

Q: Why do we not bring forth the demonstrations of health, of supply, of companionship—whatever it is that is the seeming need—more quickly than we do? Why do some attain it quickly, some slowly, and some not at all? (5-7-22)¹

A: The answer lies in two different directions. First of all, if you are studying a message of truth and attempting to work out your own demonstration, are you following one particular approach to truth, or are you trying to combine two or more?

Let me say quickly that I do not believe there is any possibility of success in trying to combine two or more metaphysical teachings, because on the whole, the principles of each message differ from those of other messages, and I cannot see how much is to be gained by trying to unite two approaches to truth. Then let us say that you have decided on one. Well, since I am here only to speak about The Infinite Way, I would like to answer that from the standpoint of The Infinite Way.

Demonstrating health, supply, companionship, home, safety, security, harmony—this is only possible in the degree that we demonstrate some measure of spiritual consciousness. In other words, separate and apart from the demonstration of spiritual consciousness, there is no such thing as demonstrating health or supply or happiness or safety or security. Therein lies one of the major misunderstandings.

This misunderstanding arises because in the earlier days of metaphysics, more especially in the days of the mental sciences, the idea was to demonstrate things. A copy of the official New Thought Magazine of about forty years ago was sent to me when I was in California, and if you could read the articles and the advertisements in it, I know that you'd have a surprise to notice the practitioners and teachers who were specializing in demonstrating supply, and then the other practitioners who were specializing in demonstrating companionship, and those who were specializing in problems of health, including diets, massage, and exercise.

As you know, this wasn't a very satisfactory arrangement, and for that reason the magazine isn't in existence any longer, and neither are the practitioners and teachers who were claiming these great powers. But at least it can be said that if you stick entirely to a mental approach, it is often possible to demonstrate things and conditions. It's hard work, but it can be done. It is only when you get into the spiritual activity, an activity of spiritual teaching, that you will find it impossible to demonstrate those things. The only possible demonstration is the attainment of some measure of spiritual consciousness.

Now it is rightly said that a grain of truth works wonders, and it really does. There are

many, many people who with a grain of truth have accomplished great things. With just a tiny measure of spiritual understanding, with the attainment of only a tiny measure of spiritual consciousness, they have had great experiences take place in their lives. Naturally, the deeper the spiritual awareness, the richer the spiritual consciousness, the more harmonious will the outer flow be, the outer conditions.

Once you perceive this, you approach the study of a message like *The Infinite Way* with only one object in mind, only one goal, and that is the attainment of some measure of spiritual consciousness, because you are *letting* all these things be added unto you. You are not *seeking* the things. You are seeking the realm, the consciousness, of God, and *letting* these things be added unto you.

Then we come to the question of the specific principles or teachings that are meant to develop that consciousness. Well of course, here again you have absolutely no assurance when you undertake this study whether your progress will be slow or whether it will be rapid. You have no way of knowing how long it will be before you attain some measure of that mind which was also in Christ Jesus. Now there are those like myself, who have worked and studied for a period of fourteen years without seeming to make any progress at all, and they wonder why, and then really like a miracle, having an experience that entirely changed their life, entirely changed their experience, and opened up a whole new way.

Now of course, this isn't good advertising, but I must say to you truthfully that after that experience, all the outer conditions of my life got worse. And if I had been looking for supply, I will tell you truthfully that I found more lack than I had ever known before. And if I was looking for health, I didn't find it. And if I was looking for home and companionship, I can tell you that I was down to no friends and no home.

Ah, no. When the spiritual light touched me, it took from me everything in my human world—position, income, friends, family, home, and money. It was a housecleaning, and I am sure that some of my former friends, looking at my experience and knowing that I was making a spiritual demonstration, must have said they would rather get along without God. I can hardly blame them, because the outer picture was bleak, and it wasn't bleak for only a week or two.

As far as I was concerned, I wasn't aware of the outer picture, except that it was happening, but it wasn't touching me because inside, something wonderful had taken place. I had really left "this world" and come into a realization of "My kingdom," and so I probably wasn't as aware as my friends were of all the lacks and the limitations that I

was going through.

But the point is this: It was a spiritual experience; it was a religious experience; it really was an act of grace. The Master called it "overcoming this world." I don't know if it was overcoming it or just destroying it, but it was bombed out! For several years, there was a hard struggle with the outer demonstration; several years of knowing the meaning of economic lack and limitation; several years of knowing friendlessness and being without family.

And yet, during those years, healing works were coming through. Other people were being greatly benefited and blessed, and I'm sure that if it hadn't been that this time just coincided with the beginning of the Great Depression in the states, I'm sure that those who have benefited would have been happy to share with me, and to express gratitude. But financially, they were going through terrible days, and so sharing wasn't easy. Then of course, gradually as more and more light came, as greater awareness came, the situation eased and finally came into harmony.

But the point that I'm making is this: It is difficult to look at the life of those who have been spiritually touched and not realize that the milk and honey, the land of milk and honey, sometimes comes forty years later. It must have been difficult to look at the experience of Christ Jesus and watch the persecutions, the hardships, the fleeing from place to place, and then finally the crucifixion, and want to follow in his footsteps. There must be easier ways of making a living.

No. You see, the spiritual life, while it doesn't always have this effect on people, it does on some. If you were to examine the lives of the European mystics of the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries, you will discover also that outwardly, life wasn't too pleasant for a while, and you wonder if it was all worthwhile. Of course it was all worthwhile because of the great inner experience that was taking place, and the transition in consciousness that was being brought into the world.

Now some of our students find that a spiritual awakening is a breaking up of their old way of life. Sometimes it is a breaking up of their particular source of supply; sometimes a breaking up of their particular family life; certainly occasionally, a breaking up of health, because in the old life your dependence was on the law. You had the law of matter to uphold you. You had the law of mind. You had the law of supply. You had the law of business. You had all kinds of law supporting your existence.

But remember that in turning to a spiritual way of life you are forsaking the law. You are

giving up everything on which you formerly had dependence. You no longer look to human modes of good. Now you are virtually saying, "I renounce the law. I renounce the human values. I renounce those human or material things upon which I've placed my dependence, and now I'm trying to realize grace."

Ah, but what is grace? Try to get your mind around that word "grace" and see how you must fail. There is no way to understand the word "grace" because it is an activity of God, and how shall the human mind ever know or understand an activity of God? It is invisible. It is incorporeal. It is beyond the grasp of the human mind how grace can operate.

If you have ever had a healing, let us say of a fever, try to remember how that fever burned in one moment, and probably within five minutes, no sign or trace of it, and probably not even the remembrance of what it was like. Try to think of some physical healing that you have witnessed in yourself or others, and the almost miraculous way in which it terminated. And you'll see that there is no explaining it. There is no accounting for it, and yet it happened.

So it is that when you are working with spiritual truth, when you are seeking the kingdom of God, you are turning your back on the realm of man. When you are seeking the kingdom of God, you are turning your back on human modes and means, on physical reliances. Later on, you'll find you are even forsaking mental reliances. You're no longer to hold on to a right thought, or a good thought, or a spiritual thought. You're no longer to use thought as a power. And while this transition is operating, there can be a breaking up of the old ways, and a transitional period before we are rooted and grounded in the new.

All these things come into consideration when you're trying to wonder why it is that I'm reading spiritual books all year, and I still haven't gotten into heaven and found the health, wealth, and happiness that I anticipated.

Again, it may surprise you that some of those who are studying almost overnight experience a change of life and go from discord into harmony. Is there an answer to that? There may be. Oh no, there is an answer, but I mean that we may know the answer or we may not. My own view is that there are those of spiritual consciousness who come to a spiritual study not knowing the degree of their own spiritual awareness, the depth of their own consciousness, and with their first touch of the Spirit, they awaken right into it because it is their natural element. They do not have to make a transition from materialistic mind to spiritual consciousness.

It may be that it has something to do with pre-existence. It may have to do with previous existences before they were born on Earth. Whatever it is, it is a fact that some people make this transition from the human world to the spiritual quickly, painlessly, beautifully, and some of us have to struggle mightily.

And so it is that if you will not lose sight of what you are doing, if you will remember that the end and object of your work isn't demonstrating things and conditions, but attaining that mind that was also in Christ Jesus, attaining spiritual light and illumination, then you will find that you will more readily manifest harmony in the outer experience.

¹*This excerpt is from Recording 415A: 1961 London Open Class, "Our Good Is Embodied in Our Consciousness." 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**.*