

## UPDATE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION

*“It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church by the daily press, by periodicals or circulated literature of any sort.” Church Manual, Article XXXIII, Section 2*

### ***Message from the Manager of Committees on Publication***

A scene in the Bible that I’ve been cherishing is of special relevance to the work of correcting impositions on public thought about Christian Science. Following the crucifixion and resurrection, two of Jesus’ disciples, on their way to Emmaus, are trying to make sense of recent events (see Luke 24:13-35). Their faith tested, they needed to get away. How were they supposed to follow Jesus now? There were rumors of his resurrection, but doubts, worry, and uncertainty prevailed. And yet Jesus, meeting them on that path, wasn’t swayed by their incredulity. Meekly, gently, the Master spoke with them, breaking down the entrenched mortal beliefs that would keep them from seeing what was right in front of them. Their eyes opened, their hearts renewed with the flame of true discipleship; they returned to Jerusalem with a rekindled desire to leave all for Christ.

Members and Committees together, genuinely desiring to feel the touch of the Christ, — and for our neighbors to experience this opportunity — may find themselves on that proverbial walk to Emmaus. At times, we may need to face down our own doubts and fears. At other times, we are listening for just how to humbly offer that light to someone else. Regardless of the need, there is a wonderful strength in the idea of true discipleship that solidifies our footsteps in following the example of the Master.

The corrective, healing work is strengthened as we individually and collectively follow Jesus in the way he taught. Committees on Publication are giving special attention to this idea of discipleship in the work. Building off the theme for last June’s annual meeting, “As you work, the ages win,” we’ve found particular strength in the whole paragraph where our theme was found. In particular, the idea of being “God-endowed for discipleship” is such an uplifting assurance. The full passage from *Miscellany* by Mary Baker Eddy reads:

As you work, the ages win; for the majesty of Christian Science teaches the majesty of man. When it is learned that spiritual sense and not the material senses convey all impressions to man, man will naturally seek the Science of his spiritual nature, and finding it, be God-endowed for discipleship.  
(My. 188:25)

This is a helpful reminder to maintain the corrective activity as an expression of Christ’s healing mission. More than simply a human activity with a humanly defined to-do list (which can sometimes be quite long), discipleship demands a richer and fuller expression. Discipleship is less about focusing on human actions and outcomes, and more about yielding to the clear, absolute expression of Christ, Truth. This spiritualization of thought helps rouse ourselves and the public from dormant mortal, material beliefs to the realization, recognition, and richer understanding of the spiritual ideas and laws of God that govern.

During a recent online gathering of Committees on Publication, Committees shared about how they'd been studying and praying about God-endowed discipleship. Below are a few brief reflections on what they shared, which I've found to be inspiring as we think about our engagement with the public.

One individual shared that when they were first appointed as the Committee on Publication in their jurisdiction, they spent a lot of time praying and reading the *Manual* to determine how best to prepare to serve. They also turned to Isaiah 51:16, "I have put my words in thy mouth." With this reassurance, they realized that discipleship meant they were never personally responsible. Serving the church and humanity as outlined by our Leader in her *Manual* is an opportunity to always put God first and follow Mind's guidance. They shared how this has helped carry them through their years serving in this role. If at times they've faced situations where the solution was initially unclear, they learned they could always pray to recognize God and God's power. From there, each footstep unfolded harmoniously and naturally.

Another Committee shared that when looking up the definition of "endowed," they found it meant to provide quality or ability, or to "give as a gift." This helped them see that each Committee and member has the God-given ability to do the work they've been appointed or asked to do. This includes everything necessary to correct a public misconception or imposition in a healing way.

These are helpful reminders that discipleship requires humility, persistence, and a humble readiness to put God first and follow where we're led; as we do, the healing result is assured. Discipleship encourages us to move forward and seek the healing solution that blesses one and all.

Correcting impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science in a Christian manner is knowing that God, Love alone, is governing and communicating the right ideas. This sense of discipleship lifts any sense of burden and provides for fresh inspiration. We should not be surprised to find our hearts burning within us as we experience more of the fullness of the Christ idea in our lives.

Sincerely,



Scott C. Shivers, C.S.B.  
Manager, Christian Science Committees on Publication

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### ***Inspiration and updates from your Committee on Publication***

In thinking about fruitage to share with you in this newsletter, I was reminded of a popular Bible story. In Luke 7:36-50 we find Jesus dining at a Pharisee's house when a weeping woman approaches him and washes his feet with her tears. The act of washing guests' feet was common, but the meekness and humility shown by the woman is presented in stark contrast to the actions - or lack thereof- of the host. Jesus was famous enough that the Pharisees took notice of him, and it is easy to assume that the Pharisee, Simon, wanted to personally evaluate Jesus and potentially challenge him. Discerning this, Jesus proceeded to uncover the disingenuous nature of Simon's dinner invitation and his self-righteousness in judging the weeping woman. Jesus contrasts Simon's behavior with that of the woman, who approached him with

sincerity and hope, weeping and wiping his feet with her tears, begging for forgiveness. Then Jesus publicly redeems the woman. What can we learn from this and how does it relate to Committee work? How can we continue to learn from Jesus and meet the need right where it is? Both Simon and the woman wanted to know Jesus, but only one of them was humble enough to receive the blessing instantaneously. Article 33 gives specific counsel when correcting impositions, requiring us to do so in a “Christian manner.” I’m happy to share that this is indeed happening in our state and here is a lovely example.

Recently a YouTube video was published by an NC resident who is exploring different denominations and remarking on his experiences. A self-proclaimed atheist, he’s visited two different Christian Science locations in the last year. He attended a Society, a Church, Sunday Service, a Wednesday Testimony meeting, visited a Reading Room and also called a CS practitioner with questions. He’s talked with several members at these locations and his video accounts have been heartfelt, conveying his genuine curiosity for our practice. He still has questions and says he will continue to research Christian Science, but his experiences were shared with respect even while acknowledging some common impositions we face. This progress all stems from Christian Scientists being open and warm to visitors and willing to have deep conversations about our religion.

Throughout our state, Christian Science churches, societies and informal groups range in size. Some are large, others are small and some operate seasonally. All of these groups meet a need in their community. It can be tempting to accept the suggestion that a small congregation isn’t enough. Or that churches with larger congregations don’t need each individual to contribute. This is not true! Each Christian Science service or meeting is a beacon to those seeking a deeper relationship with God. When Christian Scientists are willing to answer questions sincerely and be open to visitors -who may not know how to begin- God is unfolding these experiences to benefit all. Perhaps even more important than words, is how people feel when there. Letting them know that it’s ok to ask questions and wrestle with deep theological concepts...this is how our church organizations serve the community and the ripple effect is immeasurable.

Just like the meek woman who wiped Jesus’ feet with her tears. She approached him expectantly, hoping for peace and forgiveness, and trusted she would not be ridiculed and turned away. Centuries later, we are still learning from this woman who doesn’t even have a name. Each encounter with the Christ is worthwhile and significant, and we can be assured God is guiding and guarding every interaction we have with the public.

Practice not profession, understanding not belief, gain the ear and right hand of omnipotence and they assuredly call down infinite blessings. (S&H p. 15:28–30)

Warmly,

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