

Q: Why is it that so many people who never think seriously of God or of spiritual things find a great deal of success and happiness in the world, and very often experience few problems or none at all? (2-18-23)1

A: This question comes up constantly in my mail from many students who have little or no spiritual background, and from those who have been in some form of metaphysics and have been accustomed to turning to God for the satisfying of purely material needs. The answer, of course, is simple. On the human level of life, it is possible to attain anything at all that we desire if we desire it enough to make the necessary effort. A great many health problems of the world have their origin in wrong eating, and anybody can eliminate more than half of his physical problems if he watches what he eats and how much. Many problems of lack and limitation merely represent the unwillingness of the average person to work for what he wants. Many persons are satisfied to work seven hours a day, or even six, five, four, or less, and then spend the rest of the twenty-four hours in indulgence of one sort or another.

But those who really want success find ways to work ten hours, eleven, twelve, or eighteen; and in doing this, they indulge themselves far less and therefore have fewer mental and physical problems to meet. Practically anything in the world is obtainable to those who are willing to pay the particular price demanded to reach their goal. Except for those who inherit wealth, the rest of the world has to work, and work hard for what it wants. But if they want it badly enough, they will get it, and this, regardless of whether or not they ever have a serious thought about spiritual things.

What this question really means is, "Why do those who do give serious thought to the spiritual things have so many problems and often fail to achieve their goal?" Here, too, the answer is simple.

Those who turn to the spiritual path for material or human gain must inevitably fail. In the early days of metaphysics, it was believed that a person could go to God for automobiles, houses, or for better business, but the passing of years and the failure of that approach to life have shown the world that just as oil and water do not mix, neither can the spiritual kingdom be made into a merchandise mart, for these are as unlike as oil and water.

The Master made it very clear that "My kingdom," the spiritual kingdom, is not of "this world," and "My peace"—the real peace, the spiritual peace, the eternal peace—is not to be obtained through the things of "this world." Paul, too, made it clear that "the natural

man," the man who is seeking a material goal, cannot receive the things of God. So it is that those who enter the spiritual path with the object of attaining material and human good must also inevitably fail.

The goal of all those who enter any one of the mystical approaches to life must be to seek the kingdom of God, to leave all for Me; if necessary, leave mother, father, sister, and brother.

Leave your "nets," and follow Me into the spiritual kingdom where there are spiritual treasures

such as you have never dreamed of. Follow Me into the kingdom of God and find that all these

things—peace, joy, harmony, love, justice—all these will be added unto you.

Do not expect success on the spiritual path if you are seeking material goals. Though it is as simple as that, what are you seeking?

You can now know whether or not you can respond to the Infinite Way, and any new seeker can judge for himself if the Infinite Way is possible of attainment for him.

Spend a week living in Chapter 10, "Meditation on Life by Grace," in *The Contemplative Life*. If this makes your heart sing, this message of the Infinite Way is your spiritual home. Then, you are ready to begin at the beginning of this book and build a new consciousness, and all the other Infinite Way writings will open up to you as a bud opens into a flower.

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:22, 30-32.)

¹ *This excerpt is from Living Now, Chapter 9, "The Nature of Consciousness." It is posted with kind permission from the Estate of Joel Goldsmith, which holds the copyright on the books.*