

GOD, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE, AND YOU ...A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

A Christian Science nurse once told me that a Christian Science Practitioner had said to her, “If there were no Christian Science nurses, there would be no Christian Science.”

I found myself thinking:

- Does that mean we would always be dealing with sickness and sin and death? Certainly NOT! Mrs. Eddy states firmly in Science and Health (78:6-7 to death), “How unreasonable is the belief that we are wearing out life and hastening to death.”
- Does it mean there would be no Christ knowledge, tenderly nurturing, fostering, developing, or unfolding? NO!

I think what the practitioner must have meant is that Christian Science nurses will always exist, because the nurse is the evidence, made apparent as the activity of nursing, that is feeding, clothing, and bathing His idea in beauty and light, purity and perfection. Forever!

Webster’s dictionary defines a *nurse* as “a person or thing that nourishes, fosters, protects.” It goes on to say that the verb *to nurse* means “to cause to continue to grow, or develop.”

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For: Upward Wing Nursing Service
Date: November 9, 2013

This tells us, then, that there's more to nursing than providing practical care. If a nurse *nourishes, fosters, protects, causes to grow and develop*, it seems to me that spiritual ideas are being addressed here.

If the nurse is putting into practice – or expressing – these spiritual ideas, then the cause or action of nursing is God; and His idea, *nurse*, is unfolding, demonstrating, or bearing witness to Him!

Now we see God as the Ultimate, or Supreme, Nurse!

If God is the Supreme Nurse – and He is – and if we are reflecting Him – and we are – then every one of us certainly expresses or manifests the qualities of *nurse*.

This means that we are the demonstration, or visible evidence, of God's nursing qualities.

This idea – that we are the visible evidence of our Heavenly Father's nursing qualities – is not new. Nursing has always existed, because God has always existed.

In studying the Bible account of Moses I could see how nursing was a huge part of his spiritual journey. When Moses was born, he was placed in a basket and hidden in reeds to avoid being killed as ordered by Pharaoh. When Pharaoh's daughter found him and kept him, she sent for a nurse. Her instruction to the

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nurse was, "Take the child away and nurse it for me." This was the beginning of Moses' spiritual journey in nursing. As we all know, the nurse was Moses' real mother. (Looking aside for a moment, we could also say that Moses' mother could be considered a visiting nurse, going to the home as she did to provide tender care.)

The Bible account continues, "The child grew."

What took place here was really quite beautiful. Our Father-Mother God, the Supreme Nurse was in complete control of His cherished children. His all-loving nursing had washed over His spiritual ideas, Moses and his mother.

The mother, with great humility and love, let her child go when she hid him in the reeds. Certainly, in her knowledge and love of God, she was trusting this babe [Moses] to the nursing care of the Supreme One.

The joy of this experience was that Moses' mother was still his mother even though she had been called to serve as his nurse. She and her child had both been protected. You have to know, then, that Moses' teaching and training included knowledge of the one God. His nursing care, under the direct control of God [the Supreme Nurse] prepared Moses to lead his people out of Egypt, out of darkness. So, the first part of Moses' spiritual journey was that he was nursed (keeping in mind the definition of *to nurse* is to cause to grow and develop, to nourish and protect).

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This is not so different for us, as we put our own lives in God's hands. In His care we are nourished and protected as we grow and develop spiritually.

Staying with Moses we see he comes to another milestone in his life. He had been trained by his mother to know and understand Hebrew law; and by his foster mother, Egyptian law. He had been educated to become the next Pharaoh; yet, when he sees how the Israelites are treated --- the burden they carry --- he denounces the Egyptian, or materialistic, way of life. This changes everything in his life. I can't imagine how he felt. However, we can glean from reading this bible account there was a search going on in his consciousness for a clearer view of his relationship to God. We find him in the mountains --- when he sees a burning bush. It is then that divine Love speaks to Moses, and Moses receives further instruction and training. This is God nursing Moses. With great humility, Moses seeks and listens for divine inspiration and is given the spiritual ideas and tools needed for the next step in his journey.

It is easy to see the similarity of Moses instruction at the burning bush to class instruction of the Christian Science nurse (which is required to be Journal-listed). Those twelve days are a special time of instruction and of communion with the Father, preparing the nurse for his or her spiritual journey. When the nurse is caring for a guest, he or she is applying class teaching and humbly seeking and listening for the divine inspiration needed, just as Moses did. This is not the only training that goes on as most of you know. Our nurses are trained to properly care for the physical body as well.

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We know Moses led the people out of Egypt, out of darkness, and that is why I can't help thinking of him as a nurse, for he truly nurtured the people, fed them with Truth, and protected them through receptivity, listening to and following divine inspiration; however, it was a nursing experience in which Moses had to understand aggressive mental suggestion, or evil when he had to handle the serpent. He was shown that evil is powerless and mindless --- not a person, place, or thing. He learned to understand and demonstrate the ever-present power of divine law.

Truly, Moses reflected nursing skills. He set a high standard for nursing, and this standard exists today as established by the commandments. (When referring to the nurse now, I'll use the pronoun she although I am speaking of both male and female nurses.)

This standard for nursing, established by the Commandments, is:

1. The nurse shall have one God, one source of all good --- no belief of life in matter.
2. The nurse shall not bow to, or serve, false images. From the time the nurse walks into a guest's room, she is joyously and tenderly attending to the guest's human needs, all the while maintain man's true and only condition as whole, the image and likeness of God. She is not catering to material conditions.

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3. The nurse shall honor her Father and Mother – meaning God—as the only cause. She shall respect and give the glory and power only to God.
4. The nurse shall not kill; that is, she shall not malpractice nor have a belief of sin, disease, or death. Neither shall she hold that false sense of life as a reality about another.
5. The nurse shall not steal. Holding a false belief as a reality about oneself or another is stealing: stealing the expectancy of goodness, of well-being, of being well.
6. The nurse shall not bear false witness. She shall speak only the truth about man’s individuality and identity as the son of God.
7. The nurse shall not covet another’s good. She knows that God pours His blessings on all His children equally.

The Christian Science nurse takes this high standard of nursing with her in her daily practice, making it a part of her individual nursing experience, or her spiritual journey.

It is also a part of our spiritual journey. You see, every one of us is a nurse, nurturing our own spiritual growth, putting the laws of divine Principle to work – right where we are – and dropping the human senses for the spiritual idea. We must do this if we are to grow in Christian Science, the Christ knowledge.

How does Upward Wing participate in this lovely journey? They exist to provide a warm, loving atmosphere for those relying on God for spiritual healing. This service does not exist to make provision for one to retire from life. The nurse

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comes to you knowing that God and man coexist, knowing that God is ALL and that man is the evidence of God's magnificence. It is essential that you embrace these same spiritual truths, these nursing qualities, with expectancy.

It is this knowing, this recognition of infinite Love, that is of the utmost importance. This is true nursing. The nurse, then, is lifting his or her conscious awareness of the truth of being and maintaining the atmosphere of wholeness, purity, and perfection – perfect God and perfect man. When the nurse is expressing this type of wisdom—knowing the allness of God—the atmosphere surrounding the patient is filled with a sense of calm, of joy, of the quiet strength of Truth (a knowing of Love's presence).

With this practical, demonstrable knowledge present, we become aware of the spirituality of nursing. We see it is truly our tender and loving Father-Mother, God, making Himself known, and meeting every one of us in a way we can understand—meeting the human need, and lifting us, as Mrs. Eddy says in Hymn 160, “Ayont hate's thrall.” Healing is the immediate effect of this knowing of “infinite Love which alone confers the healing power” (S&H 366:18).

In our spiritual journey, then, God is nursing us, as stated in Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done”—not by personal right thinking -- “but according to [H]is mercy...by the washing or regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” – the power of God's Spirit, the continuous unfoldment and development of His goodness, His purity.

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So, how does this cleansing take place? In verse 6 of Titus, we read that it was “shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” – God nursing us through His Son, the Christ. What a gift of Love! The Christ forever nursing us! The Christ forever washing us and making clean, forever lifting our consciousness to new and beautiful heights! To the recognition that God is our Life, right here, right now!

Mrs. Eddy tells us in Science and Health (516:12-13) that “Love, redolent with unselfishness, bathes all in beauty and light,” It is this Love, this tender nursing care of God, perfect Love, that dissolves—washes clean—the adamant of error. The effect is, as St. John says, perfect Love casting out fear—making clean (I John 4:18). It is important, then, in nursing care to understand the sense of clean: the washing of Love, shed abundantly over man, through His Son, the one Christ.

We can see now that this cleanness is more than purity; it is the completeness of man. It is God bathing or washing us in Love. It is God’s nursing qualities unfolding as our completeness, and our bearing witness to God, to that complete unfoldment, in beauty, grandeur, and order forever—forever the outward expression or manifestation of what God is knowing about Himself, which constitutes the identity of man.

We can see now that our loved Father-Mother, God, has been nursing us ALL ALONG—nourishing us, protecting us, causing us to grow, develop, or unfold right here where we are. If we keep our caring on a material level, we’ll always seem

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to lack; however, if we realize God's nursing attributes are continuously flowing or washing over us in every facet of our lives, we'll stop acting independently of Him and just radiantly reflect. It isn't you (a finite you, or a finite nurse) providing the care; it is God. You are just being—or manifesting His beauty and light, His nursing qualities.

Now we recognize or understand nursing as a characteristic of the nature of God. We can see now that when the Christian Science nurse is caring for us, he or she is nursing by reflection. Just as Moses met the human needs of the Israelites when he led them out of Egypt and out of darkness, the nurse meets the needs of the patients with his or her spiritual knowledge of God's dressing, God's cleaning and God's feeding.

In *Miscellaneous Writings* (101:14), Mrs. Eddy speaks of “the scientific sense of being which establishes harmony,...” She says; it enters into no compromise with finiteness and feebleness. It [the scientific sense of being] undermines the foundations of mortality, of physical law, breaks their chains, and sets the captive free, opening the doors for them that are bound.”

That being the case the nurse is not going to give sympathy to the mortal senses, because, understanding the ever-presence of divine Love's tender care, she never enters into compromise with finiteness and feebleness. But she will with great love, tenderness, and joy, bring the Christ and support you in practical ways, while you lean on the sustaining infinite for healing.

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This is Christian Science nursing. It is a spiritual journey. This is what makes Christian Science nursing different from medical nursing. Don't misunderstand, we are grateful for the medical nurses' tender care, as far as it takes us; but God has lifted nursing beyond the physical realm. Nurturing and maintaining this "Truth, the attending nurse supports the patient and the Christian Science practitioner as the patient, being rooted and grounded in Love, radically relies on God during this time of the revealing of the spiritual facts of being; thus the nursing experience is a spiritual journey for the patient as well.

You will recall the Bible accounts by Matthew and Mark in which the patient, "one sick of the palsy," was so disabled that he was "borne of four," carried on a bed. Because the crowd of people made it difficult to reach the house where Christ Jesus was preaching, the four carrying the bier found a way to remove tiles from the roof of the house to let the palsied man down. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Expectancy was certainly present in the man sick of the palsy, as well as in those attending him. This account is the basis, the whole of Christian Science. Through the revealed word, Mrs. Eddy healed.

The Bible accounts in Matthew and Mark are extraordinary and are an important part of our spiritual journey in nursing. What a lovely, tender, spiritual journey the man sick of the palsy was on! He was the patient; the four who carried the bier were his nurses. Remember, the Bible says, "When Jesus saw their faith,..." — that bearing up of Truth, that standard of nursing care, as the patient listened for

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and accepted the God-inspired word. The nurses on this case were actively supporting the patient with the truth of his being. Their faith, based on experiences of their own spiritual journeys, is nursing—is supporting, is uplifting, is comforting, and tenderly caring for the patient. The faith of those nurses, and the faith of the patient, made room for the Christ, [in this case, the practitioner], it made room for Truth and Love; and the response was their being in the presence of the Christ.

Jesus commended the faith of those who brought the palsied man to him; **but** what was it that brought forth or caused the healing? Was it simply the faith and the dedication of the nurses? The answer to this question was part of Mrs. Eddy's own spiritual journey in nursing. For her, divine Mind, omnipresent Love, the one Supreme Nurse, tenderly and joyously revealed to her the law behind her own healing. So, it was not just faith or trust, but law—the understanding of the law of divine Principle in operation—that brought forth or caused the healing.

With this in mind, let's think further about the healing of the palsy. Christ simply states to the man sick of the palsy—and he was sick of it!—"Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." How tenderly Christ Jesus speaks the word *Son*. Now, Christ is nursing. The Christ in Jesus recognized only the Christ-identity in the palsied man. There is no duality of identity here. There is only one Christ, one Son, obeying the law of divine Principle—acknowledging one God, one identity.

What or who forgave the sins? The word of Christ forgives the sin. How does the word work? I found a few steps. Let's explore them together.

The word of Christ:

1. Was to take the palsied man's thought of from the disease which was the effect, or symptom.
2. To lead his thought to the sin, the cause, which was the belief of life and intelligence in matter, so that man might be more concerned about the sin to get it pardoned. So what is being gotten rid of? The belief of life in matter, not a disease,
3. Taking away sin—the belief of life and intelligence in matter—strikes at the root of all dis-ease.
4. By these steps, the word of Christ was removing the error from thought and letting "Truth uncover and destroy error in God's own way" (S&H 542:18).
5. The effect was immediate: Harmony became the reality and discord the unreality. Error by any name is powerless. It has no God in it.
6. Then followed the directive from Christ Jesus, "go unto thine own house"; and he sends the man to his house to be a blessing.

How many of us have wanted to stay where we feel safe and secure? Stay in an environment where we feel nothing untoward could touch us? This lovely man we've been speaking of—the palsied man—I'm sure would have lived to have followed Christ Jesus; yet he was told to go to his house and be a blessing. This

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dear friends, is what we are asked to do. Upward Wing has one purpose: to provide nursing services on a temporary basis, to support healing atmosphere to those leaning on the sustaining infinite for healing. This means that it is expected to those calling on the nursing service are like the man sick of the palsy, diligently expecting healing and then returning to their lives bringing blessings to their communities.

One can't help feeling what a blessing that Christ directive is—to “go unto thine house”—because there is no age attached to it. If you are two or two hundred, you will always be the complete, mature, perfect, harmonious, infinite expression of the one infinite Mind. This is a clear indication that our spiritual journey includes the blessing of nursing in our own communities. Every day is not merely a destination, but a spiritual journey, big with blessings!

As we leave this meeting today, returning to our homes and continuing our spiritual journey, may you be a blessing to your community and to the world, nursing them and yourselves tenderly in the love of God, through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

It has been a great joy to spend this morning with you. Thank you for your kind attention.

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