



Monthly Lesson  
September 2015

“Holding Fast to Your Integrity”<sup>1</sup>

There are questions on the desk. The first is “Do you object to students who have purchased your tapes making copies to lend to their friends who are also Infinite Way students? Is it now OK to make copies of Joel’s tapes?” Joel’s tapes are still available for sale. For both sets of tapes, there are practical considerations such as use of expensive equipment and quality control of the recordings. But I think we need to look at motive because prayer is motive. Scripture says, “*The little foxes...spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*”<sup>2</sup> I have been in this work for over 20 years and I have known students who have copied tapes and while many were lovely people, they did not realize what they were doing. The “little foxes spoiled the vines” because *it is in giving that we receive.*

When you purchase a tape of Joel’s or mine, you expect to receive the divine Impulse that spiritual Consciousness *Is*. You want to connect to that Consciousness and let It carry you and lift you into another dimension. But you can only have the same degree of integrity that *I Am* has because “like begets like.” So in your offering of a minimal

gift such as you would pay for a nice dinner, you are receiving a spiritual feast that will feed you forever. But you will not receive that spiritual feast if you do not feel it’s not worth anything. That is also why we have tuition for our classes – when we give, we also receive. When I do private work with students, there is no price that can be put on it, but I have never seen a student who had a spiritual experience and did not make a gift of gratitude. So it is in giving that we receive and “the more you give, the more you have; this is the law of Love.”<sup>3</sup>

*“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*<sup>4</sup> The natural man can’t receive the Spirit because he is a “getter.” He has a desire to “beat the system” and looks for ways to avoid giving. Those are the “little foxes” that spoil the vine. When Joel was alive, he did not incorporate his ministry but paid taxes as an individual. I, too, am living by a spiritual principle that whatever is required of me through Christ, I can meet the obligation. I feel a great debt of gratitude for living in this country where I have had free education, speech and worship. This country was originally founded on a spiritual principle that recognizes man’s spiritual identity: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”<sup>5</sup> So I am grateful to pay the taxes and to support those who

---

<sup>3</sup> Christian Science Hymn

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:14

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

---

<sup>1</sup> 1983 Asilomar Retreat, Tape 5, (8351), Side 1

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon 2:15

need help such as the needy and the poor. But I could never be needy or poor because my consciousness is built on the principle that “In my conscious oneness with God, I am one with all spiritual Being and Idea” and therefore, I am supplied abundantly.

When people cheat or are dishonest, they are cheating themselves. When a student told me that another student could not afford to pay for tapes or lessons, my response was, “Make an adjustment to the lens in your camera! Make an adjustment within yourself - what are you projecting? Are you malpracticing those individuals you think cannot ‘afford’ tapes or lessons? Scripture says, “... every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.”<sup>6</sup> Like begets like. We cannot have a mixed tree; it either bears good fruit or is barren. So this human sense of good that looks at others with pity and sees them as less than complete in God – that is malpractice. No one in a position of leadership is helping students who come to him or her if they see them as “lesser.” Unless we see the Christ in all we meet, we are not really fulfilling our obligation as a child of God. It is mandatory that we do this - let’s remember that the “little foxes spoil the vine.”

In Joel’s book, The Spiritual Journey of Joel Goldsmith, there is a note he sent to Lorraine saying that he could not tell a lie, not even the smallest untruth. Why is that? It is because the principle operating in our lives is “like begets like.” God is Truth, and because that / of your being is Truth, you cannot even tell a little white lie. There is no way you

can tell a lie, and then know the Truth when someone comes to you for healing. The same tree cannot bear both good and evil fruit and a man is known by his fruits. “*Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.*”<sup>7</sup>

When we are committed to this Way and we identify with God, we identify with integrity, faithfulness, generosity, and givingness. Scripture says, “*freely ye have received, freely give.*”<sup>8</sup> Think of what we receive! We receive all the oxygen we need to breathe, the sunshine, the ground gives us abundant crops, the birds sing – the butterflies, bees, flowers – everything works together for good and they are all giving in some way. Years ago, while we were driving through Texas, a student told me a story. For years, the ranchers looked for a species of cattle to breed with Longhorns to thrive and produce good meat in the arid plain. So they imported Brahman cattle from India and the combination of Longhorn and Brahman was very drought resistant. In their droppings, the new cattle brought grass seeds from India; this was the grass they needed to eat, and this drought resistant grass spread throughout Texas. This just shows how complete we are! Even cows come with what they need as food.

We are Self-complete, and we are not here to “get” but here to “give.” Money is the easiest thing to give but giving ourselves and holding fast to our integrity is more challenging. This was Job’s story, and his salvation was to hold fast to his integrity. In this allegory, Job was a good man, a natural man and a

---

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 7:17

---

<sup>7</sup> James 3:12

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 10:8

good citizen. He loved God and hated evil and this opened him up to temptation. In a conversation between God and Satan, Satan points out that Job is a “good” man but even he could be made to curse God. God replies that indeed, he is a good man but nothing could ever make him lose his integrity. So Satan suggested a little wager, and Satan’s entree into Job’s consciousness was made possible because Job was conscious of two powers and hated evil! And so the tempter went to work – Job lost his wife, his children, his house, his farm, and all that he had. Then he ended up sitting on an ash heap with sores all over his body.

Job had three friends who represented the psychology of that day. They tried to persuade him that a good man could not end up this way; he must have broken some law or done something wrong. But Job would not be convinced and he held to his integrity. These friends said, “Why don’t you just curse God and die? Death is a friend from where you are sitting.” But no, Job held to his integrity, proclaiming that God is good. He would not yield. At the end of this drama, God questions Job, asking where Job was when God formed the earth and stars and all that is. Job admitted that he had not been on the scene and did not know how God operated. Once Job admitted that the good that is God is unknowable to human thinking, God told him to get off the ash heap and deck himself with majesty and honor, for he was now the son of God, knowing neither good nor evil. Job rose, was healed and ended his days in restoration of family and abundance. What is the lesson in this? Job thought he knew good and evil - he was attached to that tree of good and evil, wasn’t he? But when he admitted his ignorance of God’s ways, he hung his world on

nothing.<sup>9</sup> This was very much like what the Voice said to me: “By doing nothing, everything is being done. It is not up to you. Abide in the nowness and *Is-ness* of Being. I am God.”

God was saying the same thing to Job: “*I* made this universe and everything therein. Worship me and know that *I* am the only Presence and the only Power. *I* formed the stars, planets and heavens, and gave life to every creature. You did not do that and you don’t know *anything*. You don’t know how *I* work, but *I Am*.” When Job admitted that he didn’t know what “good” was, he became the son of God, got off the ash heap, and the lost years of the locust<sup>10</sup> were restored.

This is a tremendous lesson. Job became united with the Tree of Life and the flow of Life began when that personal sense of “goodness” and hatred of “evil” left him. Mystics and mystical literature often speak of “divine disinterest.” This means that the individual who is divinely centered on Oneness is disinterested in the good and evil aspects of human life. These individuals recognize that human existence is a passing parade and they know that whatever “good” is expressed in human existence is expressed by the Grace of God – it *is* the Grace of God appearing. Therefore, they honor God. They do not honor nature that can often be violent. You can never prove God in nature though you can perceive a natural order in nature, in the stars and planets, in the order of like begetting like, and the principle that invisible activity brings forth visible fruits. The invisible life of the Tree that you cannot see brings forth manifested

---

<sup>9</sup> See Job 26:7

<sup>10</sup> See Joel 2:25

form – quite a principle to see. What Job learned was how to hang his world on nothing – nothing tangible, knowable, seeable or understandable. There is a Divine Intelligence operating that we cannot fathom with the human mind, but we can know our Oneness with It, and in the silence of our Soul, in our meditations, as we begin to serve and give in this world, It reveals to us Its secrets. Being is unfoldment – BE, BE, BE!

We are all looking at each other in a very personal way – this is dense blindness, a material sense of vision. Scripture says, “*If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*”<sup>11</sup> But we are seeing multiplicity instead of One so we must begin to impersonalize this belief of duality which acts as a universal hypnotism or mesmeric sense. When we see someone suffering from the knowledge of good and evil, we say, “Oh, that is because they have identified with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and that is where they are living.” Then we quickly know the Truth that there must be a change of consciousness by realizing that they are connected to the Tree of Life living NOW. There is only one Father of us all, one Creative Principle, and that is God, Spirit. There is only one Mind, one Life, one Soul and one Being. We quietly hold fast to this Truth, knowing the non-power of the impersonal mesmeric activity of good/evil that is binding mankind to limitation. “*Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 6:22

<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:17

*Dear Friend,*

*Consciousness is unfolding for me in a new and living way. This month, I plan to move to Kailua to be closer to John and Sandra. A lovely new apartment waits for me within walking distance of all the amenities of little Kailua Town. It will be like going home after a few years in California, Arizona and Honolulu. My new address after September 15 is below.*

*Please join me in reading one of Joel's most beautiful books, The Altitude of Prayer, so that during this election season, we can hold everyone in an atmosphere of peace.*

*Blessings of peace and love,*

*Virginia*

© Virginia Stephenson, 2015