

# A MATTER OF EVIDENCE

BY LYNN JACKSON

**THE SUN** doesn't touch the earth at its horizon. Two parallel roads don't really converge into one. What appears as an oasis in the desert is actually a mirage.

These are all familiar examples of the evidence we see with our eyes that we know are only illusions. Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered Christian Science, explained it like this: "The optical focus is another proof of the illusion of material sense. On the eye's retina, sky and tree-tops apparently join hands, clouds and ocean meet and mingle. The barometer,—that little prophet of storm and sunshine, denying the testimony of the senses,—points to fair weather in the midst of murky clouds and drenching rain. Experience is full of instances of similar illusions, which every thinker can recall for himself" (*Science and Health*, p. 122).

Is it possible, then, to be fooled by something we might consider to be more substantial—like our own physical body? Does matter, or the body, ever fool us? Is it, too, subject to illusions? Through my own study and practice of Christian Science, I've learned that the physical body, itself, is indeed very much illusory. However, through spiritual understanding, we can discover how the material senses are not trustworthy. We can find the strength to confront material disturbance through prayer, and see that transformation and healing are inevitable. As we embrace spiritual truth in thought, our experience changes for the better.

In learning to understand how the material senses fool us, I often think back on a magnificent outdoor show I saw at Disneyland about ten years ago. Projectors were aimed at a two-story film of water, which served as a screen in the sky. Images of dragons, witches, and other scary faces appeared to move and jump out of nowhere—and yet my family and I were so close to the water screen that we could put our hands straight through it and dissolve the images in an instant. This served as a clear indication of how they were simply illusory.

This is similar to how the material senses, through our body, fool us. The body becomes the screen upon which these senses attempt to find substance. And yet, disease, hatred, lust, anger, are simply projections of mortal thought, having no more substance to them than that hologram in the sky. Mrs. Eddy wrote concerning physical disease, "Disease being a belief, a latent illusion of mortal mind, the sensation would not appear if the error of belief was met and destroyed by truth" (*Science and Health*, p. 168). Christian Science explains that disease is always an erroneous projection of thought, masquerading as reality. If we believe this projection, this illusion, we may be fooled into thinking it is real and tangible. Spiritual truth has the power to show



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CHRIS JACKSON

that the illusion is no more tangible than the screen of water projecting the vivid scenes of dragons and witches.

In facing any evil as illusion, it's vital to focus our thoughts on reality, on truth. And the only place we can find reality is in Spirit, God. Looking away from the physical manifestation to the spiritual fact, we find the true facts about our health and immortality. This doesn't mean ignoring practical needs—far from it. But it does mean refusing to allow ourselves to be fooled by an illusion. And it's as we discipline our thought to look for God's reality that we find our consciousness renewed, which then results in physical healing.

Mrs. Eddy's statement from *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896* has often encouraged my prayers: "No evidence before the material senses can close my eyes to the scientific proof that God, good, is supreme" (p. 277). That strengthens me because I realize that nothing I'm facing—no matter how threatening, ugly, or seemingly permanent—can prevent me from seeing that God is supreme. *Nothing!* I can be confident that God is right here, and that right now His power is permanent and active. Right here and now I can be acutely aware that God is being God—under all circumstances, under all conditions. Spiritually understanding this gives the needed strength to rise up against the errors of sense and see them destroyed.

Once again, healing—the scientific proof that good is supreme—comes when we shift thought from a material to a spiritual basis. I've seen this evident in healings of broken bones, functional disorders, intense fear, excruciating pain, accidents, contagion, infections, and many other conditions.

One healing I had a few years ago often reminds me to keep my thought on what is real and God-sourced, rather than what the material senses indicate. Our daughter's school reported a number of cases of conjunctivitis (pinkeye). When our daughter contracted these symptoms, she was quickly healed. Then a few weeks later, I found myself with the same symptoms. However, they seemed to hit me particularly hard, and I found I couldn't use one eye at all. In fact, I was not comfortable at any time unless I simply sat in a chair, in a dim room, most of the day.

Each time I had to look in the mirror, the condition jumped out at me, and all I could think of was how awful I felt and looked. My physical condition seemed to be getting worse and worse. Naturally, I had been praying, but it was difficult to keep my thought focused on what I knew to be spiritually true through the teachings of Christian Science, and away from the curve balls that the five senses were throwing at me. Because I

felt completely incapacitated, my thoughts just went in circles about the situation rather than rising above it.

Then one day I realized just how important it was for me to look away from the physical condition completely and focus exclusively on what God was telling me about my health and perfection as His child. Each time I had to be in front of a mirror, I reminded myself that the spiritual evidence of my perfection was found in spiritual understanding, and that evidence of my God-given health and wholeness had to be made manifest in my physical appearance. I prayed to feel the presence and power of God right where the material evidence was screaming discomfort, disease, and ugliness.

The better I got at keeping my thought uplifted by spiritual truth, the more comfortable I became. Along with this mental turnaround, the symptoms of pinkeye faded away quickly and completely.

However, it's important not to judge spiritual healing in terms of an immediate change in physical evidence. Perhaps we've prayed and prayed, and felt we've made progress in spiritual understanding, and yet there is still no physical change. At such times, it's helpful to consider statements such as this: "When the illusion of sickness or sin tempts you, cling steadfastly to God and His idea" (*Science and Health*, p. 495). It's vital to know that divine Mind is *always* speaking to us, and that *nothing* can hinder us from hearing God's voice. Because God is always with us, we can insist on feeling His presence, and know that harmony will result. When we cease to fear discord, we feel the calm, ever-presence of God, of good. Then the physical picture has no choice but to change correspondingly—and we can be confident that it certainly will!

So, if disease or some other difficulty should try to parade before you, remember that your thought is governed only by divine Mind, not by matter. Getting to the root of the difficulty mentally, within the precincts of your own consciousness, will change the outward picture as well—because the law of God, good, governs all, including what appears to be material evidence. The final word about your health, wealth, and happiness isn't determined by the material senses. The only reality is your perfection, wholeness, completeness, oneness with God.

Our substance is purely spiritual—in fact, it has never been touched by materiality. And our spiritual understanding is always adequate for us to meet every circumstance with confidence and an expectation of healing. |css

Lynn Jackson is a Christian Science teacher and practitioner in Lubbock, Texas.