

Q: Why do some students fall by the wayside, if the teacher knows when a student is ready? (4-16-22)¹

A: Very few students fall by the wayside after a certain point in their development, and up to that time, even though the teacher knows the student is ready, the student does not always fulfill that readiness. The reason is this: Up to a certain point in spiritual development, we have personal sense; that is, we have a sense of selfhood. I call it "Joel," and you call it "Bill" or "Mary" or whatever it may be. And this is the reason that any student may fall by the wayside— that sense of personal self.

To begin with, as long as we have a personal sense of self, we're trying to protect it, and if anything seems to threaten it, we rise right up and do battle. This may cause us to fall by the wayside, because we are not to take up the sword.

In the case of Judas Iscariot, is it not clear that there was enough sense of personal selfhood that he wanted to be top banana; he wanted to be the important one. And as soon as anyone else seemed to gain the favor of the teacher, evidently Judas rose up to protect his position. He was very close to the Master. You know, the Master had made him treasurer, and when you trust a man with your money, why, he's quite close to you.

This personal sense of self that has left in it a trace of ambition, or envy, jealousy—this is enough to trip up a student at any state of their development, until they have completely lost the sense of self, and then there is no further possibility of falling away.

You must remember, we have here three temptations: temptation for fame, temptation for money, even when it's not a mad ambition for money, just the ambition for safety and security. These are your devil tempters because there is no need for safety or security. There is no need to be concerned about a future. And until one has attained that, there is always the danger that the temptation is going to be there and can win.

Again, on the spiritual path, if every individual were alone in the world, had no relative, no family, this temptation would be less because to go far on the spiritual path, it is necessary to lose all fear of lack or limitation or the future. But if one has a family to provide for—Ah! That is where the devil gets in. The temptations are, "You better take care of them," and then comes the temptation to fall from grace. Not by having an abundance of money; that is no sin. One may have millions without sinning. The sin would be in resorting to some human mode or means of attaining it and using some human means, and thereby losing the spiritual demonstration.

Therefore, the answer to the three temptations, or as many other temptations as can come, is all embodied in that term "personal sense" or, "sense of personal selfhood." You see, it is only with the final illumination, the one that has come to so few people in the history of the world, that final revelation when they have experienced God incarnating as individual man, that personal sense is dead. Because there is no man now, fame can mean nothing. Fortune can mean nothing. Safety can mean nothing. How can God be safe? How can God be secure? How can God have abundance? There is no such thing. But remember that we are not dealing with students who have attained that final revelation of "God incarnated as myself."

Do you remember the Master saying, "Thou seest me, thou seest the Father that sent me"? Now you know how few there are who can make that statement—"You are looking at God." Until that time, there is some measure of personal sense, and one could fall. After that time, there is no personal sense anymore. There is no I or me; there is only God. There is only the Light Itself. There is only the Spirit Itself. And this is self-supporting, self-maintaining, self-sustaining. It needs no help from any human means.

¹*This excerpt is from Recording 470B: 1962 Chicago Closed Class, "The Consciousness of My Presence." 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 on the [Infinite Way website](#) or by calling **1-800-922-3195**.*