

One evening during the holiday season, my family was returning home from a visit to relatives in a nearby state. During the car ride home, my arms started to feel very itchy. It was dark out, so I didn't realize how red and puffy my arms were becoming as I scratched them. When I arrived home, I noticed that several parts of my body were becoming itchy, red, and swollen. My initial reaction was not a very Christianly Scientific one. I wondered about what I could have eaten that would have caused an allergic reaction. I could think of nothing that would have triggered this reaction. Finally, I realized that I needed to start thinking like a Christian Scientist. I knew that I needed to stand porter at my door of thought. I had been allowing in conclusions that certainly were not the truth about me as a perfect child of God. I realized that looking for a cause in matter was not a good place to start. So, immediately, I turned my thoughts to God. I reasoned that all cause and effect comes from Him, not matter.

I continued praying, giving myself a Christian Science treatment that evening. When I awoke the next morning, the situation looked much worse. The swelling had spread to more visible parts of my body, such as my face. At this point, I realized that I needed the support of a Christian Science practitioner. When I spoke with her, she reassured me that I didn't need to become fearful of the condition or give it any power whatsoever. I listened gratefully to her suggestions for what ideas to focus on in my prayer. Throughout that day, I continued to pray and study the Christian Science textbooks. One thing that amazed me about this whole situation was that my children didn't notice anything different about me. How pure and innocent they are! They only saw God's creation. This thought gave me much comfort! My family was planning on attending a New Year's celebration at the home of a friend and her family over the weekend. So, I needed to do some grocery shopping and to prepare some food. I was able to do this, even though I felt disfigured. No one at the store seemed to notice anything about my appearance.

The next day, I awoke with even more to handle. My feet had swollen to the point that walking was painful and difficult. My hands were also achy and almost useless. The practitioner boosted my spirits with her strong convictions that I needed to really say NO to these suggestions. I spent much of the day studying and praying. Reading *Science and Health* by Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, gave me a lot of truths to contemplate. One of her statements follows: "Health is the consciousness of the unreality of pain and disease; or, rather, the absolute consciousness of harmony and of nothing else." I also enjoyed reading testimonies written by other Christian Scientists in some old copies of *The Christian Science Journal*. Although I can't remember the specific ideas contained in the testimonies, I do remember the clarity of my thought that resulted.

I knew that I was finally overcoming my fear of this condition. I expected complete healing, and it came by the next day. All the visible signs of this condition had completely vanished. We were able to attend the New Year's party as planned and had a wonderful time. I am so grateful for the help of the practitioner and for all of the people who contribute testimonies to periodicals. It is so helpful to learn how others use

Christian Science to bring about healing. I know that growth always results with every trial.

Nancy Brown
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