

Q: Please explain grace. (9-16-23)¹

A: Well of course, as you know, grace is the goal of The Infinite Way—to live by grace. To live by grace means “I live yet not I, Christ liveth my life.” It means to “take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, what ye shall drink, wherewithal ye shall be clothed.” Why? Because something else is taking thought *for* you, and it not only is taking thought for you, but is providing for you before you have knowledge of your need.

Now when the day comes when you do not think about your tomorrows, but when you awaken in the morning knowing this is the Lord's day, and that everything happens today happens to me by the grace of God. As you keep knowing that, you will find that there will be less and less need for planning.

Now of course, that doesn't mean being ridiculous. If I have to make a trip around the world, I have to plan my dates and let the city know in advance, and so forth and so on. But that isn't planning in the human sense, because I wouldn't start on the trip until grace led me to an office to make arrangements for it. Then I know that the trip is on. Now I have to put it in just a human form of dates, and usually, the dates stick all the way around the world.

So in the same way, you see how I come to a platform—no notes, no made-up schedule, no classes, no trying to have notes from yesterday's or last month's or last year's class. For this reason: If I were to have notes here, unless it would be some scriptural note or something I wanted to bring to your attention, I would be teaching you out of my knowledge, and the wisdom of man isn't really enough to teach you.

But since I have the experience that God is teaching through me, I can come to any platform anytime, completely blank of any idea of what's going to take place—as happened this morning—and then it takes place. It just happens. Why? Because this entire work of The Infinite Way is by grace. It isn't an invention of mine; it is not a discovery of mine; it has nothing to do with me. It is something that was given me and is continuously being given to me day-by-day. So that I don't have to go back and depend on last year's classes or living on yesterday's manna. All I have to do is let each day unfold and let what comes forth to come forth. Now that is living by grace!

Grace has been termed the gift of God, and that really means that grace comes to you not because you earn it, or deserve it, or are worthy of it. And that is one lesson that people who have been in churches for any great length of time must learn—that God's grace isn't dependent on human goodness, because some of the greatest sinners of the world have had tremendous inflows of God's grace.

I could point out one to you very quickly—a man called Saul of Tarsus. You can't think of a meaner man on earth—virtually a murderer, persecutor—and here he receives such a divine grace that he becomes one of the greatest of the Apostles. And Peter, I don't think was too good either, or too worthy. He seemed to be out protecting his own skin at the

wrong time. When the battle was thickest, he found the deepest bombproof shelter. But in spite of his unworthiness, he becomes the outstanding disciple of the Master, unless John was a disciple of the Master, and that we don't know. Nor do we believe that John of the Gospel was a disciple of the Master, since the manuscript of John, and John of Patmos, all took place a hundred years after Jesus. And so it isn't likely that that was the same John that was a disciple. So it is probable that Peter had more light than any other of the immediate disciples.

Now this other John, who gave us the Gospel of John, if you read that, you'll see that the message is entirely different than Matthew, Mark and Luke—entirely different; has no relationship to it at all. So that it would be a very good guess that whereas Matthew, Mark and Luke got their Gospel from each other and from checking up on each other, that John got it direct from the Spirit of God, which is the Christ. And therefore, John was probably the highest mystic of that particular period, which was about 100 AD—90 AD anyhow.

There you have it. Well, St. Augustine was another; St. Augustine was certainly, at least according to his own estimate, one of the world's greatest sinners, but he has become Saint Augustine, and in his own lifetime, he became a saint. But his own history, given in his confessions, reads more like a modern movie magazine.

And then of course, we have the experience of Starr Daily, who was one of San Francisco's worst criminals and has ended up being one of the greatest angels on earth today. And his light came while he was in chains in solitary confinement in prison, because he was the worst prisoner in prison and a desperate character. And while chained to the wall, the whole cell became illumined and there he saw the Master before him, and he received his light and his illumination. And although when he was imprisoned, the parole board made the notation that he was never to be pardoned; he was to serve his full term, which would be thirty-two years, and have no parole and no pardon because he was such a desperate character, in spite of that notation, the same parole board in three years released him, and the same governor later pardoned him.

And so you see, divine Grace, the presence of God and the power of God, is not dependent on human goodness, and that throws out a lot of church teachings. It is dependent on something far greater than that.

I have lived with the consciousness of Paul for many years in order to know him. And the answer to Saul of Tarsus is this: That man was God-hungry. He was a free citizen of Rome, but he gave up his freedom to be a slave with the Hebrews in Jerusalem in order to have the instruction of Gamaliel, who was at that time the greatest Hebrew teacher. And Paul was the greatest scholar of Gamaliel. He lived his whole life with but one object—to learn to be the greatest Jew on earth, and to be closest to that Jewish God. And when this Christian sect was getting powerful, and it looked as if his dear God might be pulled down, why this great God-hungry man and God-conscious man was willing to

go out and kill to be sure that his God didn't come to any danger.

And so you might say that Saul of Tarsus was filled with a zeal for God, a love for God, a hunger for God. It was blind at that time, because he actually had not had the God-contact. Had he had the God-contact, he would have said to these Christians, "Poor fools. If what you've got is of God, of course you're all right, and you're going to win out. But if it is of man, it's going to destroy itself, so I don't have to do anything about you." But he didn't have that illumination. At that time, he was an intellectual. He was at that time seeking the God experience. And so he was the finest and highest type Jew that he could be as an intellectual.

Now then, even though he was out on a mission of persecution, remember the reason he was out on it: He was out persecuting for his God's sake. His motive was pure; his zeal was good, and because of that, he had this illumination. In other words, what counts is not what our human acts are, but what is the *motive* that prompts them? And if that motive is leading us in the direction of good, then even if it is an erroneous one, it will end up well. And it did with Saul of Tarsus; it did very, very, very well.

Now you see, we have the same experience later with our friend Peter. Many people believe that these early disciples were Christian disciples, and nothing could be further from the truth. They were Jewish disciples; they were not Christians at all. They were followers of Jesus Christ, who was a Hebrew rabbi. But he was a Hebrew rabbi who did not approve of the Hebrew church organization, and he was trying to reform it from within. And they were disciples, Hebrew disciples of a Hebrew rabbi, trying to reform the Hebrew church from within, and of course they failed, and you might say, were kicked out. But I would like you to see that they were still Hebrews, just as Saul of Tarsus was a Hebrew up until his illumination on the road to Damascus.

Peter has a dream, and he sees this sheet lowered from heaven, and when he looks inside, there are pigs. And the voice says to him, "Peter, kill these pigs and eat them." And here Peter proves what a good Jew he is. "Oh no, God! These pigs, that's swine meat. That is filthy." You see, a Christian wouldn't do that. That was Peter the Jew, who still could not understand that there is nothing filthy.

The dream happened three times. Peter couldn't understand it. But a few days later, when Cornelius' servants came and found Peter and said, "Our master has heard of thee and of thy good works and would like you to come and instruct him," Peter was all ready to say, "No, he's a Gentile. He's filthy. We don't teach Gentiles. We only teach Jews." Because you remember, at that time, nobody could join their circle unless they were circumcised. You had to be a good Jew before you could be a follower of the Master. And so you see, they were really Jews.

But in that second, Peter remembered the dream: "Call nothing unclean that God has made," and in that second, the Jew became a Christian. In that second. Just as in the

second when Saul of Tarsus became Paul, a Christian, so in that moment did Peter the Jew become Saint Peter the Christian, because in *that* moment, he saw that God made this world and all that is therein, and you have no right to call anything unclean that God hath made. When you see that vision, you are a Christian. Before that time, you have good and evil. You are following the law. Now this word "grace" is really an opposite for the word "law." "The Law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ Jesus."

Now, while you are living under the law, you are in the Hebraic state of consciousness. You might belong to a Christian Church and call yourself one, but you wouldn't be. You'd still be a Hebrew. It is only when you come out from among them and become separate and come to this place where you say, "No, the grace of God is universal. There is no man or no thing unclean. We are brothers in Christ." Then are you a Christian. But then you have lost prejudice, bias, and bigotry. But you've lost more than that. You've lost something that many of you haven't yet lost—that is conformity to law, ritual, rule. You see, in that moment died—so far as those early disciples were concerned—died all need of circumcision. Up to that time you see, you were under the law. You were either circumcised or you just weren't a Jew. But now, oh, you didn't have to conform to the law.

So it is with the Christians of today. They're not a Christian until they're baptized. But what would the disciples have said? Baptism or not baptism, neither of these stands before the Lord. In other words, circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth nothing, baptism or non-baptism availeth nothing, communion or non-communion availeth nothing, going to church or not going to church availeth nothing. What is the state of your consciousness? Have you received the grace of Christ, which frees you from ceremony, form, ritual, obedience to certain forms, to where you can break through them all and just live in the integrity of your own being, without anyone telling you that you must honor your father and mother, or anyone telling you that you mustn't steal, anyone telling you mustn't commit adultery, anyone telling you—why as long as you have to live under those forms, you are Hebrew. You are under the law. And when the day comes when you say, "Tear up the Ten Commandments. I'm living under grace," "Oh," but somebody says, "you mean then you can break those laws?"

"How can you break them if there aren't any? There aren't any such laws; I live under grace. I don't do or not do anything. God does through me. I do not live; Christ liveth my life."

Do you follow that? It is when we break loose from this worship of effect, whether it's thoughts or thing, that we are living under grace. As long as a person says, "Give me a thought to hold to," they haven't got a God, because if they had a God, they wouldn't care if they didn't have a thought. Do you see that?

If one has to have a Bible in their hand, or if they have to have a crucifix, or a six-pointed star, or something else, they are holding onto an effect. They're not living by cause. If

they don't feel that their life is safe unless they've done the daily lesson or read twelve pages of a book, they are not living under grace. They are living by an effect. They're depending on an effect for their safety, security, protection, and so forth and so on.

When we are dependent on nothing, that is when we are dependent on God. When you can truthfully say, "I am dependent on nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing; I just am; I and my Father are one," then you're living under grace. But as long as there is a feeling that you must have this, or you must have that, or you must do this first, or you must do that, as long as there is any thought of a ritual, no.

Even with meditation, if you were to depend on meditation for your good, you would lose your God. We don't depend on meditation for our good. We *use* meditation as an avenue through which to contact God, but we don't feel that meditation has any power in and of itself to do anything for us. It is an instrument like the body. We use the meditation as an instrument through which we make God contact, but we have no superstitious belief that a meditation can do something for us. God realization can, because that's realization of cause, not of effect. Is that clear?

Now, living by grace is living with no dependence on person, place or thing. Living under the law is being obedient to something or other, and being obedient to something or other makes you then, subject to it.

¹*This excerpt is from Recording 651B: 1956 Johannesburg Practitioner Class, "Galatians – Chapter III" 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 website](http://TheInfiniteWay.com) or by calling 1-800-922-3195.*