

## You Don't Need to Be Afraid

On the shores of a beautiful lake in Michigan, a girl named Gail was attending summer camp for the first time. There were so many neat activities at the camp, and Gail loved to do all of them except one. That one was swimming. She always managed to have some reason for being absent when it was time to swim.



At a meeting in the camp cafeteria one morning, it was announced that swimming would be required for all campers. This was terrible news for Gail. In tears, she went to one of the counselors, who was a Christian Scientist like herself, saying that she just couldn't take swimming. The counselor said that she would be happy to talk about it so they went down to the edge of the water and sat down.

Gail told her that two summers ago, she had been on a lake and the boat she was in overturned. Then the same thing happened to her again last summer. This left her with a fear of going near the water. Both Gail and the counselor sat quietly for a few minutes, listening to God's angel messages. As they watched the waves on the lake, they saw that they came just so far and then gently retreated. The message suddenly became clear to the counselor. She told Gail that it was God, Love that was in control of the waves so that they didn't go any farther into the camp. Just like God was in control of the waves, He is in control of everything in the universe, including her. God was keeping her in His secret place of safety, whether she was here on the beach, or out in the middle of a lake. Gail thanked the counselor for helping her with the statements of truth. She said she would work with them that day. The counselor also asked Gail to get a hymnal when she got back to her room and read Hymn #136. It had a message in it about God's loving presence that would help her. Gail read the hymn over and over until it calmed her fears.

The next day, when it was time for swimming, it was decided that Gail would take private swimming lessons with an instructor who had been told about Gail's problem. The lessons went on for nine days. At the end of that time, Gail had to take two water tests. One test was that Gail had to swim fifty yards out to an anchored float and back. The other was called an overturned canoe test. In this test, the camper was taken out in a canoe by a swimming instructor, and then tipped into the lake. The camper then had to turn the canoe right side up, get the paddles, and return the canoe back to the shore. Gail passed these two very hard swimming tests with flying colors.

This experience of Gail's blessed not only her, but it blessed the whole camp. It showed to the other campers that they could apply their understanding of Christian Science to their problems and get results.

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*Miscellaneous Writings 307: "What a glorious inheritance is given to us through the understanding of omnipresent Love! More we cannot ask: more we do not want: more we cannot have. This sweet assurance is the 'Peace be still' to all human fears, to suffering of every sort."*