

# Spiritual Essence of the Writings of Mary Baker Eddy

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*Since 1995, a talk on Christian Science has been given at the Spirituality & Healing in Medicine conference, presented semi-annually by Harvard Medical School and The Mind/Body Institute of Deaconess Hospital, and jointly sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation. Hundreds of clergy, physicians, nurses, therapists, and other healthcare professionals attend the conferences and participate in a variety of workshops and talks. In 2002, Virginia Harris, Chairman of the Board of Directors, was asked to speak on the "Spiritual Essence of the Writings of Mary Baker Eddy." The entire text of her address, edited slightly for print, appears below.*

**When these conferences started six years ago**, something profound was beginning to happen. On the one hand, patients and caregivers were yearning for a more spiritual approach to health. On the other hand, there were skeptics and those who doubted the place of spirituality in healthcare. But I think today, more and more, we have to agree that there is a momentum in the area of mind-body healing. The polls, the surveys, the research are all confirming this momentum. Even more importantly, there is solid proof in the individual lives of our patients as they experience spiritual healing and transformation.

We all have patients who are no longer wondering, "Is spirituality a factor in my health?" They're earnestly wanting to know, "How can it affect my health? How can I connect with spirituality—my spiritual nature?"

This momentum, and these kinds of questions, are demanding of us as healthcare givers that we understand how spiritual healing relates to our patients. As healthcare givers—as practitioners, nurses, doctors, clergy—we have to ask ourselves, "How can I bring spirituality into my practice? What can I do for myself and for those who come to me for care? How does spirituality impact my patients' health for the better?"

These questions, which today are moving us forward, are not unlike the questions that Mary Baker Eddy, a pioneer in the field of spirituality and health, was asking 125 years ago. During the late 1800s, as now, people were looking for gentler forms of treatment. They were confronting the limits of medicine and searching for more effective therapies.

I've been invited to discuss with you this afternoon the writings of Mary Baker Eddy. I've come here today with the same expectations as the traditional healthcare provider. For over 20 years, I have been practicing Christian Science, the system of spiritual healing discovered by Mary Baker Eddy. And I deeply love being a spiritual healthcare provider.

This session is entitled, "Spiritual Essence of the Writings of Mary Baker Eddy." What millions have found over the years is that the essence of these writings heals.

Mary Baker Eddy was an influential author, teacher, and religious leader. She lived from 1821 to 1910, so her life spanned the 19th and 20th centuries. Her major work, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, published in 1875, is one of the most enduring and best-selling books of its kind ever published. Last year it sold over 300,000 copies, and 10 million copies over the course of its publishing history. It is published in 16 languages and has its own Web site, [spirituality.com](http://spirituality.com). *The Christian Science Monitor*, which Mrs. Eddy launched when she was 87 years old, is a leading daily newspaper, having earned six Pulitzer Prizes. Most notable is her discovery of Christian Science, which she presents in her book *Science and Health*, and which continues to make spiritual healing practical and accessible to people everywhere.

As with many approaches to spiritual healing today, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy are attracting renewed attention—not only in the United States, but around the world. *Science and Health* has a broad readership. It's loved and used as a reference and spiritual guide by people of many faiths—Jewish, Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, and others. It's also central to the faith tradition embraced by The Church of Christ, Scientist.

Individuals use and practice the ideas in *Science and Health* themselves to reduce stress, counter depression, quicken the healing process, as well as to bring about complete recovery. Both patients and health care providers use it. It works at all levels of individual understanding and spirituality.

Over the duration of these conferences and symposiums, I've had the privilege of discussing and working with doctors and healthcare providers. Many have become familiar with some of Mrs. Eddy's ideas in *Science and Health* and are using them to heal themselves.

I'd like to share with you an example of a pediatrician in Southern California who found the essence of the writings of Mary Baker Eddy a help in an emergency. This doctor told me that he has used the ideas in *Science and Health* for his own self-care and has introduced them to his colleagues and patients. He said he recently incorporated these ideas into a course he was teaching to emergency-room doctors, called "Physician, heal thyself." He emailed me the following account: "As you know, I am a very scientific Jewish physician. I have great respect for Mary Baker Eddy's teachings. The teachings that you personally helped me to understand recently saved my life. I have reread many times the written testimonial you presented to a previous Harvard conference, detailing your almost fatal accident. It helped me understand that God is love, God is everywhere, and that we are as connected to God as the rays of the sun are to the sun.

"The ideas in *Science and Health* have helped me make my belief in God more scientific. And just in time, too, because last summer, a motor boat started suddenly while I was standing on its bow, entangled in a rope that was attached to some sharp rocks. As I was jerked into the water to those rocks, my head came down on the jagged edges. I experienced intense pain while blacking out. But before I lost consciousness, I felt radical reliance on God. Some of the principles from *Science and Health* provided me the science I needed to create an instant treatment plan for myself. As I lay there, I heard a wonderful, assuring message say to me, 'Be very still.'

"It took an hour to reach land. At the emergency room, to everyone's surprise, they found very little wrong with me. And all during this time, I never lost sight of my complete, radical reliance upon God. And here I am, three months later, healthy, whole, and for the first time in my life, without fear.

"I know healing miracles occur all the time because patients have been telling me for 35 years, ever since I began practicing medicine. However, this is the first time, at least that I know of, that it has happened to me."

I was delighted and touched to hear of his experience. He definitely caught the essence of Mrs. Eddy's writings and found them practical in this serious circumstance. His feeling of connectedness with God, of being without fear—are ideas that are foundational in her writings.

Now, we could ask, "What is it in the essence of Mrs. Eddy's writings that makes spirituality practical?" For discussion purposes, I thought it might be helpful to view those writings from four dimensions. First, I'll speak from my experience as a patient of this form of healthcare—as one who has applied these ideas and experienced the resulting benefit.

Second, I'd like to briefly explain about Mary Baker Eddy herself, the Discoverer of Christian Science and the author of its central text—I'll give some background on her discovery and the surround of it.

Third, I'll explain how this system of healing works effectively for self-care.

And fourth, I'll give an example to show how a Christian Science practitioner treats patients through prayer, using the principles of treatment found in Mary Baker Eddy's writings, particularly *Science and Health*.

So, first, some insights from me as a patient. I have experienced healing through prayer my entire life, but there was one healing in particular, 25 years ago, that not only saved my life but changed it.



I was in a serious car accident. I'd just dropped our three boys off at school and was heading home. As I crossed an intersection of a four-lane highway, a car ran a red light. It crashed broadside into me, pushing my car into two other cars.

My first thought was probably like anyone else's would be in that situation: "Help, O God, help."

I was alone. I was injured. And I was trapped in the wreckage for about 45 minutes. I knew that the situation was serious. I was in and out of consciousness. I couldn't move. But when I was conscious, I could think and pray. So I reached out to God like never before. I actually mentally fought to stay conscious. I think I must have reasoned at that moment that if I could stay conscious, I knew I was alive. And I also reasoned that if I was alert, I could pray—and prayer, at that point, was my only help and hope.

So while the rescue activity was going on around me—as the workers clamored to get me out of the car—I truly felt a sense of spiritual calm, a divine presence and comfort. It was very powerful. It helped me deal with the thoughts of panic and fear, and even the thought that I might die right there in the car. But I can honestly say that the overriding sense was one of sweet calm. There was a Bible passage from Psalms that kept coming to me and almost singing in my thought. It was: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." 1

To me, that passage was like a promise—that my refuge and strength was there with me—and that my present help was there. I prayed to feel that present help—God's help.

Everyone in all the cars was taken by ambulances to an emergency room of a nearby hospital. Someone called my husband, and he came immediately. A team of doctors quickly examined me, connected me to IVs, and concluded that the injuries, particularly the internal injuries, were so severe I might not survive. There appeared little hope for my recovery.

Yet all the while I was in the car, and then while I was in the emergency room, I was fighting to stay conscious, to stay awake. I must say I felt a deep assurance of God's ever-present love. And with it, the assurance that I could and would survive. I truly felt a promise that God would save me.

My husband and I decided that we would rely entirely on God to heal me. This choice was ours, and we felt confident in that decision. I'd been healed before. In fact, all my life—as I was growing up and as a young adult—I'd seen solid, convincing proofs of the power of prayer.

My husband called a Christian Science practitioner, who began to give me treatment. Then I was taken home by ambulance.

The first couple of days were rough. I couldn't move, and the pain was intense. There was a mental and physical pull to give in to death. But I didn't give in. I realized that God was there sustaining and healing me. And I can honestly say that even at those moments when there was almost that conflict between those two pulls, I felt God's power and strength and presence keeping me safe and calm. And throughout, I expected healing.

During those challenging days, either my mother or husband was sitting with me, never leaving me alone. The practitioner continued to pray for me. All along I was also praying for myself.

I was not a beginner at praying, at practicing prayer-based self-care. But this situation really drove me deeper, to the very heart and action of prayer. I found myself wanting to know more of the essence of spiritual healing. These days forced me to grapple with the spiritual nature of my being. And I found that the writings of Mary Baker Eddy were filled with spirituality that was practical and immediate. I'd like to share with you a few examples of concepts that—at that point in my journey—represented the practical spirituality I was searching for.

The first concept, and the most important, is to truly understand the nature of the Supreme Being, to understand what God is. In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy counsels on this point: "If God were understood instead of being merely believed, this understanding would establish health." 2

And she also says: "'God is Love.' More than this we cannot ask, higher we cannot look, farther we cannot go." 3

And, once again, Love is God, when she writes: "Love is impartial and universal in its adaptation and bestowals. It is the open fount which cries, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.'" 4

She is again referencing God as Love when she says, "Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need." She goes on to explain and to reason, "It is not well to imagine that Jesus demonstrated the divine power to heal only for a select number or for a limited period of time, since to all mankind and in every hour, divine Love supplies all good. The miracle of grace is no miracle to Love." 5

Since I literally couldn't move, I began to run and climb mentally! I used my mental energies and capacities to consider what it means for God to be Love—all-loving. I also thought about God as being not only Father but also Mother. I leaned on God as Father, as a strength to support me. But there was also a wonderful, dear sense of God's mothering—that sweet sense of caring and nurturing—whispering comfort and goodness and care to me. Care that truly sustained me. Mrs. Eddy refers to God as Father-Mother in one place this way: "Father-Mother is the name for Deity, which indicates His tender relationship to His spiritual creation." 6

Secondly, I prayed to understand better who I was as the child of God. I'd read the Bible my entire life, and knew how central it is to understand God's creation. In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy says of the Bible: "The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God. . . . Man is idea, the image, of Love . . ." 7

What does it mean to be the child of God, of divine Love itself? What does it mean to be made, as the Bible says, in the "image" and "likeness" of God? 8 I asked myself these questions over and over. "What does that mean? What does that mean for me? How can it apply right now to this situation? What does it tell me about my spiritual nature, my whole being? What does this tell me about my promise for life and not death?"

When I speak here of my spiritual nature, I'm thinking of my real being, the permanent and eternal expression of my very being as an idea—the "image" and "likeness" of God. Mrs. Eddy quotes a wonderful Icelandic translation of Genesis that says, "He created man in the image and likeness of Mind, in the image and likeness of Mind created He him." 9 The translation uses Mind to describe God.

So I was beginning to understand that there weren't two persons, one spiritual and one mortal, but that my identity, my being, derived its life and its existence and its permanency from divine Mind, God. My prayer was nurtured and supported by a sentence from Mrs. Eddy: ". . . man's perfect model should be held in mind, whereby to improve his present condition; that his contemplation regarding himself should turn away from inharmony, sickness, and sin, to that which is the image of his Maker." 10

The third concept that I prayed during this experience is one that I found to be essential in Mrs. Eddy's writings and important to all Christian Science treatment, and that is our relationship with God. She explains the relationship this way in *Science and Health*: "As a drop of water is one with the ocean, a ray of light one with the sun, even so God and man, Father and son, are one in being." 11

Now I asked myself, "What is it about God and His creation; what is it about that relationship that is so powerful, so real, so practical to us as we demonstrate spiritual healing? How am I connected to God? What is my relationship with the Almighty? How can what I know about this relationship help me, heal me?"

I began to feel, through this experience, very close to God. I felt a oneness with God—the spirit of God being with me. I thought that since God is Father and Mother, and we are His children, there has to be a dear relationship between us that is indestructible, permanent, unthreatened. And that this relationship has to be very loving, very good, and very healing.

As I lay there one day, I realized that this experience had forced me to push a "pause button" in my life. I had been very involved in community activities. But now I was face to face with what it means to have a relationship with God every hour, every day. Not just when I wanted or needed it, but



constantly. And I realized that even though I thought I knew something about God, I had only begun to touch the fringes of learning about our creator. And now I was learning these three things:

- What God is
- What it means for us to be the child, or "image" and "likeness," of God
- What it means that there is a continuous relationship between God and His child

These were very important examples of what—to me—represented the spiritual essence of Mrs. Eddy's writings.

And so, step by step, as the practitioner and I prayed with these three ideas, the healing began to come.

First, I was able to remain alert and conscious. I was able to pray and understand spiritual thoughts and ideas. Then I began to be able to move. And then lastly, the internal injuries healed. And in about two weeks, I was up and around doing normal things. And in fact, it was very soon that I began to drive the boys back to school and care for my family. I was fully healed.

I had felt the power of God in a very, very special way. For me it was an incredible experience. As I said, it changed my life. I will always be grateful for it. I continue to draw great strength from that very holy time and from the practical spiritual ideas that I gleaned from Mrs. Eddy's writings.

Sometimes, as I tell this experience, I'm asked, "Who is this woman author? Tell me a little bit about Mary Baker Eddy and how this system of healing began." This brings me to my second point—how Mary Baker Eddy came to discover Christian Science and write *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

In 1907, three years before her death, a very popular magazine of the time, *Human Life*, described her as "one of the most famous, interesting, and powerful women in America, if not the world, today." 12 Noted biographers through the years have described Mrs. Eddy as one of America's "pioneers in the mind-body connection" and as a "radical Christian thinker."

The PBS (Public Broadcasting System) program *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly* recently listed the 25 most influential religious figures of the 20th century from the point of view of Americans. Among these were Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa, and Mary Baker Eddy.

## **The book's author had a journey to travel before she became known as Mary Baker Eddy.**

But the author of *Science and Health* had a journey to travel before she became known as someone extraordinary. The first half of her life was one of struggle and hardship. She was on a spiritual search, not unlike the search of many people today. As a 19th-century widow and single mother, she had very few options at her disposal. She had no financial means of supporting herself, and there were times when she was practically homeless, moving frequently from boardinghouse to boardinghouse. She had suffered poor health for many years and had tried many different remedies. None had permanently healed her.

But she was convinced through her investigations and experimentations that there was a connection between mind and body. She explored a number of different systems, including allopathy, hydropathy, homeopathy, and what are today called placebos. She wrote in her autobiography, "The physical side of this research was aided by hints from homœopathy, sustaining my final conclusion that mortal belief, instead of the drug, governed the action of material medicine." 13

Through all of her explorations and studies—spanning almost a two-decade period—she came closer to understanding that there was a purely mental medicine. She wrote of these times, "I had already experimented in medicine beyond the basis of *materia medica*,—up to the highest attenuation in homœopathy, thence to a mental standpoint not understood, and with phenomenally good results; meanwhile, assiduously pondering the solution of this great question: Is it matter, or is it Mind, that heals the sick?" 14

Here, again, she capitalizes the term Mind. She uses it as another term for God. She realized that God, Mind, had been left out of all the practices that she'd been exploring.

Being a typical New England woman, she had a deep love for and understanding of the Bible. She knew the healing accounts in both the Old and New Testaments. But why had they become disconnected and distant from present-day thought and experience? Those healing accounts became a beacon to her. They became vivid proof of what she knew had to be true.

She writes of this search, "Again and again I asked myself, 'what was the method by which Jesus helped the sick and the sinful?' " 15

Then, when she was about 45—midway through her life—she had a serious fall and injury. This event brought a tremendous breakthrough in her research and experimentation. A few days after the accident, while still under her doctor's care and near death, she asked for her Bible. She opened it to one of Jesus' healings in the New Testament. Jesus' healing was so real, so meaningful, to her that it began her healing process. In a short time she was completely well.

This significant healing did not leave her where it found her. She described it as her "falling apple." 16 It gave forward momentum to her search and changed the way she viewed the world. It gave her a clearer understanding of the relationship between God and the patient's thought and body.

This experience also made her even more committed to a vigorous search for a spiritual healing principle. She continued testing and proving, with patients and herself, what she was learning and discovering. And the healings were significant.

What had happened? What had changed? Before her accident—before what she called her falling apple—she had accepted the conventional view of the human mind as a derivative of the physical world. She believed that the mental state of the patient was just one of the factors in the case. She came, however, to see the matter world as a product of the human mind. Instead of accepting thought as a phenomenon of matter, she saw that matter is a phenomenon of thought.

So after the accident and the discovery, she understood that thought itself is the patient. It's thought that needs to be healed. Thought is the arena where change must take place in order for healing to occur. As thought changes and grows from faith to understanding that there is one God, divine Mind, healing results.

When she uses the term Mind or divine Mind, she's not referring to a human mind, but to God as Mind, as universal and inclusive consciousness. Mrs. Eddy discovered that divine Mind governs the physical body. She observed, "My discovery, that erring, mortal, misnamed mind produces all the organism and action of the mortal body, set my thoughts to work in new channels, and led up to my demonstration of the proposition that Mind is All and matter is naught as the leading factor in Mind-science." 17

Mrs. Eddy had become well-known in New England for her healing ability. Like many great thinkers, along the way in her exploration she received both encouragement and discouragement. One who gave her much encouragement was a medical doctor, Dr. E. A. Davis, from Manchester, New Hampshire. Dr. Davis had a patient who was dying of pneumonia. So when the patient showed no signs of recovering, Mrs. Eddy was called to come.

She went to the woman's home and prayed quietly at her bedside. In just a matter of minutes, the woman sat up—well. Dr. Davis had been standing by, observing this. He asked Mrs. Eddy, "How did you do it, what did you do?" After some discussion, he said to her, "Why don't you write it in a book, publish it, and give it to the world?" That was in 1868.18

Seven years later, in 1875, she wrote and published *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. It's a how-to book about "how to be healthy." It explains why and how spiritual healing occurs. It's written for healer and patient. It explains the spiritual laws of healing, Christ Jesus' application of them, and their application to our lives today. It makes spiritual healing practical for any reader. *Science and Health* includes chapters entitled "Prayer"; "Physiology"; "Science, Theology, Medicine"; and "Science of Being." There's even a chapter with accounts from those healed simply by reading the book for the first time.



In the Preface to *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy committed to giving readers for all time what would meet their needs. She writes, "In the spirit of Christ's charity,—as one who 'hopeth all things, endureth all things,' and is joyful to bear consolation to the sorrowing and healing to the sick,—she commits these pages to honest seekers for Truth." 19

Mrs. Eddy also established a college, which is still in operation today. It supports an educational system that prepares spiritual healers to teach this method of treatment. Classes are offered worldwide to those interested in spiritual healing.

Mrs. Eddy's life and achievements continue to be recognized as influential. That fact, coupled with the growing demand for spiritual insight and research, has led to the establishment of The Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, opening in September 2002. It will be the largest collection by and about an American woman—her ideas, life, and achievements. Scholars are eager to study the life and works of this 19th century reformer.

During the last ten years, I've had the privilege of reading thousands of pages of unpublished manuscripts, articles, and letters by and about Mrs. Eddy. These unpublished materials shed light and give background on the development of her currently published writings. However, the essence of her writings can be found in her book *Science and Health*, to which I've been referring.

This brings me now to the third point—how this system is effective for self-care. Evidence of the practicality of self-care through Christian Science is seen in the lives of millions of people healed.

My own life, as I've mentioned, has been a proof to me of the effectiveness of this system of self-care. Over many years I've been able to daily apply the concepts explained in *Science and Health* with good results for every kind of need.

But many, many others—who didn't grow up using this system of self-care as I did—have also been able to use these concepts effectively.

A doctor from Michigan wrote. When he was asked about the benefits received from the ideas in *Science and Health*, he said, "I'm seeing an amazing response in my patients to the truth of being" that's explained in the book.

A psychotherapist who studied *Science and Health* while she was undergoing chemotherapy said: "The ideas in this book helped me with the pain and side effects of chemotherapy. Each time I would have to go in for the treatment, I would take one paragraph and work with the ideas. It sped up my recovery. I feel so much less fear now."

A physician raised in the Soviet Union, in the Eastern Orthodox Church, was not satisfied with his medical practice—he felt it was missing important spiritual elements. He said he was searching—both for his patients and himself. Then he had a personal crisis. At that point he came across *Science and Health*, and after two hours of reading, he was healed of a long-standing asthma condition. He said, "The book was straightforward, and the results were so impressive."

And so you have three doctors, a psychotherapist, and me—a person who was raised practicing Christian Science—all using the same system of healing for self-care.

As the fourth point, I'd like to explain, as a Christian Science practitioner, how I have given treatment to patients, using the ideas in *Science and Health*.

I'll illustrate with one of my patients, who is happy to have me share her story with you.

I met Linda when she was 14 years old. She was suffering from what doctors had diagnosed as an arterial venus malformation. All of her life she had had debilitating and paralyzing head pains, and she'd missed a lot of school. She'd been receiving excellent medical attention, but the prognosis was one of little hope. Doctors said she would have to live with medication, CAT scans, and pain all of her life, and that she would never be able to have children. They proposed an experimental surgery that gave her only a 50 percent chance of survival. If she survived, she would have to have another operation within one week.

The family was desperate.

Linda's mother worked in the same office building where I had my practitioner's office. One day she came to my office, related the story to me, and asked me if I thought her daughter could be healed. Linda and her mother came to see me the next day.

The family had no particular religious affiliation. Linda knew very little about God or about spirituality. As I visited with her, we talked about God. We talked about healing ideas in the Old and New Testaments. We talked about healing for her. And I also talked with Linda about those three points I just mentioned earlier from Mrs. Eddy's writings.

We talked about what God is. She loved the idea of God as Father-Mother. She loved discovering that God was all-loving, that He was all-good.

She also loved thinking of herself as the child of God, pure, perfect, loved.

And lastly, she loved that idea of the relationship that each one of us has with God. We talked about thinking of herself more spiritually and what that meant for her health. She was also beginning to learn, through our weekly appointments, how to pray for herself.

One day she came bounding in, and said, "I am feeling so much better. I am not having those headaches like I used to have. And because I'm feeling so much better," she said, "I'm not having to take the medication." Her parents were very encouraged, and so they decided to postpone the surgery. At that point they asked me if I would begin giving her treatment in Christian Science.

In treating patients, as many of you know, it's vitally important to remove the patient's fear and replace it with hope, expectation, courage, comfort. As this is done, as patients begin to lose their fear, they become much more receptive to healing.

In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy includes an entire section called Mental Treatment Illustrated. She shows how to give a mental treatment. She instructs healers, "Always begin your treatment by allaying the fear of patients." 20

Fear is lessened and overcome in ourselves and in our patients as we gain that understanding of God as Love, the source of spirituality, and by finding that this Love is immediate, real, and ever present.

As I prayed with Linda, using some of these basic principles, she became receptive to healing.

This was early fall, and by Thanksgiving, Linda was completely healed. She never had to have the operations. The doctors named her the "miracle girl."

Today, she's the mother of two children. I see Linda from time to time, and recently I asked her, "Do you remember when the change occurred in your thought that brought healing?" She said, "It was when I felt that I was no longer vulnerable, that I was in charge of my body. Then I wasn't afraid anymore."

As this case illustrates, the patient's thought is the arena where change takes place in order for healing to occur. Prayer brings about this change in consciousness as the individual recognizes his or her wholeness and feels the presence of divine Love.

People like Linda who are facing severe illnesses, who are in pain, often feel cut off, isolated, discouraged—out of control. Disease becomes their whole world. They talk about "my cancer," "my arthritis," "my problem." It becomes their identity. If they can begin to lose that and recognize their wholly spiritual nature, healing can begin.

As a practitioner working with patients, I have the opportunity to see them experience a transformation of thought. Whether they're seeking physical, emotional, or stress-related relief, they can find peace and health as they discover their own relationship with God. Each case that we have demands our devotion, our trust, our spiritual conviction. This is how we can minister to our patients day after day. And I truly believe it's only as we grow spiritually that we can continue to



meet those needs, and to do so with joy.

Throughout *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy says that the most important ingredient in healing is love. She writes: "Love for God and man is the true incentive in both healing and teaching. Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way. Right motives give pinions to thought, and strength and freedom to speech and action." 21

And again: "The vital part, the heart and soul of Christian Science, is Love." 22

Clara Barton was quoted in the *New York America* in 1908 as saying she was much comforted by the teachings of *Science and Health*. Speaking of Mrs. Eddy, she said, "Love permeates all the teachings of this great woman." 23

Mrs. Eddy often asked in her classes, "What is the best way to do instantaneous healing?" In one class, they answered reasonably well. But then she finally answered her own question, saying: "I will tell you the way to do it. It is to love! Just live love—be it—love, love, love. Do not know anything but Love. Be all love. There is nothing else. That will do the work. It will heal everything; it will raise the dead. Be nothing but love." 24

Well, I hope that I've given you a glimpse of what, to me—over the course of my journey—represents the spiritual essence of the writings of Mary Baker Eddy. It may be helpful if I summarize what I have found to be the essential spiritual concepts:

- Understanding what God is—all-power, divine Love, divine Mind, Father-Mother
- Discovering what it means to be the child of God, made in His "image" and "likeness"
- Understanding what it means to have a precious, indestructible, eternal relationship with God
- Understanding matter as a phenomenon of thought; and therefore,
- Thought as the arena where healing takes place
- Allaying the patient's fear
- Love as the essential quality in healing

We, friends, hold in our hearts and hands the future of medicine—and the medicine of the future. The concepts we've been discussing are very necessary to the progress of our practice of spiritual healing.

Each of us yearns to be a better healer. We yearn to know more about spirituality and the power behind health and wholeness.

Particularly since September 11, our desire extends even beyond our own patients, to resolution and healing for our nation and the world. This is a time for unprecedented transformation. Spirituality is a powerful force that naturally and inevitably comforts and transforms. It heals our grief, enlivens our hope, and restores our bodies.

I can't think of a better gift to give to the new millennium than what we're about together.

May God bless your efforts and prayers.

1 Ps. 46:1.

2 *Science and Health*, p. 203.

3 Ibid., p. 6.

4 Ibid., p. 13.

5 Ibid.,  
p. 494.

6 Ibid., p. 332.

7 Ibid., p. 475.

8 See Gen. 1:26.

9 *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 97.

10 Ibid., p. 98.

- 11 *Science and Health*, p. 361.
- 12 *Human Life Magazine* (March 1907).
- 13 *Retrospection and Introspection*, p. 33.
- 14 *Mis.*, p. 379.
- 15 A11051, Untitled Article by Mary Baker Eddy circa 1900.
- 16 *Ret.*, p. 24.
- 17 *Science and Health*, p. 108.
- 18 Yvonne Caché von Fettweis and Robert Townsend Warneck, *Mary Baker Eddy: Christian Healer* (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1998), p. 56.
- 19 *Science and Health*, p. xii.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 411.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 454.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- 23 *New York American* (January 6, 1908).
- 24 *We Knew Mary Baker Eddy* (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1979), p. 134.