

— A CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PERSPECTIVE —

## Live to give

On Giving Tuesday, a global generosity movement, this article highlights our innate ability to express selflessness and love toward others – and the blessings that doing so brings to all involved.

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“**W**hatever blesses one blesses all” is a core idea I’ve learned from my study of Christian Science. It’s an encouraging thought, because it points to an all-encompassing love – no one left out. But what is its basis, and how can we prove it?

To begin with, this thought is part of a statement in the textbook of Christian Science, “Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures” by Mary Baker Eddy. The full sentence says, “In the scientific relation of God to man, we find that whatever blesses one blesses all, as Jesus showed with the loaves and the fishes, – Spirit, not matter, being the source of supply” (p. 206).

Its basis, therefore, is the precious relation of God to His creation, man (a term that includes all of us). In the Bible, we learn that we are made in the image and likeness of God, and that everything God made is good (see Genesis 1:26, 27, 31). This is God's law, God's blessing on all of us. We are actually imbued with the ability to express God's goodness. We are each made to express love to one another, to give happiness to others – or, you could say, to live to give!

This is seen so clearly in the healings and life transformations of individuals resulting from the way Christ Jesus lived, so completely at one with God. And it was reflected in his counsel to his followers to do likewise: “Love one another; as I have loved you, ... love one another” (John 13:34). But how many of us go through our day with this as the primary goal in mind? Do we not, rather, often focus on our own mental list of what we need to make ourselves happy?

I've found that when we consider the spiritual foundation of living to give – that we are one with God, created to reflect toward others the overflowing goodness that God expresses in us – we're empowered to give more freely. Not just to be polite and kind to others, but also to sacrifice our own wants and needs for the benefit of others.

That's not always so easy to do. But letting the unselfish goodness that comes from God animate us is truly satisfying. Jesus said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). That sounds to me like “Whatever blesses one blesses all.”

When my children were in their teens, my mother became ill and asked if we could move in with her, across the country, to care for her. My husband and I both had established careers where we lived, but as radical a change as the move would be, as we prayed for guidance, we decided to do it. My mother had given so much to everyone, including us, her whole life, and it seemed clear that to give back in this way was the right thing to do.

In some ways, it didn't go very well at first. I missed the meaningful job I'd had in the education field, and my son ended up going to school far away, so I'd lost the opportunity to be with him. Nonetheless, when I humbly turned to God for comfort and guidance, I stopped focusing on what I didn't have and felt a calm trust that there was more than enough divine good to go around for *all* involved. Because we're made to bless others, and God's love is infinite and universal, we can't truly lose out on goodness in the process of reflecting it toward others. Rather, we *gain* as we grow in our understanding of God's all-encompassing blessings, which reward obedience to the divine commandment to love.

That's what happened in my family's case. In time, my mother experienced a complete healing through Christian Science, so much so that she took on a new position that had her traveling all over the world. My son and daughter ended up leading very happy and productive lives. Based on the work my husband was doing because we had moved, he was offered a fulfilling job abroad, where I also had meaningful and expansive opportunities to work in education. And the blessings continued, too.

What I most value about this experience is the knowledge I gained that we can always trust God. When we strive to love others selflessly, even when it seems like a sacrifice, all involved are blessed. That realization is a humble but powerful lesson that I will never forget, and that we can all experience.

*Some more great ideas! To read or share an article for teenagers on how identifying ourselves as God's children frees us from limiting labels titled "If you feel like a victim," please click through to the TeenConnect section of [www.JSH-Online.com](http://www.JSH-Online.com). There is no paywall for this content.*