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## DON'T GET STUCK IN BREAKING NEWS

**HAVE YOU EVER WATCHED** a television news story and noticed how it airs over and over? Such “breaking news” is repeated so often and so dramatically that viewers sometimes get fixated on the television, waiting for more information.

I have to ask, Isn't there something else going on? Isn't there more to this story than repeating and repeating news of disaster? Of course. No matter what the tragedy, almost instantly people begin to help one another. These are natural human responses to an emergency. And prayer can also be a natural response—reaching out to a higher power for support, for strength, for help in time of need. It's a way to love our neighbors as ourselves, even in situations where we can't actually lend a hand. God loves us, and by helping neighbors—even those we don't know personally—we are expressing His love to others.

I remember the first time I experienced the results of this type of thinking. While I was walking along a busy street, an ambulance rushed by with lights flashing and siren blaring. My first thought was that someone was hurt, but I immediately turned to God in prayer to gain a higher, spiritual view. It became clear that the siren and vehicle were signs of help, of care for one another, and that none of us is ever outside of God's love for His children.

Instead of becoming fixed on the picture of breaking news, I acknowledged God's care reaching and touching everyone. We can all witness this love and its transforming power. It is this same power that impels us to care for our neighbor in distress.

One Sunday, just minutes after a church service, I was talking to a friend outside church. We both heard a loud crash that sounded like cars colliding. We felt we must immediately go help. My friend said, “Wait! God is in control . . . there are no accidents in His kingdom, and that's where we all are.”

Then we went quickly to the street where the crash had taken place. A man had turned the corner in front of another car, and the cars collided. No one was harmed. While we were all waiting for the police, we shared some ice water and were also able to praise God for His presence at that moment in that place.

This same approach—“God is right here”—will also help us resist the mesmeric effect of breaking news, even when it is

about a major event. Instead of letting fears and concerns pile up, I find that the real need is to turn to God—to see what He is seeing. Understanding the nature of God helps us understand the spiritual nature of His creation, which is indestructible. In this way, we begin to exchange the view presented by breaking news for God's view.

This method of prayer is illustrated in detail in the book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy. In the first chapter, “Prayer,” she wrote, “The prayer that reforms the sinner and heals the sick is an absolute faith that all things are possible to God,—a spiritual understanding of Him, an unselfed love” (p. 1). These three ingredients lead us to prayer that breaks the grip of breaking news: absolute faith, understanding God's nature, and getting self out of the way.

Rather than being a burden, such prayer grows out of the spiritual fact that God is Love, and that we are meant to express His infinite care. All-powerful Love brings safety, peace, and security. If Love is everywhere and cannot be overpowered, can you or I be overwhelmed? If Love is never fatigued, worn out, or depleted, can you or I be exhausted? If Love is self-regenerating strength and supply, can you or I be weak or lacking anything needful?

According to Christian Science, Jesus saw this Christ-truth about those who came to him for healing and help. He realized their spiritual nature was never touched by sin, sickness, or even death. The Christ-message is able to cut through the repetition of breaking news. By listening to it, and changing our view, we're responding to guidance given in the Bible that we are to “pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17). That prayer can include the insistence that each of us is God's creation, perfect, indestructible, and complete—spiritual, not material. This last point is one people often find difficult to accept, but it is the key not just to improving our own lives but also to helping others.

Love is eternal; Spirit is indestructible; Truth is ultimate reality. These are the spiritual facts we can stand on, regardless of what the news media report. By understanding our true selfhood, we are able to see ourselves and our neighbors as God sees us. And this is active prayer that heals. icss

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