

Health: what it is and how to demonstrate it Jamae Wolfram Richardson (van Eck)

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harmonious rhythms – that proceed from the divine
Mind and are manifested by the real man.*



Health is a fact of spiritual being. It is the condition in which God and His ideas dwell. Spiritual wholeness, or holiness, which is reflected from God, can't fluctuate or break down, can't lapse into sin and disease, deteriorate with age, or be altered by circumstances.

Because health is God-derived and maintained, it's not at the mercy of mental stress, emotional imbalance, moral contamination, or spiritual deprivation. It doesn't depend on chemistry, climate, or heredity. It isn't vulnerable to chance or accident but is as unassailable and incorruptible, as fixed and certain, as God Himself.

Humanly speaking, we demonstrate this spiritual fact of health by degrees. Becoming more conscious of God as our creator, the source of *all* true being, we awake to our real stature as the child, or idea, of God. We demonstrate this stature in greater well-being as we progress in understanding and living what is spiritually true.

If health were not the fact – if it were not the natural and only possible state of man made in God's image – no one could demonstrate it. Because health is the spiritual fact, even if there appears to be any disturbed sense to the contrary, the human sense of things must ultimately be brought into conformity with that fact through prayer and spiritual growth.

This does not mean to imply that Christian Science focuses solely or even primarily on physical well-being or on prolonging a material sense of existence. But the well-being that comes from spiritual demonstration can be one measure of a right understanding of God – evidence of God's reign, or kingdom within.

Every Christian can take quite literally Christ Jesus' promise "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." (John 14:12) In Biblical terms, well-being results from having "the mind of Christ" – from being in accord with the Father, from knowing God, from living in obedience

to His law. The peace that derives from trusting Him, the comfort of Love's presence in our hearts, the understanding of God that is "a wellspring of life unto him that hath it" ([Prov. 16:22](#)) – all these undergird holiness in thought and, consequently, health in the body. As stated by Mrs. Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, in *Miscellaneous Writings*, "The true consciousness is the true health." ([Misc. p. 298](#))

It's not just that sick thoughts make a sick body, but that the physical body itself is a mental construct. The body is thought objectified. So the way to improve the body is to reform the thought that controls it.

This is the healing process undertaken in Christian Science. It's not an effort to manipulate or restructure a human mentality; rather it is the yielding of mistaken human thinking to the divine Mind – to what God is and knows. Healing always includes a change of thought. It involves mental awakening, renewal, or rebirth: the recognition and acceptance of what is spiritually true of man – your and my true being – as God's likeness.

Christ Jesus illustrated his theology through his healing works. What he taught of the true nature of God and man he proved through what he did. He showed that salvation relates to body as well as soul. The Savior came to set humanity free from sickness as well as sin. For this reason, all followers of Jesus can regard healing in this full sense as their mission – and not just the healing of personal ills but of humanity's woes.

Exercise of the Christian virtues, assimilation of God's revealed Word, and steadfast living in accord with this Word constitute the best possible program of health maintenance. Discipline and defense of thought constitute the key to stable health.

In this effort we alertly close the mental door to errors that would be against health. We counter fear with faith, or trust, in God. We strive to replace ignorance of God and His goodness with understanding, and to replace sin with purity and morality.

We can also learn how prayer is effective in overcoming stress, emotionalism, rigidity; in correcting a merely personal sense of things; and in dealing with other disordering errors.

False burdens of pressure and responsibility lift when one realizes in prayer that man is reflection. God is always the creator and source of all action; man is the expression, or emanation, of God. Even Jesus acknowledged that he could do nothing of himself but that "what things so-

ever he[the Father] doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” (John 5:19)
Man’s sufficiency is always of God. Understanding this fact strengthens us when challenges seem too difficult to bear.

Those emotional states classified as anger, hate, disgust, envy, tend to unbalance, to disorder, or to corrupt the natural harmony of being. Such states are negatives to be effaced with the genuine qualities of trust, compassion, equanimity, contentment, love. Especially love! Whatever would diminish or impair one’s sense of love would tend to diminish one’s life. But the spiritual fact is that man, God’s image, can’t be separated from divine Love or deprived of what Love bestows.

Through prayer and spiritual growth we come to feel the joy and peace, the dominion, the freedom and benevolence, that derive from God. Man’s true selfhood can’t be thrown off-balance emotionally – can’t be made to react with anger or anguish, can’t be startled by apparent ills, threatened by them, or grieved over them, since man knows that good alone is real and ever present. Man doesn’t yearn for anything because, as God’s idea, he is already complete.

Rigidity or inflexibility – especially with regard to fixed human opinions or beliefs – can be inimical to health, to the spiritual ease of thought that is manifest in ease of body. Certainly, one human act or state may be nearer right than another, but only what is spiritually true is absolute – right and unchanging in its nature. Self-righteousness and self-will, rather than the righteousness that is of God, are most often at the root of critical mental attitudes, and it takes humility and unselfed love to dissolve them.

The overcoming of personal sense, including extreme sensitivity as well as sensualism, will aid greatly in demonstrating a healthier, better balanced life. The human personality is a counterfeit of man’s true spiritual individuality. So we shouldn’t fight for this counterfeit if it claims to be our own, or condemn or idolize it if it appears to be someone else’s. Moreover, because good belongs to each of us by reflection, a person is neither the source and originator of good, nor can he destroy good. Knowing this helps center thought on God. It frees from both the assertions and reactions – yes, even the wounds – of personal sense, and so helps maintain an unshakable poise.

Trying to go beyond what we’ve actually demonstrated – to take a position we haven’t yet proved – is unbalancing. Simply asserting un-lived spiritual truths or values while continuing to live in depraved human

circumstances is dangerous. To allow errors to accumulate uncorrected to some breaking point or to procrastinate in dealing with challenges as hand is to ignore the healing influence of the Christ. It's also a common tendency of the so-called mortal mind, or carnal mind, to go from one extreme to another. Such erratic tendencies need to give way to the rhythms – the ceaseless, steady, restful, rightly ordered, harmonious rhythms – that proceed from the divine Mind and are manifested by the real man.

Healing in Christian Science is so much more than making a diseased body into a well one. It is an awakening from the illusion that there can be a diseased state either of thought or body. It is overcoming sin. It is transformation of thought *and* life. We must be clear, not just that God – the all-creative, all-perfect Mind – never made disease but that He never created or could allow a disturbed, disordered, unbalanced, impure, mesmerized state of thought.

There simply can't be a sick body without sick beliefs to produce it. Human thinking must be regenerated, and this is accomplished to the degree that the false human consciousness, or ego, yields to Christ, Truth. The method of healing in Christian Science is to discern and hold to what is spiritually true of God and man. This truth acts as a law to correct the mistaken human sense of things, reform individual consciousness, and bring healing.

The healer is really a spiritual seer. He or she recognizes discordant physical conditions as mental illusions, and deals with these illusions by discerning the relevant spiritual facts about God's man. The healer gains these facts, not from material evidence, which is false, but from revealed Truth – from what spiritual sense tells us of divine reality.

And what are the facts of God's creation? God is Spirit, omnipresent and intelligent good; and man is His spiritual image or idea, possessing God-given dominion over all things. Man is subject only to the law of God; his true being is exempt from impairment, sinfulness, disease, injury, discord, deterioration, death. God constitutes and regulates the life and health of all His own creation, and man, therefore, remains as well and whole and harmonious as his Maker.

Christian Scientists are striving to understand the spiritual nature of all things. They are beginning to grasp that neither the so-called human mind nor the ills it is supposed to produce are real or personal. They are learning to look away from misleading physical evidence and to agree only

with God – with what is spiritually true. It is of enormously greater importance that we be right with God – free from a mistaken or sinful illusion – than that we be made comfortable in an erroneous state of thought or living.

From the standpoint of Christian Science there can be no such thing as an ineradicable error of belief. Any state of wrong thinking – no matter how entrenched or inveterate – can yield to Truth. In Christian Science, it's never too late for healing.

As God's image, man can be only what God creates, have only what He imparts. Each of us, in reality, manifests the order, harmony, freedom, purity, and wholeness of the Divine Being. Such truth will be proved practical in human experience to the degree it is understood and lived. Then we will find ourselves well. We will awake in some measure to the harmony as God's spiritual child. And we will experience – at least in some measure – present salvation.

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