



Let us exalt His name together

— Psalm 34:3

Dear Friend:

In Psalms 34, “together” comes from a Hebrew word that means “unity” and “community.” At the day of Pentecost, those present with Peter and the other disciples witnessed a community that “had all things common” (Acts 2:44). This community was not created through the human effort of the disciples, but was revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Following the day of Pentecost, the book of Acts records several stories about Christian benevolence. The new Christian believers “sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need” (Acts 2:45). The day of Pentecost caused spontaneous acts of benevolence and charity—not in a structured or institutional way—but from an impulse to give that came from the heart. Spirit was inspiring the giving, and although very little detail is provided about the forms this charity took, we are assured that each individual’s needs were met. Each new convert recognized that part of the new faith would be a commitment to aid others, to be the Good Samaritan who assists the individual in need.

Was this benevolence just financial help? After the day of Pentecost, Peter and John encountered a lame beggar at the temple gates. To all appearances, the lame man needed money in order to sustain his uncomfortable existence another day. But Peter and John recognized that what the man really needed was to be lifted out of this uncomfortable existence, something money couldn’t help him with. Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee....” Peter knew what he had to give was much greater than money; he healed the lame man through the power of the Christ. What a profound example of Christian benevolence! Have you ever considered what might have happened if Peter had given the lame man money instead? How true it is that charity is never just about the money, but about the spiritual

uplift that allows us to take the next step forward on our journey.

Following this, there are two more stories related to benevolence and the early Christians’ heartfelt commitment to give (Acts 4:34-37, 5:1-11). Looking at all these stories, it seems clear that after the day of Pentecost, the new Christians were inspired to give to people in their local community and help one another humanly and spiritually. Certainly Peter and John were showing that the benevolent acts of healing and helping others would not be limited to the three years of Jesus’ ministry; it would become an integral part of the Christian church—a church which had no organization at that time other than the spiritual unity the followers were demonstrating. As the organization emerged, it initially evolved from this inspired and spiritual unity.

At The Principle Foundation, we are continually seeking and finding new spiritual inspiration on which to build our benevolence. This year we have taken on the new role of administering the National Fund for Christian Science Nursing (NFCNSN), which is giving grants to individuals who need financial assistance for their Christian Science nursing care. Christian Science nursing is one of the ways that Christian Scientists are demonstrating benevolence for others, and we are so thankful that we can be helpful to both Christian Science nurses and patients in this way. We have included a brochure that explains this new fund, as well as a brochure about The Principle Foundation’s core activities. This year continues to provide us with opportunities “to exalt His name together.”

With deep affection and gratitude,

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