

HIGH RIDGE HOUSE
ANNUAL MEETING

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
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“The High Calling of God: The Ultimate Prize”

based on

“ . . .press toward the mark for the prize
of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”

(Philippians 3:14)



LOVE



It is a joy to be here with you today.

A joy, because it is always wonderful to share spiritual insights with each other. I realize this is not a two-way verbal dialogue, but I trust it

will be a two-way spiritual conversation, where together we celebrate High Ridge House and the Christian Science nursing ministry that is bringing spiritual healing to this region of the United States.

Of course, this ministry reaches far beyond the northeastern part of this country, given the vast global audience that embraces High Ridge House, as the result of the monthly metaphysical talks and inspiring Touchstone messages that High Ridge House sponsors.

Part of celebrating something or someone is to express gratitude for present success and achievements — gratitude which is certainly being expressed at this Annual Meeting today for the healing triumphs High Ridge House has experienced this past year in so many different areas.

Another reason for celebrating is that we know this present good doesn't stop with the good we are celebrating.

We understand that good is always soaring to unforeseen new heights. And this understanding comes with our acceptance that we are always in presence of God's kingdom of heaven, harmony — “the atmosphere of Spirit, where Soul is supreme” (“Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures” by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 590:3).

Understanding that we are always in the atmosphere of God's kingdom, where Soul is

supreme, can sometimes seem a difficult task. This could be attributed to the fact that our daily paths appear to be full of distractions — obstructions — that would try to interfere with the commitment Christian Scientists have made to leave behind material laws of discord and limitation and realize the presence of Soul's unlimited harmony.

I don't think I need to give a laundry list of the distractions, but it does seem that in this present-day world, they are of a magnitude greater than ever before experienced. And the solutions? Disappointingly obscure, in so many cases.

It was here that I stopped writing to express deep gratitude for the theme that has been guiding High Ridge House this past year.

I began to see it as a guide to help us stay on our committed path to demonstrate for ourselves and our fellow citizens of the world, Christ Jesus' promise that the kingdom of heaven, where Soul is supreme, is truly at hand — now!

The theme comes from Paul's encouraging letter to the church at Philippi:

“...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

The church at Philippi was committed to bringing Christianity to a pagan world (as most of Paul's churches were) — to bring the healing light of the Christ to those living in darkness.

At first, I was a bit confused as to why he would ask them to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God because had they not already received the calling?

What greater high calling can there be than to spread the gospel of Christ Jesus. That is, the good news that the Kingdom of Heaven is

already present, without and within! And that was certainly what the people of the Church at Philippi were committed to.

And isn't this true for those who call themselves Christian Scientists? Have we not already accepted Christ Jesus' promised Comforter, Christian Science? And because we have accepted it, does it not come with the promise that we are able to do the works that Christ Jesus did, and greater? (See John 14:12) Is this not the high calling of God in Christ Jesus — the ultimate prize?

To some this may seem a radical view. Many Biblical scholars tell us that Christians see themselves on an ongoing journey to achieve the prize of the high calling; that it's unfinished until one hears the call from heaven, leading to heaven, at some point in the distant future.

However, Christian Science, the Science of the Christ, brings to this age the Scientific spiritual sense that we don't have to wait — that right now, as the children of God, created in His image and likeness, we live, move and have our being with Him.

Given this Scientific fact, is it not spiritually logical that now is the present time to accept that we have the prize of this high calling; that it is not something to come in the future? Is not now the time to accept Christ Jesus' promise that the kingdom of heaven is indeed at hand, and within, now? Isn't this the prize already obtained?

And according to Christ Jesus, it also seems spiritually logical that the key to continuing our high calling — that is, stay on the path where we apply the laws of God as Christ Jesus promised we would do — we have only to repent. We have only to keep thought on the reality of the present reign of Spirit, and not on the material sense of things.

As I studied Paul's letter, it became clear that it was meant to give the Philippians loving guidance to help them stay the course on their path of high calling, free from obstructions based on the material sense of things.

I invite you to join me in looking at Paul's guidance and how it applies to us as we continue on our journey to fulfill the promise of the ultimate prize.

There's an added plus as to why Paul's message is relevant for Christian Scientists.

I happened to run across a comment Mrs. Eddy made about Paul's teachings. She was having a conversation with her followers about the present and future prosperity of her discovery, Christian Science and the Church she founded.

She said that its safety rested on the Word of God, and the instructions in the "Church Manual" by-laws.

And then she added that the teachings of St. Paul "are as useful to-day as when they were first written" ("Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Authority" by Robert Peel, The Christian Science Publishing Society, Boston, Massachusetts, 1982, p. 228).

Taking this to heart, I felt that Paul's guidance was Mrs. Eddy's guidance as well.

Paul had powerful words of wisdom to give his church, given in love, to help the people successfully continue the high calling they were committed to.

Before He imparts his instructions, he begins his letter by expressing gratitude for how well the church is doing. There were reasons for



INSTRUCTION



celebration. After all it was the first church established in Europe. It was here that the first woman converted to Christianity. We know her as Lydia. Here a damsel possessed with the spirit of divination

was healed. And a Roman prison guard and his family were converted.

But after expressing praise and gratitude, he warns the people about external and internal hostilities. He could see that these hostilities could become the very distractions or obstructions that would threaten their going forward on their path of high calling.

Perhaps he was having the same type of conversation with them that Mrs. Eddy later had with her followers when she was talking about the present and future prosperity of her church.

He identifies the source of the external hostilities as Rome's oppressive governing methods which threatened the church's right to exist.

Internally, non-Christians were demanding strict obedience to old, outdated laws. In the King James Bible, he refers to them as "evil workers." And this seemed to be at the core of dissension and division among the church members.

True, the 21st century Christian Science church, in the United States and most parts of the world, is not confronted by an outwardly oppressive government. But aren't we still obligated to be alert to subtle, sometimes aggressive, external threats against the Christian Science commitment to following Christ Jesus's healing methodology? Don't we still need to be alert for opportunities to express loving corrections when we are faced by any resistance — resistance that is usually caused by fear or confusion spawned by misinformation?

And what can we say about the dangers of internal hostilities? For many of us, whether members of churches, local communities, even within our families, haven't we seen internal strife try to raise its ugly head to cause tension and division among good people — people who love God and have a common goal to simply offer the cup of cold water in Christ's name to those dwelling in darkness?

And at this point Paul could have been thinking about Jesus words in the book of Mark, "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3:25).

But he had a simple solution that would protect against both of these hostilities that would keep the church safe and intact so they could continue their Christly purpose. The solution rests on the people creating and maintaining a unified community, solely committed to unconditional love and support for one another.

And we would say that this is easily accomplished when we are obedient to Christ Jesus' simple commands to Love God first and foremost; to love ourselves as God sees us; and to love our neighbors as God sees them. I've dubbed these commandments the Commandments of Love.

Church communities obedient to the Commandments of Love will naturally fulfill the high calling of God. And vice versa, communities following the high calling of God will always be obedient to the Commandments of Love. This is the "Love, – casting out error and healing the sick" (S&H, p. 35:24).

Paul is calling for the community to be unified by being of the same mind; having the same love; and to be of one accord — all of which are the fruits of being obedient to the Commandments of Love.

But he warns that unity can be threatened by selfish ambition or conceit. Instead, he insists

that everyone should act in humility. They should regard others better than themselves. They should not look to their own interests but to the interests of others. And he summarizes with “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

When we are free from self-ambition, and are of one Mind, one love, of one accord, are we not have fulfilling the promise of the Sixth Tenet of the Christian Science Church?

Have we not kept our promise “. . . to watch, and pray for that Mind to be in us which was also in Christ Jesus; to do unto others as we would have them do unto us; and to be merciful, just, and pure” (S&H, p. 497:24)?

Living the Commandments of Love fulfills our promise. And we are united together with the Mind that leads us to live the Golden Rule, and to be “merciful, just, and pure” (S&H, p. 497:27). This is a perfect definition of how we live our high calling.

In this next section I’d like to take Paul’s lead and speak about conditions — or temptations — that could cause us to fall prey to forgetting the very qualities that support our fulfilling our high calling successfully.

We’ll look at the temptations, and at the same time look at the truths that nullify any suggested harmful effects.

To summarize Paul’s instructions:

- He warned the people against the temptations of selfish ambition or conceit.
- He cautioned against their regarding themselves better than others or focusing on their own interests.
- He lovingly showed the people that they were protected from ill effects from these temptations when they acted with humility; regarded others better than themselves; when

they looked to the interests of others and not their own.

• And we know he summarized with the unity factor we’ve already claimed, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Mary Baker Eddy uses the term aggressive mental suggestions for any and all temptations that would attempt to turn us away from maintaining our loving unity within our church community and with our fellow citizens.

And isn’t it interesting that she gives us a “Church Manual” by-law (Article VIII, Section 6) telling us to defend ourselves daily against such suggestions so that we not forget our duty to God, our duty to her and our duty to all mankind, which can be seen as the bedrock for staying the course of our high calling.

Would she have given us a by-law in the “Church Manual of The Mother Church” if she hadn’t known we would be met with suggestions that could cause us to forget our duties? She had to meet aggressive suggestions. Christ Jesus did. Paul did. And it looked as if the church at Philippi did as well.

But Christian Science, the promised Comforter, leads us to the truth that defends us and the activities within our Church, including the Christian Science nursing ministry. The Comforter defends against any distractions that would obstruct our being about our Father’s business.

Here are four suggested temptations, along with their counterfacts:

Consider the suggestion or temptation to fall prey to conceit or self-ambition — either in ourselves or in another.

THREE

“SELS”



Both terms are spawned from self-will, self-justification, and self-love.

And in “Science and Health” we read, “In patient obedience to a patient God, let us labor to dissolve with the universal solvent of Love the adamant of error, — self-will, self-justification, and self-love...” (p. 242:15 In).

Notice the three “selves” are referred to as the “adamant of error.” The word adamant comes from the root word lodestone from which comes the word diamond.

We know that nothing on the planet is supposed to be able to dissolve a diamond and yet, God revealed to Mary Baker Eddy that the universal solvent of LOVE dissolves the adamant of error, dissolves the hardness of destructive error that wars against spirituality — against our true spiritual nature that allows us to heal as Christ Jesus promised we would do.

By living the Commandments of Love basic to our high calling, we reflect that Love that protects against any attempted attack on our true spiritual identity.

Armed with our true spiritual nature we and our fellow church members are able to stay fast with our high calling. We are able to bring the healing message to our fellow citizens that it is their “divine right” to accept the freedom that comes with their true of identity as the children of God (S&H, p. 227:26).

A second temptation or suggestion to consider that would threaten a community’s being of one accord would come

SPIRITUALITY
PRESERVED
✿

HUMAN
OPINIONS
✿

from relying on human opinions rather than divine Mind.

This seems to be exactly what Paul was concerned about with his church. He saw personal opinions causing internal dissensions that threatened to divide and conquer and ultimately destroy the church and its high calling and that of the people.

But we read in “Science and Health”, “The only excuse for entertaining human opinions and rejecting the Science of being is our mortal ignorance of Spirit...” (p. 280:30).

Can we be ignorant of Spirit while at the same time we are keeping the First Commandment?

Years ago I was about to take a position in a Christian Science organization that involved working closely with others in ways that affected many people. However, there didn’t seem to be a job description that afforded any guidance about how this was to be accomplished.

I was praying about this as a family member and I were driving to a new city to begin the position. She was reading the Bible Lesson from the Christian Science Quarterly and I heard her read the quote I just shared, “The only excuse for entertaining human opinions and rejecting the Science of being is our mortal ignorance of Spirit.” I was sure it was put in the book the night before. But I also knew it was the answer to my prayer.

Of course, it didn’t mean I should ignore other’s opinions. I want to hear them all. I care deeply about what other people are thinking. But if I entertain my human opinion or another’s without asking God which way to turn — to the left or to the right — I am in essence not keeping the First Commandment of Love. It is then I forfeit the truth of my being and that of the person I’m talking to, praying for, or just want to help.

During the time I served in this position and after, I knew that when things went well there was obedience to the law of one infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation. No human opinion was involved.

When things hadn't gone well, when I knew I could have done better or I'd made a wrong decision — when the kingdom of harmony seemed pretty distant — in almost every case I could pinpoint a human opinion, either mine or someone else's, that had been entertained.

And there's more to the Comforter's advice about entertaining human opinion. The ignorance of Spirit that opens the way to entertaining human opinions, always yields when we understand divine Science, and it is this understanding that allows us to "enter kingdom of Truth on earth and learn that Spirit is infinite and supreme" (S&H, p. 281:2). Harmony within the church preserved!

A third suggestion that could disrupt the harmony of our individual lives or our communities would be the temptation to tell God how to do something or what the end result should look like.

TELL GOD
HOW
✂

I have always cherished the story I once told of Mrs. Eddy saying to a household member:

"All I have ever accomplished has happened when I get Mary out of the way and let God be revealed."

Or rendered,

"All I have ever accomplished has happened when I get personal sense — mine or what seems to be another's — out of the way and let God be revealed."

(See "We Knew Mary Baker Eddy, Expanded Edition, Volume 1," © The Christian Science

Publishing Society. John C. Lathrop, p. 270).

God's message is very clear when He speaks to us through Isaiah (55:8-9)

"... my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Then He becomes even clearer when He tells us that it is His word that goes out and it won't return void; it will accomplish what He pleases AND what He sends His word to, will prosper. (See Isaiah 55:11)

Another result of the aggressive suggestion to tell God how to run His ship, is a hopeless feeling that God is never going to step in and be present. We begin to feel that dissension is inevitable and that harmony is impossible, locally or worldwide.

Certainly, our daily news reports seem to aggressively suggest this.

This temptation is thwarted, again, by keeping the First Commandment.

When we are loving God above all else, we trust and know that His will is already done on earth as it is in heaven. We understand that His will of harmony is supreme now, governing our high calling journey.

A fourth temptation that would attempt to divide a community is the temptation to judge another negatively because of their actions.

To judge negatively is the opposite of beholding another as God created them and sees them.

In essence it is a rebuff of that part of the second

JUDGE
NEGATIVELY
✂

FORGIVE



Commandment of Love that tells us to love our neighbor as God loves him or her, without conditions!

According to the divine Comforter, this is not the example Christ

Jesus gives us.

You may be aware that this following citation appears frequently in our Bible Lessons, including in our recent Lesson on Man.

“Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God’s own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick. Thus Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is intact, universal, and that man is pure and holy” (S&H, p. 476:32–5).

It comes with such frequency that each time I read or pray it, I am led to think, “someone really wants us to get this right.”

When we follow Christ Jesus and see God-like qualities in others that heal the sick, we see the kingdom of heaven intact, universal and man (ourselves and others) as pure and holy — our high calling in action.

A word about forgiveness:

By following Jesus’ example, we have given up the false material sense of ourselves and others for the true spiritual sense that God created — the children of God.

Notice the two words: “give” and “for.” **Give up** the lie **for** the truth. For — give. To forgive can be seen as the ultimate reflection of divine Love because we are knowing the truth that the individual is

God’s child, the perfect man, woman and child of God’s creating. To forgive is a most effective spiritual tool to remove distractions and obstructions that would cause disunity and separation in our communities.

Just before Paul mentions the prize of the high calling of God, he writes,

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,” (Philippians 3:13).

Is he telling the people — and us — why and how forgiveness is key to our protecting the prize of our high calling? Was he thinking about his life before his conversation? Perhaps he is saying,

“Now is the time to leave all past mistakes and failures — all material beliefs — behind. Forgive yourself, love yourself as God loves you so you can do the works of God as I am doing.”

According to one Bible scholar, Paul describes his life with the metaphor of a sprinter who only looks forward and ignores what lies behind him as he goes forward to win the prize. If a runner keeps looking back, he’ll lose the prize.

Keeping our prize of the high calling of God is assured when we leave all and go forward with the Christ.

Mary Baker Eddy writes in “Retrospection and Introspection,”

“It is well to know, dear reader, that our material, mortal history is but the record of dreams, not of man’s real existence, and the dream has no place in the Science of being.”

She continues, “Mere historic incidents and personal events are frivolous and of no moment, unless they illustrate the ethics

of Truth. ... The human history needs to be revised, and the material record expunged.” (pp. 21:13–15, 25–27; 22:1)

Up to the time she wrote this, her personal history was full of hardship, sickness and sadness. Had she clung to that material history, would she have realized the high calling God had for her?

Would we be here today?

We just talked about four aggressive suggestions that could cause obstacles in our high calling journey and in turn, disrupt the harmony of our church communities.

- The conceit of the three selfs.
- Human opinion vs divine Mind.
- Personal sense getting in the way of trusting God.
- Judging others negatively — as mortals.

And their antidotes:

- Divine Love dissolves all error.
- Understanding divine Science overrules human opinion.
- God’s will is already done.
- Seeing as God sees and the power of forgiveness.

Here we might ask, “What is the source of these temptations or aggressive suggestions that we are to defend ourselves and our high calling from in the first place?”

The simplest answer is if God is infinite Mind, the only Cause and Creator there is no source to create a tempter or suggester in the first place.

However, Scripture tells us that Jesus had to deal with temptation or suggestions right after he had spent forty days and nights in the wilderness. He knew exactly who he was as the son of God. He was clear that his mission was to bring the truth about God and man to the world, to save all

mankind from sin, disease and death.

As prayed-up as he was, we’re told he was tempted by the devil. But Jesus knew it was simply the suggestion of a ‘false accuser’ —the Greek translation of the word Devil —trying to convince him he was not the son of God, that he was separated from God, etc. So, can’t we find comfort in knowing that if and when any temptations or suggestions try to falsely accuse us, we should consider ourselves in good company?

But to go forward in our high calling as Christ Jesus did, we must be quick and alert to tell the false accuser to get behind us! And we can do this for the same reason Christ Jesus was able to.

We are able to because when Mary Baker Eddy discovered the Science of the Christ, she discovered what Jesus knew: that evil has no power because the false accuser is a liar, and the father of the lie. If we were to believe otherwise we would not be keeping the First Commandment, because obviously we would be acknowledging a power other than God.

She gave us several terms that all have the same effect — nothing claiming to be something.

Terms such as

- mortal mind
- mental malpractitioner
- animal magnetism.

The last term, animal magnetism or evil, “nothing claiming to be something,” would always try to claim that there is a power other than God.

Mrs. Eddy explained the claim of animal magnetism and its non-effect to one of her students, John Lathrop. (From John Lathrop’s Reminiscence

ALERTNESS



from The Mary Baker Eddy Library, Diary 11, December 1904)

“Animal magnetism, ignorant or malicious, you cannot separate me from God. You cannot dim my spiritual perception. You cannot make a law that I cannot heal myself or others. God is my strength and refuge — the only Intelligence. You are not mind or any of its attributes. You are no power, no intelligence. You are non-existent and a nonentity.”

Up to now we have spiritually reasoned that we have received the prize of the high calling, what it is, why we have it, and how we can continue to successfully fulfill this glorious opportunity we have been given to serve God, our Leader and all mankind.

I would like to devote our last few minutes to the majestic symbol of our prize, THE CROWN.



We have received our prize, *our* Crown, because we have accepted the spiritual fact that Christ Jesus’ promised Comforter, Christian Science, is here. And it has opened the way for us to

fulfill our high calling, along with our fellow church members, to bring the light of the Christ to a world seeking freedom from oppression and discord.

What exactly is our crown?

Several places in the Bible mention the crown as the Crown of Glory, that is, the crown of abundance, honour, dignity, splendor, brightness, majesty. (See Proverbs 4:9 and 16:31; Isaiah 28:5 and 62:3; and I Peter 5:4)

“Science and Health” speaks of the Crown of Rejoicing (see p. 29:5).

That is, the Crown of gratitude for the good already received and that which is ready to be realized. And the Crown of Love (p. 451:6) that over comes hatred, including the blatant “hatred for the truth and love. “...Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23: 34) — the Crown of Love that casts out all error and heals the sick.

In the book of James we read, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

We can claim the Crown of Life because we are perfectly clear about how to overcome temptation.

And finally, we have the Cross and Crown (see p. 254:27). When we look at the Christian Science logos and the position of the Cross and Crown, we are reminded that the Crown is always victorious over the cross.

When I first began studying Christian Science I was very confused about the cross. I think this was because when I was a young child there were several Biblically-based movies that I took as reality. After all it was in the movie — it had to be true. (I was VERY young.)

For years whenever I thought about the cross, all I could see was a man with a heavy wooden beam struggling up a hill, wearing a crown of thorns, with sweat and blood flowing from his brow. And since the cross meant agony and defeat, I didn’t want any part of it.

But then came Christian Science and the material history was expunged!



My fear of the cross changed to encouragement and hope when I read in “Science and Health”:

- That the cross was simply “leave all for Christ” (p. 34:1). Isn’t this the very focus we mentioned earlier that keeps us looking forward and not behind?
- To take up the cross just meant to “...heal the sick, cast out evils, and preach Christ, or Truth, to the poor,...” (p. 34:13) — which we have seen is what the high calling of God is all about.
- That “The real cross, which Jesus bore up the hill of grief, was the world’s hatred of Truth and Love.” (p. 50:30) always destroyed by the Crown of Love.
- And when we take up the cross and follow Christ in our daily life we are able to reach “the understanding of Christian Science in its proper signification will perform the sudden cures of which it is capable;...” (p. 178:32).

Then I read a statement in “Science and Health” about the cross that caused me to hesitate. Big time! “If you launch your bark upon the ever-agitated but healthful waters of truth, you will encounter storms. Your good will be evil spoken of. This is the cross. Take it up and bear it, for through it you win and wear the crown” (p. 254:27).

I asked myself, “Do I really want to stir up those ever-agitated waters, no matter how healthy they are; do I really want to knowingly bring on storms or have my good “evil spoken of” even if it does allow me to keep the crown?

Thoughts like this can tempt us to resist taking up the cross. They can tempt us to “save ourselves” by coming down from it altogether. This is exactly what chief priest tried to tempt Jesus to do. And had he, what happens to the crown?

Then it occurred to me, “How difficult or hard can it be to take up the cross or stay on it, when I know I’m already wearing the crown?” For instance, wasn’t Jesus expressing the Crown of Love when he said, “Father, forgive them for they know no what they do?” And what did this lead to? Resurrection and ascension? I think so. Isn’t this the same love that Paul and Mary Baker Eddy expressed? They knew they had the prize of the high calling. And so do we.

Finally, as we stay on our path of the high calling we have received, the majesty and glory that shines from our Crown of Glory, Rejoicing, Love and Life will go forth to our fellow citizens of the world. By this, they will know they are the children of God and understand why, just as we do.

And they will be able to exercise their glorious freedom to harmony and peace that is their divine right, just as it is ours.

I am so grateful to be united with you in the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Lynne Buckley-Quirk, CS

PROMISE
FULFILLED





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