

**TITLE: ANGELS OF HIS PRESENCE**  
**SHARON HOUSE ANNUAL MEETING 2018**  
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INTRODUCTION

It is a delight to be here with you all. Let's contemplate for a moment why we've all come together today. Perhaps we came to receive the annual reports of the activities and financial transactions of the Corporation. Or, maybe it is to gather in community with members of Sharon House, Christian Science nurses, and fellow Christian Scientists. Perhaps it was to receive some inspiration, or maybe it was all of the above and more!

As members of Sharon House we are constituent parts of what comprises the whole of the ministry of Christian Science nursing in our community. Put another way, what we think – or don't think – about Sharon House is all we manifest of it. So today, let's give some exalted thought and rouse our understanding to what the ideal of Christian Science nursing is, to what the qualities required by individuals who demonstrate it are, and how **we** can best develop and broaden it in our **own** thinking and, thus, in our community.

WHAT IS THE IDEAL OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING?

Well, let's start with those first two words – Christian and Science – and we'll go straight to the source, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy for her interpretation of these words. In *No and Yes* she clearly emphasizes their magnitude. I quote:

The two largest words in the vocabulary of thought are “Christian” and “Science.” The former is the highest style of man; the latter reveals and interprets God and man; it aggregates, amplifies, unfolds, and expresses the All-God. The life of Christ is the predicate and postulate of all that I

teach, and there is but one standard statement, one rule, and one Principle for all scientific truth.<sup>i</sup>

The word “Christian” is the highest style of man, our Leader says, and the word “Science” reveals and interprets God and man. Why did she choose to put these two words together to describe her discovery? She explains in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, “the term Christian Science was introduced by the author to designate the scientific system of divine healing.”<sup>ii</sup>[Repeat:] ... to designate the scientific system of divine healing. This system is wholly founded on a spiritual basis and Mrs. Eddy states further, “the proof that the system stated in this book is Christianly scientific resides in the **good** this system accomplishes, for it cures on a divine demonstrable Principle which all may understand.”<sup>iii</sup>

So, how does the word nurse relate to the spiritual basis of scientific, divine healing? If we look up the word “nurse” in today’s dictionary, the first definition is “a person formally educated and trained in the care of the sick or infirm”. This definition indicates that we must be alert to all the things society attaches to “nurse”. And, based on what we just established, we can determine that this is clearly *not* a definition that would be associated with the words “Christian” and “Science” since they imply a knowledge of matter, sickness and mortal man. However, in the Webster’s 1828 dictionary – the one Mrs. Eddy would likely have used – we find this definition third, with the first two being related to the care of infants, which may give us a clue as to a deeper and more elevated meaning.<sup>iv</sup> Examining the origin of the Latin form of nurse, we find it means *to nourish*. This word includes the sense of fostering and nurturing, of promoting and strengthening – of care and encouragement.

While this definition includes a moral basis, it still remains in the realm of the human and not the divine. On page 115 of our textbook, our Leader describes the Scientific Translation of Mortal Mind in degrees. This definition of nurse could be left in the Second Degree, which reflects the transitional qualities of

“humanity, honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance.”<sup>v</sup> And while these are all good qualities, to pair nurse with the words “Christian” and “Science” demands the Third Degree reflected in “wisdom, purity, spiritual understanding, spiritual power, love, health, holiness.”<sup>vi</sup> Hence, the activity of nursing in its truest sense is a very spiritual one. It is love expressed in tangible and practical ways.<sup>vii</sup>

We find confirmation of this in I Corinthians Chapter 13, – Paul’s epistle concerning love. I’m going to read from the New International Version of The Holy Bible:

“If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God’s secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn’t love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn’t love others, I would have gained nothing.

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. ... Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.”<sup>viii</sup>

It’s pretty clear from Paul’s discourse, that the ultimate good, the primary attribute above all others, the standard of perfection and excellence in caring for others, is love.

As students of Christian Science we know that this love is divine Love, Love with a capital L, meaning a name for God - as declared in I John chapter 4, verse 8: "God *is* Love".<sup>ix</sup> So that there's no confusion, no blurred lines, Paul also points out what this Love is *not*. It is not envious, arrogant, unseemly, easily provoked, self-seeking or evil thinking. These characteristics reflect the First Degree called depravity that dwells in the "physical. Evil beliefs, passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, self-justification, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, revenge, sin, sickness, disease, death."<sup>x</sup>

But, Love with a capital L is the ultimate presence of care demonstrated as patience, kindness, humility, cheerfulness, watchfulness, perseverance, faithfulness, and hopefulness. This care manifests itself, as Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer, as "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors", and as our Leader interpreted, as "Love reflected in love."<sup>xi</sup> This care manifests itself as God nourishing His children spiritually and mentally, with ideas and thoughts from Him. God gives us inspiration and ideas in such a manner that touch and uplift our hearts, and which heal our bodies.<sup>xii</sup>

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mrs. Eddy variously defines God's inspiration and ideas as, "not etherealized human beings, evolving animal qualities in their wings; but they are celestial visitants, flying on spiritual, not material, pinions"; "Angels are pure thoughts from God, winged with Truth and Love, no matter what their individualism may be." "Angels are God's representatives." "Angels. God's thoughts passing to man; spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect; the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality."<sup>xiii</sup>

There are several references to Angels in The Bible, which illustrate their caring, and strengthening power. Individuals like Jacob who was receptive to God's guidance, received—in a dream about a ladder from heaven with angels ascending and descending,—the assurance that God will always be with him.<sup>xiv</sup> An angel ministers to the prophet Elijah, who is hopelessly discouraged

with melancholy, fortifying him to continue with his mission.<sup>xv</sup> And, an angel from heaven appeared to Jesus and strengthened him in the garden of Gethsemane when he prayed that God's Will be done, on the eve of the crucifixion.<sup>xvi</sup>

These examples of God's care illustrate what Mrs. Eddy discerned of Angels: Spiritual ideas straight from God, present within our consciousness constantly reassuring and supporting us with the precise idea specific to our need in the moment. This is truly the spiritual care of the heart, uplifting us and healing us as nothing else can; this is the ideal of Christian Science nursing.

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING EXEMPLIFIED: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Perhaps the best example in The Bible that illustrates precisely the nature and essence of a Christian Science nurse is Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, in the tenth chapter of Luke.<sup>xvii</sup>

Imagine with me for a moment that you were an observer on the road down to Jericho from Jerusalem, - an isolated, inhospitable and dangerous route - and you saw a Jewish traveler who had been assaulted, robbed, and left lying in a ditch. Then you watched a priest come that way and pass by the man on the other side of the road. And shortly thereafter, a priest's assistant did likewise. The next thing you saw was the most unlikely: A Samaritan - the bitter enemy of a Jew, - responded with solicitude and care. He bound up the injuries of the wounded traveler, and then set him on his own beast. Later, you found out that the Samaritan had taken him to an inn where he paid for his care before continuing on his way. He essentially saved this man's life.

Since we know metaphysics resolves things into thoughts and exchanges the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul, what do you suppose was in the thought of the Priest and the Levite? Well, Biblical history might give us a clue. According to The Book of Numbers, Priests had the responsibility to minister

before the tabernacle, the law of the covenant, and the care of the sanctuary and the altar. Levites were responsible to the Priests and were to perform all the duties of the tabernacle, but they were not permitted to go near the furnishings of the sanctuary or the altar; anything *inside* the curtain and on the altar, only the Priests could touch. This meant that both had to remain “ceremonially clean” in order to perform their tasks.<sup>xviii</sup> Consequently, they were probably thinking, to touch that injured man would have made them unclean and therefore, unfit to do their jobs.

Because these men were responding to a call to the temple, the type defined, in part, in the Glossary of *Science and Health*, as “a material superstructure, where mortals congregate for worship,” their thought was focused on creeds and rituals.<sup>xix</sup> These two men, therefore, did not express the qualities the injured man needed; pride and fustian would not cleanse and heal him. The fact that Christ Jesus used a Priest and a Levite in his parable was a significant one. Remember, he told it because a lawyer – a scholar who would be very familiar with the law – asked the question: Who is my neighbour? Jesus was making a clear distinction, – as Paul did in his epistle on love, – of what a neighbor *is not*, and what a neighbor *is*. By definition, a neighbor is one who shows kindness or helpfulness toward his or her fellow humans.

Jesus knew that true Christianity does not divide its interests between the Spirit and the letter, God and personal interests and opinions. Divided loyalty is inadmissible because it inevitably reaps the error it sows. Spiritually conceived mental self-knowledge, states Mrs. Eddy, “consists in the dissection of thoughts to discover their quality, quantity, and origin”. In fact, she asks the question that was at the root of Jesus’ parable: “Are thoughts divine or human? That is the important question,” she states. She goes on to say, “This branch of study is indispensable to the excision of error. The anatomy of Christian Science teaches when and how to probe the self-inflicted wounds of selfishness, malice, envy, and hate. It teaches the control of mad ambition. It unfolds the hallowed influences of unselfishness, philanthropy, spiritual love.”<sup>xx</sup> Clearly, then, the

Priest and the Levite were *not* fit to provide the generosity and care that would nourish and promote the injured man's healing.

In general, the purpose of Jesus' parables not only sought to teach in a way that was wise and considerate, but also, in a way that shook up convention, to help individuals awaken, from blind belief and complacency, to enlightened understanding. And didn't this parable do just that? Jesus' deliberate choice to use a Samaritan to contrast the thinking of the one who provided the needed care, from the ones who did *not* provide their neighbour with the care he required, was controversial at the very least!

In order to understand why the Samaritans were so hated by the Jews, let's take a look at Bible history. The Samaritans claim they are the descendants of the Northern Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who survived the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel (Samaria) by the Assyrians in 722 BC. Influenced by the foreigners who overthrew them, the Samaritans took up the practice of worshipping their pagan gods and intermarrying with them. The Jews, on the other hand, were Southern Israelites who were taken into captivity by the Babylonians and despite this, remained monotheistic. When the Jews were permitted to return from captivity to rebuild Jerusalem, the Samaritans vigorously opposed the repatriation, and worked to prevent it. Thus the religious enmity between the two factions began. From that time on, antagonisms between the Jews and the Samaritans increased to the point where they no longer had dealings with one another.<sup>xxi</sup>

So, to the question of why Jesus deliberately chose a Samaritan" as the caregiver, perhaps it was to shock the lawyer (and like-minded thinkers in the crowd) out of smug satisfaction with labels, customs and usage that prejudice thinking and support self-will, self-justification and self-love – the adamant of error. Or, perhaps it was to rebuke the pride of intolerance and the blind opposition of ignorance and fear. Either way, the parable clearly illustrates that, it is God not man who is the judge of a man's character and that His beneficence is supremely

trustworthy. Put in Mrs. Eddy's words, it is "Practice not profession, understanding not belief, [that] gain the ear and right hand of omnipotence and they assuredly call down infinite blessings."<sup>xxii</sup>

Without a doubt, the Samaritan was a blessing to the wounded man. Jesus beautifully illustrated how he responded to an angel impulse, of compassion and love. His was a God-inspired provision. This dear man's thought rose above that of the Priest's and the Levite's, above material standpoints to the "Angels of His presence" and he responded to the call of "guardian in the gloom" to the wounded traveller.<sup>xxiii</sup> The Christly nature of unselfed love was expressed as the Samaritan, in brotherly love, as a type of compassionate thought.

The parable, then, expresses the divine nature of the Christian Science nurse through its tender, practical, healing message to mankind. In essence, it illustrates how when we find ourselves in extremity, the unutterable, all-embracing love of God meets our need. It does this with tender, compassionate, ministering, infinitely practical as revealed in Christian Science. The individual who represents himself or herself thus, has found us, has bound up the wounds inflicted by wrong thinking and false belief, has gently poured in the oil and wine of comfort and inspiration, has soothed the sharp pains of wounded pride, fear, self-condemnation, and has lovingly cleansed our consciousness from all ill effects of the mental conflict.

Moreover, the Christian Science nursing thought, which comes with the assurance of the ever-presence of Love, and which lifts us out of the mire of materiality, carries us to a place of safety, to "the secret place of the most High," where we realize in supreme security our freedom from error.<sup>xxiv</sup> And not only that, but it provides for future needs, as well! While the urgent emergency is taken care of, the Christian Science nursing thought makes provision for our future needs as we journey on because it knows, as our Leader so eloquently puts it, "Through divine Science, Spirit, God, unites understanding to eternal harmony. The calm and exalted thought or spiritual apprehension is at

peace. Thus the dawn of ideas goes on, forming each successive stage of progress” which “unfolds new views of divine goodness and love.”<sup>xxv</sup>

### EARLY STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE IN OUR MOVEMENT

This word “nurse” first emerged in print in 1881 in the third edition of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.<sup>xxvi</sup> Interestingly, the phrase “Christian Science nurse” began being used in the periodicals beginning in 1899.<sup>xxvii</sup> Perhaps Mrs. Eddy first penned the word “nurse” as a first step in “the logic of events” that “sprang from necessity”, “impelled by a power not one’s own” that Mrs. Eddy wrote of in relation to the development of the Rules and By-laws in the Manual of The First Church of Christ, Scientist.<sup>xxviii</sup> Perhaps she was seeing nursing in the field and in foresight used the word “nurse” in the chapter titled “Healing the Sick” as guidance for what are *not* the qualities of a nurse. She wrote:

“A cross or complaining nurse should never take charge of the sick. Never conjure up from the dark depths of fear some new discovery, to acquaint your patient with it. Long prayers, in which God is told that the case is hopeless, and asked to take the patient to Himself, are the prayers that do not heal the sick.”<sup>xxix</sup>

Over the years, this version underwent several revisions until its final iteration was made in the 1908 edition in the chapter entitled “Christian Science Practice”. Interestingly, this was published before the Christian Science Nurse By-law was written. [Incidentally, the By-law was first adopted by The Christian Science Board of Directors on November 16, 1908, published in the Christian Science Sentinel in the November 21, 1908 edition, followed by its publication in the December 1908 issue of the Christian Science Journal, and finally, it was published in the Church Manual 75<sup>th</sup> edition that same year.]<sup>xxx</sup> In concert with the Master’s parable and St. Paul’s epistle, it includes both what the qualities of a nurse are *not* and what they *are*. On page 395 in the current edition of our

textbook it reads: “Prayers, in which God is not asked to heal but is besought to take the patient to Himself, do not benefit the sick. An ill-tempered, complaining, or deceitful person should not be a nurse. The nurse should be cheerful, orderly, punctual, patient, full of faith, — receptive to Truth and Love.”<sup>xxxix</sup>

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE QUALITIES: THE ANGELS OF HIS PRESENCE

Let’s closely examine the last two sentences in the paragraph to more thoroughly understand their nature and qualities. The first sentence uses words that tend to be reactionary in nature, favouring opposition and presenting extremes of irritability, impatience, sensitivity, self-justification and duplicity. The former is a sure clue to the dualistic mortal and material nature of this disposition for it alerts us to the First Degree of the Scientific Translation of Mortal Man – the mortal-minded, fleshly, and fallen sense of man. All of these characteristics are bad-natured, disagreeable and give, in Mrs. Eddy’s words, “occasion for reaction unfavourable to (spiritual growth, sober resolve and wholesome perception of God’s requirements).”<sup>xxxix</sup>

Does this disposition promote healing? No! Of course not!

Well, what does? The second sentence clearly outlines the desirable, beneficial and responsive qualities of a nurse - cheerfulness, orderliness, punctuality, patience, faithfulness, receptivity to Truth and Love. These characteristics respond favourably, are good-natured, agreeable and express equanimity, - all of which give occasion for a nourishing responsiveness which includes the sense of fostering and nurturing, of promoting and strengthening – of care and encouragement – all the qualities we established earlier on that reflect the ideal of Christian Science nursing and are in the Third Degree where, as Mrs. Eddy states, “mortal mind disappears, and man as God's image appears.”<sup>xxxix</sup>

What promotes healing, then, is both receptivity to angel thoughts and the responsiveness of loving one's neighbor - as appreciation of the perfection of others, by a gentle word or hand volunteered, by happiness found in another's good, by Truth inflowing and Love outflowing, — all these activities express the buoyancy which characterizes the qualities of a Christian Science nurse and which are necessary aids in a sick room.

And, let's not forget how critical this state of thought is to promoting the mental atmosphere in that room to encourage and inspire the love, confidence, well-being, and health of the one being cared for. A room, by definition, is a space available for something; to make room is to make provision or allowance for. In Old English and Middle English the verb meant 'become clear of obstacles, make clear of, evict'.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Isn't that what the Christian Science nurse is doing? Doesn't he or she make mental space available and clear the mental atmosphere of obstacles to healing? Doesn't he or she emit a bright, cheerful, and orderly light in the room? In fact, isn't the power behind this unselfish affection what our Leader refers to in her poem, the Communion Hymn? "Love wipes your tears all away, And will lift the shade of gloom, And for you make radiant room Midst the glories of one endless day."<sup>xxxv</sup>

### ANGELS OF HIS PRESENCE FELT

Imagine for a moment, what a patient's state of thought might be. Let us turn our attention back to that injured man on the road to Jericho. What must he have been feeling? He had been robbed, stripped of his raiment, wounded and left for half dead. "The wound came from his fellow man. It may have been from a weapon or it may have been from verbal attack—criticism, gossip, or some other mode of destructiveness. ... He may have felt deprived of a great deal more: his faith, his courage, his strength, his self-esteem," and his ability to recover. Half dead was how his state of health was described.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

But, the Angels of His presence alighted with the love so generously showered upon him by the Good Samaritan. God had inspired in him both the impulse to perform a loving deed, and the spiritual ability to accomplish it with ease. The Samaritan brought with him the understanding that Love is already present, is beneath, around, above. He must have known, and was radiating the Truth, that right in the midst of them was Love,- nothing but Love. As the Samaritan was binding the man's wounds, as he was pouring in oil and wine, and setting him on his beast, he was representing himself as Love's devoted touch of "consecration, charity, gentleness, prayer, [and] heavenly inspiration".<sup>xxxvii</sup> In that presence of thought, there could be nothing to influence, condition, govern or control but Love.<sup>xxxviii</sup> How could the injured man *not* have been healed in this supremely favourable atmosphere of Love?

Our Leader has taught us that Love is a "universal solvent" and dissolves whatever is "the adamant of error".<sup>xxxix</sup> Wouldn't the cared for man have felt relieved from fear of being alone and helpless when the Samaritan had stopped and tended to his needs? Wouldn't he have felt gratitude in place of resentment and woe? And wouldn't he have seen the Samaritan as a guardian in what was assuredly the gloom of the material scene? What an example of the mental obstacles being dissolved by this form of spiritual care!

### WHAT CONSTITUTES SPIRITUAL CARE?

To illustrate what constitutes spiritual care, I'd like to tell you the story of quadriplegic man who had been in this state all his life. A reporter was doing a story on caregivers and the man was being interviewed to get his views on the care he had been receiving for decades. In a moment of profound discovery, as the man was expressing his gratitude for all the help he had received from caregivers over the years, what he noticed most was that he had never been seen as whole and complete. *He had never been seen as whole and complete.*

This man's discovery poignantly illustrates what happens if we limit the practice of nursing to an attendant in a sick room who tends to merely practical physical issues. In *Miscellaneous Writings*, Mrs. Eddy clearly defines the nature of material influences in the mental surroundings: "The atmosphere of mortal mind constitutes our mortal environment. What mortals hear, see, feel, taste, smell, constitutes their present earth and heaven".<sup>x1</sup> A merely material influence *deflects* the healing power of Life, Truth and Love.

But, the spiritually-minded Christian Science nurse, understanding the control God, the creator and governor of man and the universe, has, brings the mental atmosphere under divine control—mentally *and physically*—testifying to how his or her understanding cleanses the sick room. This form of attendance in a sick room proves what Mrs. Eddy writes of dominion in *Miscellaneous Writings*: "As many as do receive a knowledge of God through Science, will have power to reflect His power, in proof of man's 'dominion over all the earth'".<sup>xli</sup>

Understanding that man's consciousness is altogether spiritual, the Christian Science Nurse is acquainting the patient with his or her spiritually radiant self and with the health and peace that are inseparable from it. He or she understands the relationship of man to his environment as one of dominion. As this understanding permeates the mental environment, it rebukes the insubordinate, godless, false sense attempting to claim presence and refuses it from repeating itself further. This is because the Christian Science nurse is working in the Third Degree where mortal mind disappears, and man, as one with God appears.

The spiritualization of the Christian Science nurse's own thought operates in the environment providing the radiant condition that supports emergence from bondage to dominion, from mental darkness into spiritual light—a state of existence which is wholly apart from the dream of material life and its attending discords that the patient is entertaining. To demonstrate one's highest degree of man's God-bestowed dominion by accepting and utilizing the angel thoughts

that come constantly from the divine source, is to demonstrate the authority attained through the **humility** and **unselfed love** which casts out error and heals the sick. In Mrs. Eddy's words, "Spirit is symbolized ... by holy thoughts, winged with Love. These angels of His presence, which have the holiest charge, abound in the spiritual atmosphere of Mind, ... and spiritual blessings, thus typified, are the externalized, yet subjective, states of faith and spiritual understanding."<sup>xlii</sup> Thus, it is the nature of spiritual care to promote an atmosphere of love and healing.

### DEVELOP AND BROADEN THE MINISTRY

At the beginning of our talk, we set out to give some exalted thought to and rouse our understanding of what the ideal of Christian Science nursing is and to what the qualities required by individuals who demonstrate it are. I think we've touched the hem of that garment. Wouldn't you agree?

Have *you* ever – at any time, or under any circumstance – expressed some or all of the qualities discussed as the nature and essence of a Christian Science nurse? I'll bet you have! (I think God will forgive me the gambling reference here, because one with God is a majority and therefore a sure and the only bet!) I'll bet if you let the angels tell you, you'll be reminded of some occasion or occasions that you put these qualities into practice. With this in mind, it's now time to consider how *we* can best develop and broaden Christian Science nursing in our *own* thinking and in our community.

Do you recall at the outset, I stated that what we think – or don't think – about our ministry of Christian Science nursing called Sharon House, is all we manifest of it? Is all *we* manifest of it? You may be wondering, "What's my part in this? I'm never going to become a Journal-listed Christian Science nurse!" That may be true, but isn't it incumbent upon us all to follow our Leader's practical wisdom in the discipline and guidance of members she gave in The Manual of

The Mother Church? Isn't it our duty, as Mrs. Eddy admonished us in her Other Writings, "to hold guard over Truth, Life, and Love"?<sup>xliii</sup>

This By-law then, has something to do with the spiritual progress of each Mother Church member as well as with the mission of our Church. In its broader context and deeper meaning, this By-law applies to all members of The Mother Church and not just to a few select individuals who represent themselves as Christian Science Nurses.<sup>xliv</sup> To carry out our duty to God, our Leader and mankind, then, and to develop and broaden our local ministry of Christian Science nursing, is to uphold and obey the By-law in Article VIII, Sect. 31, entitled, **Christian Science Nurse**. I shall now read it:

A member of The Mother Church who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, who thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room, and who can take proper care of the sick.<sup>xlv</sup>

Let's take a step-by-step look at the By-law. Who is it speaking to? A member of The Mother Church. Now, remember that wager I made a minute ago about betting we all have put Christian Science nursing into practice? Well, if we've ever nourished, nurtured, encouraged or comforted another, then the By-law is speaking to us, *as well as* to the individual who humbly and selflessly chooses to make this a career! Notice it's not exclusive because it doesn't say "one who is a Journal-listed nurse". I'm also going to venture to say that all of us have practiced Christian Science sufficiently to have made at least one or two demonstrations. Am I right? So, the By-law still applies to us all!

Now, practical wisdom is the next requirement. This practical wisdom is based on the understanding that Truth is demonstrable rather than abstract and unattainable. This practicality is made on a simple, scientific basis that "The Christlike understanding of scientific being and divine healing includes a perfect

Principle and idea, — perfect God and perfect man, — as the basis of thought and demonstration.”<sup>xlvi</sup> As Christian Scientists, don’t we all understand that in a degree?

As for the sick room, isn’t it located anywhere there is an erroneous thought or atmosphere, and don’t we all frequent them on a regular basis? In these instances, are we taking proper care of the “sick”? I’m going to bet again that we are! Remember those two words we established at the outset that do the most good? The word “Christian” is the highest style of man, our Leader says, and the word “Science” reveals and interprets God and man. I’m going to bet further still, that each and every one of us, who has ever stepped into an unpleasant or inharmonious environment, has provided the correct thought that was needed to promote divine healing in at least one instance. Wouldn’t you say that this constitutes the meaning of “proper care”?

In *The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany*, our Leader wrote, “As an active portion of one stupendous whole, goodness identifies man with universal good.”<sup>xlvii</sup> Isn’t that what we’re all attempting to do in our daily walk and conversation? And isn’t this in some degree an exemplification of Christian Science nursing? Understood in this light, true nursing is evidence of the coincidence of the divine with the human — “as divinity embracing humanity in Life and its demonstration, — reducing to human perception and understanding the Life which is God.”<sup>xlviii</sup>

If we agree, then we have to realize that the concrete manifestation of Christian Science nursing in our community, the externalized object of understanding, is not merely resident in a physical building. It’s what *we* make of it in our collective thought. It is not just the responsibility of the individuals who represent themselves as Christian Science Nurses to uphold this sacred office.

As Members of *The Mother Church*, we have been instructed by our Leader to watch carefully that we maintain the love and light with which it was established

and never permit it to dim in our thought. Mary Baker Eddy wrote the By-Laws of the *Manual of The Mother Church* to form the basis of its existence. **The By-Laws were written to form the basis of our Church's existence.** I quote from *Miscellaneous Writings*, "They sprang from necessity, the logic of events, — from the immediate demand for them as a help that must be supplied to maintain the dignity and defense of our Cause; hence their simple, scientific basis, and detail so requisite to demonstrate genuine Christian Science, and which will do for the race what absolute doctrines destined for future generations might not accomplish."<sup>xlix</sup> **To maintain the dignity and defense of our Cause.**

This is why it is so important for us to exemplify and to identify ourselves with the qualities of Christian Science nursing, to keep *the standard* established in our thoughts and prayers and our own practice of Christian Science as well as others'.

As we listen to the remainder of the activities and business of Sharon House today, and afterwards, leave this happy gathering, let us ask ourselves, "How can I live the ministry of Christian Science nursing better, more fully and more unselfishly in my own life, in my family, in my workplace, in my church, and in my community? How can I best develop and broaden the standard of this ministry? How can I keep the holiest charge for Christian Science nursing along with the Angels of His Presence to keep calm watch by day or night and reproduce their characteristics? Let's make our response to these questions what we manifest of our demonstration of the ministry of Christian Science Nursing called Sharon House!

Thank you!

**REFERENCES:**

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- <sup>ii</sup> SH 123:16
- <sup>iii</sup> Ibid. 546:27
- <sup>iv</sup> Webster's Dictionary 1828 – Online Edition
- <sup>v</sup> Ibid. 115:26 Humanity
- <sup>vi</sup> Ibid. 116:2 Wisdom
- <sup>vii</sup> A Christian Science Perspective [Christian Science Monitor, May 6, 2015] Honoring nurses by Linda Kohler
- <sup>viii</sup> I Corinthians 13:1-7, 13 NIV
- <sup>ix</sup> I John 4:8
- <sup>x</sup> SH 115:21
- <sup>xi</sup> Ibid. 17:6-7
- <sup>xii</sup> Cared for by God in His kingdom by Lyle Young From the October 17, 2016 issue of the Christian Science Sentinel
- <sup>xiii</sup> SH 298:25–28; SH 298:28-30; SH 299:11-12; SH 581:4
- <sup>xiv</sup> Gen 28:10-15
- <sup>xv</sup> I Kings 19:1-8
- <sup>xvi</sup> Luke 22:39-43
- <sup>xvii</sup> Luke 10:25-37
- <sup>xviii</sup> Numbers 18 NIV
- <sup>xix</sup> SH 595:9 a
- <sup>xx</sup> Ibid. 462:20–30
- <sup>xxi</sup> II Kings 17:24; II Kings 17:29-41; Ezra 9:1-10, 44; Neh 13:23-28; Wikipedia; and Bible.org
- <sup>xxii</sup> SH 15:28-30
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Ibid. 174:9-14
- <sup>xxiv</sup> The Good Samaritan by Florence L. Morgan from the May 16, 1925 issue of the Christian Science Sentinel
- <sup>xxv</sup> SH 506:10; SH 66:14-16
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Curatorial Department Longyear Museum June 11, 2009
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Early History of Christian Science Nursing – A Timeline Summary Copyright 2016 Tenacre Foundation
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Mis 148:8
- <sup>xxix</sup> Early History of Christian Science Nursing – A Timeline Summary Copyright 2016 Tenacre Foundation
- <sup>xxx</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> SH 395:15
- <sup>xxxii</sup> SH 7:10
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> SH 116:4–5 *mortal*
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Dictionary.com
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Po. 75:10
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Could you qualify for the leading role? By LonaIngwerson from the August 18, 1980 issue of the Christian Science Sentinel
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> See Oil SH 592:25
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Addresses and Other Writings on Christian Science by Doris DufourHenty
- <sup>xxxix</sup> SH 242:15
- <sup>xl</sup> Mis 86:26-29
- <sup>xli</sup> Mis 183:26-28

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xlii SH 512:8

xliii My 353:12-13

xliv From the Directors – An important statement on Christian Science nursing by The Christian Science Board of Directors from the May 1988 issue of The Christian Science Journal

xlv Man. 49:7

xlvi SH 259:11-14

xlvii My 165:16-18

xlviii SH 561:16-20

xlix Mis 148:8