

Clearview Home talk 2024

Written by Marilyn Armbruster, C.S. read by Barb Zanoni, Board member

You are listening today because you love God and know that He loves you. Love for God enables the giver to give, unselfs and enables one to truly mean “I can of mine own self do nothing”. The care is from God because God is love, and we reflect through our witnessing that love. Putting God and His love for man first is what makes us care. It’s not about us, but God’s care for All, and we reflect that love for all.

I would like to start with a quote from our Leader:

We come today “to strengthen and perpetuate our organizations and institutions; and to find strength in union, — strength to build up, through God’s right hand, that pure and undefiled religion whose Science demonstrates God and the perfectibility of man. This purpose is immense, and it must begin with individual growth, a “consummation devoutly to be wished.” (Mis. p. 98: 5-7(to.), 12-13,16-1)

As workers in the caregiving and nursing field we are called not to be moved by the world. For our God is with us and before us.

I like to think about the 5 love languages spoken in today’s vernacular and often used to receive and express love and giving sometimes between spouses and partners. But I think that each of them added together synergizes into the role of caregiving, nursing, and all church work. They are

- acts of service,
- quality time,
- words of affirmation,
- physical touch, and
- receiving gifts.

The “receiving gifts” can be confusing, but what is meant is a thoughtful gift not necessarily a materialistic one, but folks who resonate with this see that gifts symbolize love and care; it’s the thoughtfulness expressed in even the small tasks. Kind of like the cream puffs that Clearview’s chef makes for us year after year at these annual meetings.

From No and Yes: “Christian Science involves a new language, and a higher demonstration of medicine and religion. It is the ‘new tongue’ of Truth, having its best interpretation in the power of Christianity to heal.” (No. 44:4-5)

When I think about the ways to love and be loved in various love languages, I also remember an article entitled *Reformers in Miscellaneous Writings* where our Leader wrote:

“What has not unselfed love achieved for the race? Who should care for everybody? It is enough, say they, to care for a few. Yet the good done, and the love that foresees more to do, stimulate philanthropy and are an ever-present reward. Let one’s life answer well these

Clearview Home talk 2024

questions, and it already hath a benediction: Have you renounced self? Are you faithful? Do you love?" (Mis. 237:1; 238:7–10,16-23)

So, when one has much courage to give daily and is brave like many Christian Science Nurses, who take up the cross daily—they are truly philanthropists. The ultimate in unselfishly caring for others.

We all know someone who makes us instantly smile when they are near, a sunny individual who feels joy and wants to share that joy, someone who has that special quality that makes them truly shine. What is it about that person that draws us to them? What is it that makes us want to be near them?

Often, it all comes down to their selfless care for others and you can't help but see and feel the warmth from the Christ light that is reflected; it is bright and shiny. We are naturally drawn to people who make us feel genuinely comforted. Caring for others can come in so many different forms, such as listening, displaying kindness towards others, being sensitive to other's feelings, showing compassion to those less fortunate, being at the bedside of a dear one, sharing meals with others, using manners, and forgiving someone who has done wrong.

John reminds us of the blessings of giving: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (I John 4:16)

Love is, not just one of the names of God, nor the only name for God, but Love is the all-in-all of God. Love is tender, long-suffering, patient, forbearing, compassionate, optimistic, hopeful, believing, faithful, constant, honest, and truthful. Divine Love multiplies Her riches by abundantly pouring them out over Her children.

Whether we are volunteering or even expressing compassion towards a friend who's going through a tough time, caring for others gives us the opportunity to make a positive difference. Staying close to God, having a God-centered view is the source of our ability to be caring. And we are directed to do this just as Jesus did by sticking to and beholding a spiritual sense of others.

The Bible is full of examples about caring for those who cannot care for themselves. Those in need are usually described as "sojourners," the "fatherless," and the "widows." The Hebrew word for "widow" means "unable to speak." Essentially, "widows" in Biblical times were those who had no power or an advocate (husband or father) to protect them. How does this apply to Western culture? The underlying moral idea is that we care for those who have no voice or have lost the ability to defend themselves - being their true advocate. An example of this comes from Deuteronomy, where we are reminded that "the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, ... shall come and

Clearview Home talk 2024

shall eat and be filled, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.” (Deut. 14:29 (English Standard Version))

There is no greater example than that of Jesus Christ. His ministry saw the healing of the diseased and the restoration of the broken. He felt compassion when he could have expressed condemnation, and He showed mercy when He could have shown judgment. He demonstrated to His disciples the importance of having a servant’s heart. “No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends.” (John 15:13 NIRV). A caregiver gives his or her time, energy, and love every day. The attributes of Christ — mercy, compassion, self-immolation — are all critical to caregiving. As we strive to live up to his example, we can always remember that caregivers aren’t just doing good work—they are doing God’s work.

There are very few options sometimes, for those who need care, as the availability of Christian Science nurses may ebb and flow, and often even medical caregivers are also feeling the shortage. Even on those toughest days, possibly full of much care, and we feel spent, there is an uplifting—a searching, a seeking and finding “with the angels singing” (Hymn 207) - that tells us we are never alone! There were many sleepless nights and days when I cared for 2 people for 22 years in our home and had little time off. I often felt the Shepherd walking beside me giving directions, always listening and giving me the strength to go forward. From Hymn 304:

“I will listen for Thy voice,
Lest my footsteps stray;
I will follow and rejoice
All the rugged way. “

Demonstrating the qualities and skills needed when caring for others takes practice and devotion. How can we NOT care—when God loves us so very much, guides our careers, comforts, constantly provides for our every need and heals us. We are told to love our neighbor as ourselves-that’s caring but making it practical requires more.

So how can you start your caregiving journey?

By accepting the challenge to be caring--- possibly your branch church no longer has a care committee, and even if they do, it may be up to the members to fill in or help with that role should there be a need. There is so much one member can do for another, or for their family members; bring over or send home with the member something homemade, give them a subscription to a periodical they don’t have, a group could hire a housecleaner to help in some way, help with their children by taking them on an outing like the zoo, lend them care equipment you may have that you are not using, and you can start a sign-up sheet and rotate providing dinners. There are so many ways, I know you understand.

As a young child I had a couple of examples of being cared for that stand out to me. When I was in 4th grade, I had a significant healing after a glass shampoo bottle broke and my ankle was

Clearview Home talk 2024

deeply cut. A visiting Christian Science Nurse came and bandaged my ankle. She gave me specific instructions (no peeking) and I obeyed. It healed faster than my neighbor friend who had a similar cut on her arm the week before and had stitches. She begged me to show mine, but I never did. What a great comfort that was!

Another big healing came when I was in 6th grade with some stomach belief which made it difficult to go to school. While mom was at work, I was required to read the Bible Lesson and call a Christian Science practitioner and tell her what I gleaned from its reading each day. I was soon healed and knew I wanted someday to help others in prayer and be a Christian Science practitioner.

I was able to care for my mother from the time I was in graduate school until her 99th birthday! It was not always easy working with different care situations and in her later years there were several challenges brought on by family members. During one difficult time, mom was transferred to a Christian Science nursing facility and received much better care when she arrived there from a private care situation. As I witnessed the loving care she received from the Christian Science nurses, every trace of bed sores was healed and vanished right before my eyes. This is what Christian Science nurses, and our Christian Science nursing facilities do! She asked for and had Christian Science care her whole life, what a joy it was to be able to support her desire.

No matter the situation you're in in your life, somehow, God is reaching out to you to create good in your life, so that you can give good to others. Like the hymn "Satisfied" which I work with so much. "It matters not what be thy lot so Love doth guide. . ." Hymn 160. I feel that hymn is a surrendering to God, like most of Mary Baker Eddy's poems.

Another way to grow our caring qualities is to make time to develop our spiritual sense. Being alert to and willing to give up a *false sense* of self. The glory of Christian cross-bearing is that we can first recognize and then progressively leave behind this fallible sense of things.

Worldly selfhood may often claim that grace is far from ours. However, each time we see spiritual worth in a contentious friend, patient or relative, and see it as a challenge to be even more caring and compassionate, we discover opportunities to see grace where adversity appears. Keeping one's focus on God as the center and circumference of being is necessary for the caregiver, and that reflection of light is felt by the one receiving care. A reciprocal blessing indeed!

Mary Baker Eddy shares her motive for caring for others in *Retrospection and Introspection*: "The motive of my earliest labors has never changed. It was to relieve the sufferings of humanity . . ." (Ret 30:7; 31:2)

Clearview Home talk 2024

There is a marginal heading in *Science and Health* called “Aids in sickness” and it includes the following: “The nurse should be cheerful, orderly, punctual, patient, full of faith, — receptive to Truth and Love.” (SH 395:15)

After a loved one experienced a belief of stroke, I never doubted, despite the doctors’ predictions that they would not walk, talk, or see. I quickly acknowledged that all ability is from God, and those lies did not define my loved one. All the predictions were overcome.

How important it is for us to see through any belief of a chronic condition, whether it is a visitor to our services, a family member, a church member, or a patient. We can embrace them mentally with the love of Christ.

The last quality in the “Aids in sickness” paragraph is to be “full of faith—receptive to Truth and Love”. This was again evident after our loved one experienced another stroke and it appeared they had passed away as the paramedics had difficulty resuscitating them. However, life did return shortly, thanks to praying with another of Mary Baker Eddy’s poems: “Love alone is Life” and the realization that the individual was right at that moment “a gentle beam of living Love, And deathless Life!” The poem goes on to affirm that we can expect the individual to be an idea of “Truth infinite, — so far above All mortal strife, Or cruel creed, or earth-born taint: Fill us today With all thou art — be thou our saint, Our stay, always.” (Poems 29:15–22)

After this we had to do a lot of rearranging of daily activities and schedules, but it was done with love and everyone was blessed.

Recently a passing billboard said **“It’s a purpose not a job. Caregivers needed”**. So, even a billboard gives expression to caregiving as a calling, a mission, ministry, and a purpose. Aren’t we all caregivers? We can’t help but be caring!

Caregiving is similar to the concept of “stewardship” in the Bible. In a recent Bible Lens, we were told: “In ancient times, stewards held significant positions over seeing their master’s business and goods. Since early Christians view their community as a household, (see Galatians 6:10 Ephesians 2:19) the steward metaphor calls on believers to act as trustees, generously sharing their God-given gifts with one another.” Let us each be great stewards—being oh so generous with our gifts of care and giving. The reward is the realization and understanding that giving to others really is a gift.

I think caregivers need to be (and I’ll use a line from a movie) “wiser than Solomon, stronger than Samson and often more patient than Job!” It was a toast in a movie when a man who was toasting his wife said she must be all those things because she was married to him, but I think it applies quite well to anyone who is caring for another. We need wisdom to discern what is a real need, mental strength so as not to be taken in by the human picture, and patience with another’s fear.

Clearview Home talk 2024

How can we forget the very practical instruction from Mrs. Eddy in *Science and Health*? “The tender word and Christian encouragement of an invalid, pitiful patience with his fears and the removal of them, are better than hecatombs of gushing theories, stereotyped borrowed speeches, and the doling of arguments, which are but so many parodies on legitimate Christian Science, aflame with divine Love.” (SH 366:30)

From the *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 553

Our desire to heed God’s calling
Lifts us to a new design,
Outlined by pure inspiration,
Rendered in Love’s graceful line.

When our own plans seem to crumble
Incomplete or ill-defined,
Let us turn to God’s creation,
Always perfectly aligned.

With the model right before us,
Perfect God and perfect man,
Let God’s wholeness reign within us,
Let Mind’s will perfect our plan.

Far beyond the bounds of matter,
Unrestrained by fear or time,
All our plans unfold together
In Soul’s harmony and rhyme.

I leaned heavily on this hymn when it was necessary to be an advocate for a family member who ended up in a hospital intensive care unit. One of the medical nurses put something in their eyes, then later an intern looked in on the patient and panicked but would not say why. Next thing we knew, a nurse said they were prepping for an operation. When I asked why, we were told they had to relieve pressure on the brain. So, they were going to operate and place a hole in the skull to relieve that pressure. I said I must speak with the intern. I told him “No way would that happen”. He tried to explain why it was necessary and it came to me to share with him that a nurse placed a drug in the patient’s eyes. He said no I was incorrect and that the nurse was told to admit the drug into the patient’s mouth. I continued to declare that that was not what happened and soon overheard the two discussing the mistake. Later another doctor came to the room and was planning to administer other medical drops into the eyes. I requested that they leave the patient alone and let their eyes return by a normal process. Within minutes the eyes became normal, much to their amazement. It was not easy being a fierce advocate in that caregiving setting, but I was intently listening to divine Mind.

Clearview Home talk 2024

Leaning on “the sustaining infinite” with the truth that God, Mind **only** is in control, even medical mistakes can be corrected and avoided. Our family member was released from the ICU the following day.

Mary Baker Eddy instructs us to know: “No mortal mind has the might or right or wisdom to create or to destroy. All is under the control of the one Mind, even God.” (SH 544:14–19)

Even after discharge from the hospital, family members may still require our prayers and support. How can we support them? Just as Christian Science nurses do, by witnessing to God’s complete perfection right where the appearance of a sick mortal appears the most aggressive. The recognition that Life, Truth, Love, Soul, Spirit, Mind, and Principle are present, before, during, and after any situation, will continue to lift up the patient, creating a spiritually supportive atmosphere for healing and inspiration.

Oh, you will be pleasantly surprised at the results from such prayers. Diagnoses are reversed, predictions of worse case scenarios changed, experimental procedures halted, hospital stays are shorter, bones get set by mental not physical means, and even death is avoided. What cannot God do? Even if sent to rehab after the hospital stay, there are ways to work through that too, and return to the peace of a home setting.

Often our non-Christian Science relations are blessed when exposed to Christian Science healing. When our daughter was 6 or 7 her grandmother (my mother-in-law) was in the hospital. My mother-in-law was deeply concerned because she was told it would be her “last night on earth” and things looked so bleak to her. My daughter and I went to visit and brought a big bouquet of flowers to cheer her up. Shortly after arriving our daughter asked for the enclosure card. She proceeded to write on that card the Daily Prayer—not understanding her grandmother who had much contempt for Christian Science teachings—my not even accept such a prayer. But my daughter innocently read it to her grandmother explaining that “reign” was not the rain from the sky but that she was ruled and looked over in God’s Kingdom because He was the King, and she was His daughter. Pointing out that it’s even in our name “Oehler**KING**” —her father’s surname. She then reminded her grandmother that they both are His princesses, and they would play “Pretty, Pretty Princess” when she gets out of the hospital.

I did not know our daughter knew that prayer so very well, but we had talked about the word R-E-I-G-N and what it meant. She also had a plaque with the Daily Prayer in her bedroom and had memorized it all on her own. Her grandmother did not pass on that night after all. She was then able to celebrate, at their home, her 50th wedding anniversary, something she badly wanted, and our daughter did later play the Princess game with her. Love was there and lifted her up even though her minister had given her last rites.

Clearview Home talk 2024

In *Retrospection and Introspection*, Mary Baker Eddy shares a poem from A.E. Hamilton:

Ask God to give thee skill
In comfort's art:
That thou may'st consecrated be
And set apart
Unto a life of sympathy.
For heavy is the weight of ill
In every heart;
And comforters are needed much
Of Christlike touch.
—A. E. Hamilton (Ret. 95:4-13)

Margaret Rogers's article called *Power of Asking*, from Christian Science Sentinel of 11/20/2017, references this poem when she talks about caregiving:

"It's hard to think of a more needed skill than the art of truly comforting others. And it's comforting in itself, that we can ask the infinite source of comfort for that skill. ...

The power of asking is completed by thanking the Giver of all good. Gratitude itself is a powerful comforter. We keep it lively with humble, persistent acknowledgment of every evidence of honesty, kindness, beauty. Giving thanks daily draws us closer to recognizing Love and its manifestation as all that is real."

The Manual By-law for the Christian Science nurse is located in the section on Discipline under Guidance for Members. As I read through the by-law, let's think about all the qualities and examples I've shared today. The Manual By-law is a call for all Mother Church members to express caregiving qualities to each other without fail.

"Christian Science Nurse. Sect. 31. A member of The Mother Church who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, who thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room, and who can take proper care of the sick.

The cards of such persons may be inserted in *The Christian Science Journal* under rules established by the publishers." (Manual of The Mother Church, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 49:7–16)

In conclusion:

We are all being called to give, just open your heart filled with love, and apply the qualities of love and brotherhood. If a young child can, so can we all! Thank you, givers, of so much good from the One Source-God-and thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift of CARE!

Clearview Home talk 2024

From Ezekiel:

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up *that which was broken*, and will strengthen that which was sick: . . .

Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God *am* with them, and *that* they, *even* the house of Israel, *are* my people, saith the Lord GOD. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, *are* men, *and I am* your God, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 34:16, 28, 30, 31)

And from II Corinthians:

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work: (II Corinthians 9:7, 8)

You are so VERY MUCH needed and cherished.