividly the evening before. I was taught in Sunday School that prayer is not a selfish thing. Prayer includes praying daily for your community and the World as well as for yourself or loved ones. So leaving the Metro that evening my thought was drawn to repetitive rolling thunder on the horizon. Initially I thought God was telling me that I shouldn't pray about such destructive elements to go around my area to hit another. Then I felt the urgency was telling me there was much more to it. The

voice became even more distinctive and urgent, prompting me to pray about “the gathering of malice.” Immediately a passage from *Science and Health* burned brightly in my thought, “There is too much animal courage in society and not sufficient moral courage” (p. 28). Then another related idea of Mrs. Eddy’s came to thought, “God governs all. . . His power is neither animal nor human. . .” (p. 102). This statement led my thought to pray to acknowledge the fact that moral courage is *superior* to animal courage. The urging to pray remained very insistent all that evening. Friends remarked that I seemed preoccupied at a church business meeting that night. The gravity of the insights still made me intensely concerned. I prayed until nearly 1:00 AM that morning. Moreover, every day I am more and more sure such prayers of acknowledgement bring the Truth of God’s power to bear in very tangible ways.

That next morning I got a call from the Pentagon Dental Clinic for an annual check of my teeth. The receptionist at the Clinic apologized that she hadn’t called me on my birthday, which was 8-11. She remarked that somehow my file had gotten lost on her desk for just one month. I told her I didn’t have the normal brownies I make for the dental personnel because I completely forgot it myself. She laughed and said they’d surely do my panoramic X-rays regardless of whether I had my baked goods or not. That call pulled me to an opposite side of the Pentagon. As I left my office, the voice I heard in prayer again directed me to go back and get my Full Text Edition of the Christian Science Quarterly Bible Lesson.

The Clinics, like many places in the Pentagon, had CNN news on. As I waited for the results of the panoramic X-rays, everyone watched the first footage of the plane flying into the first tower of the World Trade Center. We debated what the possibilities were and what could have been wrong with the communications with the FAA. Then a chilling silence fell on the room when the other plane hit the second tower. At that moment everyone realized this had to be a terrorist act. As everyone debated what was occurring on the screen, someone ran in and said we had to evacuate the Pentagon because we had also been hit by a plane. For a moment we thought people might have been confused by what they were seeing happening in New York.

Two chaplains who had been in the Medical part of the Clinic and I met outside on the sidewalk by the Pentagon Athletic Club. Chaplain (LTC) Jim Walker and Chaplain (LTC) Al Sykes were two of my dear friends. Jim said he’d tried to go back into the Pentagon, but the security guards threatened to arrest him if he didn’t evacuate. We leaned close together and were silent for a few moments as we prayed. What had come to me in prayer was that our right place was to be on site to pray with the casualties. I shared the passage from St. John’s Revelation that came to my thought, “that if God opens a door no man can close it.”

The medical teams were forming behind us. As the senior chaplain, I simply suggested we were going to fall in with the medical teams. I heard one of the doctors yell, “Medical team number one, GO! Medical team number two, GO!” We all nodded and we fell in with the teams. When we reached the security turnstiles the guards again stopped us. I knew the head of security because I always took pies and cookies to the guards who worked holidays. So, I stepped forward and said, “Mike, this is doctrinal. They need us to pray with the casualties.” He immediately recognized me, and smiled and said, “Okay, Chaplain Horton, you guys can go in.” We ran to what was the Pentagon’s “Ground Zero”— the center courtyard inside the Pentagon where the firemen were just beginning to bring out the casualties.

In the military you never simply assume someone wants to pray. Out of respect for their mental privacy you ask if they would like to pray with you. When we talked later, it had struck each of us that not one person said “no.” Next, we would ask the person’s faith background and would kneel on the grass beside them and pray in terms familiar and meaningful from their religious tradition. Often the words of the 23rd Psalm seemed all too pertinent, “He makes me to lie down in green pastures. . . He restores my soul. . . yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.” This was almost eerie because the firemen were bringing the people out and laying them on the

green grass in the inner courtyard that we called “Ground Zero.”

I found “The Christian Science Bible Lesson” (Section IV) for September 11th focused on reducing fear and inflammation. I started putting the verses into the first person, as if they were being spoken directly to the person with whom I was praying. From Malachi (4 and 3) I shared, “I am the Lord, I change not; therefore you shall not be consumed and the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.” And from Jeremiah (23 and 30), “Is not my word like a fire?” and “Fear not...neither be dismayed, for...I will save you from afar and...you shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet and none shall make you afraid...For I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds, saith your God.” I also prayed to know that God understands all things and to Him all things are possible. One of the correlative passages in the textbook stated, “To reduce inflammation...divine Truth is more potent than all lower remedies” (S&H 180).

One of the earliest casualties I prayed with was Brian Birdsong. He had taken a break from a meeting and gone to the men’s room down the corridor. When the fuel in the plane exploded he found he was on fire. He spoke of this moment in a Pentagon Prayer Breakfast months later. He said his first thought was that he would never see his family again. He fought this aggressive suggestion with a wise and discerning heart. He recognized it as the temptation to die. That impelled his heart to turn to God in prayer. He affirmed that he loved his wife and kids and wanted to live to see them again. As his heart yielded to God’s presence being possible in the scenario, he felt the sprinklers activate. The rush of water put out the flames that had engulfed him. He was then able to crawl out of the restroom doors and toward the closed fire door at the end of the corridor. Colonel Wright and another officer were able to break down the door and get him part of the way out before they were overcome by smoke. To everyone’s blessing the firemen quickly found them and carried them out into the Pentagon courtyard. They were some of the earliest casualties with whom I prayed. That’s when I first saw Brian. I knelt beside him, and he said he wanted to pray. He was a Christian, so I shared some of the Bible passages. Nearly every casualty seemed to quiet noticeably as soon as they heard the familiar and comforting words of the Scriptures. One woman who was Catholic wanted to repeat “The Our Father.” It was a sweet and moving moment I will never forget.

One man, a Lt. Colonel, who I prayed with, told me he was Baptist. I told him that I was sure he would want to pray and he agreed vigorously. Yet he was transfixed by the attempts of the medical team removing his socks and cutting his pants away from his legs. He kept repeating, loudly and emotionally, that he could see what they were doing, but he couldn’t feel his legs. He had jumped from a second story window to escape the fire from the exploding airplane fuel. I was told later that as he lay on the cement below, unable to move, he had used his arms to break the fall of other casualties. I was concerned that uncharacteristically this man wasn’t calming down. I turned to God and listened for what I could do. It came to me to speak to him with more authority. So I used my leadership voice and paraphrased Romans 8:35, “Now Marion, you listen to me! Nothing can separate you from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ, not height, nor depth, nor things present, nor things to come, nor principalities, nor powers.” When he heard those familiar, comforting and beloved words of the Scripture, he calmed down decidedly.

It was just at this time we were told there might be another unaccounted for airplane. We were instructed to move everyone out to the Potomac area where ambulances were arriving to evacuate the casualties. As we lifted the Lt. Colonel onto the litter, some dried leaves were poking him in the back of one of his legs. He began to exclaim loudly, “OUCH!” There was a moment when we all realized that indicated he was feeling his legs. Almost instantly, we rejoiced triumphantly. You could sense one grand brotherhood in operation. I was relieved when I called him a few weeks later. He told me he had some issues with his ankles and yet he was already returning to work.

A young specialist had put the fire out on a civilian woman and pulled her up through the crumbling floor. He carried her to the window and saved her from the rapidly expanding fireball that was mushrooming through their office area. He dropped her out of the window onto the walkway below. She

too was one of the early casualties I prayed with at “Ground Zero.” I wouldn’t see her again until she tracked me down a year after I retired in Ocala, Florida. She recalled our prayer and just wanted to talk to someone who had been there that day also. We later did a benefit at the Ocala Hilton that she organized to help others who had won their way back from trials such as hers.

Early on I also encountered a Navy Operations Center NCO who was desperately searching for survivors of her unit. She was on a mail run when the plane hit. She had realized the plane had landed directly on her section and yet she was determined to see if anyone had seen any Navy survivors. You could hear the emotion and grief as she ran from person to person. I held her by her shoulders and told her the people we were assisting were alive and they needed our help. I assured her there would also be an appropriate time for everyone to grieve, later. Her military training immediately kicked in and she wholeheartedly dove into assisting with the casualties.

People often ask me if I was afraid as we worked. I have always said that fear was a selfish emotion. I don’t recall anyone that day that I saw among the responders who appeared to be afraid. It seemed clear to me they were so focused on helping that they weren’t thinking about themselves. They were totally immersed in what the next casualty would need, or what they could do to protect the children in the Child Care Center, or could they identify who was unaccounted for. Instead of fear, what we did see was an absolute unity of effort. This was true brotherhood in action.

Because no one working the site had anything to eat, the Military Police shot the locks off the soda machines to get something for the firemen to drink. Chaplains and other workers poured out the pop and filled the bottles with water. When a bin of ice we were pushing across the concrete walk tipped over, I was struck by seeing a two-star Air Force General, a young specialist and myself, a Colonel, working side by side to instantly scoop up the ice and get the job done. Not one person groused about the job being inappropriate to their rank or that someone else should be doing a menial or dirty job. It was an inspired effort by everyone.

Others broke into the snack bar to scrounge for food. We found little but a few hamburger buns. The result produced a surprising picture. We three chaplains began to serve the firemen. I think it was the first time I saw any of them taking even a moment to sit down. We went from fireman to fireman, breaking bread, the hamburger rolls, and handing them a cup of cold water. Many of them remarked that it felt very much like a very holy communion.

Later when we had evacuated all the casualties a priest from Fort Meyer and I went out to check on the children in the Child Care Facility. Marines and the workers had moved the children into the trees in the park near the Potomac River. We found that most of the children had been successfully reunited with their parents. We returned to the center courtyard and awaited the change from casualty assistance to mortuary affairs.

Most folks are not aware of how many people work in Pentagon. On an average day about 24,000 people are in the building. And you could probably throw in another couple thousand visitors at any given time. Yet it was amazing how limited the casualties were there. It was a common story for someone to say, “I had just gone for the mail or coffee or a meeting.” Remarkably the plane hit a Pentagon wedge that was being renovated. My secretary and I were in a temporary office. Twice in the previous months before, we thought we were going to move into our new offices. Once we didn’t go because the computers weren’t ready and another time there was a delay with the furniture. As it was, the diagrams that showed where the plane exploded put the nose of the plane just behind the Pentagon library. If you walked out the front of the library you were at the front door of our temporary office. My secretary had felt the impact and jumped up from her desk. She stepped into the hall to see a huge cloud of smoke and debris flying through the air toward her. She found her way home. When we finally returned to our office space, there was a lot of debris and pieces of the ceiling on the floor and desk in my inner office area.

The Armed Forces Chaplains Board was a Joint Office, supervised by the office of the Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness. They were responsible for crunching the numbers on the casualties. I have a copy of the original run on the numbers. The first run had estimated that 196 people were missing. That included the unconfirmed count of 64 persons on the American Airlines Flight 77. Compared to the numbers in the thousands we were hearing from New York, that seemed miraculous to everyone. Most people theorized that the plane didn't hit the intended section of the Pentagon. It appeared the inexperienced pilot had spun in a bit too early. He came down over the Navy Annex and hit the wedge near the helipad that faced Crystal City. The opposite side of the Pentagon is considered the high rent district. It would have been the most probable place to target in the building. That section contained the offices for the Service Secretaries as well as the Chairman and his Joint Staff. Their eighth and ninth corridor offices went untouched. The final count was 186 casualties. That included the 66 people on the plane. When I thought about that final count, I felt we had seen that God had indeed reduced the "inflammation" in the Pentagon building.

Compassion and generosity of Spirit were evident at every turn. When I talked to my chaplain friends later, none of us remembered exactly how we got out of "Ground Zero." We all remembered wading through water that was building up in the inner ring sidewalks as the fire crews continued to drench the building for hours. We all worked together tirelessly providing some of the most diverse forms of ministry we'd seen in our careers. Taxi cabs and individuals in personal vehicles compassionately started offering rides to people stranded in the Pentagon area. Almost immediately a village sprang up in the parking lot that faced Pentagon City Mall. The FBI and other intelligence agencies also began to work the site from work areas out front. To feed the hundreds who worked the site almost continuously for the next few weeks, a McDonalds, Outback Steakhouse and a Church Rotisserie chicken group provided food free of charge to anyone in the recovery teams. We also set up a tent where fire and rescue workers could see their families on the few breaks they took.

Later, when a Mortuary Affairs Officer was briefing the volunteers from The Old Guard that had been brought over from Ft. Meyer we witnessed an incredible turning of thought. The impressive young troops, hand picked for The Old Guard, were all considered picture perfect soldiers. They were standing tall until the man began to describe what their duties would be. He explained that one had to volunteer for this difficult duty and that there would be no stigma if anyone found it a duty too difficult to stomach. He underlined it wasn't for everyone. However, as he began to describe what the duties would be like he began to get so graphic it appeared to be getting to the majority of the troops. You could see some getting woozy or nauseous. Some soldiers had to turn away to keep from getting sick. A number had already begun to take a step backward indicating they were reconsidering volunteering.

At this point Father Spenser, a somewhat shy Catholic Priest stepped forward. (This was completely out of character compared to his normal unassuming manner.) He spoke with considerable authority in his voice. He exclaimed, "That's not what you're here to do!" He clarified again in a tone of deep compassion. "You're going in there (he pointed to the Pentagon wedge damaged by the crash and fire) to bring the precious remains of our families' loved ones *out of the darkness into the light*. Then, we will be able to honor them in the manner appropriate for the ultimate sacrifice they have made for their country." Needless to say, every one of the Old Guard soldiers stepped forward proudly and stated they would volunteer. The recovery teams insisted they would not go without a chaplain. Whenever they found anything even remotely resembling human remains they would not proceed until they all knelt and the Chaplain with the team provided a blessing. (Another Christian Science Chaplain, Dan Brantingham, worked at the Joint Family Assistance Center providing support to those who lost a loved-one at the Pentagon that day.)

All branches of the Military were all at work the next morning. The leadership wanted to send a

message, as a show of resolve, that the Pentagon was fully functioning. As you walked about resuming your normal work it wasn't uncommon for workers and other military personnel to ask if you could provide counsel for their many concerns. Some people had been so impressed by the repetitive images of the planes flying to the Pentagon and the World Trade Centers that they were having trouble sleeping. A number of moms and dads said their children were having nightmares and asked what they could do to comfort the children. I suggested that they replace the repetitively disturbing pictures by a children's song that would remain in the child's thought. Everyone can identify with how a favorite song tends to stick in your head once you've sung it. The hymn "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so" was an example of Love meeting the need. Whenever the child would complain about the images, the families would sing favorite hymns and before long the child was asleep. I was told by a number of parents that this had worked wonderfully for the children but was also helpful to them.

I was contacted by a Congressional Liaison representative and asked to share my experiences praying with the casualties. The following Thursday evening President Bush was scheduled to speak to the nation about our nation's response to these shocking events. The White House wanted someone who had been at the Pentagon to sit with Mrs. Bush. Eventually I was asked to email a copy of the Bible Lesson passages I had shared to a Presidential Liaison. By Thursday morning I was told it was down to two people to sit with Laura Bush. I was told to be in my Class A uniform and be ready. The final decision was coming down to me and one other person. About 5:00 PM I was told I had been chosen. I was not really quite sure why, but I listened and heard the glad sound, so I asked who the other person was who had still been in the consideration. I was told it was a young enlisted man. I knew of the heroic nature of the young man's actions that day, and I felt moved to ask if it wasn't too late to let him have the opportunity. In a surprised voice they ask me "why." I told them that I was at the very end of my career, but this dear enlisted man was at the beginning of his, and that this opportunity would grace him throughout his career and it could really help him. I was almost in tears when they said "yes." This was yet another example of how grateful I am that when we listen, divine Mind always directs us what to do and say.

I was also interviewed by the Pentagon Historian, not long after the events. I was glad they would be recording the many amazing things the people in the building had done that day. He asked me to allow him to keep the original Bible Lesson Full Text booklet I had taken with me that day. He was very taken by the applicability and timeliness of passages for that day. He was amazed by the fact they were printed months in advance. I found it hard to give up something that meant so much to me, but realized it needed to go into the historical record of the day. He told he couldn't remember seeing anyone more emotionally moved when having to part with an item for the archives.

In June of 2002, I was asked to be part of a ceremony to honor the Fire and Rescue Workers who had responded to our needs in the Pentagon on September 11th. I was told that the firemen had remembered the lady chaplain and asked if I would provide an invocation for the dinner. I was also delighted to find that the Old Dominion District Boy Scouts from the National Capitol Region would be present to honor the men who were a part of an elite Battalion of Rescue Workers. (This is the same elite battalion that responded for the Hurricane Andrew rescue efforts in Florida and the earthquakes in Mexico in the recent years.) I was very moved and honored to have been asked to do so. I spent a number of days praying about what to put into that important invocation. As I sat in my home one evening a poem appropriate to the situation began to rush into my consciousness. It was all I could do to record the words pouring into my thought. I knew divine Love was leading me in this important tasking. I printed the poem on parchment and placed a commemorative stamp depicting the Firemen Raising the American Flag on that day. The stamp read, "Heroes USA."

This is the poem I offered at the dinner on June 14th, 2002.

“The Best in Human Character”

The Fairfax County Search and Rescue Team

Almighty and Merciful God,
How great a task it is to offer prayer
For humble servants who come to bear
In many times through constant care
Faithfully, they’re always there
In each day upon them cast Your ever-watchful eye.

For in their neighbor’s time of need
Not one just simply passes by
They find and rescue in distress so dire
Oft in times of earthquake, wind and fire
And unknown dangers cannot stay
Because You preserve them in the way.

In this a free and open land,
Where freedom flows from hand to hand
There duty done lifts hearts on high
As stars and stripes so boldly fly
An emblem of their selflessness,
A spirit pure, and blessedness
Their kind and tender manner
Would constitute their banner.

Theirs is a courageous work
Never deterred when dangers lurk
The best in human character they show
And most of us would hardly know
Their valor’s rarely e’er perceived
In recognition well deserved.

To our ideals and values hold
This is the American spirit, bold
To rise, to help and heal
We this evening now reveal
To look on them with gratitude
For brave and noble fortitude
For duty done and valor lived
We thank them Lord and ask You give
Your recognition e’en divine
The fire only can refine
Their heart and soul to serve Thee more
Your greater purpose now.

For rescue workers, living and deceased
We ask your blessings, grace and peace.

A female Army buddy of mine, a Colonel at the Personnel and Readiness section in the Pentagon, and I wrote a prayer for General Timothy Maude, who was the senior ranking military casualty that day. I had known Tim and his wife Teri for many years since my tour in Indianapolis. I had also been stationed with them in Heidelberg for most of a three-year tour. My husband and I were delighted when we knew the Maude family would also be in D.C. at the same time we were. Teri Maude allowed the Adjutant General Corps to publish this prayer in its newsletter.

Tim's Prayer
"I Gave My All...Soldiering On"

I thank you forever, dear God, for Teri, Kathleen and Karen, *
How my heart laughed with them
How I loved each one of them
As priceless treasures in my heart.

I thank you for all the soldiers, service members and civilians I served with
You allowed me to leave a legacy of leadership through them
And through countless missions we met with joy and resolve.
Now it's clear, I've done my duty
I stood my watch...even in the face of gravest danger,
You and I understand what faithfulness is.*

You gave me great courage *
And in honor and dignity, I served a vision beyond the mere call of duty.
I ask but a simple recognition
That I am a soldier,
And as a soldier, patriot, father and husband
I gave my all.

I smile and offer up all the love in my heart. *
Lord, may I drink of Your living water *
And may I take my place with You
And will You write my name among the stars *
May I enter the eternal peace
To the haven of Your love? *

Your faithful servant Tim.

For a soldier such as he, we all give thanks
And ask Lord, that You grant him peace forever...Amen

*Lines adapted from "Prayer from the Ark/The Creature's Choir" by Carmen Bernos De Gastold

Many people post 9-11 who lost a loved one asked to modify this prayer and personalize it to the loved one they wanted to commemorate and read it at their memorial services. We were honored to allow that to happen, for this brought comfort to so many folks. Truly "Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the ways" (S&H 454).

Mrs. Eddy wrote in *Unity of Good*, "Matter and evil cannot be conscious, and consciousness should not be evil. Adopt this simple rule of Science, and you will discover the material origin, growth, maturity, and death of sinners, as the history of man, disappears, and the everlasting facts of being appear, wherein man is the reflection of immutable good. Reasoning from false premises,—that Life is material, that

immortal Soul is sinful, and hence that sin is eternal,—the reality of being is neither seen, felt, heard, nor understood...the demonstration of God, as in Christian Science, is gained through Christ as perfect manhood” (pp. 50-51). How important it is for each of us to do the best we can to hear the glad sound! And we hear Spirit, God, best “...when the senses are silent” (S&H 89).

The third admonition of our Leader points us to the fruits of spiritual sense.

“Felt ye the power of the Word?” (Hymn 298)

We read from the Gospel of Mark, “When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she *felt* in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him...said, Who touched my clothes? ...the woman...came and fell down before him and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace and be whole of thy plague” (Mark 5, italics added).

Mrs. Eddy tells us, “The effects of Christian Science are not so much seen as *felt*. It is the ‘still small voice’ of Truth uttering itself. We are either turning away from this utterance or we are listening and going up higher” (S&H 323, italics added). And in “Choose Ye” she writes, “Christian Science is not a dweller apart in solitude; it is not a law of matter, nor a transcendentalism that heals only the sick. This Science is a law of divine mind, a persuasive animus, an unerring impetus, an ever-present help. Its presence is *felt*, for it acts and acts wisely, always unfolding the highway of hope, faith, understanding. It is the higher criticism, the higher hope; and its effect on man is mainly this—that the good which has come into his life, examination compels him to think genuine, whoever did it” (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist*, p. 3).

In the 1970s there was the forced integration of women into the military. The Chaplain Corps was the last Corps integrated in the Army. It was only done by threat to the Chief of Chaplains. So it was an emotional issue. Many chaplains really felt it was God that told them women weren’t meant to be there. This was the arena I entered.

The First Week is Often the Hardest

It took a very spiritual sense of events to face what seemed to be pronounced gender bias in the mid 1970s as I began my career as a Christian Science Army Chaplain. I likened this type of spiritual sense which Mrs. Eddy illuminated to being at a position of attention spiritually. In my first week at Ft. Sill in Oklahoma, which was the Artillery Unit, I in-processed four different units and found I was rejected sight unseen by the Commanders when they found out I was a woman. The “Bible Lesson Sermon” on “Love” that week included some passages that helped me pray. The passages all reassured me that God’s hand is directing, right where it might seem that events weren’t as they should be. I read from the Book of Job, chapter 23, “... he is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth;” and from Isaiah 40 “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?” These gave me confidence to know that I was in my right place with a right sense of purpose.

My new Artillery Group Commander, a Colonel, told me they were going to assign me to another unit. Jokingly he asked me if I knew what a Polar Bear was? I told him I assumed he didn’t mean the animal. I asked if it was the name of an artillery piece. He laughed and said I would find out tomorrow. He then told me to report the next morning in my physical training (PT) uniform. He pointed out the window to a building on the nearby parade field and said my unit’s morning formation would be there. At that time the military ran in combat boots, green fatigue pants and a tee shirt. The PT uniform didn’t include the fatigue jacket where name, rank and branch insignia would normally identify me as an officer and chaplain.

As the sun came up the next morning I realized I was the only woman among 600 infantry men. When

the Infantry Commander saw me he thought someone was playing a joke on him. He told me to fall in the back of the formation and he would straighten out the mistake after we finished a six and a half mile run. He told me to just to fall out when I couldn't run any longer. A Sergeant Major would always have a straggler formation at the rear. I had worked up to running two miles in my Chaplain Officer Basic Course but had never run any longer distances. I remember praying and thinking about the Biblical passage, "...they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40). Another passage from the Book of Job included, "For he performs the thing that is appointed for me" (Job 23). I drew my strength from those passages, knowing I wasn't going to run six and a half miles by mere human effort. The Bible assured me that God would do the work. I needed to recognize it was only for His glory. By recognize and trusting the Bible truths, I had resources I could lean on for strength.

At about the five-mile point, I was surprised when the Commander came running to the rear of the formation. He seemed agitated and asked me if I could run to the front of the formation. He explained that we only had a mile and a half left. I told him I thought I could do that. I knew that "Whatever it is your duty to do, you can do without harm to yourself" (S&H 385). I knew I wanted to do my duty and that God would help me for that reason. When we reached the parade field back in garrison the Lt. Colonel began to dress down the formation. He accused some of the soldiers of sandbagging on him, as it had been customary that 60 to 80 men fell out everyday. He said, "Just because this woman made the run, not one of you men fell out. I'll fix this. I'll run her up front with me every day and then none of you will ever fall out again!" He then fought to allow me to be assigned. The unit had no chaplain authorization, and the previous unit that rejected me now wanted me because I had run so effectively.

Unfortunately, the Installation newspaper showed up the next day, because a photographer from the "Stars and Stripes" military newspaper asked to photograph me running with the "grunts." There was an Oklahoma City TV reporter that wanted to do a half hour program on me. I refused to do the publicity and ended up in front of the Brigade Commander's desk. The Colonel told me I was going to do the stories. I begged him not to force me because it would compromise my credibility with the soldiers. I told him it wasn't fair to the men who had been making that run every day for months and no one cared. We finally came to an agreement that the "Stars and Stripes" could take a photo. I also talked the TV reporter into doing a story on the unit running. The reporter was a woman and understood what the possible backlash might be if she gave me special attention. Then I agreed I would talk just a little at the end, if she first interviewed my Infantry Commander, a Tanker, and a Signal Corps member. That would include all the factions of the 4/31st Infantry Task Force. She agreed and every one seemed happy with the outcome.

When I reported to my office, it had been stripped of everything but a desk. Throughout the day members of the battalion would come in and mention they had an extra set of curtains, a file cabinet, a desk chair, etc. until the chaplain office was once again intact. By that afternoon I had even the highest level phone capability installed. Next, an enlisted Chaplain Assistant introduced himself by telling me he couldn't work for a woman. I asked him why, and he said his wife wouldn't let him. I told him I understood if he wanted to respect her wishes. However, he would need to explain to her what would happen if he wasn't at his appointed place of duty. After 48 hours he would be charged with what is called "failure to repair." Then at 30 days he would be declared AWOL, and then if he still didn't report for duty he would be dropped from the rolls. That meant she would eventually need to visit him in the stockade. He looked shocked and said maybe he *could* work for me.

I didn't know that the Brigade Chaplain, a Major who was my supervisory chaplain, had been informed of my pending assignment. He responded by refusing to supervise me and by passing out derogatory information on my denomination to all the units and chaplains in our Artillery group. The Major so riled his supervisor, the Corps Chaplain, who appeared at my door just after the long run. (A Corps Chaplain holds the rank of Lt. Colonel, which would be intimidating to the soldiers assigned at Battalion level. He equaled the rank of our Battalion Commander.) He stood in the hallway of our

headquarters, pushed my door open and boomed a challenge from the busy hallway. He said, “You’re the devil incarnate and you’re going to Hades in a handcar and I’ll be pushing it.” I turned to God and listened, not saying a word. The thought came to me to silence this lie. Next it came to me to simply shut the office door in his face. For a new Captain to shut the door in the face of another officer two grades higher would be a huge shock. Our personnel officer, a West Point Lieutenant, was so shocked he was standing at a position of attention in his doorway across from mine. He was so squared away in his uniform and military courtesy, his nickname was “Starch.” (Really squared away soldiers had perfectly starched uniforms at all times.)

Sometimes it takes something startling to shake loose an entrenched belief. I knew he would also need to know my motive was pure. Then I immediately reopened the door and grabbed both of his hands and shook them lovingly as if nothing had happened before that. We needed a fresh start! I introduced myself and told him he sounded upset and that perhaps we should talk. I pulled him into my office. After showing him some direct misquotes in the articles about my denomination, he calmed noticeably. I asked him if he could respect the obvious lack of scholarly integrity in the articles. He agreed he couldn’t and seemed to relax even more. I asked him if he as a Southern Baptist believed precisely what a Catholic Priest believed. He agreed no. I told him I guessed he had served with chaplains of various denominations much different than his in order to bless all our soldiers. He smiled and wholeheartedly agreed we could work together. And just as quickly, we became dearest friends until his retirement.

If things hadn’t been eventful enough that first week, I was informed I was required to attend a Chapel meeting late on Friday afternoon. About ten Protestant chaplains were assigned to work on the staff of this chapel. The senior chaplain had called us together to tell us only four chaplains would be allowed to preach. They all came from similar church backgrounds. The only black chaplain, the only Pilipino chaplain and I were told we would not be allowed to be in the preaching rotation because they knew we didn’t want to preach. The two minority men didn’t challenge their assumption. When they came to me, I told them I did want to preach. This set off a huge debate among the assembled chaplains.

They began to argue about every aspect of preaching. One group began to insist that preaching was central, which set off more debate about whether they would maintain a split chancel or have one central preaching podium. Next they argued about whether we would wear robes or not. Astounded at the divisive tone these arguments were taking, I simply sat in the front row watching as they tore into each other up on the platform. Suddenly the senior chaplain realized I wasn’t participating. He turned on me sitting quietly in the front pew. He demanded I tell them, as a Christian Scientist, where I was on the issues.

I told them it didn’t matter to me whether we wore robes or not, whether there was a split chancel or any of the forms suggested. But, there was one thing I did know. That as long as evil, hatred, devil, Satan or whatever name they chose to call it was governing them, no one would ever hear the Word of God, no one would ever be touched by it, no one would ever be healed by it. I suggested that when they finished whatever it was they were doing up there, I just wanted to know when I was going to preach. With an edge in his voice the senior chaplain said, “You’re preaching this Sunday!” He loudly predicted everyone would walk out.

I thought of what Mrs. Eddy remarked in her sermon *Christian Healing*, “The difference between religions is, that one religion has a more spiritual basis and tendency than the other; and the religion nearest right is that one. The genius of Christianity is works more than words; a calm and steadfast communion with God...” (pp. 1, 2) Well, on Sunday, one man made a visible display of standing up in the front row and leaving as I stood up to preach. But contrary to the predication, no one followed him. I preached that first sermon on “Jesus Christ as Savior” and talk about Jesus Christ as a full service Savior, which they really liked. The sermon received praise. That was pretty much the end of the overt resistance at the Chapel. So many who attended came up to me after the sermon and said, “Every chaplain we have ever heard has told us to

pray, but not one has told us how to pray. You told us how to pray. And can you preach again?"

It's interesting that when we maintain a more spiritual sense of something it usually turns out so well. Anything that tries to turn you around from the true sense of brotherhood as described by Mrs. Eddy is an argument against what she has shown us to be true. Isn't it our duty to simply acknowledge and recognize the import of "Saw ye my Saviour? Heard ye the glad sound? Felt ye the power of the Word?"

Conclusion

Let us revisit Mrs. Eddy's statement, "In the order of Science, in which the Principle is above what it reflects, all is one grand concord" (S&H 262). Our world needs a greater degree of order and a higher sense of Principle. Our healing work through the Christian Science practice, as Mrs. Eddy expected of her followers, is so needed by our fellow man. The activity of Christian Science nursing is simply one of the blessed avenues to live and demonstrate this Divine Science. I think you'll agree that it's so important for each of us to learn from our Master's example, as he demonstrated so consistently and fully many years ago, and also to follow our Leader as she followed Christ in all the ways we can! This is having one accord and practicing true brotherhood!

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