

Practical Wisdom

A talk by Daniel L. Jensen, C.S.B.
to the staff of Tenacre, Princeton, New Jersey
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Tonight I'd like to share with you nurses some of the things that I have felt strongly about for a long time. I think that if there's any place in our institutions or in other avenues of our healing movement where the mental attitude is important, it's with you people; because you're so often the ones to whom the patients are really attuned. And so *PRACTICAL WISDOM* seems to me a very appropriate topic in regard to nursing — important, that is, that the nurse exercise a *practical* wisdom. As you know, our Leader writes in our Church Manual that anyone who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse must thoroughly understand the "practical wisdom" necessary in the sickroom.¹

When I began to consider these terms I looked in the dictionary under "practical." I found that it says, "that which is useful and makes good sense"; and "wisdom" is defined as "knowledge and good judgment based on experience, wise conduct." These definitions would seem to have a very particular application to Christian Science nursing, and we're going to talk this evening about a very special application of *practicality*.

"*Spirit is all. 'There is no matter' . . .*"² That probably is, to the material sense view of existence, the most radical statement the world has ever known. Stop and think what Mrs. Eddy has said in this passage from *Miscellany*, in the last paragraph of her letter to the churches in New York:

"There is no matter" is not only the axiom of true Christian Science, but it is the only basis upon which this Science can be demonstrated³

Now if there ever was a strong, clear-cut statement this is it! There is *no* equivocation, no room for compromise. It must be the basic frame of reference, the basis for right reasoning,⁴ the premise from which the nurse must think and work in order to demonstrate its truth. There's no sick matter, and no well matter. There's no old matter, and no young matter. There's no pink matter and no white matter. There's no bad matter, and no good matter. No matter at all! We come to see that matter doesn't matter, and to see it consistently. Why? Because *SPIRIT IS ALL*.

At this point I'd like to share some excerpts from a wonderful article entitled "Perfect Models," written by one of Mrs. Eddy's students, Annie Knott.⁵

¹ *Manual of The Mother Church* 49:7

² *Miscellany* by Mary Baker Eddy 357:22

³ *Miscellany* 357:22

⁴ *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy 492:3

⁵ *Christian Science Sentinel*, January 10, 1914

Mrs. Eddy tells us that we “must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually, or we shall never carve them out in grand and nobles lives” (Science and Health, p. 248). A glance at the Concordance to Science and Health shows us where to find a number of deeply interesting and helpful references to this topic, all of which point away from the material to the spiritual. Close self-examination reveals the tendency of the human mind to cling to mortal and material concepts instead of laying hold upon the spiritual and perfect, and this explains the slow advance made by mankind in their efforts to escape from the bondage of material belief. The student of Christian Science who attempts to spiritualize matter, to his own sense or that of others, can find nothing in the teachings of Christian Science to support his views.

In one of Mrs. Eddy’s classes, a student remarked that she always endeavored to have the perfect body in her thought when giving treatment. Mrs. Eddy at once asked where she found her authority for such a method. The student unhesitatingly responded that it was from Science and Health, and after a little search she triumphantly read the statement on page 407, “Let the perfect model be present in your thoughts,” etc. Smiling, as one would at the mistake of a child, Mrs. Eddy then asked if she regarded the body as the ‘model’ here referred to, and the student said she had so believed up to that moment. With the utmost patience Mrs. Eddy then explained to her students that we can only perceive the divine and perfect model as we are, to quote Paul, “absent from the body” and “present with the Lord.”

Humanity has been slowly yielding up the belief in a corporeal God, but it still clings to the belief in a bodily model for man, while accepting the Scriptural statement that he is God’s likeness. Its model is therefore that of the sculptor who studies the human anatomy, with some regard to the emotions, passions, and tendencies of the carnal or bodily mind. Strictly speaking, we can have but one model, God’s perfect idea, with countless reflections, all governed by the one divine Principle.

Suppose you came to me with a problem of a sore thumb. You describe it to me: how it hurts, how long it’s been that way, what happened to it, what you’re afraid of and why. I tell you that you must hold a “perfect model before thought and look at it continually,” and that I will help you do this. Furthermore, I tell you that you have come to the right man because I am an expert on *thumbs*. I can even give you several photos of perfect thumbs to look at in order to strengthen your image of a “perfect model.” Isn’t this ridiculous — even kooky! But don’t we often do just this, *mentally*?

Some of you here tonight may have traveled considerable distances to be here. It seems to you, perhaps, that you got onto roadways and perhaps traveled many miles. But I submit that you never went anywhere! For you see, when we know there’s no matter we know there’s no space, for space is only the distance between material objects; and if there are no material objects, then there is no space, no separation. There is unity of thought. When we see further that this rules out time, what wonderful horizons of thought open. It hints at the time, of which our hymn

suggests, when we will experience the truth that “time and space and fear are naught.”⁶ In this context we can understand and accept that Jesus moved a boatload of men across three and a half miles of water *instantly*;⁷ and that he could walk through walls,⁸ having no material impediment to his movement. Jesus recognized that Spirit was all — *all!* — and that consequently there was no matter, no limitation.

Now this is a very radical stand because the world is “holding before our gaze continually”⁹ the belief that we live in matter, that we’re dependent upon it. It claims that Spirit enters into a capsule of flesh (called a body), stays there for so many trips around the sun (called years), and then leaves to go to Valhalla, heaven, hell, or somewhere else! It says that body is a temporary dwelling-place for Spirit. But by reducing this theory to its ultimate we can see the ridiculousness of it. It would place God, *omnipotent God*, in a position of dependency — the All-in-all God dependent upon the whim and fancy of two amorous mortals getting together, having sexual relations, and “creating” a child in order that there be a dwelling-place for Spirit! Isn’t that the most ridiculous concept you can imagine? Man is spiritual, as described in the first story of creation¹⁰ — the *only* story of creation.¹¹ The second story, of Adam and Eve, is an allegory for the ignorant tribesman. But what about that *third* story:¹²

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain,
and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

An acceptance of this *biological* story of creation, this false concept of birth, has kept us chained (literally chained) to a body as the reality of man. And the only possible way to free ourselves of the belief of *death* is to understand that there was never a material *birth* — because man is spiritual. Remember that according to Mrs. Eddy what set Jesus apart and enabled him to raise Lazarus was his realization that Lazarus had never lived in or died out of a body.¹³ When you nurses are caring for a body, as it would appear, there must be this realization that SPIRIT IS ALL, always has been ALL, and that *consequently* there is no matter. This allows you to step clear of the second and third stories of creation.

Now, in regard to being *practical*. The thought will sometimes occur to you while on a case, “Well, of course you have to use *wisdom!*” How many times have you heard that? And of course you do have to use wisdom — there’s no question about it. But what is the nature of your wisdom? Is it spiritual, or material, divine or human? Human so-called “wisdom” cannot be exercised at the expense of radical Christian Science treatment and healing. Our mission is to heal, and there is no healing unless

⁶ *Christian Science Hymnal*, #136

⁷ John 6:21

⁸ John 20:19

⁹ *Science and Health* 248:19

¹⁰ Genesis 1:27

¹¹ *Science and Health* 502:24-27

¹² Genesis 4:1

¹³ *Science and Health* 75:16

we are radical Christian Scientists — no way! So when these suggestions come of the need for “practicality” and “wisdom,” stop before making any mental concession and remember our Leader’s words: that Spirit’s allness is “the only basis upon which this Science can be demonstrated.” There is no rule that allows for quibbling or compromise, for we must be single-minded and radical Christian Scientists if we are to carry forth the healing work of the primitive Christians.

Now mind you, it’s your state of *mind* we’re talking about. I’m not saying that you aren’t going to provide good physical care. But primarily what is the state of *mind*? I am so happy to see the nurse’s training bringing that out because it is all-governing and all-determining. You don’t have to worry about whether the nurse will do the kind, loving, practical, wise thing if the state of mind is right. Right action will follow automatically. You don’t have to give specific instructions about smiling at the right time, about loving, understanding, and caring, about quieting a patient’s fears — if a nurse understands the *mythical* nature of material sense testimony and man’s real spiritual nature. When that is understood, in the *heart* of the nurse, there will be no problem about his or her practical and radical demonstration of Truth.

Speaking about practicality, was it *practical* to go fishing when Caesar’s tax had to be paid? Was it *practical* to invite thousands of people to a picnic when the host had only two fishes and five loaves? Was it *practical* to let someone lie dead for four days in the desert heat before trying to heal him? Was it *practical* to turn down a kingdom and instead be crucified? But through such acts of radical, *spiritual practicality* Jesus demonstrated spiritual principle and changed the course of more lives than anyone who ever lived. And this kind of radical practicality will enable you, as well, to contribute to the transformation of others’ hearts and lives. It means that you can bring your healing mission to thousands of people in the most practical and effective way possible. *We speak in the relative to be understood of men; but we think in the absolute to understand God.* Our *thinking* is what we’re talking about here. We must *think* in the absolute.

I’ll never forget comments made to me by a little practitioner I knew who, in her late nineties, was still making house calls. She didn’t accept any concept of age and therefore had no sense of such limitation. When she got ready for bed she’d say, “Well, I’ve got to go bathe my doll now and put it to bed!” Once in bed she would say, “Now I’ve fed you and bathed you, combed your hair and brushed your teeth; now I don’t want to hear another thing from you until tomorrow morning!” That’s how she regarded this whole belief of body. Earlier in her life, in her teens, she’d been condemned by materia medica to the life of a helpless cripple with no hope of ever leaving a wheelchair. She’d been told that she’d never be able to read because of eye problems. She didn’t believe or accept these predictions and consequently lived a life of normal activity that was just beautiful — because she looked through matter to Spirit, and that’s the crux of the whole thing.

Mrs. Eddy says:

Metaphysics resolves things into thoughts, and exchanges the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul.¹⁴

Sitting here, you don't see a *table*; you're aware of a *thought called a "table."* What you think you're sitting on has no reality as matter; it doesn't exist as substance — only as a mental image. This solid-appearing building that we think we're sitting in is entirely composed of thought. If we start to view things this way, it isn't such a big task to take the next step and realize that this \$6.50 worth of chemicals that we call a body and believe to be the originator of thought, is simply a false mental concept. I remember Mr. Seeley explaining, in one of his lectures, that if you could squeeze all the space out between the electrons and protons in the atomic structure of the body you'd have left a speck so tiny that you couldn't see it on the point of a pin! And that's that solid stuff we talk about?

Some time ago the *San Francisco Examiner* had an article written by an atomic physicist. In it he openly stated that matter resolves itself into nothing but "crystallized thought." In today's quantum physics it is recognized that merely *observing* an experiment changes its outcome — having no *physical* contact or influence, but the mental *observation* of it changes the result!

You needn't stand aghast at nothingness — whether you're changing a dressing or filling out an insurance report that requires some kind of diagnosis (in effect, a description of an illusion). Don't allow the mental picture, for a single second, to become a fact. When you start to complete the form, recognize that it calls for nothing but the description of a ghostly belief, a mirage. You're complying with a regulation, but not describing reality. Somehow when we write things out they often tend to become more real in our thinking, and slip into consciousness if we're not consistently alert. Remember *God's diagnosis* of creation: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."¹⁵

Now, how to make clear that this appearance of so-called "matter" is "no-thing," and *keep it* a "no thing." What's the process? What's the best way of doing this? Mrs. Eddy tells us that: "Sleep and mesmerism explain the mythical nature of material sense."¹⁶

Let's think about this for a moment, for if we can once see the *mythical* nature of what appears to be matter, we're never going to stand aghast at it again. It means that when you walk down the street and see a tree, a bird, or an automobile, you can stop and think, "That's a thought *called* a tree, a thought *called* a bird. But it all exists in thought." I find myself practicing this, because it's that first step and most difficult step in what Mrs. Eddy advises (resolving things into thoughts). The world is holding before us constantly the belief that so-called matter is substance. But the

¹⁴ *Science and Health* 269:14

¹⁵ Genesis 1:31

¹⁶ *Science and Health* 490:28-29

experiences of the night dream and of hypnotism can lead us to accept that apparently convincing sense impressions are not what they seem to be.

We learn the *unknown* by association with the *known*. So our Leader gives us known, familiar examples of illusion which can help us understand the unknown, unrecognized illusions of material sense. She tells us that sleep, for one, can explain the mythical nature of material sense. So let's look at sleep (i.e. the dream) for a moment.

In a dream we see, feel, hear, taste and smell all of the physical sense reports (sometimes even more vividly than in the waking experience). Yet we know that everything we behold, everything we experience, is entirely mental. Not one single aspect is ever anything *but* thought, and we know and accept that. But when it comes to what we call this *waking* dream we say, "Oh, *this is real!*" Yet isn't it just as mythical, just as much a dream as that sleeping experience? She tells us so in our textbook:

Mortal existence is a dream of pain and pleasure in matter, a dream of sin, sickness, and death; and it is like the dream we have in sleep, in which everyone recognizes his condition to be wholly a state of mind. In both the waking and sleeping dream, the dreamer thinks his body is material and the suffering is in that body.

The smile of the sleeper indicates the sensation produced physically by the pleasure of a dream. In the same way pain and pleasure, sickness and care, are traced upon mortals by unmistakable signs.¹⁷

Now I ask, Is there any more reality in the waking dream of mortal existence than in the sleeping dream? There cannot be, since whatever appears to be a mortal man is a mortal dream.¹⁸

When we realize and accept that we're dealing with thought in the *waking* experience (just as in the sleeping) we'll begin to deal with things as thoughts. But as long as we're dealing with the human experience as material we don't even get into the ball game — we're still out in the parking lot! We have to resolve things into thoughts before we can go on to make the exchange. The exchange takes place after you have it in the realm of *thought*. That's why the practice of seeing things as thoughts, and recognizing them as such, puts us at the point where we can say, "Big deal! I can handle that." But if you continue to view the situation as one involving so-called "matter," as one needing a change in cell structure, or restoration of an organ, you've got a different problem. And that's what the world is holding before your view continually. But an understanding of the mythical nature of material existence, viewing it as a mental dream, better enables us not to stand aghast, not to get stuck in the dream.

Now let's look at the nature of material sense as one of mesmerism (hypnotism); for you're going to see that ultimately that's all you're dealing with. It's no

¹⁷ *Science and Health* 188:11-21

¹⁸ *Science and Health* 250:22-25

accident that Mrs. Eddy defines the problem's nature as "animal magnetism" or "hypnotism." In light of God's, Spirit's, position as the only cause and creator what else could it be?

Most of us believe that in order to become hypnotized we've got to have someone with black glassy eyes holding our concentration and enticing us into watching a swinging pendulum, a flashing light, a watch, or something of this nature, and thereby bringing us under his Svengali control. But this is not true. Even voluntary hypnotism doesn't require a spoken word. [See testimony by J. Woodruff Smith in *The Christian Science Journal*, March 1977, Volume 95, page 162.]

Do you remember the furor raised recently in the big chess matches when the Russian finalists were accusing one another of having teams of hypnotists in the audience zapping each other — and without a spoken word? They knew what was going on.

Christian Scientists are the only people in the world effectively trained to deal with such apparent influences. We have to recognize the mental nature of things, and the power of the one and only divine Mind!

Now I'd like to tell you a true incident that I think you'll find helpful. A man at Fifth Church, San Francisco, had a very good friend that was an expert hypnotist. They used to talk metaphysics from time to time, and he said to the Christian Scientist, "One of these days I'm going to hypnotize you and then you will understand what I'm talking about." Well, the Scientist would kind of good-naturedly scoff at this. Time went on, and one night they went to dinner at the Persian Room of the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. For dinner the Scientist ordered lamb chops. When the waitress served him he looked down at his plate and said, "Just a minute, Miss, you've made a mistake in my order. I ordered lamb chops, not watermelon." She said, "What watermelon?" "Why," he said, "*this* watermelon!" And he held up a big slab of red watermelon. She said, "Are you putting me on?" "Well, no," he said; "I know that I ordered lamb chops." "Well, I *served* you lamb chops — that's what you have!" They got into quite an argument. Finally he caught a glimpse of his friend sitting across from him, with a smirk on his face. He stopped, looked right at him, and said, "You finally did it, didn't you?" That broke the spell. He looked back at his plate and there, where an instant before had been a big slab of red watermelon, were the lamb chops. Well, he rather shamefacedly excused himself to the girl and they went on with their meal.

The next day this Christian Scientist and his mother went to visit an invalid aunt who was suffering from a belief of cancer of the face. It had reached the stage where she could no longer go out in public, and so the family took turns visiting her, and this was their turn. This man, the night before, had shared the experience about the watermelon with his mother. So when they walked into the room where his aunt was, and caught a glimpse of her face, he turned to his mother and, almost with a chuckle, said, "Why Auntie's got watermelon all over her face." You see, he saw so clearly that this appearance was absolutely no different than the appearance of the watermelon had been the night before. It was an hypnotic image, not a substantial

or actual condition. There was no reality in it. He saw its unreality, as did his mother. They then talked to the aunt about what *body* really was.

The next morning the niece who was taking care of the aunt called, so excited she could scarcely speak. She said, "The most wonderful thing has just happened. That entire cancerous growth fell off of Auntie's face this morning, and she's well!"

Now, let's look for a moment at what happened. Psychologists have come to recognize that the breaking of a hypnotic spell requires two things. The first is a recognition that the picture is illusory. Now isn't that exactly what happened when this Christian Scientist turned to his friend and said, "You finally did it, didn't you?" At that instant he recognized the "watermelon" to be an illusion. Even though it was still evident when he said it, he recognized it to be an illusion. Likewise, we must recognize material sense to be illusory — even when we're standing knee-deep in it. We must, as our Leader says, admit the facts of divine Science even though they are not supported by material sense.¹⁹

Even though it *looked* as though that cancerous growth was all over the aunt's face, he recognized it to be an illusion as he turned to his mother and said, "Why Auntie's got watermelon all over her face." So the first step, of *recognizing the appearance as illusion*, was taken in both instances. The appearance of leprosy must have appeared very real to Jesus; but he clearly knew, that in light of the facts of divine Science, it must be an illusion, a dream image.

The second requirement to break a hypnotic spell is knowing what the *fact* of the particular situation is. Now that's what the waitress provided in the first instance. She said, "Those are lamb chops!" again and again. She provided the fact right then! And when the man and his mother and the aunt recognized and affirmed the nature of man's real body, his identity, it combined with their recognition of the illusion to break the spell; *and it did!* There was no way it could have been avoided! It's as unavoidable as darkness disappearing when light is in its presence. The oldest, most enduring darkness you could possibly imagine—in a cave that had been dark for 10 million years — will give way *instantly* before the light of a tiny little flashlight. Likewise a lie, in the presence of Truth, is destroyed. So our job is simply to stand, apparently in the midst of the illusion, consistently declaring its illusory nature: recognizing it to be a lie (mental imagery, and nothing more) and acknowledging the spiritual fact of God's perfect man.

Again, we must see things as thoughts, then we can make the exchange. You see, the growth had to be seen as nothing but a belief, a hypnotic thought, in order to exchange the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul. And when that happens, you cannot avoid healing, for you're really only *revealing* that which was there all the time. You're not healing an imperfect man, only destroying a lie about a perfect man.

In the human picture those lamb chops were there all the time. That's all that ever existed.

¹⁹ *Science and Health* 471:13-17

When mortal mind is talking
 And lifts its hydra head,
 I don't have to listen,
 Because nothing's being said.

And we really don't! We never heal actual conditions. Truth simply removes a false belief from thought. Jesus spoke of it as "casting out a demon." Mrs. Eddy says, in *Miscellaneous Writings*,

Every material belief hints the existence of spiritual reality; and if mortals are instructed in spiritual things, it will be seen that material belief, in all its manifestations, reversed, will be found the type and representative of verities priceless, eternal, and just at hand."²⁰

Stop and realize: there has to be a spiritual idea, a reality, where a counterfeit appears to be. Every material object is only a misconception of the genuine, a distorted image of the actual and perfect resulting from looking through a distorted lens, called "material sense."

Now this looks like a fountain pen — feels like it, is useful, purposeful; but in reality it is only a thought *called* a pen. Now that's our first step. We see it as thought — *material* thought, but still thought. Now where does that thought have its origin? We know there's only one Mind, one creative Mind. That Mind is the source of all, totally all. There is no other. Then that thought must have its origin in the divine Mind. Our Leader speaks of it in this way:

But, say you, is a stone spiritual? To erring material sense, No! but to unerring spiritual sense, it is a small manifestation of Mind, a type of spiritual substance, "the substance of things hoped for." Mortals can know a stone as substance, only by first admitting that it is substantial. Take away the mortal sense of substance, and the stone itself would disappear, *only to reappear in the spiritual sense thereof.*²¹

Imagine what the *real* idea is like. Isn't it an exciting thing to think that we'll come to see this as our thought is uplifted? We look at a sunset and think, "Isn't it magnificent?" But imagine the beauty of the purely spiritual idea, when we behold it in its reality, when we can see it through spiritual sense completely. Mrs. Eddy says that these ideas will have form, color, and outline. This gives us some idea of what she refers to when she writes:

In our immature sense of spiritual things, let us say of the beauties of the sensuous universe: "I love your promise; and shall know, some time, the spiritual reality and substance of form, light, and color, of what I now through you discern dimly; and knowing this, I shall be satisfied. Matter is

²⁰ *Miscellaneous Writings* by Mary Baker Eddy 60:28

²¹ *Miscellaneous Writings* 27:27-2

a frail conception of mortal mind; and mortal mind is a poorer representative of the beauty, grandeur, and glory of the immortal Mind."²²

Now I'd like to share another example of illusion with you, regarding hypnotism. I could tell you many, many instances, but this one I want to share with you because it is the clearest illustration I know of the need for continuity, consistency, in dealing with illusion. It came from Laura Sargent, and I think it explains something of what is demanded of us in our work.²³

During Mrs. Eddy's time one of her students (anxious to know more about the handling of animal magnetism) booked passage to India, to go and learn more about the defenses against mesmerism. He took his things aboard the ship, put them away in his room, and then went up on deck. He was standing there, watching the stevedores load great stacks of boxes which were sitting on the docks in orderly piles. Everyone was happily going about their business. There, among the passengers, he met a Hindu and they got to talking. Pretty soon he asked the Hindu, "Do you believe in mesmerism?" Well, it was a beautiful, sunny day. But all of a sudden the most terrible storm came in from the Atlantic. Great waves smashed into the boat and threw it about like a toy, slamming it against the dock. The wind knocked those big piles of crates around, like match boxes, and threw some of the stevedores into the water. Great waves piled up under the piers and tore the roof off of some of the buildings. He had to hold onto the rail for dear life, to keep from being thrown overboard. It was a frightening experience! This went on for some time. Then, just as quickly, it stopped! Absolutely stopped. The Christian Scientist looked down at the dock and there were the stevedores going about their business as happily as before, and all the crates standing just as orderly as ever. No roofs were torn off, and the water was just as calm as a lake. The Hindu turned to him, smiled, and said, "I've just answered your question."

He went on with his trip, and on arriving in India he met with the man who was to be his teacher. He was shown to his quarters (which were simply furnished, with just a table and a chair) and then was left alone. Presently the door opened, and a man entered carrying a magnificent big Indian vase. He had never seen such a beautiful vase. The man walked around in front of him, suddenly lifted the vase over his head, and slammed in onto the hard tile floor, breaking it into a thousand pieces. Well, it was kind of a startling experience; however the Scientist was somewhat prepared because of his previous experience on the boat. He remembered what the Hindu had said: "The only defense against mesmerism is to hold to a fact; no matter how simple it is, hold to a fact." He remembered this and so he did it. The only fact that came to him at the moment was $2 \times 2 = 4$. And so he held to that. To his amazement the vase and all its pieces quickly disappeared from view, absolutely disappeared. He was left alone in the room. Well, he sat back

²² *Miscellaneous Writings* 87:6

²³ *Memoirs of William Curtis Coffman* (student of Laura Sargent's sister, Victoria), author of three articles in the *Christian Science Sentinel*, including "Treat Yourself Daily" (volume 50, page 397). Mrs. William C. Coffman, while living in San Francisco, gave a copy of her husband's memoirs to James Wilbur Reid, C.S. He, in turn, gave a copy to Daniel L. Jensen, C.S.B. who had an office in San Francisco.

feeling pretty proud of what he'd been able to accomplish and he allowed his thought to drift; and when he did almost instantly it was back, the whole mess all over the floor. He stopped and went back to that fact. Again, the vase disappeared. He relaxed again and when he let his thought wander, back it came—in and out, in and out. Finally he saw that he had to *maintain* that fact, to be *consistent*. When he did the vase disappeared permanently. Presently the door opened and the mesmerist came in and said, "You need never fear mesmerism again. You now know the secret of dealing with it."

Now Mrs. Sargent told her student this in order to illustrate the necessity of continuity in our work. You can't just know the nothingness of error and then let yourself drift back into it again. You can't talk to a patient or change a dressing, go write it down in your reports, and then slip back into matter's picture again — even remotely. *The fact must be maintained consistently*, or the illusion will slip back into thought.

Never lose sight of the fact that you're dealing with hypnotism. You're dealing with illusion. In practice we often reduce basic treatment to denial and affirmation. And that's what we're doing in breaking the mentally hypnotic state. I very seldom use the word *healing* in my own thinking, because it's awfully hard for me to keep the thought of healing separate from the thought of a gradual process of a scab forming and something material happening. But by thinking of it as "*revealing*" I recognize that I'm only becoming aware of what's there already; I'm not having to *change* anything. The fact exists in its harmony and unity.

The ten lepers were healed, not when they stood in the presence of *Jesus*, but when they stood in the presence of *what he knew*. Let your patients stand in the presence of what you know. When you're tempted to believe what you see, remember the experience of the practitioner when *he* was faced with the dreadfulness of disease. He said, "Father, You were there; what did You see?" Stop and think of that.²⁴

When you see it through those eyes, the eyes of Spirit, the dreadfulness of the appearance and its claims of helplessness, hopelessness, and incurability are washed away. Have confidence in your patients. I've heard it said that Christian Scientists are a lot like tea bags. Their real strength doesn't come out until they get in hot water. Have confidence in man's native spirituality. Expect a response in that. Rejoice in that. Then you'll help to bring it out.

Now, to sum it up. Be radical Christian Scientists. We're only radical as far as *world standards* are concerned. It's the most *practical* religion alive. Know that there's no matter: really know it, feel it, think it. Remember that it's the feel of it that counts. Did you ever notice in the preface to our hymnal the three hymns that are included because Mrs. Eddy asked that they be included? Remember them — "I need Thee every hour"; "I'm a pilgrim, I'm a stranger"; and "The clanging bells of time." These old hymns have a tremendous feeling to them. Don't overlook this "feel" with your patients, it's the essence of healing. It's not emotionalism, but the

²⁴ See *Unity of Good* by Mary Baker Eddy 7:6, and *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Trial* by Robert Peel, page 140

recognition of God's presence and power, His love! Clinical treatment is useless. It's intellectualism. There's got to be love, a love of Mrs. Eddy, of Jesus, and an awareness and feel of God's power.

Our Leader advises:

There is no power apart from God. Omnipotence has all-power, and to acknowledge any other power is to dishonor God.²⁵

Watch this with your patients. Encourage their spiritual awareness of this power. Reading some of the biographies or the *We Knew Mary Baker Eddy* series strengthens this feeling and appreciation. It's so important. Because when we love Jesus and our Leader all the rest opens up. We must love the messenger to be able to love the message.

I've one more area to discuss briefly before closing, and it has to do with the subject of *how we study, how we read*. To introduce this subject I would like to refer to a testimony in the March 1918 *Christian Science Journal*. It's one of the most remarkable testimonies of healing you will ever read, and I heartily recommend that you do read it — read it very thoughtfully. Briefly the circumstances are this.

This woman had been an invalid for three or four years. Her last operation had involved the removal of her left ear drum and ear bone, leaving her deaf in that ear. She wore heavy glasses and her eyesight was failing rapidly. While on the verge of a nervous breakdown she contracted tuberculosis and went to a tubercular hospital for strength and rest. She continued to grow weaker but had to leave when her money ran out. Having nowhere to go, she accepted the hospitality of a Christian Science friend — but only after having her promise not to talk to her about Christian Science. The testimony reads:

The moment I reached her home she had to help me to bed, as I was too feeble to stand and had a burning fever. Before leaving me she handed me the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mrs. Eddy, telling me to read if I could not sleep.

How grateful I am for the wisdom which closed her lips and left it to truth to prove itself. Being alone I began to think, and to wonder if Christian Science had wrought the change in her which I had noticed. After a while I came to the conclusion that nothing else could have done it, and having reached this point in my thought I decided that there was some truth in this teaching of which I did not know, and I was going to find out what it was. I forgot my ailments for the moment in my search for this truth, really not giving a thought to the fact that Christian Science was supposed to heal physical troubles.

I opened the textbook and began to read, but my eyes were so weak that I could read only one sentence at a time. Having finished a sentence I would lay the book down and think it over, trying to come to a conclusion as to

²⁵ *Science and Health* 228:25-27

whether or not I could accept it as true. I would think of what I had read and discuss it from all sides, for I wanted to know the truth but was not willing to accept it simply because others had done so. Every time, however, I came to the conclusion that what I had read was the truth. After having read for twenty minutes I was so filled with the healing thought of this truth, so certain of the presence of a loving Father-Mother God, that there was no room left for any discord.

I got up from the bed and it seemed as if all inharmonious conditions were laid aside as one lays aside a soiled garment. I realized right away that the eyes which a few minutes before had refused to let me read in comfort, were seeing far beyond my human sense of eyesight, and I laid off my glasses at that moment and have never used them again. My nerves, which had tried to play havoc with my happiness and reasoning power, heard the command, "Peace, be still," and obeyed. The tubercular trouble with all the rest had gone into the nothingness where it belonged. All this I realized at once, but somehow I did not think of my ears right then, only I knew there was no aching. But that night when trying to find out whether or not my watch had stopped I inadvertently held it to the left instead of to the right ear. I had never heard distinctly with my left ear, and how great was my surprise when for the first time in my life I heard the tick of my watch with that ear, with which I was never supposed to hear again. The eardrum is gone, the hole left by taking out the ear bone is still there, but God does not need these material conditions to make His child perfect. Being a teacher I needed a certificate of health after the doctor had pronounced my case tubercular disease, and within two weeks after the experience just related I had two certificates from the best known physicians of the state, saying that I was in perfect health.

Just think of it — *twenty minutes of reading!* But it's *how* she read, her state of thought, her purpose. Her single-minded purpose was simply *to discover the truth*. It is always Truth that destroys the lie — not our wishes, no matter how fervently felt. Truth is as irresistibly destructive to a lie as light is to darkness and even more reliable — *and even more reliable*. And on this Truth we depend, *radically depend!* So help us God!