

# MARY BAKER EDDY LETTER

**Letter Number Two, March 7, 1997**

My thanks go out to the many who responded so lovingly and heartily to the first issue of the *Mary Baker Eddy Letter*. We have been flooded with notes of encouragement and requests to become regular subscribers. Many people have given addresses of friends who might also be interested; and almost everyone has sent a contribution. Even the smallest is *deeply* appreciated. To all of you, my heartfelt thanks.

I am deeply grateful for all your support, but I am especially heartened by the way your wonderful response shows your deep love for Mary Baker Eddy. Your heartfelt gratitude for all she has done for humanity shone through in every letter we received. It gave all of us here an overwhelming sense of joy that so many people are beginning to grasp the great truth that in reality their own real Mind is the infinite good we call God, and that learning to “*be Love*” is the only thing that matters.

Perhaps the fact that the first issue was **SHORT** also helped to bring this avalanche of response. While this issue is longer, we have tried to keep in mind the story of the preacher who started his sermon, “Oh, where to begin? Where to begin?” and heard a voice from the congregation yell, “As near the end as possible!”

With so much important material to draw from, limiting the *Mary Baker Eddy Letter* to a reasonable length *is* a major challenge. We don’t want to omit vital information and risk giving people an incomplete message, like the society reporter who wrote, “The bridegroom’s mother wore a two-piece suit with purple accessories. The bride’s mother wore a hat.” Yet even Shakespeare said, “Brief let me be.”

But where to begin? Where to begin?

## **Go Forward!**

When the Israelites were hemmed in between the Red Sea and the pursuing Egyptians, human deliverance seemed impossible, but Moses cried out to God for help. The answer to his cry rings down the centuries as one of the mightiest calls to action in history: “Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they *go forward*.”

The true Mind of Moses didn’t say, “Where are the boats?” or “Where is that press agent who said he could get me two pages in the Old Testament?”

The true Mind of Moses said, “*Go forward*,” and this should become our watchword as we go forward to surmount the many barriers which would try to block our way. Mary Baker Eddy writes, “If the reliable *now* is carelessly lost in speaking or in acting, it comes not

back again. Whatever needs to be done which cannot be done now, God prepares the way for doing" (*My. 12:21*).

Barriers become stepping stones for the individual whose desire is to obey God and bless his fellow man. They lead to ever greater heights of dominion, joy and achievement. Jesus has promised us that "when the Spirit of Truth shall come [with the Second Coming of the Christ,] it will lead you into all Truth." In the Second Coming of the Christ, with the advent of Mary Baker Eddy and her fulfilment of Jesus' promise of the "Comforter," we are learning that the infinite good we call God is actually our own right Mind; therefore we can go forward in any right undertaking in proportion to our spiritual understanding, remembering that, as Jesus stated and proved, "the Father [our own right Mind] hath put all things into [*our*] hands."

### **Let's Not Lose Our Sense of Humor**

Let's have joy and happiness along the way and not take ourselves too seriously. When my husband, Bill, and I lived in Bethlehem, PA, I used to deliver a talk once a week to a dear group of students. Once when I had to be away I asked the most spiritually-minded student to prepare and give a talk in my absence. On returning, I asked another student how the talk went. "Between you and me," she confided, "it was quite dull."

Concerned, I sought out the student who had filled in for me and asked how she felt about her talk. "Fine!" she said. "I didn't have time to prepare anything, but I found a lecture you had written, and I delivered that."

Her humbling answer reminds me of the man who needed desperately to talk to the preacher. He went to the church again and again but the preacher was never there. Finally he ran into the janitor, and complained, "Your preacher isn't here much, is he?"

"No, sir," the janitor replied, and he isn't much when he is here."

None of us are much until we realize we have the same Mind that was in Christ Jesus!

### **The "Comforter" Reveals We Have All Power**

We received a telephone call recently from a reader who wanted to tell us how happy she was to learn *she was God if and when she got self out of the way*. Once we get self out of the way we will find that through understanding the "Comforter," which Mary Baker Eddy brought us in the Second Coming of the Christ, *we have all power to do all things rightly*.

The Apostles' authority in their healing work was based upon accepting and professing Christ Jesus' divine and spiritual authority. Just so, we today, as loyal Christian Scientists, must see and acknowledge Mary Baker Eddy as our *divine authority* for our understanding of Christian Science and its healing ability. To advance spiritually we must see how her

inspired example, as the “Second Witness,” fulfilled the scriptural prophecies concerning the Second Coming of the Christ, and Jesus’ promise to send the “Comforter.” For all she did to awaken us to our present oneness with infinite good, we owe her endless gratitude and homage.

### **What Will Do the Most for Our Cause?**

What does Mary Baker Eddy say would *do most for our Cause*? Does she say, “Healing”? No. What then?

Mrs. Eddy instructed two of her most prominent students, Judge Hanna and Edward Kimball, *that for the world to understand her in her true light and* life would do more for our cause than anything else could. Why? Because if we understand *her*, then the healing will follow naturally.

Remember, when the practitioners in Chicago learned this lesson-to love the one who brought the Second Coming of the Christ-their ability to heal was restored.

Because the enemy knows this, it tries harder to hide Mrs. Eddy’s life and light than to win any other points. As the breaking up of old beliefs goes on, it may cause the world to appear chaotic; but we are not fearful. Instead, we rejoice, because we know we are making steady progress, progress in ways we do not always comprehend. Because Mary Baker Eddy has shown us that evil is unreal, the long night of materialism is waning; a new day is dawning.

The purpose of these *Mary Baker Eddy Letters* is to help the world understand Mrs. Eddy in her “true life and light.”

As we drive over the bridge to the 21st Century, let us turn up the heat on error. Let’s give it the kiss of death. May *this* Letter help the reader, help *us all*, to blossom out of the harsh soil of spiritual poverty and look to the present with gratitude for all our Leader has given us in the Second Coming of the Christ, to educate us spiritually. She has shown us that our own real divine Mind is the strength that causes us to advance.

### **Taking Responsibility: Divorce and Its Cure**

Sometimes we hear students, faced with a troublesome circumstance, blandly suggest that we “leave it all in God’s hands,” that “things will be just the way God wants them.” This is not piety but apathy, indicating that the students still think the infinite good we call God is up in the sky, or somewhere besides their own real Mind. Either from ignorance or selfishness they are passing the buck, refusing responsibility, failing to see that only *they themselves* have the power and dominion to think rightly. There is not a God somewhere beside their own real Mind.

The result of this erroneous thinking becomes painfully apparent when we look at what is happening to marriage and the family today.

The divorce rate in the United States is impossibly high. The untold misery this has inflicted on humans tears the heart. How much of it is due to people refusing to take responsibility for making marriage work?

What can help this sad situation? Let us take a look at the seeming cause and its cure, which is the cure of all inharmony. Then let's look at what should be the number one criterion in selecting a life-long partner.

The "daily prayer" (*Manual* p. 41) states: "...May **Thy Word** enrich the affections of all mankind and govern them." Surely enriching and governing the affections is just what is needed here. How can we apply this passage?

"**Thy Word**" is the Word given to us in the Second Coming of the Christ; it is the "Comforter" Jesus promised. If we want to know what God is telling us we need to read and take seriously what Science and Health is teaching us, not what something **apart** from our own right Mind is telling us.

In Christian Science we learn that the carnal, mortal mind, must be replaced with the true and real divine Mind; that the human mind must be educated out of itself until it becomes the divine Mind, which is always latent within us, the kingdom of God buried within our consciousness. Looking into the mirror of divine Science we will see what we really **are**, now and forever. (See *Mis.* 61:4.)

In the human we have all seen how **unexpected acts of kindness** can win others over. In divine Science we learn that infinite Love, our own real Mind, is one with all good; and its reflection, "man," is a compound, complex idea or likeness of our real Mind that is Love. Spiritual education will continue until all people learn that divine Love is their real Mind.

In reality all is thought, and through our study and practice of Christian Science we will finally realize our coincidence with Love. All is **thought**. That is why Life is eternal. There is no matter. Matter is an illusion, hypnotic suggestion only.

Isn't this-the rising to the true consciousness that our own real Mind is Love-what the Bible is about? Note the imperfect human instruments the Bible tells us God chose: Look at Abraham. To save his own neck he quailed and trembled before Pharaoh's officials and shamelessly offered them his wife, Sarah, to do with as they pleased. Look at Jacob, cowardly and cheating, stuffed to the gills, as he made off with the stolen birthright. Look at Noah, leaving the Ark to build an altar, then drinking himself into a stupor and cursing his grandson. (See "Glossary" in Science and Health for **how** God used them.)

Why do these stories live? Because they tell of forgiveness and redemption; they tell of

falling and starting over, and thus learning what we **really** are as one with infinite good. This is what Jacob learned as he struggled all night with the fear that Esau, his brother, would kill him. When his material sense finally yielded to the spiritual sense of Life and Love, he saw his brother's face "*as though he had seen the face of God.*"

How many a divorce could be avoided if either partner would struggle as Jacob did, and finally see a partner's face as though he had seen the face of **God**.

### **The Greatest Gift, the Only Power**

*"All feel the need of sympathy, of kind words and hearts interested for them as well as yourself. And they feel the want of these who have them not, sevenfold more than those who have them. Therefore be charitable, for the greatest gift is Love."* - Mary Baker Eddy

Our daily prayer should be: May I never say or do a thing that would spoil or destroy another's peace and happiness.

In Ephesians we read, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth..." In the Bible are many warnings that "the tongue is a fire," "a devouring flame," "a world of iniquity." "Let thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth." Repeatedly the Bible tells us to keep the lower half shut; that "a perverse tongue falleth into mischief." "Under our tongue is mischief and vanity." Let us not smite each other with "the scourge of the tongue." Let us have the tongue of the peacemaker which "is as choice silver." The "tongue of the wise"- "a wholesome tongue"- "is as a tree of life." Therefore "let no corrupt communication proceed out of thy mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

I am reminded of an Episcopal bishop who went to an unfamiliar church to celebrate the Eucharist. There was a microphone on the altar, and being uncertain whether it was switched on, he tapped it gently, with no result. So leaning very close to it, he said in a loud whisper which echoed around the church: "There is something wrong with this microphone."

The well-trained and responsive congregation, familiar with the latest liturgical language, replied at once, "And also with you."

If we want to see our partner's face as though we had "seen the face of God," we will never respond: "And there is also something wrong with you!"

Since Love is the only power, let's not succumb to error's argument that I can love and **forgive** if I can get a good swat at him first. ***Don't allow a sense of having been hurt continue with you.*** Resist this devil. Since your own real Mind is infinite good, you have the dominion that maintains harmony by seeing only the perfect man. Remember, you "are always alone with your own being and with the reality of *things*" ('01 20:8).

We must array all our mental resources against every error that comes to us to give it life. Let us quickly deny all human discords and not give in to them. Ultimately, Love is the only power. The riches of infinite good's kingdom are available to all who claim their divine heritage through learning the divine being **they already are and always have been**. Error's pretense and arrogance will collapse whenever we struggle like Jacob until we see our so-called adversary's face "as though we had seen the face of **God**."

## Armed with "Thy Word"

### The Transitional Qualities

We gain confidence when we wrestle with error and overcome it.

"*Thy Word*" offers us powerful instruction for donning St. Paul's "whole armor" of infinite good. Mary Baker Eddy counseled: "**Just BE Love. BE it-do not know anything but Love. There is nothing else.**" Why is there "nothing else"? Because, as we have seen, our own real Mind is Love. Love, our real Mind, reveals "the omnipresence of present perfection," and is the only real power or presence there is.

To help us "be Love" "*Thy Word*" gives to us the "**transitional qualities**" we will need in our climb heavenward. These are the qualities we must develop in order to be in coincidence with the divine-with the infinite good we call God. Then we will no longer look to a God up in the sky or somewhere outside our own real and true Mind; then, and only then, will evil beliefs *disappear*.

"*Thy Word*," on page 115 of Science & Health, lists the "transitional qualities" as: "Humanity [which the dictionary defines as kindness and kindliness], honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance."

"*Thy Word*" instructs us to be a law to ourselves so that mental malpractice, lack of humanity, lack of honesty, affection, compassion, love, etc., cannot harm us either when asleep or when awake. (See S&H 442:30.)

We build the God-character when we express these qualities of love and compassion as "Thy Word" has written them down for us to use and demonstrate. There is no way I can do what infinite good wants me to do if I fail to express these transitional qualities that lead me to coincidence with infinite good.

Judge Hanna wrote: "The result of Christianly Scientific living must of necessity be a better, higher, and purer humanhood. Unless this be true, we misread the Bible, and Science and Health, as well as all the other writings and admonitions of our Teacher and Leader. We cannot conceive it possible to reach a spiritual state except through improved human conditions as precedent thereto...."

How easily people stray from this simple advice. The carnal mind would have even dedicated seekers lust after things (and people) to the hurt of themselves and others. “Thy Word” lays out the consequences. Dwelling on the physical, which is unreality, leads to depravity: “evil beliefs, passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, self-justification,” etc. (S&H 115). This is the downward spiral we see playing itself out all too often in failing marriages, and other relationships.

The “*transitional qualities*” have the power to heal this situation. Lived and demonstrated in a marriage or any human relationship they can break the cycle of selfishness, betrayal and recrimination that so often ends in the agony of divorce.

Mrs. Eddy wrote: “If thou the bending reed wouldst break, by thought or word unkind, pray that His spirit you partake, who loved and healed mankind.” When we, by our words or actions, hurt another, especially one who loves and trusts us, we have misread all that Mary Baker Eddy and the Bible have said on the subject.

### **Addressing Divorce**

At the beginning we asked, “Why is the divorce rate so impossibly high?” It isn’t lack of looks or of money; it isn’t “needing you,” because each one ultimately has to take responsibility for his own problems.

So what is the number one criterion for choosing a lifelong partner?

It is *character*. Why? Because, as someone has said, “When we consider the truth about life’s ongoing challenges and the onslaught of temptations, tribulations and dilemmas, your security, stability and welfare will depend on your partner’s *character* and on yours. Romance and passion don’t generally include concern about character. Those intense sensations and emotions would bring people in close enough proximity to mate if we were nothing more than *animals*. But they should stimulate our ability to transcend our animal nature and become more fully human—the human that is in coincidence with the divine.

“Whatever anyone’s spoken or implied intentions during romantic interludes, their behavior in *true* difficulty is the measure of their *character*. Do they succumb to temptations that run counter to their professed personal and moral values? Or can they be trusted *to stay true* to those values?”

“This is what we call *character*. Character dictates that each partner should have, live by, and share a set of ideals, goals and values. *Character* dictates that each of us should be willing to make sacrifices for the other, measuring sacrifice as mutual *gain* instead of personal loss.

“*Character* means that both of us should feel responsible to bring our best, emotionally healthy, selves to the relationship. *Character* means that both of us should be reliable in

the commitment, thereby providing the safest place in the world for intimacy, fulfillment and happiness.”

Reading our textbook through the lens of a lifetime of experience, I see again the importance of those Second Degree qualities as we travel the all-important road to the Third Degree (S&H 116:1-3): “Wisdom, purity, spiritual understanding, spiritual power, love, health, holiness.” When we disregard what “Thy Word” instructs in this second degree, we cut off the lower rungs of the ladder on which we climb heavenward.

Divine Love forms the coincidence of the human and divine, the kingdom of infinite good within us. “Pure humanity, friendship, home and the interchange of love, bring to earth a foretaste of *heaven*.” (*Mis.* 100:22)

When the veil that hides reality from us is removed, when we awaken from the Adam dream, we will see that we *are* and *always have been* the conscious, intelligent, radiant Love that is Life Itself. We will see the face of our brother, or our partner, as the face of God and, as the Psalmist writes, we will “dwell in the consciousness of Love forever.”

### **The Children’s Corner**

A friend tells of taking her three year old son on his first major camping trip, an excursion into the Canadian wilderness. Night was closing in, a light snow was beginning to fall and they were still two miles from the lodge when they were stopped by a log jam blocking their way. Grimly they unloaded and secured their canoes, shouldered their gear and started off through the dim forest. There was no trail and no one free to carry the child. The little boy stumbled along, his eyes huge and his face white in the twilight.

As they struggled through a particularly dark ravine my friend turned to encourage her son, who was looking more and more frightened. Before she could say a word, however, he straightened his little shoulders, lifted his chin and stated, “I not scared. No.” Hiking sturdily ahead, he declared, “We making it!” and he repeated those words every few minutes, his new found courage rallying on the hikers until a twinkle of lights through the trees told them they had indeed made it.

### **The Strength Innate in Every Child**

As my friend discovered, even very young children have deep reserves of strength which can be a powerful resource in adversity. There is a great need today to become aware of the deep-rooted strengths that lie latent within children, and to help children tap these innate strengths to combat the societal evils that threaten their safety, health, and development.

Today one reads much about crime. A recent front page article in the Wall St. Journal stated, “Children are 12 times more likely to die by gunfire than their counterparts in the rest of the industrialized world.” This morning’s Sunday Times reports, “The U.S. is the most



violent by far of all the industrialized nations....By a wide margin we have the highest rates of childhood and adult suicides and firearms-related deaths of any of the 26 richest nations in the world.”

Christian Scientists do not close their eyes to evil. We open them and work to ameliorate this evil. It is especially important to begin with children, who face a world of drugs, violence, gangs. More and more educators, coming face to face with the violence of murders of students they have taught, and the murders of parents and friends, are being propelled into action.

We must, of course, do all we can to make the world safer for children, but we are woefully shortsighted if we stop there. Children must be helped to find the strength *within themselves to say “NO”*; to self-destructive behavior—to drugs, to gangs, to violence of any kind. Once children really know the difference between good and bad, and know that they have the power within themselves to meet the challenges that face them, what a difference it will make to them!

### **Tapping the Strength Within**

Drawing out these strengths must become our aim. Barbara Vining, writing in the Christian Science Journal, tells of an incident when her own children were growing up. A business associate of her husband came to dinner one night, and she noticed that there was something about his natural appreciation of the children that brought out the very best in them. “They blossomed in his presence,” she said. “During this gentle man’s hour or two in our home, I saw beautiful qualities in our children that I had barely perceived before.”

From this guest Mrs. Vining said she learned a valuable lesson in how to bring out what is already present in every child, in fact in everyone.

True education is not a pouring in but a drawing out. It is the bringing out of possibilities that lie latent within us. And one of the most valuable things every child has within him, indeed that we all have within us, is the ability to know right from wrong; the ability to be good and to do good. This is true because, as we have learned in Christian Science, our real and true Mind is the infinite good we name God. The same Truth that Jesus manifested is here today—innate in each individual.

Parents need to be aware of how their own actions may be undermining the child’s budding understanding of right and wrong. Is the parent shacking up with some new honey? Are abusive parents destroying the soil around their children’s roots? A Christlike appreciation and perception of every child, and of one another, will help to destroy any abusive tendencies, any carnal elements of thought that would crush out innocence and purity.

The most important thing in the education of children is to draw out their moral and spiritual strengths.

## Showing Your Love

Sometimes parents love a child, but their love is not communicated in such a way that the child *feels* loved. Bill and I once lived next door to a little boy who came over to visit almost every day. Often when he came I let him crawl onto my lap and I hugged him and told him little stories fit for a small boy.

One day he confided that his parents didn't love him. I said, "Oh, yes, Ronnie, they love you dearly. He said, "No, they *don't*. They just want me to get on my bike and be gone!"

The next time his mother came to see me I gently asked, "Marylyn, do you ever hold Ronnie on your lap and hug him and tell him how much you love him?" She looked a little surprised, and said, "No, I never thought of doing that." Then she asked, "Do you?" I said, "Yes, Marylyn, I do, nearly every time he comes." I urged her to hold him on her lap and hug him; he needed that assurance.

To parents of a child it should be the *feelings* of the child that matter most. We can teach moral values by instruction and example but the best way to help children access their inner strength is to make sure they *feel* loved, and in the way the Vining's guest did, by believing in them, by seeing in them the Mind of God.

## The Healing Power of Love

As we near the end of this *Letter*, I would like to tell of an incident that taught me the power of love and of simple kindness. Many years ago, my beloved husband seemed almost on his deathbed with double pneumonia. We were not meeting it in Christian Science. In desperation I called the only doctor I knew of, Dr. Gold, a pediatrician. Dr. Gold said, "Bring him here immediately."

My daughter Marie was with me and together we got Bill to the clinic, a few hours drive from home-all the while declaring, "The doctor's Mind is God, infinite good; he can only see infinite good."

Dr. Gold greeted us kindly and made Bill as comfortable as he could, but as the day wore on it became obvious that Bill was missing our dog, Charlie, who usually slept in a box right beside his bed. Dr. Gold, taking a leaf out of Dr. Schwitzer's book, told us, "Go home, and bring your dog here. We will put you all up for as many nights as necessary."

This was *love!*

I felt lifted up. Peace descended over me and I felt infinite good wrap me in joy and gratitude. As Marie and I drove home to get Charlie I felt an overwhelming sense of happiness and love, which stayed with me all through that long night as I sat by Bill's bedside in the clinic, reading to him and holding his hand while Marie and the dog kept vigil nearby, and I *knew* that all was well.

In the morning Dr. Gold was able to report great improvement in dear, blessed Bill. The danger was passed. When I started to thank Dr. Gold, he refused to take credit for the healing. “Mrs. Wright,” he said, giving me a big hug, “it was love that healed your husband.”

### **In Closing**

Before closing I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to Elizabeth Zwick for her editing, and to all who so tirelessly and lovingly carry on here, giving me free time to write in these busy days.

And also, again, many thanks to the recipients of this *Letter* who have responded with such loving expressions of interest, encouragement, and support.