

## **It's time to elevate the human race**

There is a crying need for all of us to get to know and truly value men and women of all races as our brothers and sisters in God's family, in order to heal the wounds of injustice. Each of us is capable of expressing God's universal, healing love through active compassion and caring.

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**By Barbara Vining**

Important strides have been made toward improving race relations in the United States in the 50-plus years since the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. And there is certainly cause to celebrate progress made in appreciating cultural differences and diversity. But it is sadly obvious that deeply held negative feelings still divide the races. One only has to consider the frequent violence erupting between law enforcement and the black community to realize that the time has come to elevate the human race above the ignorance, injustice, fear, and hatred perpetuated by the long-held belief that we are inherently divided by skin color.

There is something each of us can do – individually, and collectively – by making a decision today that Dr. King, a deeply Christian man, made. He said: “I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

Hatred springs from ignorance of those we don't truly know, fear that arises from the unknown, and injustices that have been perpetrated on innocent people. These can be burdens indeed. So, it's time to “stick with love” – with the courage to have our ignorance, our unjust thoughts and actions, and our fears uncovered and overcome by divine Love, which forgives and heals. In doing so, we can do our part in helping to lift racial prejudice.

The Jan. 10, 1901, issue of the Christian Science Sentinel published an article regarding the building of a monument to the Jewish philanthropists Baron and Baroness de Hirsch “in commemoration of the eradication of racial prejudice.” It contained a letter by Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer of Christian Science, that was later published in her book “The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany.” In it she said, “Love for mankind is the elevator of the human race; it demonstrates Truth and reflects divine Love” (p. 288).

“Love for mankind.” That's where we need to start. This involves demonstrating Truth and reflecting divine Love, which is spiritual and universal – so it's much more than a

human emotion. It means elevating our thoughts above defining one another by physical characteristics, and realizing instead that we have one common creator: God, divine Truth and Love, who created us as His spiritual image – one race, that has nothing to do with skin color or human heritage.

This is where we begin to truly know one another. But this understanding also needs to be made practical. And the first step in healing racial divides is to care enough for one another to recognize the challenges and mental wounds that have built up through time, and that pose as barriers to overcoming fears, misconceptions, and injustices. There is a crying need for all of us to get to know and truly value our brothers and sisters of all colors – both spiritually and humanly – and to heal the wounds of injustice through the love that reflects the unchanging love of God.

If progress in elevating humanity seems exceedingly slow, we can take heart from this statement from Mrs. Eddy: “An improved belief is one step out of error, and aids in taking the next step and in understanding the situation in Christian Science” (“Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures,” p. 296). The situation is understood in Christian Science in proportion as we learn, through step-by-step Christly caring, how to love and value each person as a member of God’s universal family.

Christian Science places the responsibility on all who study it to put into action what they are learning about the universal truth of man and woman made in God’s likeness. We need to let divine Truth inform us that as children of one common Parent, divine Love, we share inherent goodness and purity with all. We need to open our hearts to understand what needs healing in others’ hearts and minds – and to let divine Love move us to repent of unjust thoughts and actions, remove our ignorance and fears, reform our own hearts and minds, and lead us to dialogue and actions that heal. This humble approach is a living prayer that reflects the love that “worketh no ill to his neighbour” and is “the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10).

All humanity is in need of being elevated to that love for others that demonstrates Truth, is just toward everyone, reflects God’s pure love, and brings healing to hearts. In proportion as this is done – through genuine caring and active compassion – the elevation of the human race beyond racial division and strife is accelerated.

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