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SECURITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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There is more security in one Godlike motive and act than in all the matter in the world. Security cannot exist in materiality, a state of thinking in which men deny the integrity of God and His creation. But Christian Science shows that Christlike thinking and living, arising from an understanding of God's laws and obedience to His spiritual demands, make readily available the security of the power of omnipotent Truth and Love.

Responding to God's demand that one acknowledge no substance or life but that which is spiritual, Christ Jesus kept inviolate the security of his person and mission, even when mortals sought to kill him. The security he exemplified was the security of the individual demonstrating the power of Spirit over matter.

His life purpose was to show men how to avail themselves of this same spiritual power and protection. But his teachings are of benefit to mankind only as the individual adopts them, learning to know man as God's image and to live and work with new, Christlike motives. Jesus' example resolves mankind's quest for security into terms of the individual and his quest for understanding of real being—perfect God and His reflection, perfect man.

Mary Baker Eddy writes in the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 569), "Every mortal at some period, here or hereafter, must grapple with and overcome the mortal belief in a power opposed to God." Again she states (*ibid.*, p. 494), "Jesus demonstrated the inability of corporeality, as well as the infinite ability of Spirit, thus helping erring human sense to flee from its own convictions and seek safety in divine Science."

One may ask, How is it that overcoming belief in a power opposed to God can provide security for one who may be in physical need, or one whose freedom, perhaps his very life, is threatened by circumstances external to himself and over which he seems to have no control? How does one "seek safety in divine Science"?

Jesus reduced evil to a condition of self-deception when he called it "a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). He thereby showed that evil has no rationale and therefore is subject to annihilation. Jesus also said (Mark 7:23), "All these evil things come from within."

One's experience can include discord only through the consent and participation of one's own thought. In no place other than individual human consciousness does evil seem real, life seem threatened, supply seem limited. Consequently, there is no other place where these errors are to be grappled with and overcome.

Jesus proved through spiritually mental means alone that there is no actual power opposed to Spirit. It follows that physical need and insecurity but evidence a need to better understand man in his oneness with God, Spirit, as His expression.

We read in the sixth chapter of II Kings that at one time Elisha's servant gave his mental consent to the mortal belief that life is subject to human will and material force. The king of Syria had dispatched "horses, and chariots, and a great host" to the city of Dothan to capture Elisha. Believing his master to be threatened by this military might, the servant cried in despair, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"

Elisha did not petition the soldiers, nor did he excitedly seek to elude them. He rightly appraised the mortal threat to his security. He comforted his servant. "Fear not," he said, "for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And that his servant might also discern the power of Spirit to preserve the harmony of the individual, Elisha prayed that God would open his eyes. We read, "And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

It is useful to note that it was Elisha's assurance of safety in God's ever-presence that destroyed the servant's fear of vulnerability in matter. Because of his receptivity to Truth, the servant saw evidence of the security realized by Elisha, and the situation was taken care of without harm to anyone. Complete and final security does not accrue to an individual vicariously, however, either through another's labor and reliance on God or through the acquisition or redistribution of matter.

Caring deeply for the welfare of his fellow men, Jesus fed the five thousand; but he did not continue to feed them. At the pool, Bethesda, he healed the one receptive to Christ and later counseled him to sin no more. The intent of Jesus' mission was to save mankind; but each

individual must demonstrate his own sinless, spiritual selfhood, which always lacks nothing of Spirit's substance and essential qualities.

Jesus in no way relieved the individual of responsibility for his own thoughts and acts in making a demonstration of Truth. We learn through his example that meeting such a responsibility in Christian Science is the paramount necessity for a useful and happy life. Regardless of what others may or may not choose to do, one who attains genuine spirituality will make manifest in his human experience the security found in divine Mind, God.

Of those who joyously and enthusiastically seek to do God's will, the Psalmist observed (Ps. 37:25), "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." When viewed from the standpoint of our Way-shower's example, the Psalmist was not self-righteously disregarding mankind's need of security. On the contrary, by placing the issues of security squarely on the righteousness—the spiritual-mindedness —of the individual, he illustrated how the preserving power of divinity embraces and benefits humanity.

God constitutes the continuity of the real individuality of man and holds man eternal and harmonious in existence and function. Overcoming the false claims of mortal sense by faithfully responding to the demands of Christ, Truth, every individual may feel divinity's embrace and prove for himself that he is the beloved son of God, spiritual, substantial, secure.

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