

Q: Do you recommend the New English Bible, New Testament by Oxford University and Cambridge University Press, and other versions and translations such as the Revised Standard Version Holy Bible by George Lamsa and the Smith Goodspeed Bible? (3-16-19)¹

A: Let me answer that this way: As far as I'm concerned, my favorite version of the Bible is the King James Version. I love its beauty and its poetry. And, whatever I have caught of biblical understanding has come to me from the King James Version. On the other hand, I have all of the versions that are available, including the New English Bible, and I have found them useful in this way. When I am working with a particular passage or story of Scripture, I find it very interesting to turn to these other versions, to see how they present it, and sometimes from one version or another, you get quite a different slant. And so, just for comparison or just for clarification, I often find it handy to refer to these other versions to get their view. And I have, on many occasions, caught something worthwhile in doing that.

Now, in the New English Bible, this New Testament that has just come out, I have not had an opportunity to go into it very deeply, but I have taken some of my favorite passages and checked on them in this New English Bible. And what I've found is this: the New English Bible is entirely devoid of the beauty and poetry of the King James Version. There are passages in it that clarify some of the meanings. There are some passages in it that ... what's the opposite of clarify? Confuse—yes, confuse. I think that some of the passages are more confusing than in the King James and in the other editions. But undoubtedly, there are people who will get used to the idea of reading it in common everyday English and get something from it that they did not get from the King James Version.

Now, I intend, as time permits, to check every one of the scriptural references that we have used in The Infinite Way to see if there are some others that clarify these things. And I will certainly read through the entire Bible to find if there is anywhere any clarification for me. You see, we cannot afford to close our minds on anything that comes to us in the light of something authentic, something legitimate.

I have brought this point out many times: The Infinite Way is one approach to the spiritual life. I've also brought this out: I could rewrite the books of The Infinite Way without using our Bible. I could write these same books out of the Hindu scriptures. I could write these same books out of Zen, because there are basic truths to be found everywhere.

I have also said that a message like The Infinite Way isn't for everybody; that there are states of consciousness that require other approaches at some time in their

development. And that's why I've urged that students—younger students—study these writings, try them, but do not necessarily feel that they have to remain with them if there is some other approach that more nearly suits their state of consciousness.

You must remember this: the beginning of this metaphysical work was with Christian Science, and out of its beginnings has come a great worldwide institution doing tremendous works. And all of this proves that there must be an awful lot of good in it for it to be accomplishing the works that it has accomplished and undoubtedly still is accomplishing.

Next, we had Unity, which—I think Christian Science begins with 1875 and Unity with 1892—and here it has been thriving all of these years. And so, there must be something; there must be millions of people who have derived great good from it. And then, of course, has come New Thought, and out of the New Thought work, we have works that have survived, like those of Ernest Holmes and those of Dr. Bailes. I guess they are the two outstanding approaches in the New Thought world that have survived with great success.

So, a person who is a beginner seeking a way of life would be foolish to close their eyes and say, "I won't investigate," or "I won't read," or "I want someone's opinion." Why? We don't know what it is that meets our particular need until we investigate. And so it is on a matter that is as important as Scripture. If you really want to know the Bible; if you really want to study Scripture; what could be more wonderful than any one of these, or all of these particular Bibles that are mentioned here: The New English Bible, the Revised Standard, the Holy Bible of Lamsa, and the Smith and Goodspeed, along with the King James? And certainly, these should be studied with concordances and probably with cross-index concordances, for those who really want to make something of scriptural study.

Now I don't have to tell you that I have worked with concordances and cross-index concordances, because you just don't get a knowledge of the Bible out of the air. If you want to know the Bible, you study it. If you study it, you get all of the tools of study, and you put in time, and it's worthwhile for those whose inclination runs in that direction.

So, it is true that there is a lot of horrible literature in the world, and there's an awful lot of horrible metaphysics in the world. But then, there are those approaches that have stood the test of time. There are those approaches that have brought great inspiration and success to the lives of many. We need not close our eyes to those, until we have found the one that is our path. When we have found that, it's like marriage. We just put

everything else aside, and we cling to the one. Why? Because there is only one principle that we can work with. We can't work with opposite principles. We can't work with principles that conflict with each other, and so when we reach that place of having found the principles that stand up for us, that we can harmonize with, that is the teaching for us to follow.

¹ This excerpt is from Recording #399, 1961 Los Angeles Closed Class, Side 1: "The Function of Mind." 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 at www.joelgoldsmith.com or by calling 1-800-922-3195.