



## The power of compassion

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**Are you, or** is someone you know, in need of healing? To be a reliable help to another, we need compassion. This is not mere sympathetic pity, which can mire us in the problem. It is also not just feeling another's suffering empathetically, which is often sparked by love but, being rooted in human affection, cannot in and of itself heal. It takes something more than concern, pity, or even empathy to destroy suffering and bring about healing results. In its deepest, spiritual meaning, compassion is a power based on God, divine Love. It moved Jesus to act and resulted in healing myriad sicknesses, raising the dead, and destroying sin.

Although Jesus is no longer physically present, this power of the compassion he expressed is always available, moving many to act from the same basis Jesus did and with similar healing results. Mary Baker Eddy discovered that there is a law of God that undergirded Jesus' healing ministry. She named this law Christian Science because it can be learned and proved by anyone. The theology and practice of Christian Science include this compassion and result in healing the sick the way Jesus healed—through God's power alone. We read in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mrs. Eddy, "Love for God and man is the true incentive in both healing and teaching" ([p. 454](#)).

Our desire to express compassion is a good place to start. Then, step by step, trusting God's leading, we find that Christly compassion motivates us, as it did Jesus, to strive to see ourselves and others as God sees us—as the spiritual, perfect, healthy manifestation of Deity, having no element of matter or mortality. And we become more willing to give up even long-held beliefs and yield to the radically new view of everyone as spiritual.

The rules of God's law of healing that guided Jesus' ministry are presented in *Science and Health*. Christian Science treatment is based on these rules. It takes consecration and spiritual discipline, yet those who practice this compassionate work consider it a privilege. And those healed by it attest to its efficacy.

Jesus gives an insight into the compassion that has the power to heal. The Bible relates an account of a leprous man who approached Jesus for healing. Jesus reached out and touched the leper. Healing was instantaneous. Why would Jesus touch one considered untouchable? It was Christly compassion, based on divine Love, that saw through the false picture presented by the physical senses. The power of this compassion moved Jesus to see the man as God saw him—Godlike and perfect, and this divine touch helped the man catch a glimmer of his own unmarred, incorruptible perfection.

It is the power of compassion that moves a Christian Scientist to go into the public healing practice of Christian Science and be available for those who ask for help through prayer. These practitioners do not possess any personal touch or power to heal; rather, they faithfully bear witness to God's ever-perfect work, as they pray for those who request treatment. Compassion motivates a Christian Science practitioner to take up a case and persist in prayer till

healing becomes evident, knowing that the healing power comes from God.

Self-condemnation for not experiencing a quick healing is unhelpful. Moreover, none should condemn another for their choice of health care, even if it differs from what Christian Science teaches. Suffering of any kind is not to be ignored. That would not only be uncharitable, it would also be unchristian. We all have the right to work out our salvation, including our health care, according to our understanding, without being judged or condemned, either by ourselves or by others. We can compassionately support one another without compromising what we know and are proving, however modest, about the infallibility of God's power to heal. We can know that God never fails. This is the truth, regardless of the human situation.

It is Christly (not simply human) affection and compassion that make us "Christian enough to practise scientifically" (*Science and Health*, [p. 365](#)) and witness healing results. Many practitioners could tell of responding to a call for prayerful support when other activities were competing for their attention or of praying through the night. But the shift in thought this work can bring, the clearer understanding of the reality of God it provides, and the joy that results from healing make this spiritual discipline worthwhile. It blesses both patient and practitioner.

Mrs. Eddy saw from her own Christian practice that love is a power that moves us to act rightly. She writes: "Love is not something put upon a shelf, to be taken down on rare occasions with sugar-tongs and laid on a rose-leaf. I make strong demands on love, call for active witnesses to prove it, and noble sacrifices and grand achievements as its results" (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896*, [p. 250](#)).

Healing in Christian Science is based on divine Love and requires Christly compassion. This compassion is powerful and active. It takes us with it and moves us all the way to healing.

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