

**WIDE HORIZON, INC.
A CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING FACILITY**

Christian Science Nurses as Witnesses to Divine Law

**by Christie C. Hanzlik, C.S. of Boulder, Colorado
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I've had the privilege of partnering with Christian Science nurses in many situations, both as a patient and as a Christian Science practitioner, and it is an honor to have this opportunity to show them my gratitude. In this talk, I share several examples of healing that involved "Christian Science nurses as witnesses for divine law." I trust that my deep love and respect for Christian Science nurses will shine through clearly. And I hope that those of you who read this text or watch the video version of the talk will be inspired with a clearer sense of the qualities of thought necessary for Christian Science nursing and that these qualities of thought are good practice for all of us who wish to be better healers.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WITNESS?

I'll begin with a story that illustrates what I mean by the word 'witness'. One morning, about five years ago, I was serving as a Christian Science practitioner at a Christian Science summer camp. My morning had been especially peaceful when I got a request on my walkie talkie to pray about a situation in which a horse had become caught in a barbed-wire fence. My colleague at the corral asked me to pray and join her at the site.

I was told that this horse, Kit, was quite spirited, making the process of untangling him potentially more difficult. I began to pray by affirming that the laws of God (good) were in operation and could not be interrupted. The essence of my simple prayer was to understand with more clarity that nothing could interrupt the harmony of God's goodness, and that the law of God's harmony was ever-present. As I prayed, I drove a golf cart toward the corral.

As it turned out, a crew of dads who were volunteering that session happened to be out on fence repair duty near where this incident occurred. They could have been anywhere on camp, but were nearby and able to cut that horse free from the fence. We were grateful that the normally spirited horse was calm as they cut him free from the wire. What's more, when the wranglers took Kit back to the corral to wash out the wounds to his flesh, he stood calmly. I stood and watched, affirming again that the divine law of harmony was in operation here and nothing could interrupt the harmony of God's goodness. The horse remained calm as the wounds were washed and treated without medication (just a bit of Vaseline-like gel to keep flies away). Within a couple days these wounds sealed and healed, and there was no proud flesh — meaning there was no scar tissue.

In the weeks following the experience with the horse, I pondered what my role had been as Christian Science practitioner. It wasn't me who brought those "dad workers" to the exact location they needed to

be. It wasn't me who calmed the horse while its wound was cleaned, and it wasn't me who closed up the wounds. So, what was my role?

After praying about this question, it became clear that my role was to witness God's goodness. I realized that God's goodness — divine Love's goodness — is always in operation. It is always true. It is up to us to witness this goodness, and this was my role with the horse.

This insight about the relationship between prayer and being a witness reminds me of the adage: If a tree falls in the woods and there is no one there to hear it, does it still make a sound? The relevant question here is: If God's goodness is all around us, but no one witnesses it, does it still happen? Well, the good news is that we *are* here to witness it. There are no hypotheticals for divine Mind. In fact, we could say that part of our purpose for existing is to witness God's goodness. My talk today focuses on this metaphysical fact of being, and emphasizes the particular role of Christian Science nurses as witnesses to divine law, which is the active power of God in our experience.

Prayer-based witnessing is more than just being present and watching. It is *active* witnessing. I'll explain what I mean by "active witnessing" using the Bible story of Jairus and his daughter.¹ Recall that in the book of Mark, Jairus travels to ask Jesus if he can heal his daughter who is dying. Jesus agrees to go to Jairus's house, but stops on the way to heal the woman who touched the hem of Jesus's garment. Then, as Jesus continues to Jairus's house, Jairus's servants come and tell Jesus that it is too late, the girl has already died. Jesus does not accept this news, and he continues on, but when he gets to the house everyone is in mourning, wailing over the girl's death. And yet, right in the midst of bedlam, Jesus tells the crowd not to worry; the girl is merely asleep. They laugh at him. To me, their laughter symbolizes what the world's opinion of prayer seems to do to those of us who are expecting healing through prayer when all the medical evidence tries to convince us that a problem is insurmountable. Standing up for healing and harmony like Jesus did is what the Science of the Christ is all about. It's about turning to the laws of God's harmony even in the face of difficulty and knowing with certainty that those laws are unbreakable and irreversible.



"Raising of Jairus Daughter" by Ilya Repin, 1871

And this is what Jesus did in Jairus's home. Right in the midst of what looked like a death scene, he affirmed Life and Life's full expression. When the crowd laughed and showed that they did not expect healing, he sent them away. Jesus sent everyone out of the room except for Jairus and his wife and three

disciples — Peter, James, and John. Why did he allow these five to stay? Perhaps because he could trust them as witnesses. They were *active* witnesses he could trust to expect healing.

And, to me, this quality of thought — being an active witness who expects healing — characterizes an effective Christian Science nurse. A Christian Science nurse has a fearless faith, an understanding of God’s laws, and a calm assurance that all is well. And I believe Christ Jesus knew that he would have these qualities in those three disciples as he called on them to witness healing.

Christian Science nurses who are listed in *The Christian Science Journal* dedicate themselves full time to Christian Science nursing. But those of us who are not *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurses can also strive to have the quality of thought necessary for Christian Science nursing. We all have opportunities while caring for ourselves and others to adopt the quality of thought of an effective Christian Science nurse. Perhaps we can ask ourselves, “Am I ready to be called into Jairus’s house?” In other words, “Am I ready to be a witness for God’s law of harmony even when faced with a difficult situation?”

Being an active witness for God’s laws when facing difficulties may not always seem easy, and so I’m dedicating the remainder of this talk to helping us think through ways to develop, maintain, and defend this type of prayerful alertness.

A WAY TO PRAY.... G.L.A.D. A.R.K

I’ll begin by introducing an acronym that helps me to think through a way to pray. The acronym is G.L.A.D. A.R.K. You may have heard me speak about this idea before, but here I’m presenting it from a different perspective, using seven specific healings involving Christian Science nurses as examples of how to pray. I want to be clear that GLAD ARK is not a formula. Prayer is guided by inspiration, not routine. Instead, GLAD ARK is a kind of framework to help me present ideas about prayer. And it is, of course, merely one approach, not *the* approach, to prayer.

The letters of the acronym stand for:

- G — Gratitude
- L — Love
- A — Affirm God’s ever-presence
- D — Deny the existence of anything unlike God, good
- A — Apply the specific law of God to correct and govern the situation
- R — Reject serpentine suggestions that would undermine prayer
- K — Know your prayer is complete

That was a quick summary, but we can now go through each letter in more detail. Note that the second “A” stands for “apply the specific law of God,” showing one way in which divine law, which is the focus for today, is often foundational to prayer.

I’ll now show how we might apply these seven ideas by offering a prayer about this talk:

G — Gratitude. We can start with a sense of gratitude that we're all tuning in today with a desire to know more about God, good. This gratitude is more than just the gratitude that the computer works or that there's nice weather. This is gratitude for the fact that, right now, we have chosen to prioritize our desire to know more about God and feel a deeper sense of Love.

L — Love. Prayer-based love is about having a desire to have a more and more expansive sense of divine Love and love for one another. This love is more than just loving things that are easy to love. This is loving our enemies and loving beyond personality or mere opinion. This prayer is a desire to love more and more purely as we are each expressions of divine Love's omnipotence. We can pray that this talk helps us each to learn more about infinite Love and share in the unconditionality of our innate worthiness.

A — Affirm God's ever-presence. Divine Love is present with me where I am and it's simultaneously present with you also...right now...and tomorrow, and the next day.... We can affirm the eternality and ever-presence of Love, the ever-presence of divine Principle, Truth, Mind, Soul, Spirit, and Life.

D — Deny inharmony. We can deny that anything can interrupt harmony. We can deny the possibility of distraction. Nothing can interrupt our feeling the presence of divine Love.

A — Apply the specific law. We can affirm that divine Mind is the only true communicator here. Divine Mind is the only true communicator and is communicating to each one of us exactly what we each need to hear today — and this includes the speaker.

R — Reject sneaky serpentine lies. We can reject the serpentine suggestion that technology, distance, distraction, or personality of any kind could possibly interfere with our inspiration. Nothing can cloud our desire to purify our sense of Love.

K — Know that our prayer is complete. We can know that this prayer is complete. Our prayer protects and seals our inspiration. This talk is both already complete and also unfolding according to God's plan. We can have a clear and calm confidence that all is well.

This was a run-through of a prayer using the GLAD ARK framework. As I've used this framework over the years, it has become more like all one action instead of a step-by-step process. For me, the framework is helpful to think through steps of prayer (just like we could break down each step of swinging a baseball bat), but when we actually pray (or actually swing at a baseball) it becomes one fluid motion, and with practice it becomes more and more natural and effortless.

For the purpose of this talk, I will go over each step and illustrate it with an account of a healing that occurred with a Christian Science nurse.

GRATITUDE

We'll start with the "G" for "Gratitude." The gratitude that heals is not just the gratitude for easy-to-love things like chocolate and ice cream. That is too easy. And as wonderful as chocolate and ice cream are, they can melt. Instead, the gratitude that heals is a gratitude for opportunities and experiences that

encourage us to go deeper in our understanding of divine Love. As you know, Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered the Science of the Christ, endured a difficult life early on. And yet these difficulties drove her to search and search for a deeper understanding of how prayer works. Reflecting upon her path toward discovering Christian Science, she wrote, “God had been graciously preparing me during many years for the reception of this final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific mental healing.”² That Mary Baker Eddy saw her hardships as God “graciously preparing” her for the discovery of Christian Science is an example of the gratitude that heals, the gratitude that prepares the soil for rich healing. While some may have lamented their difficulties, she reflects upon those experiences with gratitude for what best made her aware of God’s laws.

This is the type of gratitude that we need for healing. It’s gratitude for what pushes us higher and deeper toward an understanding of God.

To illustrate how I’ve felt this type of gratitude during healing, I’ll share an experience I had when I was sixteen. My parents were out of town and I was out with five other friends on a Friday night. A friend was driving us on a six-lane freeway in downtown Houston, and a drunk driver hit us from behind. Our car spun out of control, rolled down a hill, and we landed upside down. All of us were safe. I was able to climb out from the front passenger seat through the windshield and get to safety. We all got free and clear of the car and watched as it blew up twice.

Soon, ambulances and police vehicles arrived. The emergency medical technicians wanted to take me with them to the hospital because they were very troubled by what they said was a broken cheekbone. This didn’t feel comfortable to me and I felt a strong desire to be at home. A female bystander, whom I thought of as a highway angel, offered a friend and me a ride home, and we accepted.

When I arrived home, and since my parents were not yet home, a family friend helped to arrange for a Christian Science nurse to come to the house. The Christian Science nurse came to my bedside. Her presence was calming. I honestly don’t remember her name, but I do remember that her presence brought comfort and changed the atmosphere. I was able to see the experience as an opportunity to feel a truer sense of safety and to learn more about God’s protection. I felt untouched by the drama — like it was a distant dream — and I could see how we had been protected all along.

The Christian Science nurse took care of the physical needs. She was able to remove glass from the surface of my hands and made sure I was comfortable and safe. I slept soundly. Soon, my parents arrived home. Over that weekend, I experienced a perfect healing and by Monday morning I went to school with no ill effects. And what’s more, I was able to drive without having a sense of trauma, which is, in itself, a huge healing. Here are three other notable ways we were protected that night. First, the driver who hit us and kept driving was apprehended. Second, even though I had been unaware that the Jeep did not have an automatic fuel shutoff, I took the keys out of the ignition before climbing out through the windshield (I discovered the car keys in my jacket pocket several weeks later). Arguably, removing the keys, which I don’t remember doing, forestalled the car from blowing up until we passengers were a safe distance away. And, third, even though I seemed to have initial injuries, no one else suffered serious injury despite the explosion and car tumbling down the side of the highway.

I'd like to highlight that the Christian Science nurse's role of having a calm and clear sense that spiritual healing was the expectation helped shift the scene and ground my thought in a sense of gratitude for the protection we experienced, as well as for the opportunity for gaining a deeper awareness of divine Love's omnipotence. The attitude of gratitude made me feel and experience an atmosphere of healing.

LOVE

Our next letter is "L" for love. The love necessary for healing is more than just an easy or superficial type of love. It's not just loving cute kittens, or people who are nice to us. The love that heals is loving more purely...loving our enemies...loving beyond personality and beyond the outward appearance of things.

I like to think of love using the three degrees that Mary Baker Eddy describes on page 115 of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.³ On this page, Mary Baker Eddy offers the scientific translation of mortal mind and describes the three degrees of translation. If we apply these three degrees of translation to the concept of love, maybe it would look like this. As a first-degree type of love, I could have a passion and appetite for chocolate and raspberries — and I do! But, you know, chocolate melts when you leave it in the car and raspberries sometimes go bad. So that is not the type of love that can heal a situation.

A second-degree form of love is a bit more robust. Second-degree love would be about humanity and compassion and affection. It could mean being patient with someone who doesn't seem to deserve it or tolerating someone who has annoyed us. While this second-degree love is definitely a step in the right direction, and is probably the type of love that most of us strive for during our daily life, and may lead to healing, yet it is not necessarily the radical love needed for healing.

The radical love that heals is a third-degree love that results in truly loving the unlovable, loving our enemies so purely that we can see beyond a limited personality and only see divine Love's perfect creation, without beginning and without end. With third-degree love, we can see beyond the outward appearance and discover the deeper and eternal reality of goodness. We love because God loves. We love because we are loving. We feel our at-one-ment (health) with Love as we are purely loving. This deep and abiding sense of love is the Love that heals in Christian Science prayer.

In any given moment, I may experience all three degrees of love. I may enjoy a chocolate bar, be compassionate with someone who is argumentative, and then go into prayer mode to focus on what God is seeing, asking divine Love, "help me to see what you are seeing here." In my experience, this third way of loving doesn't necessarily mean stopping all activity. We can experience the stillness and focus of pure Love right in the midst of a crowd of people.

I'll illustrate this type of third-degree and Love-based prayer with a story about a boy at a Christian Science summer camp. About six years ago, I was serving as a Christian Science practitioner, and a Christian Science nurse and I were together when a counselor burst into the room — out of breath from running up a hill — to tell us that a middle-school camper's leg had been injured and he couldn't move, sit, or stand and that he was in a lot of pain. When we arrived at the scene, about twelve boys surrounded the sweet boy who needed our attention. They appeared scared, and I sensed that none of them were expecting this boy to walk before the end of the session or longer. I felt a surge of divine Love's power

impel me to say to the group, “This is a wonderful opportunity to prove that this stuff — the Science of the Christ — works right now and right here. We’ve been learning about it here at camp for a week, and this is nothing but an opportunity for us all to witness the Love that is present reaching out to all of us.” (Note that this was a statement to lead the group toward gratitude.)

I asked the boys to move away and give the Christian Science nurse and me space — perhaps we could say that we put them out like that crowd in Jairus’s house. But most were still clinging to the scene and to the boy’s side. I said, “I can see that you all love your friend very much. Let’s use that sense of Christian affection to heal. When you truly love your friend, you release him to divine Love, you trust that God is taking care of him and you let your limited sense of who he is out of your thought.” At this point, they were able to back away. And more importantly, it felt as though thought was moving from a second-degree to a third-degree sense of Love’s presence.

I put my arms around the boy (affection, compassion) and cherished him. I felt divine Love’s love for him, which felt like it was pulsing around us. The Christian Science nurse and I sang to him — some of the boys joined in — and it became clear that it was okay to move him. I carried him to the golf cart, and the Christian Science nurse supported the limp leg. We drove back to the Christian Science care facility across the lake at about 0.5 mph because every single bump seemed to cause the boy to yell out in pain.

We made it back to the Christian Science care facility and carried him to a couch with his leg outstretched. Again, I felt a clear sense that Christ — the awareness of Love — was present with us. It was palpable.

The boy still seemed to be in a bit of pain, but that Christian Science nurse was so wise. Instead of hurriedly putting him in a bed and expecting a long recovery, she helped him find comfort on the waiting room couch. She maintained an expectancy of healing.

The boy told us he wanted to go to lunch to be with his friends. Lunch was in about 20 minutes, and the Christian Science nurse and I looked at each other, both realizing that we would have to overcome any sense of our own doubt about immediate healing. I asked the boy, “Why do you want to go to lunch?”

He said, “To be with my friends.” (Perhaps this was kind of a first-degree sense of love.)

I said, “Well, let’s elevate that desire. What we really want is to join our friend so we can express the kindness, humor, generosity and friendship that God gave us. We want to go so that we can demonstrate that nothing can interrupt the expression of good that you are.” (Perhaps this could be seen as moving toward a second- and third-degree sense of love.)

He agreed and we prayed out loud together along the lines that nothing could diminish his pure expression of love, his pure expression of light — “You are the light of the world” was my prayer theme that summer.

He had some trash in his hand and wanted to throw it away, so the Christian Science nurse gave him a little test and said, “Why don’t you walk over to the trash can and throw it away yourself.” Both of us

wanted to see him walk before we thought about him going to lunch. And he took very limping steps but was able to throw out the trash.

Five minutes later, it was time for lunch. He stood up, I put my arm under him for support and we began a slow walk to the lunchroom. On the way, I was saying out loud that, “We are the light of the world. Our expression of God’s light cannot be diminished. Our purpose is to express God’s love and his power and grace.” By the time we were halfway there, he was walking on his own with just a little limp. By the time we got into the lodge and he saw his friends, he ran. And I cried. These were tears of repentance. Had I had so little faith as to think that this was not possible? I was so grateful to learn from this sweet child!

The long benches that the campers sit on to eat can be difficult to get in and out of because you can get wedged in on either side by other people. But this boy didn’t ask for accommodation. He sat right in the middle of friends on either side, and when he had to get up to go get food, he swung his legs up and over the bench. During the meal, I stood watch. I affirmed that nothing could reverse his progress. I knew that no one’s thought or false suggestion could hamper his dominion and expression of divine Love.

This particular day was a boys-only day because the girls were away on trips. After lunch, a Zumba instructor from Hawaii treated the boys with an impromptu Zumba class. This was typically a girls’ camp activity, but on this day the boys went out back and the Zumba instructor taught Zumba on stage while the boys danced along. Well, this sweet boy who couldn’t walk the hour before, got up on stage and danced right beside her. Not only was he doing the moves, but he was good! He danced freely and his legs looked like healthy rubber bands. The Christian Science nurse and I watched from a distance and celebrated. What a victory! At the end of the Zumba class, he jumped off stage, did a mid-air 180-degree turn, and landed and ran off with his friends — leaping and dancing and praising God! He was laughing and I had tears of gratitude and love.

I was especially happy this boy gave a testimony two days later at the Wednesday night testimony meeting because the healing had been so immediate that I was concerned the other boys who had witnessed the healing might have forgotten about it.

This healing shows a radical demonstration of divine Love’s power. The Christian Science nurse’s confident expectation of healing facilitated the experience. She maintained a fearless sense that all was well and we all saw it.

As I was preparing for this talk, I made sure to get permission to share these healings. When I checked with this boy and his mother, they remembered the extremity of the situation, and let me know that he experienced no negative aftereffects from the injury. The healing was complete.

And another wonderful thing happened. For years before this incident, the boy struggled with incapacitating allergies in the spring and fall, and it got to the point that his father wanted to take him in for a medical diagnosis. The medical team said that he needed to have surgery for a deviated septum, which was a somewhat invasive surgery. The mother requested that they postpone the surgery until after summer camp. As it turned out, when he returned from camp, he experienced no symptoms of allergies

that fall. Ultimately, there was no need for the surgery. The allergies were healed. The boy is now in college and doing well.

You may have noticed that in this healing, the Christian Science nurse and I weren't praying about the leg, *per se*. Instead we expected healing and strove to have a purer sense of divine Love's governance.

The G and L of GLAD ARK are sufficient for instantaneous healing. Mary Baker Eddy advises, "Gratitude and love should abide in every heart each day of all the years."⁴ Maintaining an alert sense of gratitude and love is a characteristic of an effective Christian Science nurse and all of us as healers.

AFFIRM GOD'S ALLNESS AND EVER-PRESENCE

The next letter is "A," which stands for "Affirm the allness and ever-presence of God." I'll illustrate this "A" with a story that occurred about eight years ago. A young woman called me from a hospital a few states away and told me that she had been diagnosed with some kind of super flu. Physicians had told her that if she recovered, it would then take ten or so months of intensive physical rehabilitation to become functional again — a grim diagnosis! I got this call from her, and then, hours later, she sent a follow-up text, letting me know that she was now unable to speak and couldn't move. When I spoke to her recently to ask permission to share this experience, she said that on that day she lost most almost all her functions. She couldn't talk, eat, text, or lift herself up.

It sure felt as if I was cut off from this patient — she was states away and unable to communicate. My prayer was to affirm the ever-presence of God. This prayer led me to contact a traveling Christian Science nursing service in her state. A Christian Science nurse was soon on her way to visit my friend in the hospital. What an expression of the ever-presence of God's tender care! The Christian Science nurse was able to give me a live report on what was going on in the patient's room. At the time, I thought of the Christian Science nurse as my eyes and ears on the scene. Upon reflection, she was really the active witness for the ever-presence of God's goodness.

When I spoke to my friend recently, she said that that Christian Science nurse's visit helped awaken her to the fact that she could indeed expect prayer-based healing, and that she did not need to succumb to this diagnosis. Within 24 to 48 hours, the young woman left the hospital. What's more, she was able to travel to Illinois that weekend to participate in an educational workshop, and ultimately experienced full healing. She remembers the Christian Science nurse's visit as the spark of becoming aware that God was present.

And divine Love *is* ever-present. It is not as if we're "in the hospital" or "in Christian Science" — we are always *in* the atmosphere of Love divine. The Christian Science nurse was not the cause of Love's ever-presence. Love was already there in the hospital. The Christian Science nurse was an active witness to the divine fact of Love's ever-presence.

DENY THAT ANYTHING CAN INTERRUPT THE ALLNESS AND HARMONY OF GOD

The next letter is “D,” which stands for “Deny any hint of inharmony.” This “D” means knowing that nothing can diminish the light of Life, the light of Love. The story I’m sharing to illustrate this point may at first sound a bit weightier than the others, but it raises crucial issues.

There was a difficult stretch of time in my life back in 2008. I had two young children at home, both under four. I was teaching at CU-Boulder, and my mom was struggling quite a lot — the prognosis didn’t look good. She was states away from where I lived, and our family called in a Christian Science nurse for help. The Christian Science nurse resided in my parents’ home and was able to tend to basic needs: food, laundry, cleaning, hygiene, general tidiness, and Bible Lesson reading. Meanwhile, she helped maintain an uplifted and cheerful atmosphere. She was on watch to witness the continuity of good and the ever-presence of Life. Every other weekend, or as often as I could, I flew out to help, and I had frequent conversations with this Christian Science nurse. The spiritual wisdom she had as a great grandmother and Christian Science nurse were precious gems to me at this time, and she shared freely.

Well, when my mom passed, on the night of her passing, I experienced such a clear sense that all was well and that the mantle — the light — was mine. In the midst of what threatened to be a devastating loss, I gained a clearer sense of the continuity of Life. We had effectively denied that anything could diminish the light of Life.

I was healed of grief quickly, within 24 to 48 hours. I stayed alert during those first few days and remember feeling such a deep sense that nothing had interrupted the light and life of my mother. I could feel her presence. I felt a sense of connection that went beyond mere physical proximity. This inspiration was more than mere psychological denial — that is not what happened. I was paying attention and was alert to God’s allness in a new way. I felt a beauty and an order to life that couldn’t be interrupted. When I talked to the Christian Science nurse about this recently, she said that she too felt like she was witnessing Life’s eternity. Her alertness and wisdom during this time blessed our whole family.

Now, this healing of grief might seem difficult to grasp because, right in the face of what seemed like death, I felt a fuller sense of life. I have an analogy that can help us grasp this point. Picture a large metal ring, a circle. This metal ring is symbolizing eternity without a start or a stop. If I took a piece of paper and covered up that circle, it appears as if the circle is gone (making it a first-degree view). But the circle hasn’t gone anywhere. As we’re able to see beyond the paper, beyond the outward appearance of things, then we can know that the circle is still intact and whole.

And if I were to use the paper to cover up only part of the circle (like a second-degree view), and only an arc of the circle is visible, then maybe it looks like there’s a start and a stop to a circle, just like it may appear as if there is a start and stop to life. But, again, we can look beyond that start-and-stop view to see the whole circle, the eternity of life.

And, if I were to cover up that circle with a piece of see-through tissue paper, then you could see the whole of the circle even though there is tissue paper on top of it. To me, this symbolizes what it is like when we move from a second- to a third-degree view of Life. This is the best way I can explain what that Christian Science nurse and I both experienced during the time. And, of course, we also know that there

is no need for even the tissue paper. We are capable of having an unobstructed understanding of eternal life.



During precious moments of what appears like a start or stop to life, I've found that we can see through the veil, see through the tissue paper, in such a way that we gain a deeper understanding of eternal Life. Really, we are always capable of sensing the "beginning-less-ness" and endlessness of Life. Every spiritual healing is a new glimpse of reality. And yet, in my experience, it is during these precious moments with loved ones that we can pay even more attention to Life, to the metaphorical metal ring. The Christian Science nurse's alertness helped me do this.

And, the Christian Science nurse was blessed as well. In fact, she is still a dear part of our family. She's even been on vacations with us. She's told me that one of the most special part about sharing this experience, and being a witness for the continuity of life, was that she was included in a small family celebration-of-life ceremony on the beach. She says that she could feel the joy, unity, and gratitude palpably.

This case was more than one individual's healing of grief; it became a collective healing. For me, this healing of grief, which came from a newfound understanding of immortality and eternity, helped catapult me into the full-time and public practice of Christian Science. A month after this healing, I left my work at the university and began taking cases as a Christian Science Practitioner, and later that year listed my name in *The Christian Science Journal*.

In my experience, this strongly effective Christian Science nurse helped to maintain the atmosphere for healing. An effective Christian Science nurse elevates thought and serves as a witness for good right where a situation may seem most dire. This is a good example of what it can mean to apply the "D" of GLAD ARK and deny any hint of inharmony.

APPLY THE SPECIFIC LAW OF GOD TO MEET THE NEED

The next letter that I'd like to talk about is the second "A," which stands for "Apply the specific law of God to correct the situation." Finding the specific law of God that applies to a situation is more than just looking up citations in the Bible or *Science and Health*. It means prayerful listening, a yearning to hear the divine law that eliminates fear.

Divine law is always in operation and is correcting and governing already. Prayer does not make divine law active. It is already active. Prayer is about discovering the law that is actually in operation already. Divine law is self-enforcing. Our prayer doesn't change the divine laws of existence, but it brings us into harmony with them.⁵

My favorite analogy to understand divine law is the dawn. The sun is going to rise tomorrow. We don't have to pray to make it happen. It is already true. In the same way, God's laws are in operation. We know that the sun will rise tomorrow because, in truth, the sun hasn't actually gone anywhere. It is still there. It only seems to be gone because the earth has turned, so the sun is out of our view. So, when the earth continues rotating, the sun will "rise" again. The principle of astrophysics explains why the sun appears to rise. In the same way, the divine metaphysics of Christian Science, as revealed in *Science and Health*, explains why God's laws are omni-active.

Earlier in this talk, I applied the "three degrees" to love. Perhaps we could also apply the concept of the three degrees to law. Here's one way of thinking about this:

First Degree (physical law): hygiene, dietary, muscular, medical, criminal, corporeal
Second Degree (moral law): humanity, honesty, affection, compassion, temperance
Third Degree (divine laws): understanding, purity, harmony, health, holiness

As I see it, if Christ Jesus had yielded to the first- or second-degree laws that seemed to be in control of the situation with Jairus's daughter, he wouldn't have been able to heal her. Instead, he needed to apply a third-degree divine law of unending life, the understanding of the unbreakable law of eternal good. Christ Jesus's understanding of divine law was enough to overturn the so-called first-degree corporeal laws. This "third-degree" view is what we are striving for in our prayer.

To illustrate this idea, I'll share another experience from when I was serving as a Christian Science practitioner at a CS summer camp. A young boy was brought into the Christian Science care center, and he had apparently been hit on the head with a rock thrown by another boy in boys' camp. (The boy who threw the rock felt awful, but I'll wrap that part of the story up later.) The boy appeared to be covered in blood. It was pretty messy. The Christian Science nurse and I looked at each other with a clear sense of calm, and just then, the divine law that came to us was, "It's all for show." Now, it seemed like a very dramatic and showy scene, but this pithy statement arrested our thought, made us smile, and we realized that all this blood was all for show. It had no power to undermine the divine law of harmony. This particular Christian Science nurse and I partner together often enough that we didn't have to speak as I covered up mirrors (so the boy wouldn't see the "show") and she began cleaning him.

As we continued cleaning and finding him fresh clothes, we talked about this opportunity to feel a deeper love for the other boys at camp and finding a sense of forgiveness. All through that activity, the Christian Science nurse and I maintained a clear sense that all of the drama and messiness of this scene was "all for show." I consistently see Christian Science nurses doing all kinds of practical work with their hands while praying deeply. When we had washed his hair and had him all cleaned up, we searched and searched, but there was no wound at all. There was nothing there. The blood was indeed "all for show."

The boy's mother was serving at camp and when she came to check on him as we were wrapping up, she heard us say, "It's all for show." To her, this statement meant something different. To her, it meant that this healing was a show of God's glory. She saw it as a positive statement about God's goodness being the only thing that could possibly show forth. I absolutely love that this succinct little statement spoke to us differently, and meaningfully.

Her understanding of the divine law in action was correct. When her son went back out to boys' camp, less than an hour after the other boys watched him leave covered in "ickiness," their jaws dropped in awe. The boy who had thrown the rock apologized, and there was forgiveness. It was a beautiful show of God's harmony, and we saw God's love tenderly touching each one of us in that experience.

REJECT THE SNEAKY SERPENT OR FALSE SUGGESTION OF FEAR

The "R" of GLAD ARK is for "Reject the sneaky serpent or false suggestion of fear in all its forms." I'll use another camp healing to illustrate this idea. Several summers ago, a counselor came to the Christian Science care center at the camp with what appeared to be a bite on her thumb. We didn't have it diagnosed but it appeared to be pretty serious, with the skin on her thumb discolored and infected. She had the option of seeking medical care but chose to rely on Christian Science treatment, prayer and Christian Science nursing care.

The Christian Science nurse was experienced with this type of cleaning and bandaging. But this particular patient seemed to be fairly afraid, and the symptoms seemed impressive, so we decided that each time bandaging was needed, the Christian Science nurse and I would both be present. Changing the bandages ended up happening multiple times a day because of water activities and so forth.

Well, as we went through this process, there were moments in which I began feeling afraid. But this Christian Science nurse met each moment with spiritual confidence. She had fearless faith, an understanding of divine law, and a calm assurance that all was well. Her excellent standard of Christian Science nursing snapped me right out of the mesmerism of being afraid for this counselor so that I was able to meet the case with effective Christian Science treatment and prayer. This occurred over two or three days, and each time we met this girl to change the bandage, it felt as if I were receiving Christian Science nursing care also. Each little serpent of fear and doubt and discouragement was overcome. What a wonderful example of partnership between a Christian Science nurse and a practitioner! Ultimately, prayer chased away the metaphorical serpent of fear, and divine *Truth removed properly* the evidence of infection.⁶

In this situation, the Christian Science nurse's consistent expectancy of healing kept me alert and able to feel the presence of divine Love. And, of course, the thumb healed properly before the end of the session.

KNOW THE PRAYER IS COMPLETE

The final letter of GLAD ARK is the "K," which stands for "Know the prayer is complete." Knowing that the prayer is complete is that calm assurance that all is well. In Christian Science healing there is no room for worry, no need to hurry, no rushing, and no imagining. There is only a calm certainty of the good

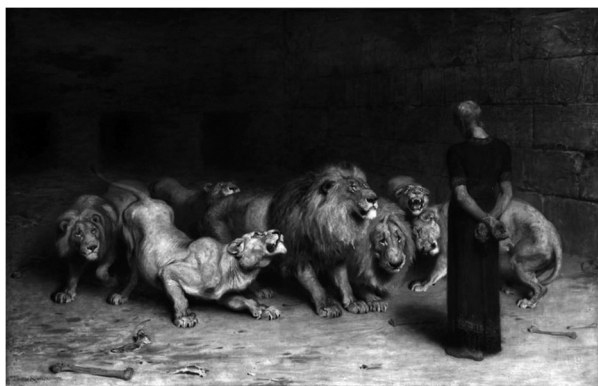
of knowing what God has already done. If we seem to be worried, then we may need to go back through our prayer again until we feel settled calm and “know the prayer is complete.”

At one of the Christian Science summer camps, there’s a particular field in which we play capture the flag. And it seemed like every capture-the-flag night, there would be some kind of injury. Now, we always had great healings. I remember one time in which a seventh grader had a serious ankle injury and was healed within 24 hours and playing full-court basketball the next day. But still, there was no reason for the harmony of the activity to be interrupted.

So, the Christian Science nurse and I went on prayer watch and decided to do preventive prayer, affirming ahead of time that nothing could interrupt the goodness of the event. We were clear on this, and we let this calm clear sense sink in. I don’t remember seeing another case from capture-the-flag night in the several years since our prayer watch. Since then, this Christian Science nurse and I have sat together on many occasions watching various activities at camp, basking in a sense of settled calm, knowing that divine harmony is in action, and our prayer is complete. We’re witnessing God’s law of harmony while knowing our prayer is complete — no worry, no hurry.

My favorite illustration of what it looks like to know that prayer is complete is the well-known painting of “Daniel and the Lion’s Den” by Briton Rivière. In the painting, you can see that Daniel’s hands are bound and he’s looking at the lions. Daniel’s shoulders are relaxed and he looks calm and peaceful even though the seven lions’ faces wear expressions of fear, anger, shame, hatred, hostility, etc. Daniel is completely calm, not worrying and not hurrying. To me, he is demonstrating the calm of actively witnessing God’s laws.

A subsequent painting of Daniel in the lion’s den by Rivière is called, “Daniel’s Answer to the King.” In this painting, Daniel now looks out a window at the dawn’s light. His back is to the lions, showing his confidence that he is safe. And each lion’s face is no longer agitated...their faces (and their characters) are subdued and submissive to Daniel’s spiritual confidence that all is well. And all is well. Daniel has made it through the night, and the animalistic threat of the lions has been overturned. Daniel didn’t tame the lions; he witnessed the divine law of harmony in action.



“Daniel and the Lion’s Den” - Briton Rivière



“Daniel’s Answer to the King” - Briton Rivière

Daniel's posture demonstrates that his prayer is complete. We can all strive for this posture as we're gaining spiritual confidence. Each one of us can strive to have those qualities of thought that it takes to do effective Christian Science nursing so that we are metaphorically ready to be called into Jairus's house. We expect healing.

THE ROLE OF THE PATIENT IN ACCEPTING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING CARE

In this last section, I'll share a final note about the role of the patient when working with a Christian Science nurse. I'll share one last healing. This past summer at summer camp, a dear friend of mine had a strange thing happen — there was no physical explanation — but his hip seemed to go out of joint, and he was unable to walk. Now, I don't know anyone more capable than this friend. I don't know anyone stronger, more industrious, or harder working than this friend, so you can imagine that this was quite debilitating for him to so suddenly be unable to walk.

My friend and I have a great track record of prayer-based healing, and he has published many healings in the Christian Science periodicals, so we expected healing right away. We had the gratitude of knowing this was an opportunity for learning more about God. We knew that this experience would purify and uplift our sense of love. We affirmed the ever-presence of Love and knew we were not outside of Love's care. We denied that anything could interrupt his good work at camp. We applied the divine law that we are never safer than when we're doing God's work, and we rejected the serpent's scary suggestions that this was a permanent condition. No! As we prayed in this way, we felt calm and expectant.

And yet, the situation still seemed dire. It felt as if something else was needed. I suggested that we consult one of the three Christian Science nurses on staff. I reminded him that one of these Christian Science nurses was a strong 6'4" man who could probably lift him. But my friend wouldn't have it. He insisted that he would go back to his house and let his wife care for him.

I continued to pray. Honestly, my prayer was mostly about receptivity and the willingness to yield to God's care. (I did not think specifically about the hip nor look up citations on leg joints.)

When we talked about it a few days ago, he told me he spent that night and the next in excruciating pain. And then, the next day he called a Christian Science nurse and asked for her help. This was a huge shift for him. She went to his home and, in her words, "opened the space" for healing. She helped him switch the bed around, showed him how he could be more comfortable, found a chair for the shower, and other practical details. He says that the practical wisdom and prayer-based tenderness shifted his thought. He felt humility and a willingness to accept care. He was able at that point to feel a greater sense of Love's tender presence. He told me that he slept peacefully through the night. When I saw him later that day, he was happy to report that he almost jumped out of bed in the morning because he felt so free but stopped himself and read the Christian Science Bible Lesson first. He considered this a major part of that healing; not because he doesn't normally read the Bible Lesson, but because he had the humility to stay and pray even though he may have felt behind on work.

I'll never forget watching him bound down the steps at the Wednesday night testimony meeting two days later to give a testimony about the healing. Just so you know, my friend's testimony was all about the Christian Science nursing care. His testimony was about the humility it took to accept the care of the Christian Science nurse. He cited this as the shift in thought he needed to experience healing.

His lesson has been a lesson for me as well. We can all strive to have the humility to accept tender care. We can all strive to be a witness for God's laws and to have the quality of thought necessary for Christian Science nursing: a fearless faith, an understanding of divine laws, and a calm assurance that all is well. And we can meanwhile have the receptivity of tenderness and be willing to accept appropriate nurturing from others, and to allow ourselves to be "cared for, watched over, beloved and protected,"⁷ as my friend felt that day.

We can all strive for the qualities of thought necessary to be effective Christian Science nurses, whether we go into the public practice of Christian Science nursing or whether we care for family members, are caring for ourselves, or whether we care for strangers on the street. We can each adopt the qualities of thought of the Christian Science nurse, the qualities of thought necessary to be a witness for divine Law. And we can also have that humility to allow ourselves to be nurtured because we are worthy of feeling the gentle nursing presence.

Thank you. Thank you for letting me share these ideas. Thank you for supporting Wide Horizon. And thank you for supporting Christian Science nursing!

¹ Mark 5: 21-43

² *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 107:3

³ *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 115–116

⁴ *Manual*, p. 60:15–17

⁵ "Prayer cannot change the Science of being, but it tends to bring us into harmony with it."

(*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 2:15–16)

⁶ "A spiritual idea has not a single element of error, and this truth removes properly whatever is offensive."

(*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 463:12–13)

⁷ *Christian Science Hymnal*, Hymn 278

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WIDE HORIZON, INC.
8900 West 38th Avenue
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
PH (303) 424-4445 – FAX (303) 422-6373
www.widehorizon.org – www.facebook.com/WideHorizonInc