



Monthly Lesson
April 2015

“Discipline of the Soul”¹

We continue with The Infinite Way quote found in the front of all Joel’s books: “This union is the free state of spiritual brotherhood [because there is only the leadership of the Christ.] The only restraint is the discipline of Soul...” What is the “discipline of Soul”? How does one recognize it? Greater than the mental faculties, we have the faculties of Soul, and it is necessary that we rise above the mental level of judging good and evil to experience Soul. The great discipline of Soul is living in the *NOW*.

This is why meditation is so important. Unless we meditate, we do not experience the sensitivity necessary to live in the *NOW* and to receive this discipline of Soul that tells us when to act, where to go, or when to respond. The mental level has a purpose – the mind is a wonderful instrument of analysis and reason. But the mind can be overfed by reading many forms of literature without discerning concrete principles by which to function. This feeding of the mind does not always bring inspiration or revelation. Books may lead us to inspiration, but if we are living by the discipline of Soul, we receive revelation and inspiration – inner manna that comes day by day. This is our spiritual supply and

sustenance, so if we can’t go beyond words and thoughts to free our mind of conditioning, we do not discern the still, small voice, intuition or spiritual sense, but have only the voice of material sense. So you see why it is most important that we learn to meditate in order to gain awareness of the Soul realm.

There is a question on the desk: “Is it possible to have a lesson on breathing?” In some of our private classwork with Joel, when people asked about meditation techniques, he offered three or four techniques people use. However, he said, it is really very simple and primarily requires an attitude of prayer. Prayer is an attitude of attention that is really an altitude of Love. When we love someone, we are willing to pay attention, to listen without interruption. There is a saying about people in love – “she hung on every word he said,” in other words, total attention to the beloved. So it is with us when we are born again of the Spirit. Mystical living is a love affair with our Christ Self, the heart and Soul of love, the Beloved within us. All Love proceeds from the here and *NOW*, and if we love the Christ within, we pay close attention.

This is a natural, spiritual, loving act. We don’t have to be taught how to do this; we already know how to pay attention and we do it automatically when we love. This is why in the New Testament, the fulfillment of God’s love for man, there are only two commandments: “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as*

¹ 1983 Asilomar Retreat, Tape 2, (8348), Side 2

thyself."² Pay complete attention! Do not put your devotion and attention on outer forms but instead focus on the beloved Son, the beloved Self that is your real Self. Pay full attention to the Blessed *I Am*.

Holding images such as a crucifix or a man in a white robe in our mind is our imagination. Imaging is a violation of our spiritual integrity because we cannot form an image of God. But God can reveal Himself to us in His spiritual form and identity if we have no image in our mind. As we free ourselves of imagery, it is possible for the Beloved to reveal, unfold and disclose Himself to our immediate awareness. When we start to focus solely on our breathing, this is a discipline of the mind. The mind is like quicksilver – it shifts frequently. This is why in many Oriental philosophies, mantra are repeated to hold the attention. This, however, can be a form of hypnotism.

But if we just gently watch our breath, eventually quietness comes and we experience a sense of expansion. This is a freeing exercise. We let our listening be the rhythm of our breath – we just watch it. We are not trying to make anything happen – we know that God *Is* the breath of Life and Life is living Itself, breathing Itself. We just sit quietly and we do not bring anything into our mind – we just watch our breath. Then we may find we take a deeper breath – and we've made our contact. We have attuned ourselves to the Essence of our being. Breath is not a physical essence – it is Spirit within and without. This was a technique that Joel gave us along with his book, The Contemplative Life.

² Luke 10:27

If you are a young student, you must imbue your mind with truth often as a reminder by taking specific principles such as "*I and my Father are one,*"³ "*Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine,*"⁴ "*Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.*"⁵

God Spirit is the essence, the substance and the activity of Life. This Life that is living us that brought us forth into expression is omniscient – all-knowing, all-wise – and God created us for a holy purpose: to be men, women, wives, husbands, parents, business people who live by grace and Truth. Someday the activities of *this world* will pass for all of us whether they are "good" or "bad" because they are part of the passing experience. But this relationship with God is eternal. As we learn and experience the Kingdom of God within us, we are laying up treasures in heaven: "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*"⁶

Someday we will leave our families, businesses, and wives or husbands. All of us pass from the human scene and if we have not laid up any treasures in Heaven, if we have not become aware of this vast universal dimension of Love, satisfaction and completeness within us, we will have no treasures to take with us.

³ John 10:30

⁴ Luke 15:31

⁵ Alfred Tennyson

⁶ Matthew 6: 19-21

What is true faith? It is not faith in God or faith in any person, place or thing. It is our ability to act from our spiritual sense, or our within-ness. It is our ability to have faith and trust in our own within-ness to the extent that we can stand against the entire world, not by fighting, but in quietness and confidence. If the entire world says, “you will fall off the edge of the earth at the horizon line,” we can stand firmly in our realization that this little globe is a circle of Love! We do not try to prove it, but continually live out from our own spiritual within-ness, proving each day that Love alone is Life. This is what faith is.

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*⁷ When we first begin practicing faith in trusting our Oneness, we may see a “symptom” such as a cold – this is the moment that we can test our faith. If we have studied the Infinite Way message, we can immediately say to ourselves, “God constitutes my being, so what is there to fear? This appearance is just a mental projection, a universal one without presence or power. It cannot use my body.” Then we dismiss it in inner conviction of our oneness with God. If we start practicing the principles with the appearance of a cold or headache, then we can walk by grace without fear because we have begun to build our confidence in God’s grace through standing on a principle within ourselves. That is how Grace is demonstrated. The Grace is always there, but if we say, “Oh, help! I’m fearful, I believe yet I don’t believe,” we are like a wavering sea: *“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”*⁸

⁷ Hebrews 11:1

⁸ James 1:6

The man who cannot stand on his own feet is like a wavering sea, and all of us start out that way. As we learn to meditate, we develop a quietness of mind so that we reach the Soul realm within us. Soul has the staying power, the power to stand. In The Infinite Way, the chapter on Soul says:

“Complete and final destruction of error comes only through the achievement and exercise of the faculties of the Soul. The Soul is that part of man which lies buried deepest within him and is therefore seldom realized.”

We know what material force, mental force, and mental power are, but we know nothing about Soul power until we begin to meditate, go beyond words and thoughts, and – at will – pay attention and be still. When we can quiet the mind by paying attention which is an act of love, our mind, body and soul are integrated. We haven’t forced our mind to be still because the act of *paying attention is an activity of love*, not force. And so our body, mind, soul and spirit become fully integrated – *one will*. That has come about because of our love of God, loving with all our heart, mind and soul. Therefore, we can listen and receive the impartations of Soul that come through spiritual discernment, spiritual sense, or spiritual intuition.

At first, we don’t trust ourselves – we have little faith. In the beginning of my studies, *“O ye of little faith!”*⁹ often came to me because of my lack of understanding. I did not yet have the ability to stand fast in this inner peace, not doing or thinking anything,

⁹ Matthew 6:30

but abiding in Me, the living Christ. Letting Christ abide in us is a test of our faith. This is a test of our ability to be still and listen and each day to do what is given us to do. This is walking not by human reason but by faith.

This is not a lazy way of life. We are not saying that we don't pay attention to our human responsibilities – rather, we can be so spiritually integrated that Soul, mind and body are one. Mind is greater than the body and is not physical but mental, so all changes of the body and outer experience take place in the mind. There is no change needed in our Soul; it is perfect. It is our God Being, our original spiritual Being. As we are aligned, Soul, mind, and body in love's attention, this integration takes place. This simple act of watching our breath for short periods of time leads us to a quiet mind and union with Christ. We don't have to meditate for long periods of time; when meditation becomes a mental exercise, it becomes ritualized.

Scripture says, “...when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”¹⁰ We are told to pray in secret, and pray without ceasing. Prayer is not a ritual and it has no form. It is a formless yielding to the Divine within ourselves so that through spiritual discernment and intuition, we may be led of the Spirit with revelation and newness of Life. “Behold, I make all things new.”¹¹

¹⁰ Matthew 6:6

¹¹ Revelation 21:5

Dear Friend,

Discontent is the greatest curse we can have. It is often the state of mind of those who have the most material goods. Contentment is an acknowledgment of our self-completeness in God.

“Rest in the deep, clear well of contentment within you. Peace already IS.”¹²

“That which I am seeking, I already am.”¹³

Let inner Peace be your gift to yourself and to all mankind.

With love and aloha,

Virginia

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¹² Wisdom from The Infinite Way, Joel S. Goldsmith

¹³ Living the Infinite Way, Joel S. Goldsmith