

Goldsmith Global

1963 Kailua Private Class

Joel S. Goldsmith

Summary of Recording 517B: "Above the Letter into Spirit"

Joel begins this class by talking about spiritual progress. He says that feeling more spiritual, behaving better, or being more virtuous are not the signs of spiritual progress. The signs of spiritual progress are in our reactions to the pictures of the world. Are we reacting with less horror or fear to sins, diseases, disasters, and threats of war? The less we react, the more spiritual progress we have made.

As we come to understand that temporal power is not power in the presence of God, we react less to diseases, disasters, and accidents. As we understand that evil is impersonal, we react less to so-called evil people. Instead, our attitude toward them is "Father forgive them their ignorance." When you do not react with pity to the lacks in other countries, but rather realize that supply is spiritual, omnipresent and infinite, you show your spiritual progress, and you actually help to remove the lack and limitation. So the degree of your non-reaction is some indication of your spiritual progress.

Scripture says, "*To know Him aright is life eternal*," so the only solution to the problems of the world is to know God aright. But God cannot be known through the mind, so we have to stop thinking thoughts about God. Thoughts about God will not bring the knowledge of God any more than thinking about music makes one a musician. God is an *experience*.

If you want the *experience* of Spirit, God, Christ, you must let the mind rest and take no thought, for "*in the moment that ye think not, the bridegroom cometh*." The Spirit of God comes in the moment of your humility, when you are *listening* for the still small voice, realizing that God is not a word or a thought. God is Being, and since "*I and my Father are one*," God is my being and yours. Therefore, "*be still and know that I am God*."

Mystics have said that if you say that God is good, or that God is all-power, or almighty, or divine love, or omniscience, you are saying no more than if you simply say "God is." When you see the orderly universe of sun, moon, stars, planets, and tides, and when you see that apples always come from apple trees and peaches from peach trees, you can say, "Man did not create this; certainly I know that God *is*." To go any further is to put the mind to work, and that sets up a barrier between you and God. When you just acknowledge, "God is," you have gone as far as anyone can go.

But we do not merely keep "God is" as a form of worship in the mind either. We go one step further, and that is to stop being "me" insofar as I can, and let God take over and live my life. This means that I do not pretend to be good, spiritual, charitable or benevolent of myself. I realize that I am only those things to the extent that I can let God function. Once I have

surrendered myself in that way, there is not God *and* me; there is God functioning *as* me: "*I live yet not I, Christ liveth my life.*"

As I give up trying to know or worship God with the mind and live in the constant atmosphere of "God is my being; God lives my life," there is no personal self and no personal attainment.

For example, Joel says that if The Infinite Way is of God, Joel is not responsible for what happens to it today. Joel is responsible only for maintaining himself as a transparency. Nor is Joel responsible for what happens to The Infinite Way when he is no longer physically present, because that which sent it into expression will continue to function it. So it is with respect to your individual life. You must stop thinking of it as *your* life and begin to think of it as *God's* life. You didn't create your life or your talents; God gave Himself to this world *as* you. The more you realize this, and the more you surrender yourself that God may function as your mind, soul, body and life, the more of divine grace will be expressed as you.

Every individual is the expression of God, whether or not they are aware of it. But if they are not aware of that, how can they become aware? The human mind is not going to give itself up, but as we realize in our meditations that "all that I am, thou art" we loose the Christ into the world. Others can be touched by that Christ, and It can change them.

This is how it was with us. In our humanhood, we could not have come to a spiritual teaching, but at some point we were inwardly touched by Spirit and turned in a spiritual direction. We don't know where the spark came from. Perhaps we were touched by the prayers of a mystic or someone else on the other side of the veil. Similarly, the spark can come to others through our prayers or from the meditations and prayers of those in monasteries or on the other side of the veil.

Once we are on the spiritual path, there is still the possibility of turning back. An earlier fear of death could re-emerge and grip us, because "*the last enemy that shall be overcome is death.*" So at some time, we must overcome the fear of death and realize that death is really a transition into a different experience, like that of the worm that becomes a butterfly. When we understand death as a transition, the fear of it dissolves. Then you are wholly on the spiritual path. But this state does not come until you realize that God is your Selfhood; that God is living Its life as you; that this life is God's life, not yours.

When you realize that words and thoughts do not reach or influence God, your thoughts will stop and your prayers will be receptivity, listening, awaiting God's grace, and awaiting the still small voice. Then the Spirit of God enters your consciousness, and you become consciously aware of It. At first there is a "me" who is listening, but as I continue in the listening attitude, this "me" disappears, and all there is, is that Presence fulfilling Itself. This Presence is the hidden manna. It is "*the meat the world knows not of,*" the grace of God within you, "*the Christ that liveth my life.*" In the spiritual stillness, I become aware that I am not living my life. This Presence, this Grace is doing it. There is not "me" *and* God. There is only God.

The goal of the mystical life is to be a beholder of God in action, ascribing nothing to ourselves. There is no desire or need because every need seems to be met. That is "living by grace," but you can only live fully by grace insofar as the personal sense of self, which has desires, hopes, and ambitions, disappears. The mystical life is lived in the degree of our desirelessness and our selflessness. You find yourself living every day, not wondering about tomorrow because there is no tomorrow for you. There is only tomorrow for God. So it is useless to try to fathom God with the mind. Even when God is living your life, God is a mystery.

Joel says that when someone asks him for help, the first thing that takes place is that he stops thinking, even thoughts of truth. He listens, and that lets the presence and power of God through to do the work. If he tried to think even a thought of truth, he would be trying to make a God-power of a thought or a statement of truth. But only God Itself is God-power, so if you want God, *be still and let God function.*

Joel concludes this class by counseling the participants to take great care in imparting the deep principles of this work, cautioning that students who are not ready for it may be shocked or offended, or think that you are saying that a human being is God. He also expresses his appreciation for the students who are participating in the class, saying that they realize that he is revealing to them the fruitage of forty years of spiritual searching. He says that he expects that when they leave the class, they will be less concerned with questions and more concerned with having periods each day of experiencing God and gradually surrendering the personal sense of self.