

Canterbury Crest 2013 Annual Meeting Inspirational Address

Lions and Tigers and Bears? One Mind!

By Cindy Clague, C.S.B. of Eugene, OR

Imagine you're out in the Oregon woods and you hear a bear's growl. What do you think that sounds like? Well, that's what a beloved Christian Science practitioner did one night when she got up after hearing a noise in her dark Portland home. She had gone to bed early, but when she heard this noise, she got up without turning on lights and saw a man in her living room. She didn't know if he saw her, but the first thing that came to her mind to do, was to growl like a bear. So she did! And the man hightailed it out of her home.

Why did she growl? She remembered hearing that sound in the Canadian woods as a small girl picking wild berries. When she heard it, she ran home as fast as she could. Her dad laughed when she told the story—he knew she had happened upon hidden moonshine-makers who chased her away with their fake growls.

When feeling afraid, there's nothing like a roar or two to help you take control. Remember in the classic movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, when the three characters are walking through a dark forest and start to be scared? They begin to chant, "Lions and Tigers and Bears, OH MY!" in increasing tempo and crescendo. Well, no surprise, before long a lion leaps out at them. But little Dorothy rises to the occasion and roars back at the lion, "Shame on you!" The lion ends up crumpling before her bravado. No longer scary, the lion joins them in their quest, himself seeking more courage.

In the Bible, lions are often used as symbols for things that frighten us. But the Bible also holds reassurance that even a lion is not as powerful as man under God's protection. The 91st Psalm promises that those who dwell with the Most High will have dominion over fear—they will tread on lions and dragons.

What does this have to do with our nursing service? Along with a good roar or two, the tender provision for Christian Science nursing helps us face some of the biggest fears we may encounter in our Christian experience. When a disease threatens, "nursing qualities," as Mary Baker Eddy identifies them in *Science and Health*, are invaluable companions. And they aren't just for those wonderful beings who make nursing their profession. They are for everyone to express.

Our Leader first identifies qualities that do not help us face fears: “An ill-tempered, complaining, or deceitful person should not be a nurse.” Mary Baker, in her younger years, was an invalid and knew how a harsh word or rough and thoughtless action made fear and suffering worse. Snarling at a patient or oneself is never the right approach. And she also understood how helpful and healing the true nursing qualities were. She listed them: “The nurse should be cheerful, orderly, punctual, patient, full of faith, — receptive to Truth and Love.” (S&H 395:17-20)

The Bible describes two kinds of fear—an aggressive, sudden danger, or the slinking, lurking undertow of worry and anxiousness. In order to walk fearlessly through the forest and to practice the healing gift and nursing arts of the Science of Christianity, we need to know the source of our dominion over these critters. To be fearless is to have the life of joy and freedom that God intends for us.

A few years ago our family went camping in the Redwoods. We went hiking and found amongst those big trees signs warning that this was cougar country. They advised hikers of four things they could do if they were confronted by a mountain lion:

First: Stand your ground, don't run and don't turn your back. A cougar will instinctively chase someone who runs.

Second: Speak firmly to the lion and back slowly away.

Third: Make yourself as large as possible. Rolling up in a ball or covering your head, encourages a lion to attack because it thinks you are vulnerable.

Fourth: Find a weapon, and fight back if needed.

I have thought about all these instructions in relation to fear, either sudden fear or those creeping fears that slink under the surface. So, let's look at these four points and also the nursing qualities that help overcome fear.

Stand your ground: Apparently, running from a lion isn't the way to escape from it. The same is true of fear. Fear needs to be faced and dealt with and the best time to stand and face a fear is the *first* time we encounter it. Punctuality is a nursing quality that helps us put fear to rest most quickly. Christian Science teaches us how to promptly address fear. Our textbook says, “To decide *quickly* as to the proper treatment of error — whether error is manifested in forms of sickness, sin, or death — is the first step towards destroying error.” (S&H 463:21)

Now, punctuality means not only promptness, but doing the right thing at the proper point in time. Jesus taught that the proper time to deal with a fear is now. Paul discovered that we all have the same Mind that was in Christ Jesus. Like our genteel, gray-haired practitioner who growled at the prowler, we have ready access to that one Mind at exactly the point when we need it. We read in our textbook that, as lone humans, “We may well be perplexed at human fear,” but then it asks, “But why should we stand aghast at nothingness?” (*S&H* 563:4) So the first step in standing your ground with fear is to know its nothingness!

When that worried chant, “Lions and tigers and bears!” starts to magnify fears, remember to be punctual. Stand your ground right then. Like understanding that the moonshiner’s bear wasn’t real, we can see the same is true about anxiety’s growls. Promptly addressing fearful suggestions prevents them from growing. But even if they do, we can know that magnifying fear is really magnifying nothing. A giant zero is really no more powerful than a little one.

Our textbook tells us: “The physical effects of fear illustrate its illusion. Gazing at a chained lion, crouched for a spring, should not terrify a man...The body is affected only with the belief of disease produced by a so-called mind ignorant of the truth which chains disease. Nothing but the power of Truth can prevent the fear of error, and prove man's dominion over error.” (*S&H* 380:12-21)

I remember when I first learned the importance of promptly turning to face a fear. I was working in the Reading Room, when a sharp pain developed in my side. It seemed to get worse and worse. I had a very busy day with errands and appointments ahead. I thought, “When am I going to find time to pray about this? Maybe when I’ve picked the kids up and got them to their lessons, I can sit down and pray.” As I got home, the pain throbbed and then the thought occurred to me, “You can pray right now. You have five minutes before you pick up the kids.” I thought I needed a long prayer session to handle this big pain, but I could feel a mental shift as I realized I could stop running from it and turn around and face that fear and pain right now. So I did. I gave it my full prayerful attention and began by saying slowly with conviction, “I...am...spiritual.” With each word the pain began to drain away and by the end of that short prayer, I was completely free. The pain never returned.

Speak firmly to the lion and back away: There’s a story about a lion, a tiger, and a bear sitting on a hill. They were getting hungry. Below them, three hikers walked by, a Frenchman, an Italian, and a Czech. The bear said “I haven't had French food in a while.” So he ate the Frenchman. The lion said, “I'm hungry for Italian food.”

So he ate the Italian. The hungry tiger looked around and said “I guess it's my turn to spring for the Czech.” ☺

To hikers of all nationalities, the New Life Version of the Bible warns: “Keep awake! Watch at all times. The devil is ... walking around like a hungry lion with his mouth open. He is looking for someone to eat. Stand against him and be strong in your faith.” (1 Peter 5:8-10)

Maybe we aren't likely to encounter wild animals in everyday life—the Christian Science Monitor recently reported that there are only about 3000 tigers left in the wild. [But it said there ARE tigers in captivity--5000 in the state of Texas alone.] Still, we do sometimes encounter lionish and bearish thinking and acting. In circumstances or relationships, a sudden ambush, the swipe of a claw, or backbiting can come at us unexpectedly. We need to speak firmly to ourselves when we are tempted to be afraid at such encounters.

I love the bluntness of something Mary Baker Eddy writes in her autobiography. She says, “Science saith to fear, ‘... You do not exist, and have no right to exist, for perfect Love casteth out fear.’” (Ret. 61:13) Preaching that gospel in the face of every lion, tiger or bear helps them disappear.

The lions in the story of Daniel no doubt represent Daniel's envious, malicious co-workers who, when introduced to Daniel, might just as well have said, “Hello—pleased to eat you!” We may well encounter envy and hatred not unlike what Daniel faced. Under such circumstances, it is good to remember that lions only eat material flesh and bones. But the Daniel that showed up in the den was a spiritual idea. He was firm in asserting his innocence and theirs, and that left the lions with nothing to sink their teeth into.

The nursing quality most helpful, when it seems you are being thrown to the lions, is patience. “Be patient towards persecution,” our Leader tells us. “Injustice has not a tithe of the power of justice. Your enemies will advertise for you. ... Persecution is the weakness of tyrants engendered by their fear, and love will cast it out. Continue steadfast in love and good works.” (My. 191:4-9)

Patience is not a passive trait, as any nurse will report. The reason nurses can be so patient is their firm confidence in the reality of spiritual goodness and health. This patience is not a doubtful “let's wait and see” attitude, but a confident “let's see and wait” attitude—mentally speaking firmly to error while patiently trusting that the evidence of spiritual sense will prevail.

Make yourself as large as possible: A lion researcher writes about a pride of wild lions, “Male(s) who wish to take over a pride will challenge the male(s) in control. One form this takes is a 'stare-down', where two males will sit a few feet apart, face-to-face, and stare at each other. This can go on for many hours. The first one to break his stare is the 'loser'. Eventually, most *pride* stare-downs end in some form of physical confrontation.”

Isn't that the way with pride? Our textbook makes a similar point:

“An animal may infuriate another by looking it in the eye, and both will fight for nothing. A man's gaze, fastened fearlessly on a ferocious beast, often causes the beast to retreat in terror... By looking a tiger fearlessly in the eye, Sir Charles Napier sent it cowering back into the jungle... This latter occurrence represents the power of Truth over error, — the might of intelligence exercised over mortal beliefs to destroy them...” (*S&H* 378:4-21)

When we approach humanly fearsome circumstances like disease, we need to consciously choose our standpoint. If we come to our lion on the animal level, believing in the danger of disease, facing it with human pride or fear, we will find ourselves on the same level as the problem, involved in a staredown. But by approaching an issue as the expression of the one divine Mind, as immortal man, we have made ourselves as big as possible. *Science and Health* promises, “Mind alone enlarges and empowers man through its mandate,...” (*S&H* 199:9)

The giant Goliath was pretty big, and if you had a problem that had been taunting you for 40 days, you might be tempted to feel small, like Saul and his soldiers did. David, however, didn't buy the story. Goliath may have been big with muscle, armor, and attitude. But David made himself mentally much bigger as he prepared to defeat the giant.

David had the nursing quality of being full of faith.

Faith helped him remember past successes when he had bested a lion and a bear. Faith helped him estimate the challenge rightly and didn't let appearances intimidate him. He knew he had God's power to face the giant problem, and that was way more than the problem brought to the encounter. David did what he already knew how to do. Slingshotting a giant turned out to be little different than slingshotting a lion or a bear.

So if faced with disease symptoms, don't make yourself small in relation to them by repeating to yourself (like the "lions and tigers and bears" chant): "This disease is incurable... I know CS heals, but I'm just not equal to it... I don't have what it takes... My family is worried... I'm at the end of my rope... I've never healed anything this big before." Instead of coming with human pride and fear, face the challenge with faith in God's power. This makes you as large as can be. Then look these arguments in the eye like the expression of the one Mind and make them cower back into the jungle.

The rule of multiplication is the same whether it is 2x2 or 2 billion x 2 billion. You can have faith that you know how to apply the rule because you have proved it with smaller numbers. Just because there are a lot more zeros involved does not mean the problem is too big. Whatever we face, we are bigger than it is. Why? Because we are infinite manifestations of infinite Mind. You really can't get bigger than that. Faith allows us to remember what we know right when we need it—in the midst of mortal mind's growls and roars.

If ambushed, find a weapon and fight back: We can prevent fearful problems from growing by not running from them, by speaking firmly to them, and by making ourselves as large as possible. But what happens if we are ambushed and find something fearful upon us? Then grab a weapon and be ready to fight back. The Bible says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;..." (II Cor. 10:4, 5). It also mentions wielding the sword of the Spirit, identified as the Word of God.

This is why it is so important to do regular, orderly, systematic daily study of the Bible lesson. It means everything for our continued well-being. The nursing quality of order is like keeping a weapon at hand for just when we need it. When challenges come at us aggressively, we are ready to be just as assertive in using the Word of God against them as Jesus was. His humility swallowed fear's pride and "nothing-ized" it.

The word of God arms us with Moral courage. This is the quality that is able to make nothing of error. While a nurse is very orderly with the physical environment, it is the nurse's mental orderliness that cleans out fear and helps the patient begin to hear the still, small voice of healing.

Our textbook says, "The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind, 'as when a lion roareth.' It is heard in the desert and in dark places of fear." (*S&H 559: 10-12*)

We can turn the tables on fear and insist that the very qualities that most frighten us in a lion, tiger, or bear, are qualities we also possess. Thus, we refute the quick attack with our prompt denial, the pushy insistence with our firm understanding, the persistent accusations with our committed resolve. Whatever strengths we imagine a problem possesses, are even more our own qualifications, because our one divine Mind is the only real source of thought or action. Then a lion's roar of courage rises up within us.

“Moral courage is "the lion of the tribe of Juda," the king of the mental realm,” our textbook says. “Free and fearless it roams in the forest. Undisturbed it lies in the open field, ...” (*S&H* 514:10-14)

Mary Baker Eddy's student, Julia Bartlett, told a story of a traveling circus with a large menagerie of wild animals. Mrs Eddy asked if Julia would go with her to see it. When they got to the menagerie, a guard paced to and fro in front of the pens to keep the public safely back from the cages. In one, was a lion from equatorial Africa. Mrs. Eddy stopped in front of this cage, her attention riveted. When the guard paused at the end and turned his back to them, she quickly ducked under the rope and went to the cage, rested her hand on the lion's great paw and looked, as Julia wrote, “for a long moment into the great lion's noble face.” Then she quickly ducked under the rope again and said, “Come Julia, that is all.” (*MBE Christian Healer*, p. 422)

This story shows the care Mrs. Eddy took to write only from experience. Perhaps she wanted to test her premise that Love was able to keep Daniel safe in the lion's den.

Just a little aside, I mentioned this story to someone recently and he remarked, “Isn't that what the Equator is? I said, what? He said. “A menagerie lion running around the earth through Africa? It took me a moment to realize he jokingly meant an imaginary LINE not a menagerie lion.

But this reminded me how an imaginary line drawn in the sand by some problem doesn't need to intimidate us. We can turn the tables on the terms that fear sets. WE have the strength, persistence, and certainty that fear claims to have, and fear has only the weakness and inadequacy it ascribes to us. Fear is really the impotent one and unable to accomplish anything. Disease is weak and anecdotal and ineffective and not smart enough and its efforts are useless. This is using its own

weapons against fear. All that is left after wielding the sword of the Spirit is the one Mind alone with us on the field.

CONCLUSION

A video was posted recently on the CSMonitor website taken from the Oregon zoo. A family sat their nine month old baby right in front of the lion cage. Suddenly a lion leapt upon the baby with huge mouth open to take in her whole head. Fortunately thick glass intervened and the baby was cheerfully unaware of the whole event. It's a disturbing image and yet, the family videoing the event is undisturbed. You can hear them laughing and commenting on it. They know the child is completely safe. This is like the standpoint of the one Mind, who knows no death or threat for Her little ones. It explains the nursing quality of cheerfulness that we can have when confronted by apparent danger. We can be cheerful because the lion is chained or glassed in and cannot harm us.

Isaiah speaks of a wolf and a lamb feeding together and the lion eating straw like the ox and a little child leading them. A vegetarian lion is always a cheerful possibility in the mind of a child.

A little girl whose mommy read the Bible story of Daniel in the lion's den to her, was asked why the lions didn't eat Daniel. While the mommy held to the position that lions were carnivorous and ferocious beasts from which Daniel had to be protected, the little girl insisted that they did not eat Daniel because they were "kind lions." In a sense, she expressed in seven-year-old logic what we all need to know about lions, tigers, and bears. Since God is Love, everywhere present and the only power, then all lions must, in reality, be kind lions.

The joy that none can take away shows up in cheerfulness--the confidence that cheerfully awaits the "certainty of ultimate perfection." In the end we can truly say that our lions, tigers and bears have been our best friends because they have impelled us to grow into our native punctuality, order, patience, cheerfulness, and to be full of faith--receptive to Truth and Love.

When fear says, "Let us prey!" the one Mind answers, "No, let US *pray*." Mind says, "Don't you worry about being eaten by a lion. You're not in that battle. I can swallow pride and fear--I can swallow a whole lion's pride of fears with My love."

Whatever fears you are facing today, know that you are completely equal to the occasion. There isn't a single spot in God's creation, even in what you think is

your body, that God does not love, and His kind and generous lesson is not waiting for you to discover it.

He has given the loving provision of Christian Science nursing to firmly establish you above fear. You have exactly what it takes to see through the growls and the roars of bad health. You can stand your ground with the one Mind's confidence. You can speak firmly and with joyful certainty of good. You've got the most advanced weapons on earth with the Word of God and there isn't anything bigger than you, since you're the infinite manifestation of one Mind.

When you start to hear the chant, "Lions and tigers and bears"--just answer ONE MIND! The Mind that made you, contains you, embracing you in Love. When a lion roars, it may bring up fear, but remember that you have all the power of one Mind expressing itself through you. Take all that lion's power to yourselves, and be what God made--His very own expression of courage and health.

As the good book says, "When a lion roars, who can keep from being afraid? but When the Sovereign Lord speaks, who can keep from proclaiming HIS message?" good news bible. Amos 3:8