



Monthly Lesson
April 2013

“Be Awake! Be Aware!”¹

When we reach a place in our meditation that we feel the Presence, the meditation is complete. There is no time in Consciousness; one second of divine Consciousness is far more productive than hours of sitting in meditation where there is no real consciousness of the Presence. Sometimes we are held for a longer period of time, however, meditation is effortless and timeless when the Spirit takes over. The moment we are aware of the Presence and have that released sense of Life, we know our meditation is complete.

In the Infinite Way, remember that Joel was a pioneer in introducing Western civilization to meditation. At the time he wrote his book, The Infinite Way, and included a chapter about meditation, there was very little written about this topic in western religious literature except in the Catholic Church. Of course, there was a great deal written in Eastern philosophy. When Joel left Christian Science, he was inspired to find the way of meditation for the metaphysical students. When he came to California, Joel wanted to discover meditation in the Eastern way and became acquainted with many great Yogis who were teaching at that time such as Krishnamurti, Prabhavananda at the Vedanta Center, and Yogananda at the Self-Realization Center. He was taught at the Vedanta

Center by Prabhavananda, and was very close to Yogananda. He said there was no guru at that time with such control of the mental realm as Yogananda – he could control his students wherever they were. Joel also attended the lectures of Krishnamurti, and then had his own revelation. He realized that although there was a great deal of truth in these Eastern disciplines, the meditations were mostly in the mental realm and did not bring forth healing.

At that time, we had many students coming to the Infinite Way from the yoga persuasion who sat a long time in meditation. A woman who had been a nurse in a mental hospital came to the Waikiki study center. She had seen mental patients who sat with blank minds in a trance-like state for a long time. She became worried about the possible effects of long meditations at the study center, so she spoke to Joel about this. This was when Joel gave a lesson about ten-minute meditation and ten-second meditation² so that students would not fall into a state of mental blankness that would block the flow of Divine Ideas into consciousness.

When we see people sitting for a long time, we watch for the fruitage – if there is no fruitage of harmony, peace, love and abundance, we know that they are practicing a mental form of meditation that will bear little fruitage. But when students recognize that the Kingdom of God is within and is Omnipresent, in a twinkling of an eye, they can turn to this Source and be changed in the recognition of Oneness to feel that inner peace and wonderful released sense of Life in God and as God. We rest in that Peace for ten seconds, ten minutes or twenty minutes, but very seldom does our meditation exceed twenty minutes. It is more important to have many, many short meditations each day

² 1962 Princess Kaiulani Open Class, Tape 475, sides one and two.

¹ 1993 Maui Class, Tape II (9302), Side 2

than to have long meditations. What we are doing is tuning in to the Spirit. It is as though we were saying, "I'm listening for Thy voice lest my footsteps stray." *"Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth."*³ Then we may not hear anything but we will feel a release; this might be like a little pat on the shoulder that says, "I'm with you. You are on the beam. It's OK." If we do that 100 times a day, we will continually live in the Now and be guided by the Spirit. Do not drift into a mental state that could be self-hypnotic; daydreaming is a form of hypnotism.

As a youngster, I was completely hypnotized most of the time because I could sit for hours daydreaming. I had a wonderful imagination and my Mother would say, "The house could fall down and Virginia would hear nothing." I wasn't tuned in to the Spirit but was daydreaming on a wonderful escape from the Now moment and neglected my duties in favor of my imagination. Illumination is an awakened state that brings much fruitage. When people came to Buddha and asked, "Who are you?" he said, "I am awake." He was illumined. When people asked Jesus who he was, he replied *"Whom do men say that I am?"*⁴ And they answered, *"John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others, one of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ."*⁵ That means the same thing – illumined One, awake, aware, at attention, living in the now, being totally aware of what *Is* and watching *It* unfold. So we don't want to think that the length of time we sit in meditation has anything to do with the awakened state because meditation is a timeless state of being and one second of *It* is a taste of eternity. And we don't want to come to a class and daydream or blank out

³ 1 Samuel 3:9

⁴ Mark 8:27

⁵ Mark 8: 28-29

our minds – the mind must be relaxed, at attention, and receptive.

What is the mind? It is an avenue of awareness through which spiritual ideas impart themselves. In my conscious oneness with God, I am one with all spiritual Being and Idea.⁶ If I am at attention, I am never absorbed in what I am doing. When we are absorbed in what we are doing, we have become that thing that absorbs us. For example, if we look into a burning fireplace and become hypnotized by the flames, we become that picture. The point of spiritual living is that we never become absorbed in anything. There is always detachment where we are beholding the play of the mental state and the forms it is bringing - the good, the bad, all the appearances. We don't judge any of it because we know it is the "play" of life, the play of the carnal mind that is bringing forth these images. By not judging the images and remaining detached and awake, we don't love the good and we don't hate or resist the evil. We see it for what it is – universal hypnotism, a blip of two powers on the screen of life. Perhaps a hundred people will accept that blip as reality, but if we have developed that balanced detachment, we will not have to accept it as a reality, but will see it for what it is – universal hypnotism, flashing on a big screen, showing us a picture of both good and evil. It is easier to be fascinated by the "good" pictures than by the "evil" pictures, so we must be alert and aware so that we don't get attached to the good picture. In the living Now, the mind is alert, aware and at attention.

Meditation should break our attachment to the pictures, words, thoughts, concepts, and activities of the human scene. When we live between two worlds, we must maintain a balanced detachment and recognize that there is a particular role for us. In that awakened state where we

⁶ Joel S. Goldsmith

can't be drawn into the pictures or mesmerized by the rumors, we are the "light of the world."⁷ Then through Us and as Us, divine Consciousness dissolves that which is unlike Itself. I have previously used the illustration of being at a movie theater many years ago. I was very absorbed in the movie but suddenly, I was awake, detached and disinterested. I realized that everyone in the theater was coughing and I knew that I was there to emerge from that hypnotized state and become a transparency for the Christ. So I sat back in my chair, closed my eyes and rested in Oneness. As I did, the entire audience stopped coughing. I saw that one awakened individual could affect a change in hundreds of others – this was Grauman's Chinese Theater and it was large. One awakened individual can be a transparency through which Christ enters human consciousness and dissolves material sense. But can the Christ enter if we are not awake? No! So the point is not to sit a long time in a trance-like state, but rather to be in a state of attention in meditation – aware, alert, always listening. As Joel said, have that inner ear always open and listening. Then, we are like the lighthouse, offering protection and safety to those who are in the troubled angry sea of thought.

So it is that when we do this, it creates in us a great detachment. Nothing is ever as exciting as it was before because we can no longer be hypnotized. We look at the good and evil, we realize we can enjoy the good, but know that it doesn't matter if we don't have it. I remember when we visited Joel in his suite at the Statler Hilton Hotel; the suite was filled with flowers and it was just gorgeous. He could see that I was greatly impressed. He pointed out another, very humble hotel down the street and said, "I'd be just as happy over there, Virginia. Don't be hypnotized; it

⁷ Matthew 5:14

doesn't make any difference to me." He was telling me not to look at the outer because it is nothing. Stay awake!

The following is from one of his precious letters to a student. The question is asked, "As one becomes more detached, does one become more loving?" Joel answered, "Let us take a concrete example and find out. I am fairly well detached, I think. And the question is am I less loving? Well, then, that really sets you thinking, because here you have a question of what constitutes love. By love, do we mean the kind of motherly nonsense that stews and frets and worries itself over its children? Or by love, do we mean playing God to somebody and trying to make their demonstration for them and perhaps prevent them from making their own? By love, do we mean being jealous or possessive? And of course I know that I would fail in any test of love measured by these standards. If, however, love means the ability to discern the real and true nature of every individual, white or black, saint or sinner, and a willingness to help those who are hungering and thirsting to be fed and to be spiritually satisfied, then of course, even I might be considered to be somewhat loving. If the parent that uses the back of the hairbrush on the appropriate part of the child's anatomy may be said to be loving, then I would also score high in that regard because there is nothing that I love better than to use a club or a whip with my students! You see, when you talk about love, you have to first determine what you mean by love; what nature of love are you talking about? My sense of love comes to me from the Master who said very frankly '*I came not to send peace, but a sword.*'"⁸

Joel once asked me, "What are you going to do now that I have set you on this course?" I tearfully sat in his presence and said, "I don't know how I got here and I don't like it very much. It's too challenging." He answered, "Anyone who

⁸ Matthew 10:34

puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy of the Kingdom of God. Every problem that is presented to you is a demand on the Christ and not on you personally. You must not personalize responsibility! The only way you will realize the non-power of the carnal mind is by allowing it to be presented to you in every form and not be hypnotized by it, or convinced that you need a 'God power.' What you are is enough if you are at attention." "Be still and know that I am God."⁹

Joel said, "You will not bring peace to the world; you will bring a sword. You will stir up the muddy waters because the Christ is a catalyst that brings error to the surface so that the erroneous condition operating in human consciousness to destroy the individual can be self-seen and thereby nothingized and impersonalized." As long as an erroneous influence works subliminally, none of us know why things happen and we blame ourselves. The minute we do, we immediately personalize the problem and that is the wrong attitude and approach to a solution. So when a problem appears, we look at it with a different point of view and with the question, "What is the Christ going to show me and teach me?" "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."¹⁰

So it is our opportunity to stay awake and not to give a personal, human or material cause to anything. When confronted with a negative appearance, we recognize that since God is the only Cause, the only Creator, and the only Activity, we must be dealing with universal hypnotism. In an awakened state, "I am the Light of the world,"¹¹ and this transcendental Power and Presence can enter the scene and dissolve the appearance of material sense.

⁹ Psalm 46:10

¹⁰ John Flavel, Varieties of Religious Experience, a Study in Human Nature

¹¹ John 8:12

Dear Friend:

In this lesson, we learn the meaning of being a Lighthouse because we now have accepted that we are hid with Christ in God, living in the resurrection.

We are awake and we do not personalize good or evil, but see these judgments as universal hypnotism. As we become a Lighthouse in the human scene, we witness the Christ working through us, doing everything that needs to be done without our doing anything.

How freeing it is just to BE, to live in the eternal Now, aware that God is working His purpose out in you and in me so that we can live by grace and truth. "Ye are the Light of the World."¹²

Aloha,

Virginia

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¹² Matthew 5:14