

How Will You Respond?

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How do you respond to local, national, and international news? While answers to that question will undoubtedly vary, it's been said that, love it or hate it, you simply can't ignore the news. And why would you want to? News is the instrument for disseminating information important to the public. Without journalists, writers, commentators, and media outlets, global citizens wouldn't be informed of issues affecting their well-being.

That being said, the challenge for anyone wanting to obtain news from print, TV, radio, or the Web is to find reliable, honest, balanced reporting – news that has been carefully analyzed and researched. Attention-grabbing headlines as well as in-depth analysis of issues considered important enough to be presented as news demand a response from us. The question is, What kind of response?

Responding to news with negativity and despair, or treating the news as a form of entertainment rather than as a means of enlightenment, misses the mark. Good journalism – genuine newsgathering and reporting – deserves respect. To me, one way of showing appreciation for esteemed newspapers such as *The Christian Science Monitor* is to pray for solutions that will benefit the lives of the people we hear and read about.

That's why I make a point of responding to the news from a spiritual standpoint. I affirm that God is caring for the well-being of every man, woman, and child. As all-knowing Mind, He supplies them with the ideas that enable them to be safe and well. God is omnipresent. His solutions are at hand in all places, at all times. When they are implemented, they meet the needs of the moment.

Such metaphysical, prayerful response to pressing world issues brings results. When severe drought struck Australia, I wrote about its impact on a farming family in a piece called "Australia just a prayer away" (See *Christian Science Sentinel*, December 30, 2002). I received numerous e-mails, letters, and phone calls from readers across the globe telling me that they were joining me in praying about the drought. Such an outpouring of love and prayer strengthened and sustained my trust in God's care and had these beneficial effects: ideas emerged that enabled everyone to permanently reduce their water consumption; the nation also rallied by instituting water conservation and drought-proofing measures in every state. And while enough rain has fallen to meet our needs, we've now learned to be better stewards of this precious resource.

Responding to the news with heartfelt prayer is not some pie-in-the-sky, vague activity. Healing prayer is far-reaching. It's the "'still, small voice' of scientific thought" that Mary Baker Eddy wrote "reaches over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound." Such prayer is powerful. "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" (*Science and Health*, p. 559). This reminds me that each spiritual truth we affirm

about a situation facing an individual, a nation – or all of humanity collectively – does something. It has a healing effect; it doesn't just sink out of sight, or accomplish nothing. Just as a pebble dropped into a pond sends out ripples, so does every truth declared with spiritual conviction send out healing ripples.

As *The Christian Science Monitor* celebrates its centenary of unbiased, accurate news reporting, those who think globally and pray globally can use its resources to respond unselfishly to the needs of humankind. In so doing, they will also be fulfilling this request from Mary Baker Eddy, the paper's founder: "It shall be the duty of every member of this Church to pray each day: 'Thy kingdom come;' let the reign of divine Truth, Life, and Love be established in me, and rule out of me all sin; and may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind, and govern them!" (*Church Manual*, p.41).

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