Q: Please explain illusion. (3-18-17)[1]

*If you have access to recording 0213A and would like to hear Joel answer this question, he begins at approximately **16:29.** If you have a streaming service subscription, you can go directly to this question and answer by clicking/tapping here. The recording will already be queued; simply tap the play button.*

A: Well, I think that's simple. Anyone who has been on a desert and has seen water on the road in front of them has witnessed an illusion, because on close examination, the water isn't there. Or they may have witnessed an entire city just a few miles ahead of them, and after traveling those few miles, there is no city there. It's a mental picture you see that doesn't exist.

If you haven't been on the desert, you've certainly ridden on a railroad train or streetcar, and you have seen the car tracks come together in the distance. That's illusion because no such thing happens. Or, you've looked out of your window and seen the horizon, the place where the sky and the water meet. That's an illusion. That's such a strong illusion that until 1492 it had all the people fooled – even the wise ones. But there is no place where the sky and the water meet in the distance. You can travel all around the globe and never catch up to where the sky and the water meet. That is an illusion; that is a picture in your mind which you actually see, but which doesn't exist.

Now then, we're probably speaking about the illusion of disease, and here too, you have a picture in thought of a condition that does not exist anywhere. It doesn't exist anywhere. I have a letter today from a lady who wrote me just a few weeks ago saying that her grandchild had leukemia and was given up by materia medica with no hope for its cure, and would I help. And I have a letter today on my desk saying the doctors have pronounced this child cured – in just a few weeks.

Now, if there were such a condition present as they said was present, where is it now? If it was present then and is cured now, what cured it? It received no medicine. It received no diet. It received no material help of any kind. Now what cured it? What changed the condition – the bodily physical condition – from then to now? Nothing. Nothing. Nobody touched it. Nobody touched it. The doctor gave it up!

Evidently then, the condition didn't actually exist in the mind or body of that child. It existed as an illusory concept, and where? Not in the child. It existed in the human mind – the universal human mind – and that child just happened to be a victim of that particular picture. Some other child was a victim of a polio picture; some other child was a victim of a pneumonia picture, because in no case were the children responsible. It must have been a universal belief, and this picture existed in the universal human mind,

the mind of belief, the second chapter of Genesis, and it out-pictured itself as a picture in the mind of that family.

The *condition* hasn't been dispelled; the *picture* has been dispelled. How has it been dispelled? In the same way that the picture on the desert is dispelled – by knowing the truth. The moment that you know that the water doesn't exist on the desert, you start your car and go right through it and find it isn't there. It was your *knowing*that it was illusion that dispelled it. If you hadn't

known it as illusion, it would have continued to fool you, and you would have stayed there for a hundred years waiting for that water to dry up, or at least you would have had to wait till nightfall until the action of the sun went away.

Now, the illusion of sin or disease or death, and even the illusion of health – physical health and harmony – these are pictures in the human mind, the universal human mind. In the ordinary metaphysical practice, the object of your work is to exchange these illusions of sin, disease, and death, for the illusion of health. And so it is that when the doctor reports that the body is well, you smile and give it testimony as if that wellness were any more of reality than the sickness – like our child. This condition of health is just as much of an illusion as the condition of sickness was.

If we were working from the standpoint of merely trying to "unsee" the illusion of disease, the chances are we would not have been successful. The reason that Infinite Way work has been so successful at healing is that we do not merely "unsee" the illusion of sin, disease, and death, *but also the illusion of physical health and physical wealth!*

What is so spiritual about a physically healthy body when very often it drops dead tomorrow, or gets into an automobile accident and is killed? What is so spiritual about being a millionaire when the next day one can be with nothing? There is no more spirituality in millions than there is in pennies. There is no more spirituality in a perfect heart than there is in a diseased heart, and if you want to see real healing work, don't get overjoyed when the doctor says the heart is beating normally and the pulse is normal. He may mean that it's just normal for your age, but tomorrow you'll be a day older.

Only recently I was talking to a doctor who knew my age, and he asked if I'd had a checkup recently – whatever the heart checkup is – and I said, "No." He said, "Well, don't you think you should have it?"

"No, I don't. Why? Do they testify truly? Can you rely on them?"

"Well, not wholly," he said. "A friend of mine recently had one and the next day dropped dead on the street."

"Well then, what's the use of being told how healthy I am?"

No, no, we won't have it that way.

Now the point is this: Sickness, sin, disease, death, poverty, unemployment – these are the illusions of human sense. So is physical health and physical wealth. *The only reality is your spiritual identity, your Christhood, and that you can't see, hear, taste, touch or smell.* You can only realize this in your inner meditations when you feel that your life isn't yours.

God is your life. That's when you're on safe ground, not when you believe that you are healthy. No, you're not safe then. You're not safe when you believe you're wealthy either. When you begin to realize, "God is the life of my being;" when you begin to realize, "God is my wealth; the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;" when you stop claiming it as *your* possession; then you will find that all that the Father hath is yours, whether of supply, or life, or intelligence, or wisdom, or whatever it may be.

Never believe for a minute that you are safe while you believe that *you*are alive, or while you believe that *you*have life, or while you believe that *you* have health. You are not a bit safe. But you are safe when you begin to realize, "God is infinite. Therefore God constitutes my being. God is my life; God is my soul; God is my spirit; God is my hiding place."

Now you know, we've had this before. If you think that you have a good bomb-proof shelter in your back yard, just don't depend on it too much. As a matter of fact, it would far better to be walking out in the open air right in the midst of the blitz, and realizing, "God is my hiding place, my abiding place. I live and move and have my being in God; in Him, where nothing can enter to defile or maketh a lie." Hiding in some material structure is like hiding behind a perfectly beating heart. It's like hiding behind a good bank account, and then the government comes along and cuts the ground out from under you. …

It is the same with the body. Don't ever feel confident because you're sure that your blood pressure is normal, or your heart is normal, or your digestion is normal, or your

elimination is normal. That's all nonsense, because in the twinkling of an eye, a germ, a bullet, a bomb, an automobile accident can upset it all. To be safe and to really have the assurance of your health and your supply, recognize God as infinite Being, and recognize "*God*is my life, and that life is eternal and immortal. God is my strength. I cannot get weak if God is my strength." If I believe strength is in the muscles – well, you know the answer to that.

So it is. Illusion says that health is in the body. Illusion shows us that wealth is in the bank. But Reality says, *"I*am the Lord God Almighty, and beside me there is no other. *I* in the midst of me am mighty. *I* am the life of my being. *I* is my fortress, my abiding place, my high tower – literally. Whether I sit here in this room, walk out on the street, or hide in a concrete shelter, I still have to realize, "God is my abiding place. I dwell in the secret place of the Most High. I do not dwell in a body of flesh. I do not dwell in so many heartbeats per minute. I do not dwell in a good or bad digestive system. I dwell – I live and move and have my being – in God, and God constitutes the activity of my body. God constitutes the activity of the organs and functions of my body. God is the only activity, and as long as God is active, the organs and functions have to respond to that activity."

Ah, yes! Don't be tempted by the illusion of sickness alone. Don't be tempted by the illusion of health alone. Don't be tempted to take account of man whose breath is in his nostril, for even when he's good, or healthy, or rich, he is still subject to the illusory beliefs of man who is born of woman, whose day is short. Now, we are not "man who is born of woman." We were – until we died to that individual and were reborn into the realization that I Am *I,* and I live, and move, and have my being in God, of God. I and my Father are one. All that the Father hath constitutes my being. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," and "Son, all that I have is thine."

Then, when you are living in your God awareness, you are not living in a state of confidence in a human body just because it is painless at the moment. You're not living with your head in the ground, believing you are prosperous because you have dollars today, but not knowing what tomorrow may have in store.

But when you're living in the realization—and oh, how often I bring this out – *"I," – I, I, I, I, I* –"I am the bread, and the wine, and the water," then I can walk away from anything of a physical nature and still find myself being – resting, eating, and sleeping regularly – because I and the Father are one. I am not dependent on that which is external to my inner self. God is my Selfhood; God constitutes my Selfhood; and in that Selfhood is the infinity and allness of harmonious being.

This makes me non-attached to physical health, or physical wealth, or physical strength, or physical goodness. It makes me non-attached and allows me to live right here, in the fullness of my own being, which last week we called "self-completeness in God" – self-completeness in God. I am self- complete in God. All that the Father hath is mine. I live, not by virtue of anything on earth, but by virtue of the grace of God, which is ever with me.

Now that covers this question relative to a physical appearance. That takes that whole question and answers it for you. When you are concerned with a physical appearance, even if it's a harmonious one – and you should be concerned with it even if it's harmonious – and you translate it and begin to realize, "I am not living by virtue of a harmonious physical appearance. I'm living by virtue of the grace of God, the Spirit of God in me, which is 'closer to me than breathing, nearer than hands and feet.' The Spirit of the Lord God almighty is upon me, and It ordains me to live forever, harmoniously, joyously, peacefully, and prosperously."

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[1] *This excerpt is from Recording 213A: 1958 Second Chicago Closed Class, "Questions and Answers on the Mystical Life and Healing." It is posted with kind permission from the Estate of Joel Goldsmith, which holds the copy protection on the recorded classes and the copyright on the transcripts. The full transcript of this recording is available from The Infinite Way Office website or by calling 1-800-922-3195.*